

Europa School UK: Secondary Learning Policy

Issued for discussion: 19/02/2108

Subject to review

1. Principles

- Europa School UK aims to inspire its students to become lifelong and independent learners.
- We value learning of all kinds, be it to develop academic understanding or for the development of other skills and personal attributes.
- Staff will aim to create an atmosphere of challenge and support for all learners.
- All learners will experience a climate of mutual respect in which there are high expectations of behaviour and performance. A phrase that has been used since the start of European schooling at Culham in 1978 is still relevant: “**do your best**”.
- No students should feel that they cannot discuss their progress in school.
- Teaching will be highly effective, involving a wide range of teaching methods and strategies, **ensuring progression for all learners**.
- The staff understand the importance of providing feedback both orally and in written form to help progression.
- We believe that students should take responsibility for their learning however all staff are there to support them in this sometimes, difficult journey.

2. Curriculum (see Curriculum Map)

- Our curriculum is unique in the UK – we offer a broad curriculum which satisfies the requirements for the European Baccalaureate.
- The curriculum should reflect developments in the European Schools’ programme, and in particular the promotion of the “Key Competences for Lifelong Learning”. These key competences include 'traditional' skills such as communication in one's mother tongue, foreign languages, digital skills, literacy, and basic skills in maths and science, as well as horizontal skills such as learning to learn, social and civic responsibility, initiative and entrepreneurship, cultural awareness, and creativity.
- Subject teachers, careers coordinators and management will work with students to help them identify the best courses for their learning and their future.
- The construction of the timetable will endeavour to provide the best support possible, be it in terms of staffing, rooming or double lessons where required.
- We value all types of learning, be it in lessons, around school every day or on any visit or activity beyond the regular school day.

- Enrichment is offered within and outside the school day as well as a regular organised schedule on Wednesday afternoons.
- Learning to Learn will be contained within the curriculum helping younger students understand how they learn best in order to prepare them for future study.
- Learning support is offered on a Wednesday afternoon for Language learning in English, French and German. Support in other subjects is provided via group sessions or TA support in lessons.

3. Creating a climate for Learning

The prime focus of all lessons needs to be on learning. Teachers will make best use of all the following factors to enable a positive climate for learning:

- Seating arrangements.
- The learning environment, e.g. displays.
- Clear classroom rules.
- The way students are spoken to.
- The way students speak to each other and to teachers.
- Preparation of appropriate activities and resources for different groups of learners, thereby facilitating effective differentiation.
- Use of Teaching Assistants.
- Providing equal opportunities for all students to make progress.
- Engendering an atmosphere of encouragement and support that facilitates risk taking and fosters an enthusiasm for learning.
- The school provide a library and study room to allow students to work during study periods.
- The use of IT (google classroom) to provide electronic resources.

4. Speaking to Students

- All efforts must be made to learn students' names as quickly as possible.
- When addressing students, use their names frequently.
- Maintain a calm, measured tone of voice.
- Never humiliate students.
- Avoid sarcasm.
- Positive language will be used to promote a positive learning environment.
- Make praise specific to the learning task.

5. Lesson Procedures

- The teacher will arrive punctually for the lesson.
- The teacher should greet the students as they arrive, supervising the immediate corridor area entry to the classroom.
- In all lessons, the teacher will speak exclusively in the working language of the course.
- There should be a seating plan for all classes. In S1-S5 this is likely to be boy-girl. Decisions on a seating plan should be taken from the point of view of creating the best atmosphere for effective learning. The teacher decides who sits where, not the students.

- The classroom will be arranged in such a way that students have a safe, comfortable working environment.
- A register must be taken on our data system School base at the beginning of all lessons. Any absence which raises concern should be reported to reception (reception@europaschool.uk) immediately. Late arrivals will be recorded (see Behaviour policy).
- At the end of the lesson, there must be a clear, orderly finish. The teacher will dismiss the class in his/her particular way.
- The board should be cleaned, chairs returned to their original position and the room left tidy and in a fit state for the next lesson to begin promptly.

6. Classroom Rules

- Classroom rule will be developed by the teacher and students at the start of the academic year. These may be reviewed during the year.
- There are agreed rules specific to the teaching space. Science Laboratory rules are displayed in each laboratory and it is compulsory for teachers to complete safe laboratory training for all students.
- Apply the rules consistently for all students. Resist the temptation to deviate from applying rules consistently as this can create an uncertain atmosphere for the students. If they are unsure of how rules or guidelines will be applied, this is likely to lead to difficulties in the future.
- Use a wide range of behaviour management strategies, to deal with any issues arising.

7. Lesson Content

- Lessons must be planned to ensure effective use is made of the time available.
- All lessons should have clear learning objectives which will be communicated during the lesson though not necessarily at the start. This is to ensure that lessons are varied, and lesson objectives can be part of the learning process.
- Students need to be able to talk about what they are learning, not just what they are doing.
- **Students must be able to understand the progress they are making towards their objectives and how they will be able to improve further.**
- If formative assessment highlights weaknesses in understanding, teachers must be prepared to adapt tasks and explanations to improve learning.
- There must be a range of teaching styles and a variety of activities within a series of lessons and across a scheme of work.
- There must be opportunities for practical tasks, independent work and for collaboration.

- There must be clear evidence of differentiation (see Europa Differentiation Handbook and Forward planning templates).
- All groups (e.g. high/medium/low ability, boys/girls, new students, students with special needs) within a class must be catered for.
- Other adults (e.g. Teaching Assistants) must be used effectively.

8. Homework

- Home learning (homework) must be set according to the home learning guidelines for each year group.
- Refraining from giving a home learning task should never be used as a reward. In other words, saying, “you’ve worked well today so no home learning” is unacceptable. This creates the image that setting a home learning task is a punishment.
- Home learning should be set with a learning focus. This does not necessarily mean learning something new, but can be a task to improve understanding or consolidation of particular knowledge and skills.

9. Assessment

- Assessment can take many forms – the key is that the teacher and the student know the progress that has been made and what needs to be done to improve further.
- Assessing student progress does not automatically mean marking a piece of written work and recording a mark or grade. However, there must be at least one level or grade recorded for each student per half-term. Naturally, this will vary significantly depending on the level of the course and the frequency with which the class is seen.
- Ongoing formative assessment within the classroom will be a prime focus for all staff. Identifying student strengths, and areas for improvement should be an ongoing dialogue.
- Teachers will provide varied and effective feedback and development points for students to help them realise their potential by making them active partners in their own learning. Time must be given in lessons to allow students to respond to feedback and improve their work. Students will review written learning tasks using a green ink pen to allow them to highlight learning issues. The school also recognises the power of immediate verbal feedback.
- Assessment can have a profound influence on student motivation and self-esteem. All feedback should show consideration and be both constructive and sensitive. Feedback should focus on positive comments and points for development.
- Assessed work will be attached to the students exercise books or stored in the students’ file in class. It must be always available for students, coordinators and management.
- Students’ work will be scrutinized by the class teachers on a regular basis. The feedback will be discussed at staff meetings in order to improve our practice.
- Peer assessment and feedback is often extremely useful and engaging for all students. The school encourages this practice.

- Staff will be encouraged to perform learning walks and peer lesson observations to allow for sharing of practice.

The contents of this policy provide a broad outline of the expectations we have at Europa School UK to ensure high standards of teaching and learning.

These are minimum expectations for everyday practice and must be met.

This is not an exhaustive list. Many other strategies will need to be employed to ensure that the needs of all students are met.