



# Teaching & Learning Policy

Luke Ruston | January 2024

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Minsthorpe Community College: A place where everyone plays a part in strengthening our learning community through Motivation, Commitment & Care



**Minsthorpe**  
Community College

## Section 1

# Vision Statement

### Section 1.1

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#### **'Learning & Teaching the Minsthorpe Way'**

Teachers and Student Support colleagues at Minsthorpe Community College (MCC) strive to plan and deliver lessons to a consistently high standard rooted in fundamental Core Principles of effective pedagogy. We insist on excellent standards of behaviour for learning from all students and it is our daily goal to inspire students to learn and think critically. We support and challenge students so they can achieve well, make progress and be lifelong learners and effective members of society. At Minsthorpe Community College, we insist upon clear communication and expectations that create a climate of consistency, so every student benefits from effective teaching.

This **Vision Statement for Learning & Teaching (L&T)** supports the **College Vision**:

**Minsthorpe Community College**: A place where everyone plays a part in strengthening our learning community through **Motivation, Commitment & Care**.

This vision for Learning & Teaching also links directly to our whole College **Curriculum Intent** and is closely correlated to Teachers' Standards.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

## Section 1.2

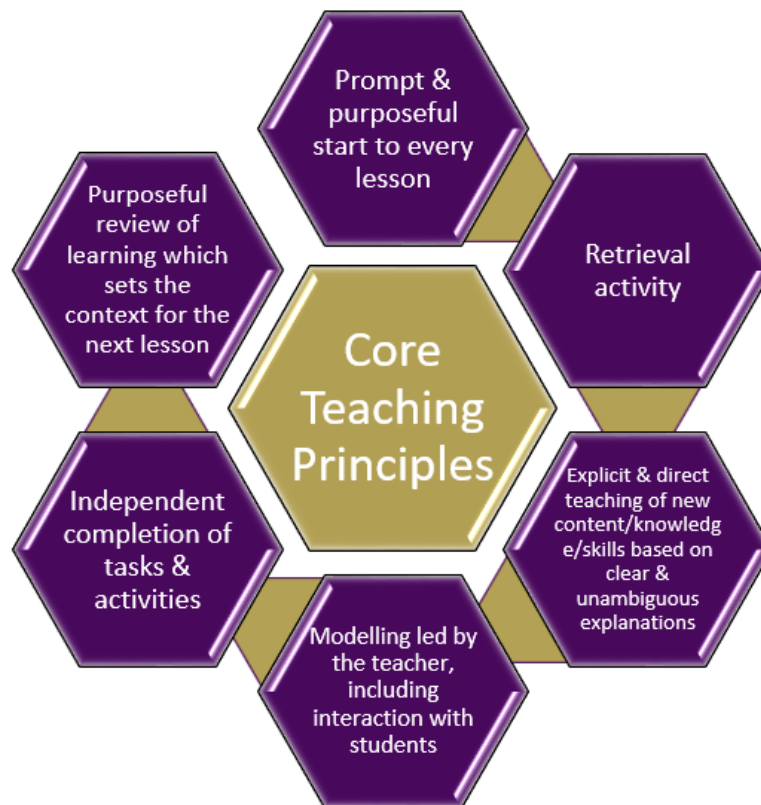
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### Core Principles of Quality Teaching & Lesson Structure

Students at MCC have three lessons per day each lasting 1 hour & 40 minutes. It is essential that teachers **plan and structure** each lesson effectively giving consideration to how students learn, retain and apply new knowledge and skills.

The Core Principles outlined below describe our approach to structuring teaching across all Curriculum Areas (CAs):

Core Teaching Principle	Intended Impact
1. Prompt & purposeful start to every lesson, explicitly setting the context for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No wasted learning time</li><li>• Appropriate climate for learning is established at the start of every lesson</li><li>• Students have clarity around the intended focus of each lesson and the teacher's expectations</li></ul>
2. Retrieval activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowledge &amp; skills are revisited frequently allowing students to retrieve information and create strong, long-term memories</li></ul>
3. Explicit & direct teaching of new content/knowledge/skills based on clear & unambiguous explanations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students receive clear &amp; intentional teaching of the content of the curriculum</li><li>• Instructions inform students of the content of the task, the length of the task, the expected presentation of work and how students should be working</li></ul>
4. Modelling led by the teacher, including interaction with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students are explicitly and regularly shown the cognitive process of successfully completing tasks with their teacher as the expert guide</li><li>• Students are given detailed teacher explanations and opportunities for guided practice</li><li>• Students develop the skills to successfully analyse the characteristics of high quality worked examples</li></ul>
5. Independent completion of tasks & activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students are given adequate time to deliberately put in to practice the required skills and knowledge across the curriculum with appropriate scaffolds</li></ul>
6. Purposeful review of learning which sets the context for the next lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular reviews of learning support, retention of information and development of long-term memory</li></ul>



*This cycle of teaching may be repeated during a lesson or over a series of lessons. It is not a wholly prescriptive list, but these Core Principles should be the basis for the planning & delivery of all lessons across the College.*

The Core Principles outlined above are all under-pinned by other important aspects of high-quality teaching which should weave through all lessons and over a series of lessons:



**Thorough planning & appropriate resourcing**

**High standards of behaviour for learning**

**Challenge & support**

**Ongoing AFL & questioning**

**Literacy & Numeracy as an integral focus throughout**

**Strong & secure subject knowledge**



## Section 1.3

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### 'Behaving the Minsthorpe Way'

#### Vision Statement

At Minsthorpe Community College, we know that students learn best in a safe, calm and orderly environment. We therefore expect that all students should be explicitly and repeatedly taught the behaviour expectations in lessons, including the entry to and exit from each lesson, and other important routines which support their learning. This expectation of teachers/HLTAs and students supports the following aims for all lessons:

- Learning is not disrupted and lesson time is not wasted;
- Teachers/HLTAs can effectively deliver well-planned & well-structured lessons;
- Students develop positive habits for regulating their behaviour which will support them in later life;
- Clear routines can be established which support calm & orderly learning environments;
- Teachers/HLTAs can build positive relationships with students and thereby create learning environments where students feel safe, secure & supported and take pleasure from their learning experience.

Our behaviour expectations in lessons are outlined through 'BE FAIR'. Staff should display the 'BE FAIR' visual at the start of every lesson and refer to it explicitly throughout the lesson.

The graphic is a dark blue rectangular banner with white text. At the top, the words 'BE FAIR' are written in large, bold, white capital letters. Below this, there are six columns of text, each with a heading and a description:

Be on time	Equipment	Follow instructions	Actively listen	Involve yourself	Respect
If late, apologise and sit down silently.	Pencil case on your desk immediately.	First time: Listen, write, read and speak	Pens down, eyes forward and sit properly.	Be ready to respond. Work quietly / silently.	Silence when others are talking. Wait to be asked to speak.

Below the table, there are two sections: 'Start of lessons' and 'End of lessons', each with a list of three numbered steps. The 'Start of lessons' section is highlighted with a light green arrow pointing right. At the bottom of the graphic, there is a white bar with the text 'Minsthorpe Community College | Motivation · Commitment · Care' and a small logo of a stylized plant or flower on the right.

Staff should also be **explicit** about **the way in which** students should complete tasks at **every stage** of the lesson. Students may work in the following ways during a lesson:

1. Silent, independent work;
2. Paired or group work;
3. Responding to questions;
4. Giving more detailed verbal inputs;
5. Actively listening to others.

At all times, the member of staff **must** be **explicit** about **how** the students should work and students are expected to follow these instructions. The under-lying principle, however, is that only one person in the classroom should speak at any one time and others are expected to listen.

## **Other classroom expectations**

To further aid members of staff to teach lessons with no disruptions and to support students in their cognitive processes, please ensure the following:

- Desks should be organised in rows so that all students are facing the front of the classroom;
- Music should **not** be played in the background during lessons;
- Students should **not** use headphones except for specific learning purposes and only as directed & monitored by the member of staff. P16 students may use headphones during private study periods;
- Classroom doors to remain open where possible;
- Individual teams to decide whether students line up before entering the classroom. This will be dependent on the size and layout of the block.
- Teachers are to regularly monitor the progress of students' work both within and out of the lesson. Where content is not understood, misconceptions are addressed, retaught and revisited so all students have the opportunity to retain knowledge and skills.

## **Section 1.4**

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### **Written Feedback**

The College recognises that marking should be seen as one type of feedback which informs students and teachers, creates positive student outcomes and drives future planning. The approach outlined below is based on research found in three key documents:

EEF Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning – Guidance Report 2021

DfE, *Reducing Teacher Workload: Marking Policy Review Group Report*, April 2016

EEF *Marking Review: A Marked Improvement?* April 2016

The underlying principle of written feedback must be to impact on student progress, not to satisfy other stakeholders. The College supports the statement 'mark less, but mark better' and agrees that 'all marking should be meaningful, manageable & motivating'. To facilitate this, every Curriculum Team has an agreed Assessment & Feedback Policy which explicitly provides an overview of Key Pieces of Work (KPOW) for each Year Group & how these should be marked with exemplars.

### **Marking with Impact:**

This section refers to the marking of written work, including work submitted electronically and practical projects.

- Students should be given written feedback on pieces of assessed writing using S followed by T and (where appropriate) A. Students should then be given time to Respond to these comments thereby improving their work e.g. correcting errors, redrafting work or answering specific question to consolidate/extend understanding.
- The teacher should ensure that students understand the feedback and it is good practice to provide a model or guidance as to how to respond effectively.
- Short, sharp, specific feedback with more detailed responses from students is most effective. It is important that students of all abilities are challenged by the target and that teachers have high expectations in terms of the reflection/response. Students must be pushed to achieve excellence in their written work and high standards of presentation should be modelled and expected.
- Teachers may decide to provide 'Whole Class Feedback' on work that is not an identified assessment. Whole Class Feedback should address common misconceptions and errors to prepare students for future assessments.

EEF research confirms the impact of feedback on disadvantaged students. Teachers must ensure all students, but particularly this vulnerable group, are supported to make progress by providing high quality, differentiated feedback and by targeting these students during response/reflection time.

- Students' responses to teacher feedback should be monitored by the teacher, however, we do not support 'double or triple marking'. Peer/self-assessment are advocated where appropriate.
- It may be appropriate to re-teach common misconceptions, errors or underdeveloped skills before asking students to respond to written feedback, in order to promote further progress.
- In line with Curriculum Area policy, teachers may choose to use self & peer assessment and verbal feedback to 'mark' assessments requiring short answers, however, students should still be given time to respond to this and to correct errors.
- In line with Curriculum Area policy, teachers will share a grade on identified assessed pieces only when appropriate.
- A teacher should use their professional judgement/discretion to decide the extent to which they provide written feedback on other class work. There is no strong evidence to suggest that acknowledgement marking (tick & flick) contributes to progress. Similarly, comments such as 'target met', 'verbal feedback given' do not impact on progress and need not be used.

### **Marking for Literacy:**

- It is not expected that teachers correct/identify every literacy error in every piece of written work.
- In line with the Curriculum Area policy, teachers should use the codes below to support the development of students' literacy skills. Some Curriculum Areas may have also adopted additional subject-specific codes.
- The codes should be used, where appropriate, to indicate to students where an error has been made, with further comments or corrections being added at the teacher's discretion under A (accuracy) at the end of a piece of work. Teachers are encouraged to mark for A (accuracy) across the curriculum to address common errors.



- Spelling errors should be corrected based on knowledge of the individual student. For example, by prioritising the most important area for that particular student to improve first, rather than highlighting every single error.
- Where appropriate, students should write out the correct spelling three times and/or show understanding of the word by writing it in a sentence.
- Teachers must insist on well-presented written work and should praise neat work, whilst targeting students to improve illegible/careless work.
- Work should start with a date & title and home learning should be clearly labelled by students.

Teachers should plan time for students to proofread and, if necessary, to redraft written work before marking (see Whole College Literacy Policy).

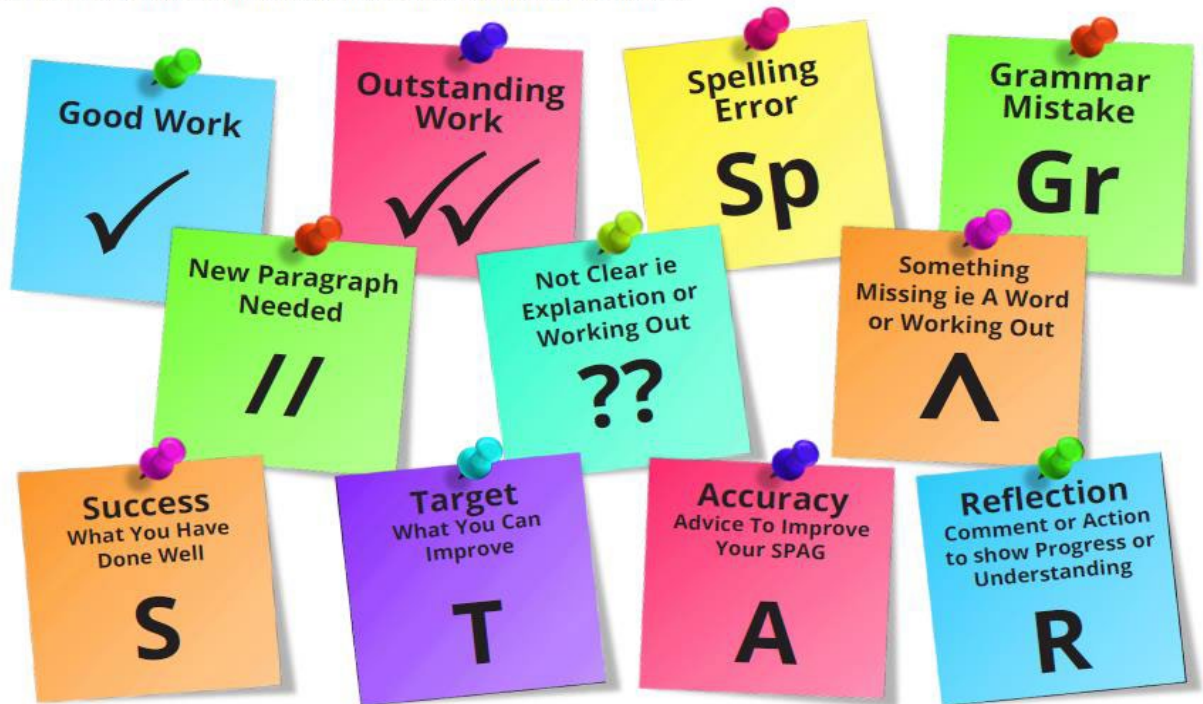
Marking Codes	
✓	Answer / section of work is at the expected level
✓✓	Answer / section of work is above expectations
Sp	Spelling error
Gr	Grammar mistake
//	New paragraph needed
??	Not clear, i.e. explanation or working out
^	Something missing, i.e. a word or a working out
S	Success – a subject specific comment at the end of a piece relating to positives in the work
T	Target – a subject specific comment at the end of a piece of work which suggests areas to be improved next time or a specific task/question to respond to
A	Accuracy – a literacy related comment, i.e. spelling, grammar, punctuation or presentation
R	Reflection/Response – students should either respond to a specific task/question or write a reflective comment about the strategies needed to improve

The marking codes are not an exhaustive list, but do represent the common codes found across Curriculum Areas.

Student friendly versions of the marking codes (to be referred to routinely in lessons).

# How Your Work Is Marked

Students who progress and achieve understand how their work is marked:



## Section 2

# Related Policies & Professional Development

## Section 2.1

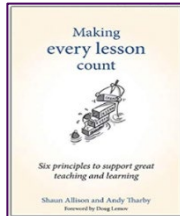
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### Related MCC policies: [Link for Policies](#)

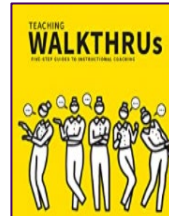
- Curriculum;
- Assessment & Feedback;
- Literacy & Numeracy;
- Home Learning;
- Good Practice Personalisation Guide;
- Whole College QA policy;
- Behaviour & Discipline Continuum.

## Professional Development:

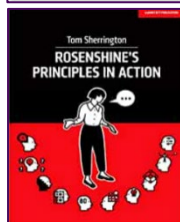
Our Core Principles of Quality Learning & Teaching are formed based on a wide range of experience and expertise within MCC, but equally through accessing well-regarded pedagogical texts. These are listed below:



Allison & Tharby, *Making Every Lesson Count*, Crown House Publishing Limited 2015



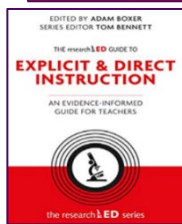
Sherrington & Caviglioli, *Teaching Walkthrus (Vol I & II)*, John Catt Educational Limited 2020/21



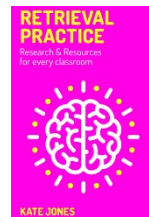
Sherrington, *Rosenhine's Principles in Action*, John Catt Educational Limited 2019



Bennett, *Running The Room*, John Catt Educational Limited 2020



Boxer, *The ResearchEd Guide to Explicit & Direct Instruction*, John Catt Education Limited 2019



Jones, *Retrieval Practice*, John Catt Educational Limited 2019

Our ongoing Professional Development & Learning programme is planned and structured to develop the knowledge and skills of teachers and student support staff around the Core Principles of Learning & Teaching whilst giving them a growing awareness of key elements from the texts listed above.

[MCC CPD Policy September 2022.docx](#)

Early Career Teachers will have full access to the Early Career Framework giving them enhanced professional development and mentoring during the formative stage of their career.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-career-framework>

## Final Section

# Equality Assessment

This policy has been assessed with regard to its impact on equalities issues, with specific reference to the aims of the Equality Act 2010. The equality impact assessment focused on race, gender, disability, pregnancy and maternity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and religion/belief.

## Policy Review Schedule

Policy last reviewed:	Due for next review:	Role Responsible:
January 2023	January 2024	Luke Ruston
January 2024	January 2024	Luke Ruston