

**Netherhall School**

*An Ambitious, Caring Community*



# Academic Standards Policy

**Adopted by Netherhall School Governing Body**

**On 20<sup>th</sup> August 2022**

Signed:  (Neil Watt, Chair of Governors)

**Date by which the procedure was last reviewed: August 2021**

**Anticipated review date: August 2023**

## **Equality Act 2010**

Our school is committed to equality both as an employer and a service provider. We welcome our general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. In addition, we recognise our specific duties to publish information every year about our school population; explain how we have due regard for equality; publish equality objectives which show how we plan to tackle particular inequalities and reduce or remove them.

We recognise our duty to ensure no-one experiences harassment, less favourable treatment or discrimination because of their age, any disability they may have, their ethnicity, colour or national origin, their gender identity or reassignment, their marital or civil partnership status, being pregnant or having recently had a baby, their religion or belief, their sexual identity and orientation.

We also welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion and British values.

The academic standards policy is the accumulated experience and wisdom from the school staff, students, parents / carers and educational experts of what constitutes effective communication, teaching and learning.

Below is a list and explanation of each key aspect, some are essential, and some are desirable, all are common sense. It is worth stating that students of all ability levels repeatedly and consistently cite all of the aspects in italics as the most effective teaching methods / tools / approaches used by teachers to support their learning.

#### **Essential:**

- **Never Heard the Word Grid:** an opportunity for students / teachers to add new words and definitions to improve their literacy, comprehension and understanding; this is most effective when the NHTWG grid is topic / unit specific and repeatedly referred to throughout the topic.
- **I Can:** specific guidelines for students to help improve the presentation, organisation and ultimately their understanding of their work.
- **Grade Tracker:** allows students to accurately record and track their assessment grades as they progress through the course, easily charting and referencing their progress and providing them with contextual feedback as to how well they are achieving and how well they are applying their effort.
- ***Students' green pen response to feedback:*** *this is the essential aspect of feedback, where students demonstrate their learning from feedback.*
- **Marking for literacy:** providing corrective formative feedback on the students' literacy (this is often combined with the students' green pen response to feedback).

#### **Desirable and highly effective:**

- **Glossary:** a list of subject / topic specific technical words and their definitions for reference by students to support their comprehension and understanding.
- ***Assessment / examination command words:*** *key words in assessment and examination questions that will enable students to accurately interpret, understand and answer the question(s).*
- **Spelling test:** topic vocabulary spelling tests that test and improve students' subject specific vocabulary.
- **Definition test:** testing students' knowledge of definitions that is accumulative and progressive, building the students' knowledge with each definitions test.
- ***Use of exemplar answers:*** *excellent resources that demonstrate to students exactly the structure and content of top-level answers.*
- ***Live modelling:*** *working in real-time with students to produce a top-level modelled answer.*
- ***Writing frameworks:*** *differentiated scaffolding for students to effectively structure and put the correct content into their answer.*

- **Challenge questions:** *a differentiated approach using extension / more challenging / harder questions for students that have made rapid progress in the lesson.*

All additional sheets of paper / assessment booklets /additional work done outside of the students' exercise books should be securely fastened into the exercise books or organised in their work folders so that they are neat, tidy and well organised, as in the essential I Can document (number 2 in the list of essentials).

Through the processes of work scrutiny and student voice, both the essentials and the desirables will be commented on, and constructive, supportive feedback will be provided for staff colleagues.

#### Vocational Department Academic Standards:

Netherhall School's vocational department has created its own expectations and tracking documents in relation to the overall expectations of the school's academic standards policy and in relation to the specific demands of the school's vocational subjects.

As with all other subjects, the essential aspects of the school's policies are required to be followed by all subjects within the vocational department, and the specifics of these are provided in the department's own academic standards policy, which takes account of the manner that work is submitted in these subjects. The wider list of the desirable and highly effective methods of teaching are also to be followed as often as possible, as they represent excellent standards of teaching and learning in the classroom for the benefit of all students.