ST ALBANS
EDUCATION GROUP

Teaching, Learning & Assessment

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A group of sector-leading Independent Schools

STAHS Policies

P06: TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT POLICY

Author/s:	Joanna Scott Mike Bryant	Date reviewed:	Trinity 2026
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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 3
2. TEACHING 3
3. CURRICULUM 3
4. LEARNING 4
5. ASSESSMENT, TRACKING AND REPORTING 4
6. HOMEWORK 5
7. MARKING AND FEEDBACK 6
8. EXAMINATIONS 6
9. ACADEMIC TRANSITION THROUGH THE SCHOOL 6

POLICY INFORMATION 8

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This policy supports STAHS's vision that the School will deliver a transformational experience which educates young people for lives of consequence, sets high expectations for our academically ambitious pupils, and provides an exceptional environment in which to work and study and make significant positive contributions to our local community and wider society. To ensure this is the case, STAHS has in place rigorous processes and systems to ensure high quality teaching, learning and assessment across the School.

1.2. STAHS is an academically ambitious school with high expectations of its pupils and staff with the aim of providing a platform for success beyond school for all pupils, aiming to ensure pupils can thrive no matter the pathway they choose. We help pupils to develop the knowledge, skills, and interests to make ambitious yet realistic and exciting choices about their futures as individuals. We are a community of learners who enjoy and benefit from academic rigour and intellectual challenge.

1.3. This document provides an oversight of all areas of teaching, learning and assessment at STAHS with further information included in each of the accompanying Related Documents, a list of which is provided at the end of this policy document. These are reviewed regularly as part of the policy review cycle to ensure they remain accurate and effective.

2. TEACHING

2.1. We value and pursue excellence in the classroom, selecting and developing teachers who are skilled in encouraging children to think critically and analytically, and who inspire a love of the subject and of learning. We use our Teaching and Learning Framework, a Related Document to the Performance Development Policy, to help steer teacher recruitment, scrutiny, and an active, ongoing culture of Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Our Performance Development framework ensures the development of teaching in line with Department and School objectives as well as individual personal development is at the core of how we operate.

2.2. The STAHS Competency Framework, outlined in the Related Document for the Performance Development Policy, outlines the expected behaviours and attributes for Teachers, Middle Leaders and Senior Leaders. Teachers self-assess and work with their line manager to identify strengths and areas for development. Further quality assurance of teaching and learning comes through ongoing and purposeful lesson observation, learning walks and work scrutiny carried out by Middle and Senior Leaders. Templates for these and further details can be found in the Performance Development Policy.

2.3. Our teachers value pupil motivation, confidence, ambition, and individuality and aim to stretch and challenge each and every pupil, and ready them to thrive in their life after their education at STAHS. Lessons are designed such that the educational needs of all are met, including those with SEND and EAL. Teaching at STAHS ensures not only that typical academic needs are met, but that an importance is placed on development of skills, knowledge and interests that provide pupils with opportunities to take their learning further. Teachers foster intellectual curiosity in our pupils and challenge them to be ambitious and adventurous.

3. CURRICULUM

3.1. We are working towards a curriculum that is inclusive, diverse, and comprehensive. It promotes the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and interests as an exciting platform for success for all children within and across STAHS. This includes experience and development in linguistic, mathematical,

scientific, technological, human, and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. It also seeks to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, experiences, and challenges of life beyond school, aligning with our Teach To 25 philosophy.

3.2. Whilst we are exempt from the Learning and Development Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework, at STAHS we use the important and inter-connected Prime and Specific Areas of learning to plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of each girl's needs, interests and stages of development.

3.3. Schemes of work for Year 1 to Year 13 are followed, which are set out in the Prep Schemes of Work and the Senior Department Schemes of Work. The curriculum also includes PSHE and RSE (where age appropriate), respect for Fundamental British Values, Computing/ICT, and access to impartial age-appropriate Careers and Higher Education information and advice. Some aspects of the wider curriculum are delivered in formal lessons, and this is complemented through delivery via tutor/form time, and in the Sixth Form also as part of the STAHS Diploma. In the Prep School, the curriculum is overseen by the Subject Coordinators at a subject level and the Deputy Head Academic. In the Senior School, the curriculum is overseen by Heads of Department, the Director of Studies and the Deputy Head Academic.

3.4. Pupils throughout STAHS are challenged through the curriculum and activities beyond the curriculum. This is most effectively demonstrated through outstanding teaching such that pupils experience day-to-day opportunities to take their knowledge and skills beyond the confines of a curriculum and exam syllabus. We provide pupils with structures and opportunities beyond the curriculum to be challenged academically, for example through entry to national academic competitions, our own internal academic House Events, the Prep School Future STAHS curriculum, the Senior School SuperCurriculum, the Year 7 Passport and the STAHS Diploma in the Sixth Form.

4. LEARNING

4.1. The purpose of the curriculum is to stimulate an enjoyment of learning by the pupils and to raise their levels of academic ambition. Learning progression through STAHS develops pupils' confidence and resilience and seeks to enhance their understanding of their own strengths and areas for development to make informed choices about their learning and futures. Subject and cohort curriculum maps and schemes of work summarise this progression.

4.2. All pupils throughout the School receive feedback and support. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), formal reports provide a comprehensive summary of each pupil's progress against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). These reports outline achievement across the seven areas of learning. In Years 1 to 6, formal reports outline achievement grades and, where appropriate, subject-specific targets. In Years 7 to 13 formal reports outline their approach to learning and their level of progress, through their Approach and Achievement scores. It is through reflection and response to this feedback that pupils make the most significant progress, which is facilitated through ongoing feedback in tutor/form time, lessons and as part of our Tracking systems.

5. ASSESSMENT, TRACKING AND REPORTING

5.1. Regular assessment, tracking and reporting is essential to help pupils understand, develop, and fulfil their academic potential. Successful teaching and learning is underpinned by the use of educational data in order to inform reflection, dialogue, planning and any necessary intervention. Pupil progress data is held in teacher mark books, centralised department, subject and/or year group tracking sheets, and through our whole School Management Information System. In the Senior School, Heads of Year work with the Assistant Head: Pastoral and Pupil Outcomes and the Deputy

Head Academic to monitor and respond to regularly collected data.

5.2. Pupils are assessed and given feedback in an ongoing nature in all lessons, through questioning and receiving regular verbal feedback, alongside homework and formal internal and external assessments. Reception pupils complete an internal baseline assessment on entry. All Prep pupils undertake GL Progress Tests in English (PTE) and Maths (PTM). CAT4 assessments are administered in Years 3 to 6. In the Senior School, pupils undertake MidYIS and ALIS assessments. The School utilises these assessments to ensure the amount of pupil progress being made is well understood, and feedback and intervention can see all pupils thrive.

5.3. There is an ongoing dialogue with pupils through the form teacher/tutor, the pastoral team, Heads of Year, teachers, and parents. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on their work in lessons, and on their general progress, at regular intervals throughout the year.

5.4. We engage with parents regularly formally through our robust reporting schedule, which sees each year group receiving frequent feedback from the teachers. This is typically on approach to learning and their progress and includes written reports and Parents' Consultations/Evenings. The achievement and progress of pupils of all abilities, learning needs, and protected characteristics (as defined by the UK Equality Act 2010) will be monitored and reviewed as far as reasonably possible, to support the fulfilment of potential.

6. HOMEWORK

6.1. Completing and reflecting upon homework is essential to making good academic progress, to intellectual enrichment, and to the development of personal organisation. Pupil progress is driven via the provision of formative feedback by teachers and its follow up and implementation by pupils.

6.2. All pupils at STAHS are set homework appropriate to their age and stage, designed primarily to consolidate and reinforce learning from the classroom. Homework may also include age-appropriate enrichment activities and opportunities to extend learning.

6.3. In the Prep School, all pupils are expected to read daily. Homework is predominantly paper-based, with selected online platforms, including Mathletics, Numbots, Times Tables Rock Stars and Century Tech, used where appropriate to support and reinforce learning. The quantity of homework increases as pupils progress through the Prep, and it diversifies to include French from Year 4.

6.4. Pupils at the Senior School are set homework across all subjects following the quantity and duration guidelines which vary by subject and year group. KS3 pupils are typically set homework tasks of no more than 20 minutes per subject. At A Level the length and frequency of homework is at the discretion of the subject teacher, while pupils are also expected to undertake independent work in study periods and at home, recognising the key importance of independent study in academic success.

6.5. Homework may take a variety of formats including written, research based or consolidation. Feedback on homework includes written, verbal, peer and self-assessment feedback as appropriate. Where written feedback is provided, teachers will typically give some time for pupils to read and react to that feedback in the next appropriate lesson.

7. MARKING AND FEEDBACK

7.1. Pupils' work is regularly reviewed, assessed and feedback provided. It is recognised that high quality feedback, understood and acted upon by pupils, is a key factor in learning. Feedback is

recognised as an ongoing process throughout lessons with feedback provided formally in writing as well as informally in response to, for example, verbal contributions.

7.2. Feedback may take a variety of forms, including written, verbal, whole class, peer and self assessment. Teachers and departments evaluate the work that is set and the method of feedback provided to ensure that it allows pupils to make progress. Feedback is provided on both written work and verbal answers in class.

8. EXAMINATIONS

8.1. All pupils sit baseline assessments as they move through the Senior School, providing important information about pupils' comparative developed ability. All pupils in the Prep School and Senior School also sit annual assessments in each year group, which provides comparative, standardised summative data about their learning.

8.2. Standardised assessments are completed throughout both the Prep and Senior Schools. In the Prep School, pupils in Reception to Year 5 complete standardised English and Mathematics assessments in the Trinity Term, while Year 6 pupils complete standardised English and Mathematics assessments in the Michaelmas Term. From Year 7 to Year 10, and Year 12, pupils complete standardised, summative end of year assessments in April, May and/or June. Year 11 and Year 13 sit mock examinations mainly in January before sitting their public examinations in May and June. In the Senior School, several subjects have Non-Examination Assessments (NEAs) forming part of their public examination outcomes which require careful adherence to the national guidelines. There is also the A Level sciences practical endorsement which is included on results certificates but does not contribute to the grade achieve

8.3. Due consideration is given throughout for those pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), many of whom have needs that require specific access arrangements to be made.

8.4. As part of the Annual Review, Heads of Department in the Senior School analyse public examination results to inform and update their Development Plans.

9. ACADEMIC TRANSITION THROUGH THE SCHOOL

9.1. STAHS is a proud through-school. It is hoped and expected that all pupils undertake successful and enjoyable journeys through STAHS. They should leave the school both with the academic qualifications to have a choice about their futures, and the skills to thrive where they choose to go. Where educational evidence indicates that positive educational outcomes are at risk of not being reached, meaningful intervention in partnership with pupils, parents and staff should be utilised to help the pupil to succeed.

9.2. The School may decide to alter a pupil's programme of study before or during a course of study. This is at the School's discretion and would normally be the result of a significant academic, pastoral, medical or special educational need.

9.3. The School may decide to alter pupils' classes or teaching groups. This most often takes place when moving from one year group to the next, for example from Year 8 into Year 9. This decision would be made by the School for educational reasons. Pupil, parent or teacher preference is not an acceptable reason to change classes or teaching groups of a pupil, and the school will not make changes at the request of individuals.

9.4. Academic thresholds are explained in the Related Document, outlining our expectations of pupils

moving between each stage. In the interest of integrity, clarity, and transparency, we will engage openly with families and pupils when there is evidence that any child may no longer be able to thrive within the STAHS community. Pupils are admitted to the School on the basis that they will be able to enjoy our educational opportunities and meet our high academic expectations. All decisions and interventions made in relation to transition will be made in line with our related document on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and with due regard to the Equality Act 2010.

POLICY INFORMATION

Policy and related documents	
Document title	**Availability**
P06: Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy	Website, Portals
06 RD Academic Transitions Through the School	Portals
06 RD Assessment, Tracking and Reporting	Portals
06 RD Challenge for All	Portals
06 RD Curriculum	Website, Portals
06 RD English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Website, Portals
06 RD Examinations	Portals
06 RD Homework	Portals
06 RD Marking and Feedback	Portals
06 RD Remote Learning	Website, Portals
06 RD Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	Website, Portals
08 RD Teaching and Learning Framework	STAHS internal document
08 RD STAHS Staff Competencies	STAHS internal document

Policies and related documents as indicated are available on request from info@stahs.org.uk.
St Albans High School for Girls, 1-3 Townsend Avenue, St Albans AL1 3SJ. Tel: 01727 853 800

This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.