

BOLDON SCHOOL

LEARNING TO LEARN POLICY

The acquisition of study skills is one part of the process through which pupils learn. If the teaching of these skills is carefully planned and developed, it will play a vital part in helping all pupils to maximise their academic achievements in every subject area.

It is important that pupils understand how they learn and recall information. The skills required to learn effectively will benefit them for the rest of their lives.

There are specialist study skills, which are the responsibility of the subject specialist; these will incorporate the principals of investigation which form the foundation of a particular discipline.

There are also general study skills, which require a shared approach from the pastoral care teams and the subject departments.

Roles in the teaching of general study skills

General study skills will be taught in pastoral lessons, demonstrating clearly one way in which positive pastoral care can underpin and enhance academic achievement.

1. Role of the Head of Department

To identify clearly in schemes of work and in department handbooks, those general study skills, which are appropriately developed within their subject together with specific study skills development and departmental use of library.

2. Role of Co ordinator of Learning to Learn

- (i) The coordinator has produced a package of work for each year group on study skills. Each year group has an individual booklet as well as teacher's notes to help deliver the package, in pastoral time.
- (ii) The coordinator has also produced a booklet called 'Preparing for exams at GCSE' for Year 11 pupils and parents. This again will be covered in pastoral lessons.
- (iii) The coordinator has for 2004/2005 produced 2 booklets:
 - Learning to Learn at Key Stage 3
 - Learning to Learn at Key Stage 4 teacher/pupil guides.
- (iv) It is hoped to develop the work done with Year 11, to include a day on study skills at a local hotel with outside speakers.
- (v) To review the teaching of study skills in pastoral lessons through end of year feedback and make any appropriate changes to the course.

3. **Role of Director of Learning**

- (i) Plan, monitor and review the teaching of study skills within their year group and report back to the coordinator at the end of the year.
- (ii) Ensure tutors within their year team have the resources and notes to deliver the study skills work (Pupil booklets/teachers notes).

4. **Mr G Curry**

Mr G Curry is available if required by Heads of Year to deliver a study skills lesson to their year group.

5. **Role of Teacher Librarian**

Mrs Smith will introduce Year 7 pupils to the library, preparing them to use the library for study. These skills will be reinforced in Years 8, 9, and 10 with specific emphasis placed on skills needed for SATS preparation in Year 9, and GCSE in Year 10.

This will take place during pastoral lessons.

The Purpose

Study skills will be taught in order to enable pupils to:

1. Understand how they learn and recall information.
2. Become competent and in control of their learning.
3. Progress from simple to more complex methods for effective studying.
4. Cope comfortably and confidently with the role of student.
5. Enhance academic progress and achievement.

Monitoring

1. The individual tutor monitoring/evaluation sheets will indicate which aspects of general study skills have been taught to each tutorial group within the school.
2. These sheets will be reviewed each term by the Director of Learning.

All Directors of Learning will report on the teaching of study skills in their year group at the annual pastoral programme meeting.

Teachers must not fall into the trap of assuming that their students know how to study; study techniques are sophisticated skills and will only be learned through a carefully planned and structured programme.

Appendix 1 to study skills policy

General Study Skills

Literacy is at the basis of all other skills. To be successful, a pupil must be able to understand and communicate using the spoken and written word.

The main general study skills are:

1. Planning and Organisation

Skills = time management and setting priorities. Some important issues are (i) the use of study timetables, (ii) the effects of the physical environment for doing homework and revising.

2. Memory Training

Memory games and understanding techniques like the WORK, TEST & REST technique can help develop skill in learning and recall.

3. Listening

A skill which staff sometimes assume is 'natural' but which will be developed by practice and the use of simple techniques to encourage active listening.

4. Making effective use of people and resources

Use of group learning with friends.
Using parents and contacts in the community.
Knowledge of available resources, including IT.
Use of school and public library.
Questioning sources.
Teachers.

5. Understanding individual preferences in study methods and integrating them into a productive learning style

Research has shown that there is no one single successful formula for learning; a variety of techniques exist, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. Students need to be made aware of the variety of styles available and be encouraged to develop one that best suits their learning habits. It is essential for all teachers to recognise and appreciate the need for differentiation in this area.

6. Taking notes/noting it down

The main skills:

- (i) Listening for:
 - a) signs from the speaker as to what is important
 - b) key facts/ideas.
- (ii) Asking questions for clarification.

- (iii) Organising notes
 - list making
 - logical outlines
 - reworking
- (iv) Writing down notes - distinguishing between the important and the peripheral
 - numbering; indenting; classifying; key facts; symbols; concept trees.

7. Essay Writing

The main skills should include:

- (i) Defining the task so you know what you are being asked to do.
- (ii) Using resources
 - People, notes, libraries, quotations, newspapers, reading around the topic.....
- (iii) Skeleton outline
 - a) Preparing an introduction.
 - b) Main body containing key ideas presented logically and developed with supporting arguments.
 - c) Conclusion.
- (iv) Redrafting - not just proof reading; students should be encouraged to re-structure if necessary.
- (v) Some departments may wish to encourage the use of appendices, e.g. bibliography.

8. Managing worries

Initially, students need to be able to identify symptoms of stress; worries about doing exams, tests, falling behind in classwork, not understanding a topic or concept. Pupils need help to:

- (i) Know how to manage stress.
- (ii) Know how to be assertive.
- (iii) Use others for support.
- (iv) Develop organisation.
- (v) Learn to prioritise.
- (vi) Keep a balance between study and other activities.

9. Presentation of work

Pupils need to be introduced to a range of techniques appropriate for presenting a variety of types of work.

10. Evaluation of work

Pupils should be encouraged to evaluate their own work as an on-going basis as well as at the end of assignments, projects etc. This enables them to identify strengths and weaknesses, problems and their solutions. Improvements then become an integral part of the learning process rather than something 'bolted on' at the end.

11. Reading for learning

Some key skills are:

- (i) Clarity of purpose - is the book vital or just background reading? This determines the reading technique.
- (ii) Practise the mechanics of reading - increasing the speed of reading by phrase reading, avoiding vocalisation.
- (iii) How to skim read and search for key facts; use of contents and index pages; recognise the difference between skimming and scanning.
- (iv) Use of databases.
- (v) Effective note taking (see no. 6).

12. Observing, sorting and extracting

13. Project work - linked to 1, 4, 6, 9, 11.

14. Collecting, classifying and analysing data

15. Preparing for examinations

Key skill areas are:

- (i) How to manage stress.
- (ii) Revision techniques - organising a revision timetable, re-working notes, using memory games to aid recall, checking syllabi, re-organising notes and making logical links, possibility of using study groups, writing summaries and outlines.

16. Taking examinations

Key skill areas:

- (i) Understanding the rubric - which questions are compulsory, how many questions have to be answered, being clear about sections, knowing mark weightings.
- (ii) Answering questions - practising under exam. conditions; familiarity with different types of questions and answers - short answers, multiple choice, open book.

17. Maintaining motivation

Key skills are:

- (i) The importance of clear objectives - knowing why you are doing something.
- (ii) Knowing how to reward yourself - small incentives built into the study programmes.
- (iii) Understanding how a person learns - learning theory tells us that we need regular breaks, so three hours solid work can lead to a feeling of demotivation.
- (iv) Knowing your primary learning style and using it to make study activities more rewarding.

Appendix 2.

Audit Form for General Learning to Learn

To be completed using information in Appendix 1 of study skills policy.

DEPARTMENT

General study skills to be covered in the 200.... - 200.... academic year.

Please place subject code in appropriate box and small ^o if the skill is not taught to the whole year group.

| Number in Appendix 1 | AREAS | Yr 7 | Yr 8 | Yr 9 | Yr 10 | Yr 11 | |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|----|
| 1 | Planning and Organisation | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | Memory Training | | | | | | 2 |
| 3 | Listening | | | | | | 3 |
| 4 | Making effective use of people & resources | | | | | | 4 |
| 5 | Understanding individual preferences in study methods and integrating them into a productive learning style | | | | | | 5 |
| 6 | Taking notes/noting it down | | | | | | 6 |
| 7 | Essay writing | | | | | | 7 |
| 8 | Managing worries | | | | | | 8 |
| 9 | Presentation of work | | | | | | 9 |
| 10 | Evaluation of work | | | | | | 10 |
| 11 | Reading for learning | | | | | | 11 |
| 12 | Observing, sorting & extracting | | | | | | 12 |
| 13 | Project work | | | | | | 13 |
| 14 | Collecting, classifying & analysing data | | | | | | 14 |
| 15 | Preparing for examinations | | | | | | 15 |
| 16 | Taking examinations | | | | | | 16 |
| 17 | Maintaining motivation | | | | | | 17 |