Woodlands

Respect ***Resilience*** ***Responsibility***

Teaching and Learning Policy

Date: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The teaching and learning strategy at Woodlands is designed to rapidly improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to secure a consistently high provision in every classroom.
- To make rapid improvements in the rates of progress for students.
- Maximise the attainment of all students in relation to their KS2 starting points and individual needs, with a specific focus on disadvantaged and SEND students.

The whole school teaching and learning strategies are underpinned by our criteria: The Woodlands Way. The elements of the criteria are what teachers are expected to demonstrate in their classrooms effectively and consistently. The criteria is underpinned by evidence based pedagogy and is intended to be a standard of teaching that is achievable and sustainable without contributing to unnecessary workload for staff. It is our intention that all relevant elements of the criteria should be evident in every taught lesson as opposed to this being an aspirational threshold for staff. The Woodlands Way drives the tracking and monitoring of lesson quality and is the focus when analysing teaching and learning. The Woodlands CPD programme is designed to support colleagues in being the most effective practitioners in all aspects of the criteria.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors:

- It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to establish a policy and procedure for teaching and learning and to monitor the effects of the procedure.

SLT (In particular the AHT responsible for teaching and learning):

- To provide appropriate support, training and resources for departments and individuals through the CPD plan for 2025-26
- To monitor and evaluate the delivery and impact of the policy through teaching and learning review days, curriculum reviews and subject leaders' monitoring
- To modify and update the policy in the light of ongoing developments and the changing needs of the school.

Curriculum Leaders and Subject Teams:

- To be responsible for the coordination of long, medium and short term planning of schemes of work taking into consideration the aims and objectives of the policy.
- To monitor and evaluate consistent delivery of the policy at team level.
- To provide targeted support to team members by delivering and evaluating the impact of department CPD.

Teaching staff:

- To implement this policy by ensuring a consistent delivery of high quality learning experiences.
- To engage in CPD opportunities in order to improve personal practice and learning opportunities in the classroom.
- To be responsible for short term planning in line with whole school expectations.

All staff:

- To be aware of the principles of the policy and how they can contribute to it.

Students:

- To work positively within lessons to enable staff to implement the policy effectively.
- To extend the learning experience outside the classroom by ensuring completion of the learning tasks set as homework.

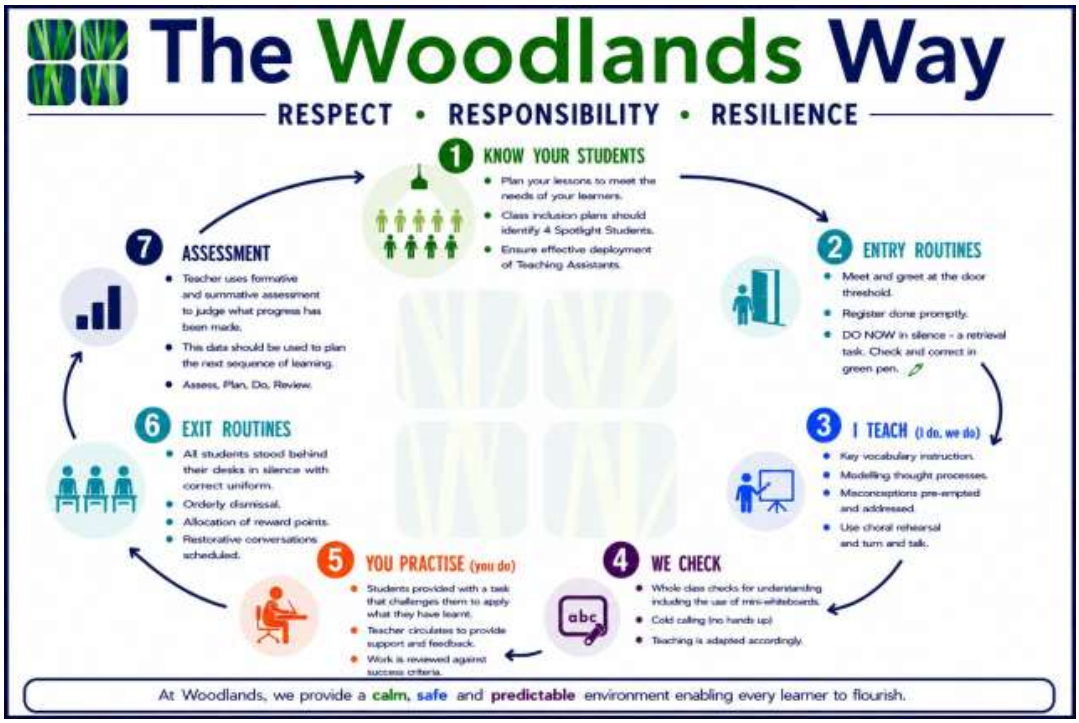
Those with parental responsibility:

- To support the policy of the school, in line with the Home-School Agreement, by providing support for students at home, allowing them to continue to develop their learning effectively

The Woodlands Way

The Woodlands Way underpins absolutely everything practitioners do in the classroom. The elements of the criteria are what observers will look for during learning walks and lesson drop-ins and will also inform leverage targets and CPD training. These principles are based on the Rosenshine Principles of Instruction, Willingham Cognitive Load Theory and evidence-based models relating to adaptive teaching and instruction and support our goal in improving students' long-term learning of key disciplinary and procedural knowledge. The criteria seeks to ensure that students secure cumulatively sufficient knowledge across all subjects through a robust focus on knowledge retrieval, clear and precise teacher instruction and highly skilled assessment.

By ensuring that the elements of The Woodlands Way are covered in every lesson, the quality of teaching and learning will be consistently embedded, robustly monitored, teachers supported and clarity and consistency guaranteed in terms of accountability. This will provide every opportunity for pupils to make good progress through rich, challenging and creative learning experiences. <u>The Woodlands Way is shown below</u>



These elements are intended to be used as guidance by teachers and observers rather than an exhaustive list or 'tick box' list.

In order to ensure that key practices and protocols for teaching and learning are clear to all staff, the teaching and learning handbook is provided to all teachers and relevant support staff.

Behaviour for learning

At Woodlands, we believe that excellent behaviour is the foundation for effective teaching and learning. It is the responsibility of all teachers to ensure they are familiar with the Behaviour for Learning Policy at Woodlands and ensure that our 'three Rs' (Appendix 2) are embedded within the ethos every day and in every lesson.

Lesson Planning

High quality planning underpins the foundation for high quality teaching and learning. We recognise the importance of students making good progress over time at Woodlands. It is crucial that lessons build on prior learning and that lessons are reflected upon and evaluated in order to maximise opportunities in future lessons. Planning should be completed prior to the start of every school day. Staff should be seeking support from Lead Practitioners to develop strategies to plan for the needs of all learners. Possible considerations for lesson reflections include:

- Students absent from the lesson
- Students that needed additional support
- Students that needed an extension activity
- Pastoral issues to investigate

For each lesson a clear learning objective should be evident; this should be explained to students and contextualised within the learning journey. There is no set format for learning objectives. These can be written in the traditional format of "To explore…" or "To develop…" or as a hinge question for learners. What should be consistent across all lessons however, is the need for these to be shared with learners.

We also expect that lesson success is measurable through a clear and relevant criteria. Shared with pupils, either at the start of the lesson, or prior to independent practice within the lesson.

Lessons should be based on the programme of learning outlined in schemes of work, but thoughtful consideration should be made to adapting pedagogical strategies to suit the learning needs of all students in the class in order to maximise progress for all learners. Whilst there should be parity across classes regarding curriculum topic/content, there should be clear adaptations made to ensure students are appropriately supported and challenged in relation to starting points. The curriculum and supporting resources within departments should be regarded as the starting point from which lesson planning is developed.

Do Now

All lessons at Woodlands are expected to start with a retrieval based activity. This activity, known as the 'Do Now' is required to be completed in silence, without support from the teacher and is designed to allow students the opportunity to practise the recall of key knowledge. It is crucial that the Do Now is knowledge driven and not task driven; Do Nows should challenge learners to recall prior learning from the short, medium or longer term in line with the departmental retrieval map. In support of our commitment to

improve students' vocabulary, all Do Now tasks will also include reference to specifically chosen key vocabulary relevant to the lesson. Teachers should explicitly refer to this before starting the lesson.

Cover lessons

For planned absence, teachers should ensure that a fully resourced lesson with lesson plan is attached. It is the expectation that cover supervisors or covering teachers should be able to deliver a lesson to support pupils' learning and therefore detailed instructions with sufficient resources are crucial in supporting this. There should not be work left that requires 'new learning' or a reliance on resources/knowledge directly from the previous lesson. Work set should take into consideration that the lesson is likely to be delivered by a non-specialist and so should be fully resourced and accessible.

The whole staff pro-forma for planned absence cover work (Appendix 4) should be used and displayed on the teacher's desk, alongside the relevant lesson resources and class portfolio. It expected that alongside the lesson plan and resource material, a Do Now activity is prepared in order to ensure that cover lessons do not disrupt embedded classroom routines. Prior to planned absence, class teachers are also expected to ensure their seating plan is up to date on class charts.

Marking

We recognise the importance of high-quality marking as way of maximising students' progress. Our full expectations for assessment can be located in the Woodlands marking policy but our key principles are:

- Teachers should provide written feedback with guidance for improvement in line with the department assessment policy.
- Key assessment pieces (as indicated on schemes of work) should be marked in line with department policies.
- Opportunities for student response to feedback should be built into teaching cycles. Student reflections should always be written in green pen in line with the school assessment policy.
- Opportunities for students to redraft and improve extended written pieces based on teacher feedback should be built into teaching cycles.
- It is expected that literacy errors are identified using the school literacy marking codes (shown here)

Tracking and Monitoring Teaching and Learning

The primary purpose of observation should not be to judge the quality of teachers, but to find the most effective ways to coach them to improve pupil learning. The purpose of lesson drop-ins conducted by middle leaders is to secure an ongoing understanding of the standard of teaching and learning against 'The Woodlands Way' within their department and to use this information to plan subsequent CPD opportunities for teachers within their team.

In order to maintain an accurate picture of the implementation of The Woodlands Way, regular Temperature Checks are undertaken by Subject Leaders and ELT. These are short, strategic classroom visits, typically lasting 5–10 minutes, and are used to identify patterns in teaching and learning across departments and the school. They are not individual developmental observations and do not result in individual teacher feedback.

Temperature Checks focus on identified elements of The Woodlands Way, with the focus changing throughout the year in response to school priorities and professional development. 'We Check' (checking for understanding), remains a consistent focus, alongside areas such as knowing students and meeting their needs, routines and expectations, explanation and modelling, adaptation and support, and purposeful independent practice.

Evidence, collected by ELT, is recorded centrally using a Google Form, with implementation recorded as fully evident, partially evident or not evident. This information is used to build a whole-school and departmental picture of implementation, identify strengths and areas for further development, and inform subsequent CPD and leadership actions. Temperature Check evidence should be considered alongside other evidence, including pupil voice, work scrutiny and assessment information, rather than being used as a standalone judgement of an individual teacher.

Alongside Temperature Checks, every teacher participates in a Developmental Drop-in once per half term, led by their Instructional Coach. This is a longer, developmental visit focused on an agreed area of practice and is followed by coaching, rehearsal and deliberate practice. Developmental work is recorded through StepLab, enabling teachers and coaches to revisit practice and evaluate improvement over time.

Where monitoring identifies a wider pattern or area for development, this will inform whole-school or departmental CPD. Where an individual colleague would benefit from additional support, this should normally be addressed through the developmental coaching process, with a precise focus, opportunities for rehearsal and subsequent review. The purpose is to support sustained improvement in classroom practice, rather than to make judgements based on a single classroom visit.

The Google Form data will be regularly analysed by the teaching and learning team to ensure that we have the most up to date picture of the quality of teaching and learning at all times. In cases where colleagues have elements of The Woodlands Way identified as 'not met' there should be an immediate follow-up learning walk to focus specifically on the area identified. If the trend of this not meeting expectations continues then coaching with a member of the teaching and learning team will be deployed. Informal coaching is offered for half a term to provide colleagues with robust support in the area identified as requiring additional support. Should, after coaching or robust department based CPD the improvements

are not made, the colleague will join the formal coaching scale as outlined in the teaching and learning escalation chart

	Temperature Check A short, strategic check-in	Developmental Drop In A supportive, developmental visit
Who does it?	Regularly done by Subject Leaders and ELT.	Conducted by the teacher's Instructional Coach (often, but not always, their Subject Leader).
How often?	Regularly throughout the year.	Once per half term for each teacher.
Length of visit	5–10 minutes.	20–25 minutes.
Purpose	To understand teaching, curriculum implementation and CPD needs across the school.	Focused on professional development and improving practice.
Feedback	Not a developmental observation so no individual feedback.	Followed by coaching, rehearsal and deliberate practice.
Recorded on	Your subject Google Sheet.	Steplab Recorded on StepLab.
Focus	Whole-school and departmental picture.	Individual teacher development.

Monitoring Activity	Frequency	Person(s) responsible	Description of activity
ELT Temperature Checks	Roughly 3 per week per ELT member	ELT	Short 5–10 minute visits used to build a whole-school picture of the implementation of The Woodlands Way. Each fortnight has three agreed whole-school focus areas, with We Check remaining a consistent focus and the other two changing according to the monitoring schedule. Findings are recorded centrally through a Google Form, enabling patterns, strengths and areas for development to be identified across the school.
Subject Leader Temperature Checks	Roughly 3 per week per Subject Leader	Subject Leaders	Short 5–10 minute departmental visits used to build an ongoing picture of teaching and learning within each subject. Subject Leaders record open comments on their department monitoring spreadsheet, rather than making Fully/Partially/Not Evident judgements. Evidence is used to identify departmental strengths, patterns and areas for development and forms the basis of teaching and learning discussions during line management.
Pupil Voice and Book Sampling	Ongoing as part of Temperature Checks	ELT and Subject Leaders	Pupil voice and samples of students' work are used alongside classroom visits to provide evidence of both the implementation and impact of The Woodlands Way. These can be completed during a Temperature Check and should include consideration of key groups, including SEND and disadvantaged students.
Subject Leader T&L Evaluation during Line Management	Fortnightly	Subject Leaders and SLT line managers	Teaching and learning is a standing item within fortnightly line management. Subject Leaders use their department monitoring spreadsheet, including evidence from Temperature Checks, pupil voice and book sampling, to evaluate the current picture of teaching and learning within the department. Strengths, patterns and areas for development are identified and appropriate actions agreed.
Developmental Drop-ins / Instructional Coaching	Once per teacher, per half term	Instructional Coaches	Each teacher receives a 20–25 minute developmental drop-in focused on an agreed area of practice. This is followed by a precise piece of feedback and coaching, rehearsal and deliberate practice. These visits are separate from Temperature Checks and are designed to support individual professional development.
Analysis of Whole-School Teaching & Learning	Fortnightly	AHT responsible for Teaching & Learning	The AHT for Teaching & Learning analyses evidence from ELT Temperature Checks and the whole-school Google Form to maintain an up-to-date picture of the implementation of The Woodlands Way. Analysis identifies whole-school strengths, variation and emerging priorities and is used to inform leadership actions, CPD and future monitoring.
Senior Leadership Teaching & Learning Evaluation	Half-termly	AHT responsible for Teaching & Learning	The AHT for Teaching & Learning provides a half-termly summary to Governors regarding teaching and learning and a termly update against relevant priorities within the School Development Plan. This draws on the range of monitoring evidence collected across the school.
Department Review Days	Yearly	SLT and external verifiers	SLT work alongside external verifiers to evaluate teaching and learning in relation to agreed School Development Plan priorities. Evidence may include classroom visits, pupil voice, work sampling and discussions with leaders and staff, providing an additional external perspective on the school's evaluation of teaching and learning.

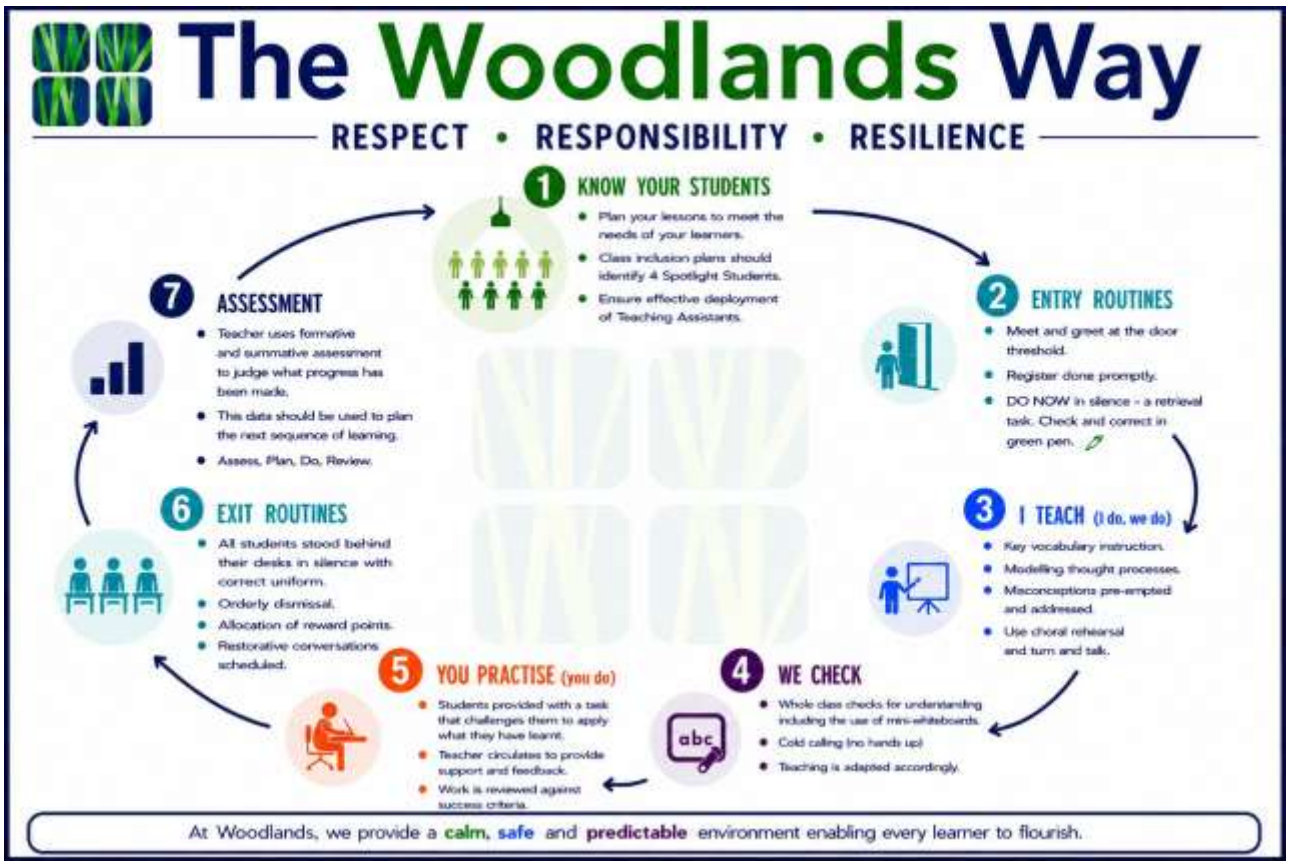
Appendix 1

The Woodlands Teaching & Learning Handbook

The Woodlands Way

The Woodlands Way is the expected day-to-day standard of teaching and learning across the school. The Woodlands Way is based upon the 'Rosenshine Principles of Instruction' and research-based pedagogical approaches, with our aim being to secure cumulatively sufficient knowledge for all students in all subjects through precise instruction, rigorous questioning and targeted assessment and intervention.

The Woodlands Way is shown below.



The Woodlands Way and CPD

Our whole school CPD sessions are tailored to launch and embed teaching and learning approaches rooted in The Woodlands Way.

CPD takes place at the following times

Week A	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Headteacher's Morning Briefing	ECT Meetings	SLT T&L Champions	Department meetings	

Week B	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Headteacher's Morning Briefing	Subject Leaders/Year Leaders	ELT	Whole School CPD	

Lead Practitioners

Lead Practitioners form part of the extended leadership team and are responsible for providing CPD for staff with an aim to support all colleagues in consistently meeting The Woodlands Way. The lead practitioners are:

- Olwen Roberts
- Debbie Penney
- Emma Rex

Lead Practitioners will also hold integral coaching and mentoring roles, supporting colleagues over specified periods of time informally or more formally.

Debbie Penney is the Lead Practitioner in charge of CPD, INSET and Professional Learning.
Olwen Roberts in the Lead Practitioner in charge of overseeing the ECT induction tutor.

Temperature Checks

Temperature Checks are short, regular visits used to build an ongoing picture of the implementation of The Woodlands Way. They are not individual lesson observations and are separate from the developmental drop-in and instructional coaching process.
ELT members conduct three Temperature Checks each week. Each fortnight, there are three agreed whole-school focus areas drawn from The Woodlands Way. We Check – checking for understanding – remains a consistent focus each fortnight, reflecting the importance of teachers knowing what all students understand and adapting teaching accordingly. The other two areas change throughout the term in line with whole-school priorities.
ELT findings are recorded through a central Google Form, enabling the Teaching & Learning team to analyse patterns across the school and identify strengths and areas for further development. Findings are used to inform whole-school CPD, leadership actions and future monitoring priorities.

Subject Leaders also conduct Temperature Checks each week within their departments. These are recorded on the department monitoring spreadsheet using open. The purpose is to enable Subject Leaders to develop an informed picture of teaching and learning across their department. This evidence is discussed as part of the standing Teaching & Learning agenda during fortnightly line management meetings, where strengths, patterns and appropriate next steps are identified.

Pupil voice and book sampling complement Temperature Checks and may be undertaken by ELT and Subject Leaders during the same visit. This provides additional evidence about the implementation and

impact of The Woodlands Way, including the experiences and progress of key groups such as SEND and disadvantaged students.

Developmental Drop-ins

Temperature Checks are distinct from Developmental Drop-ins, which focus on the professional development of individual teachers. Each teacher receives one 20–25 minute Developmental Drop-in per half term, led by their Instructional Coach and focused on an agreed area of practice.

Developmental Drop-ins are followed by one precise piece of feedback, with opportunities for coaching, rehearsal and deliberate practice. The purpose is to support teachers to develop and refine their classroom practice over time rather than to make an overall judgement about the quality of an individual lesson.

Evidence from whole-school Temperature Checks may be used to identify common priorities for CPD and professional development, while individual Developmental Drop-ins support teachers to work on their own identified areas of practice. This ensures a clear distinction between monitoring implementation at whole-school and departmental level and supporting individual teacher development.

	Temperature Check A short, strategic check-in	Developmental Drop In A supportive, developmental visit
Who does it?	Regularly done by Subject Leaders and ELT.	Conducted by the teacher's Instructional Coach (often, but not always, their Subject Leader).
How often?	Regularly throughout the year.	Once per half term for each teacher.
Length of visit	5–10 minutes.	20–25 minutes.
Purpose	To understand teaching, curriculum implementation and CPD needs across the school.	Focused on professional development and improving practice.
Feedback	Not a developmental observation so no individual feedback.	Followed by coaching, rehearsal and deliberate practice.
Recorded on	Your subject Google Sheet.	Steplab Recorded on StepLab.
Focus	Whole-school and departmental picture.	Individual teacher development.

Curriculum Reviews

All subjects will have a curriculum review during the academic year, within which, members from ELT will meet with the subject leader and members of the department to review the curriculum plan and implementation. The schedule for the review comprises of:

- 1:1 and small group meetings
- A book sample and discussion
- A learning walk

At the end of the subject review day, key action steps will be provided to be embedded within the subject development plan.

T&L Tracking

All ELT Temperature Checks are recorded using the centralised Google Form against the three agreed whole-school focus areas for that fortnight. This enables the AHT responsible for Teaching & Learning to analyse findings regularly and maintain an up-to-date picture of the implementation of The Woodlands Way across the school.

Subject Leader Temperature Checks are recorded separately on departmental monitoring spreadsheets using open comments. These provide Subject Leaders with an ongoing picture of teaching and learning within their departments and are used to inform evaluation and discussion during fortnightly line management meetings.

Temperature Check information is used to identify patterns, strengths and areas for development, rather than to make judgements about individual teachers based on a single visit. Where patterns indicate a departmental area for development, Subject Leaders may respond through department-led CPD, modelling, sharing effective practice or other appropriate support. Whole-school patterns identified through ELT Temperature Checks are used to inform whole-school CPD, Teaching & Learning priorities and future monitoring.

Individual teacher development is tracked separately through Developmental Drop-ins and instructional coaching, with feedback and agreed development priorities recorded through StepLab.

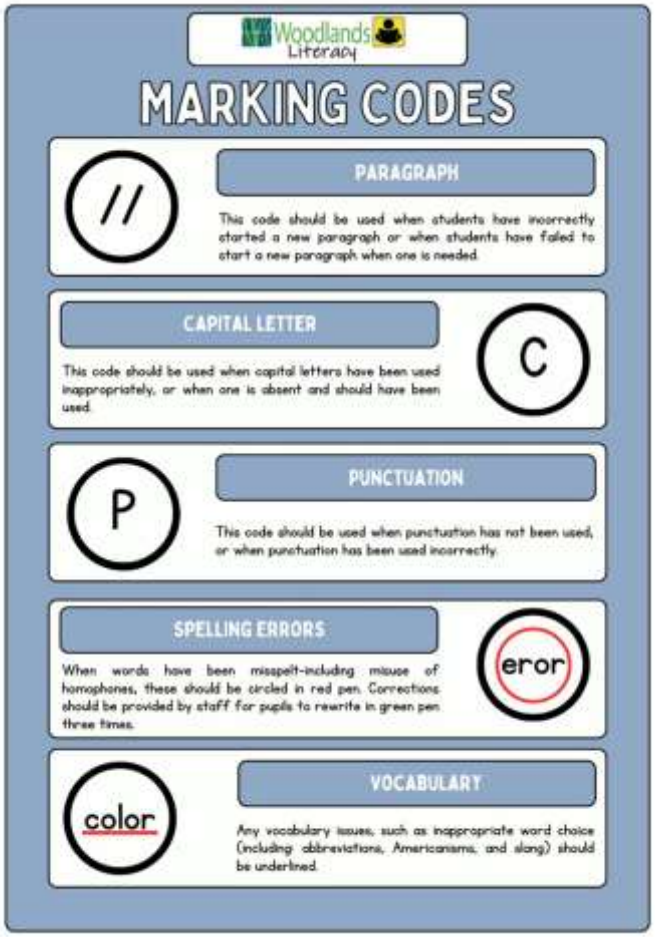
Teaching and Learning Escalation Chart

In cases where colleagues are repeatedly identified as not meeting the Woodlands Way, structured support will be implemented in line with our escalation chart. The aim of this is to rapidly improve the colleague's practice in order to secure our aim of being consistent in all areas of The Woodlands Way. The flow chart outlines the escalation process for improving underperformance in teaching and learning.

Marking

All departments at Woodlands have a specific marking policy outlining the expectations for teacher feedback to pupils. These department policies have been written in line with the whole school marking and assessment policy.

Alongside marking for subject specific content, we also expect all teachers to uphold our high expectations of written communication and therefore expect the literacy marking codes to be used when marking key pieces of work:



Woodlands Work Proud

In order to ensure our high expectations of students' presentation of work is consistent, we ask that the work proud statement is displayed in all student exercise books in subjects where there is written content. Teachers are expected to monitor presentation standards when marking student books.

Appendix 2

Positive behaviour for learning at Woodlands means that we show 'respect', 'resilience' and 'responsibility' at all times.



To show 'respect' we…

- listen actively and follow instructions first time
- respect other peoples' right to learn in a safe environment
- switch off all electronic devices including mobile phones whilst on school site

To show 'resilience' we…

- participate actively in all class tasks, offering ideas and answers
- persevere and have high expectations of our progress
- embrace challenges positively

To show 'responsibility' we…

- arrive on time
- start the lesson quickly with our planner on the desk
- come equipped including planner, homework and dear book

Appendix 4

COVER LESSON PLAN

COVER LESSON PLAN	
Date: **Year/Teaching group:**	**Learning Objective**
Resources Needed: • • • •	
Learning Activities: **THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COVERING!** ☺	
Teacher's notes:	
Cover Teacher: _____ **Comments:**	