

21st March 2025

Dear Families,

At Great Academy Ashton, we are committed to providing the highest quality teaching and learning experiences for our students. To ensure every student reaches their full potential, we have developed a structured approach to lessons that supports focus, participation, and achievement.

Every lesson has a 'Strong Start', with students being greeted at the door, and students begin the 'Do Now' in silence. This ensures a calm start to our lessons. The 'Do Now' will include an activity where the pupils retrieve knowledge from their prior learning (from the previous lesson, the previous week or even further back). This helps them to 'stick' their new knowledge onto what they already know, so that they are more likely to remember it in the long term.

During the lesson, the teacher will make use of several of our four Learning Modes: Silent Independent Study, Respectful Whole Class, Quiet Partners or Polite Table Groups, depending on the activities taking place in the lesson. The teacher chooses the most suitable mode for an activity and make any change in mode clear to students: by doing this, we can ensure that students know exactly what is expected of them. Teachers might choose Respectful Whole Class, for example when they need all students focused on them and silent as they explain, model an activity or ask questions as we know that research into the science of learning shows that attention to the material is the first step in committing information to memory. Most recently, we have been developing the use of Quiet Partners with students as part of our focus on oracy and oracy as a bridge to writing, with pupils communicating clearly to one another in pairs, in a structured way.

Towards the end of the lesson, there will be a 'Reflect' activity, where students reflect on their learning. Some lessons might include an 'exit ticket' for example, as a check for understanding to inform the teacher of what students know at the end of the lesson, and they can plan for the next lesson with this in mind. Before students leave the lesson, they make sure they are ready to move calmly and purposefully towards the next lesson by engaging in the 'Finish Now', a routine where students calmly and quietly pack equipment away and stand behind chairs in silence, ready to be dismissed. We have found that these routines help to create consistency and predictability for students: this way, they are ready to learn.

We have been working to make sure students understand why and how activities take place in lesson, and how they are chosen to best aid their learning, so we invite you to support your child's learning by asking them about the structure of their lessons and the learning modes. Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,

Louise Keeton
Assistant Principal (Teaching and Learning)