



Quality teaching

'Educational effectiveness for all students is crucially dependent on the provision of quality teaching by competent teachers who are equipped with effective, evidence-based teaching strategies that work, and are supported by capacity-building towards the maintenance of high teaching standards via strategic professional development at all levels of schooling' (Rowe, 2006).

This principle informs the practices and strategies that schools will use to develop a common repertoire of practices that will successfully engage and challenge Junior Secondary students. This principle also recognises the importance of school leaders in creating distinct Junior Secondary teaching teams that work collaboratively to share and build pedagogical knowledge and professional practice. Junior Secondary school teachers need both the generic qualities associated with effective teaching and the specific attributes relevant to teaching adolescents.

Why is it important?

Dinham and Rowe (2008) state that the 'quality of teaching and learning provision, supported by teaching standards and ongoing teacher professional development focused on evidence-based practices are demonstrably' the most effective in predictors in maximising students' learning outcomes and achievement progress. Adolescence is a distinct, significant and unique period of life characterised by the physical and sexual changes of puberty, and psychosocial and cognitive changes. Not surprisingly much of the literature on adolescence and transition reports a negative impact on student outcomes with a decline in academic achievement and engagement. Successful teaching practices that respond to the needs of young adolescents 'along with a strong and positive student teacher relationship, will allow young adolescent learners to develop their independence within a supportive environment where it is safe to take a risk and learn from mistakes' (Giles, 2012).

Key messages

Effective Junior Secondary teachers need to demonstrate their ability to engage and support students of that age, connecting with the reality of their world and experiences.

Young adolescent learners need teachers who care enough about them to have high expectations and have strategies to help students meet those expectations.

Junior Secondary teachers need both the generic qualities associated with effective teaching and the specific attributes relevant to teaching adolescents. These skills include:

- The ability to develop and promote a Junior Secondary identity
- Reflect an understanding of the needs and concerns of adolescent learners within their curriculum design and delivery
- Develop positive relationships with young adolescents, their families and the community
- Work collaboratively within a learning community to plan curriculum, share professional expertise and address student welfare concerns.

Examples of practice

- Identify staff to undertake Junior Secondary leadership positions
- The school has in place a professional development program that is responsive to the needs of Junior Secondary teachers
- Engage teachers in the visioning and planning of the Junior Secondary model to build their knowledge and understanding of Junior Secondary
- The Junior Secondary curriculum and pedagogy supports the school's common language of learning, an understanding of how adolescents learn, common strategies to promote thinking skills and some common habits and expectations for learning
- Pedagogy drives the curriculum structure
- School structures and practices provide Junior Secondary teachers with opportunities beyond non-contact time for regular professional dialogue around improving pedagogy and assessment practices.

Dinham, S. a. R. K., 2008. Fantasy, Fashion and Fact : Middle Schools, Middle Schooling. *Teaching and Learning and Leadership at ACEReSearch*, Giles, P. W., 2012. Middle Schooling and Quality Teaching: The Students' perspective. *Australian Journal of Middle Schooling*, 12(1), pp. 23-29.

Rowe, D. &, 2003. *Centre on Education Policy US Department of Education*, s.l.: La Trice Hill.

Rowe, K., 2006. "Effective teaching practices for students with and without learning difficulties.: *ACEReSearch*.