



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

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Policy Author:	Jane Straw – Head of Education
Ratified by:	Alfred Foglio – Chair of the Board of Directors

The purpose of the plan is to:

- This Policy sets out the principles and expectations behind our approach,
- Which is underpinned by the Teachers' Standards, and in doing so provides new and existing staff with a clear vision of the School's expectations, providing an agreed focus for monitoring.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any employee or applicant and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Table of Contents

Section	Content	Page
1	Introduction	3
2	Aims	3
3	Key features of the Teaching and Learning Policy	3
4	The 6 Pedagogical Principles	5
5	Challenge	6
6	Explanation	6
7	Modelling	6
8	Practice	7
9	Feedback	7
10	Questioning	7
11	Other factors to consider	7
12	References, resources, further reading	8

1. Introduction

It is our goal to nurture independent and agile learners who have the skills to be successful in an increasingly globalised and rapidly changing world. To achieve this, we must equip pupils to be critical and reflective learners in their own right by 'learning how to learn'. Pupils need to be engaged in their own learning, be part of the creation of their 'next steps' and have the opportunity to assess their own work and that of their peers in a meaningful and useful manner.

2. Aims

This policy promotes best practice and establishes consistency in Teaching and Learning across the whole School. It is our aim to motivate all of our pupils to have high aspirations, to want to do their personal best and to have the desire to be successful in and out of school. To prepare our pupils for a rapidly changing world, we need to create a stimulating and successful learning environment in order to nurture flexible, driven and creative learners.

This Policy sets out the principles and expectations behind our approach, which is underpinned by the Teachers' Standards, and in doing so provides new and existing staff with a clear vision of the School's expectations, providing an agreed focus for monitoring.

There are two sources that have informed the Teaching and Learning Policy. The first is *Making Every Lesson Count* by Allison and Tharby (2015). This distils teaching and learning into 6 core principles explained in more detail below and is based on robust evidence and practical wisdom. The second source is Rosenshine's *Principles of Instruction* (2012). Again, based on research from cognitive science, the classroom practice of master teachers, and cognitive scaffolds to help teach complex concepts, this is an evidence-informed approach to teaching.

This Policy also provides further references and reading in the last section and should be read alongside the supporting resources provided.

3. Key Features of the Teaching and Learning Policy

3.1 Mastery

More traditional teaching methods assign a set amount of time for coverage of certain topics. However, over the past decade, theory has made a notable move away from teaching to a time constraint, to varying the time to ensure that pupils are confident and proficient in the outcomes and objectives before moving on to new content. To summarise, there is a far greater emphasis upon depth of understanding rather than a thin breadth of understanding.

The Mastery approach considers the critical links that pupils must make in their learning and that without certain concepts and processes true understanding is not possible. It would be unrealistic to think that a pupil could understand division without a deep understanding of multiplication. If the bedrock of understanding is not secure, any additional content or learning will not be either.

Mastery is less effective if prior high attaining pupils are accelerated through the curriculum, without embedding understanding and concepts. Stretch and challenge are, instead, achieved through deep questioning, both by the teacher and by the pupil, and a demand for greater precision. In the same way, support is provided through strategies, such as varied and multiple representations. The Mastery approach is built upon the belief that all pupils can reach a desired outcome with the right support and depth of understanding.

The mastery-learning approach means that our pupils will be able to:

- ✓ Have multiple paths to learn deeply in the ways that work best for them,
- ✓ Demonstrate their mastery in ways that are engaging and meaningful,
- ✓ Move at their pace so that they can find their balance of challenge and time needed to learn.



3.2 Curriculum design

A detailed, structured curriculum is mapped out across all phases, ensuring continuity and supporting transition. Fundamental skills and knowledge are secured first.

Ofsted have reviewed the Inspection Framework with curriculum at the heart of the inspection. This includes:

- ✓ Losing 'outcomes' as a standalone judgement

- ✓ A 'quality of education' judgement to include curriculum alongside teaching, learning and assessment.
 - Intent: what is the School's offer for pupils?
 - Implementation: how is teaching and assessment fulfilling the intent?
 - Impact: the results and wider outcomes children achieve and their future pathways
- ✓ Personal Development judgement split into:
 - A behaviour and attitudes judgement
 - A personal development judgement

3.3 Lesson Design

The starting point of lesson planning is skilled practitioners. This is knowledge of the:

- ✓ Subject matter.
- ✓ Individual pupil, and their prior learning.
- ✓ Class group dynamics.
- ✓ School and community context, and
- ✓ Evidence of what works within these contexts.

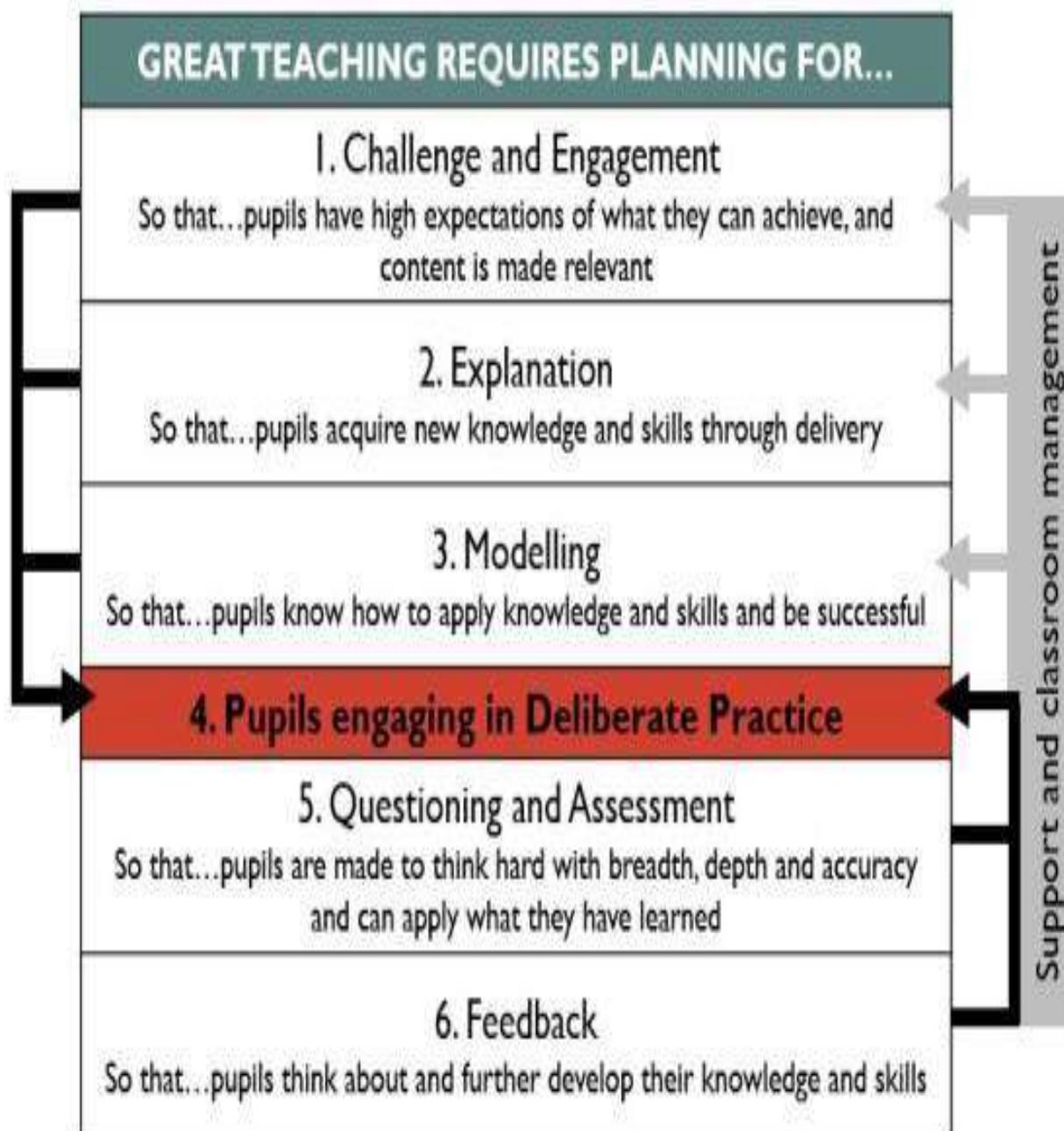
3.4 Differentiation and inclusivity

Differentiation occurs in the support and intervention provided to different pupils, not in the topics taught, particularly at earlier stages. There is no differentiation in content taught, but the questioning and scaffolding individual pupils receive in class as they work through problems will differ, with higher attaining pupils challenged through more demanding problems which deepen their knowledge of the same content. Pupils' difficulties and misconceptions are identified through immediate formative assessment and addressed with rapid intervention. This is an inclusive approach to individual learners' needs, ensuring language, questioning, concepts and ultimately learning is accessible to all.

Explicit learning is important in the journey towards fluency and embedding. All tasks are chosen and sequenced carefully. Both individual work, group work and learning outside of the classroom, helps to develop deep and sustainable knowledge and transferable skills.

4. The 6 Pedagogical Principles

The Teaching and Learning Policy is encapsulated by the following diagram, (Allison and Tharby 2015). Teachers are clear that their role is to teach in a precise way which makes it possible for all pupils to engage successfully with tasks at the expected level of challenge:



These 6 principles are key to effective teaching but by its very nature, teaching is a creative profession so there is no prescribed formula for the way they are implemented in the classroom. When dealing with varied subjects it is about how these principles are best implemented to present subject and lesson specific concepts in the most effective way to pupils.

5. Challenge

With the mastery learning model, rather than prejudging potential outcomes and stifling expectations by setting a host of differentiated learning objectives based on prior attainment, our practice is to identify a single challenging learning objective and then introduce scaffolding and progressive steps for each individual pupil to support their achievement of the objective.

- ✓ What do they struggle with?
- ✓ What switches them off?
- ✓ How much and what type of support do they respond well to?

All pupils may have different starting points but should aspire to the learning objective and a teacher is responsive in helping them to work towards, for example:

- ✓ Focused questioning.
- ✓ Adult/ peer help with starting their sentences.
- ✓ Some may need to do a draft.
- ✓ Some will need apparatus to help.
- ✓ Some will reach the objective and need to be challenged further.

6. Explanation

Three key principles should guide explanations:

- ✓ How to link to and build on something already known.
- ✓ Begin each lesson with a short review of previous learning.
- ✓ Allow for the limitations of the working memory when asking pupils to take on board new information, giving instructions, asking them to sort key bits of information etc.
- ✓ Present new information in small steps with pupil practice after each step.
- ✓ Where possible try to make the abstract concrete – think about and plan, how to make abstract ideas make sense.
- ✓ Drawing diagrams; demonstrations in science; sharing and discussing images; taking the learning outside etc.
- ✓ Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks.
- ✓ Direct explicit instruction.

7. **Modelling**

Explain the key ideas, then model how to do it / what to do with it.

- ✓ Model the creation of products/procedures. For example: write an essay, *show* them how to do it. Write it out on the board and discuss how/why you are doing each step as you go. Question them on what is being done. Explain, out loud, thought processes. If mistakes are made, point them out.
- ✓ Deconstruct expert examples and use worked examples – have an excellent finished example and share it, identifying why it is good.

8. **Practice**

During the lesson and over a series of lessons, plan in time for pupils to practice using new knowledge and skills.

- ✓ Practice for fluency and long-term retention – repeating things in order to master them; revisiting in subsequent lessons etc.
- ✓ Allowing pupils to make connections and see patterns.

9. **Questioning**

Some questions can be planned for, but some should be responsive to what is happening in the lesson. When considering planned questions, they should be to:

- ✓ Check for understanding – i.e. hinge questions that pupils should be able to answer at a certain point in the lesson, before they move on.
- ✓ Ask a large number of questions and check the responses of all pupils.
- ✓ Check for understanding.
- ✓ Provoke deeper thinking.
- ✓ Increase the ratio of participation and thinking of all pupils.

10. **Feedback**

Plan in how feedback during/after lessons is given. For feedback to be meaningful, pupils should respond to the feedback. Feedback is a two-way process, and the teacher should use the pupils' feedback to inform future planning.

11. **Other factors to consider**

11.1 Role of the Environment

The School and the classroom environment are key in underpinning and supporting the 6 core principles. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs puts the learner first, with the

responsibility of ensuring the learner's needs are met. This can be physical; the physical environment of the school and classroom setting, social and emotional needs in relation to an individuals' needs and starting point, and the teachers' role in socially competency. Working walls and displays should evolve and be celebrated as the learning journey develops.

11.2 Role of parent/carers

Parents/carers have particular insights about the strengths, skills, interests, preferences, aspirations, anxieties and difficulties of their children. Accordingly, the importance of meaningful communications and co-operation between the School and the pupils' parents/carers cannot be overstated and is a key contribution to learning. This communication is an important part of developing understanding of individual needs as well as praising pupils in line with School rewards policies.

12. References, resources and further reading

Allison. S & Tharby. T (2015) *'Making Every Lesson Count: Six principles to support great teaching and learning'*

Rosenshine. B (2010) *'10 Principles of Instruction'*