

# **St Paul's High School**

## **Learning & Teaching**

### **Strategy**

**(incorporating**

## **Assessment, Homework**

**and Feedback)**



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## St. Paul's High School, Bessbrook.

### Learning and Teaching Strategy

*“High-quality teaching and learning are the most important factor in improving attainment outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.”*

**Education Endowment Foundation (2022)**

#### Principles

Learning & Teaching is the core business of St Paul's High School. Excellent learning and teaching are a key priority and is underpinned by our school vision and values, whereby we are committed to ensuring we have the highest expectations of, and aspirations for, every child in our school. We continually strive to offer exceptional learning experiences in a caring and nurturing environment, where success is celebrated, underperformance is challenged, and pupils are encouraged to reach their best potential.

In the last ETI inspection report it stated:

*“The quality of learning & teaching observed during the inspection was a strong feature of the work of the school. Most of the lessons were effective (good or better) in promoting the learning, with three-fifths evaluated as high effective (very good or outstanding).”*

*Report of Inspection in January 2016*

#### Aims and Objectives

St. Paul's High School is a community of people living together with the core purpose of ensuring a high-quality learning and teaching experience for all pupils.

St. Paul's aims and objectives for learning & teaching are reflected in the key indicators from Every School a Good School (ESAGS) and Transform Ed:

- To provide a broad and relevant curriculum for our pupils, including the Entitlement Framework for pupils at KS4 & KS5.
- To have an emphasis on literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.
- To develop positive relationships between teachers and pupils and other school-based staff.

- To improve learning by using adaptable, flexible teaching strategies that respond to the diversity within the classroom. See Appendix 7 for further information on the Adaptive Teacher.
- To use assessment and other data effectively to inform learning and teaching across the school to promote improvement.
- To promote rigorous self-evaluation by teachers and the whole school, using objective data leading to sustained self-improvement.
- To encourage teachers to reflect on their own work and the outcomes of individual pupils.
- To benchmark and reflect on educational outcomes using effective target setting and comparative data.

**This policy sets out our school's expectations for classroom practice and the responsibilities of pupils, parents, and teachers in contributing to an outstanding learning environment.**

#### **Roles and responsibilities:**

##### **Pupils**

#### **The role of each pupil is to:**

- Arrive to school each day in full uniform and be punctual to each lesson.
- Display a willingness to learn through active co-operation and participation.
- Follow the schools Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Believe in themselves to achieve both inside and outside the classroom.
- Use their pupil planner as required.
- Be confident in seeking help.
- Meet deadlines by submitting work within the agreed timeframe.

##### **Responsibility of the parent/guardian and carers**

*For the purposes of this document the guardian or carer for the child will be referred to as the 'parent'.*

#### **Parents should:**

- Ensure their child attends school well rested and prepared, punctual and in full uniform.
- Ensure the school is kept up to date with contact details or any change in circumstances that might affect their child's learning.
- Inform the school on the first day of a child's absence.
- Ensure where possible that planned absence does not clash with the normal school day (medical appointments or holidays).
- Monitor their child's use of the pupil planner and sign it weekly.
- Review subject materials regularly including exercise books.
- Discuss with their child how their learning experience can be enhanced at home without distractions.
- Show an interest in their child's school life both inside and outside the classroom.

### **Subject Teachers**

**It is the responsibility of each subject teacher, in line with individual departmental policies, to:**

- Have an expert knowledge of their subject specialism.
- Create a stimulating learning environment by displaying relevant material including pupils' work.
- Ensure effective planning for high quality lessons, utilising a variety of teaching methods while promoting pupil interaction, dialogue and creativity.
- Adapt lesson plans to the individual needs of the pupils using a variety of available/background data e.g. SEN Statements, PLPs, PTM/PTE and other diagnostic data and other relevant qualitative data that may be available from various stakeholders.
- Promote excellent behaviour in the classroom in line with 'Promoting Positive Behaviour' policy.
- Reinforce high expectations, rewarding good effort and celebrating achievement with various methods; praise, note in Pupil Planner, SIMS achievement module, display of work, social media, etc.
- Make regular assessments of learning and recording achievement on SIMS Assessment Manager for tracking purposes. Monitoring progress and using assessment data to inform planning.
- Report to parents by a personalised statement of results, an annual parent/teacher meeting and a written report once a year.
- Self-evaluate using agreed protocols such as PRSD, peer observations, professional dialogue, and other teacher professional learning (TPL) opportunities.

## **Responsibility of the Head of Department**

**It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to:**

- Be the lead specialist teacher in their department and to model best practice in their subject.
- Ensure effective planning, delivery, assessment, and review of the curriculum provision within their department.
- Promote collegiality, collaboration, sharing of best practice and professional dialogue through regular meetings and shared responsibility for action planning and implementation.
- Carry out departmental self-evaluation to monitor and review learning and teaching within the department using agreed strategies such as peer observations etc.
- Analyse and interpret pupil performance data against agreed targets and comparative data.
- Set targets at individual, group and departmental level with agreed action plans to secure achievement.
- Support Early Career Teachers and people who may not have a specialism in the subject area to ensure high standard are maintained.
- Collaborate with department members to draw up learning and teaching targets in departmental development plans in line with school development planning and evaluate progress.
- Liaise with their SLT link to communicate best practice, achievement, action planning and concerns.

## **Responsibility of the Strategic Leadership Team**

**The Strategic Leadership Team is responsible for the implementation of the L&T policy at whole-school level.**

**It is the responsibility of the Strategic Leadership Team to:**

- Provide appropriate resources, staffing and accommodation for an effective learning environment.
- Encourage dialogue among all staff to engage with TPL opportunities to improve practice.
- Facilitate and resource various learning communities within school and with staff of partner schools to share best practice to improve learning and teaching.
- Organise systematic monitoring and evaluation processes to identify best practice and areas of concern.
- Provide appropriate internal and external Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) opportunities to address the needs identified from both formal and informal reviews (e.g. Lesson observation)

## Quality Learning & Teaching Team

### Vision & Aims of the QUILT team

*Our vision is to foster an inclusive and dynamic learning environment where educators and pupils thrive. We are committed to excellence in teaching, continuous improvement, and innovative practices that inspire lifelong learning. This team aims to empower by cultivating a culture of collaboration, respect, and integrity, we aim to empower every individual to reach their best potential and contribute meaningfully to our community and society.*

**The QUILT team lead the realisation of this vision.** The team is responsible for advising the SLT on implementing whole-school improvement objectives linked to teaching and learning.

The QUILT team is led by the Senior Teacher in charge of Teaching & Learning. The whole team will focus on the implementation of the Four-Phase Model (Tweak to Transform, Mike Hughes). Details of the model can be found in appendix 6. The team also has various sub-groups.

Review of Assessment, Summative Assessment & Teaching Resources	Assessment for Learning (Learning intentions, success criteria etc)
Preparing guidance for departments e.g. departmental handbook Review of policies	Feedback (Effective Feedback & supporting departments with producing a feedback policy)

The QUILT team assists the SLT in the quality assurance role in supporting effective learning and teaching in St Paul's.

## **Assessment Policy**

*“The real goal of classroom assessment is to improve student performance, not merely audit it.”*

### **Sousa and Tomlinsin**

#### **Rationale**

Assessment strategies should be concerned with the whole child. The process of assessment should enable us as teachers to make decisions about the education of the pupils in St Paul’s High School as we chart their progress and achievements, and it should also assist us in the diagnosis and identification of barriers to learning.

As part of the N.I. Curriculum children are entitled to have their achievement recognised and used to shape their future learning, thus ensuring progression and continuity. Effective assessment strategies enable this to happen. Assessment should be formative as well as summative and must point the way forward in the child’s learning process as well as recording the point reached in any given area of the curriculum.

#### **Aims**

In our assessment process we aim to gather information which enables us as teachers:

- to identify individual strengths and areas for improvement.
- to provide reliable information to parents and colleagues about the progress and development of each child.
- to evaluate our teaching effectiveness and inform planning for future teaching and learning experiences.
- to evaluate and record each child’s attainments and progress.
- to match work to the needs of individual pupils.
- to compare individual levels of attainment and progress with that of the wider school population.
- to compare the school’s level of attainment and progress with that of similar schools.

## As a school we recognise

- the importance of continuously examining our methods of assessment, our assessment programme and the use we make of our assessments.
- the importance of involving pupils in the process of self-assessment.
- that there are 4 pillars of assessment; **Purpose, Validity, Reliability** and **Value** and we use these pillars to gauge the effectiveness of our assessment procedures. These pillars provide a framework for designing and implementing effective and meaningful assessments.

## Marking

The purposes of marking are:

- to monitor the progress of the pupils.
- to determine the standard of knowledge and understanding of the pupils.
- to assess mastery of skills.
- to award a grade/mark/comment corresponding to the standard of work.
- to correct inaccuracies in the work.
- to comment on the presentational skills of the work.
- to encourage improvement.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Pupils

The role of each pupil is to:

- Participate fully in class and prepare effectively for all assessments.
- Act on feedback provided by teachers after assessment.
- Set targets for each subject and strive towards achieving these –re evaluating them on a regular basis.
- Use assessment results to assist in making subject choices and career decisions.

## **Responsibility of the parent/guardian and carers**

*For the purposes of this document the guardian or carer for the child will be referred to as the 'parent'.*

### **Parents should:**

- Use the SIMS Parent App to stay informed about outcomes of their child's assessments.
- Help and support their child to plan and prepare for both internal and external examinations.

## **Subject Teachers**

**It is the responsibility of each subject teacher, in line with individual departmental policy, to:**

- Mark work regularly and contribute to how grades/ marks/ comments are standardised and attributed in line with departmental policy.
- Use a variety of assessment methods that demonstrate purpose, validity, reliability and value.
- Provide feedback to students which indicates next learning steps.
- Ensure marking of work emphasises and supports high standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar in all areas of the curriculum and demonstrates the application of the schools Literacy Code.
- Keep a record of all marks/grades given for assessed pieces of work.
- To record an assessment result on SIMS at planned times of year.
- To celebrate the success of pupils in assessments.

## **Responsibility of the Head of Departments**

**It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to:**

- Ensure a consistent approach to formal assessment throughout the department.
- Use assessment data to monitor and analyse outcomes and inform future planning.
- Moderate assessments to ensure consistency across the department.
- Report to SLT on assessment results and findings.

### **Responsibility of the Head of Year**

**It is the responsibility of the Head of Year to:**

- To use data from assessments to target underachievement and to liaise with parents with regards to this.
- To liaise with parents when concerns arise regarding pupil progress.
- To proof-read and evaluate summative assessment comments in annual reports.
- To supervise internal examinations.

### **Responsibility of the Strategic Leadership Team**

**The Strategic Leadership Team is responsible for the implementation of the Assessment policy at whole-school level.**

**It is the responsibility of the Strategic Leadership Team to:**

- Provide appropriate training on Assessment.
- Support staff in the implementation of the Assessment policy.
- Liaise with Subject Leaders to create and share an assessment timeline for the Year ahead.
- Comply with statutory requirements regarding the recording and reporting of pupil progress.
- Promote the use and effectiveness of tracking student progress.

## Types of Assessment

### Assessment for Learning

As a school, we are committed to the principle of 'assessment for learning' as well as acknowledging the need for assessment of learning for the purposes of grading and reporting. Assessment, which is explicitly designed to promote learning, is the single most powerful tool we have for both raising standards and empowering lifelong learners.

All assignments/assessments should be set in relation to clearly defined and explained learning intentions & success criteria.

**Formative Assessment:** Formative assessment should be an ongoing process to inform both teaching and learning, enabling students to learn more effectively. It is a continuous process that happens throughout a pupil's learning journey and can take the form of effective questioning, quizzes, observation of pupils, mini whiteboard activities, etc.

It can also take the form of more formalised classwork/homework where a piece of work should stretch, challenge and differentiate amongst pupils and marked by the teacher with constructive comments e.g. modelling/scaffolding responses/ two stars and a wish. Work can also be marked in less detail, using a variety of approaches such as; Peer assessment, Self-assessment, Whole class feedback, Teacher marking related to success criteria with ticks and/or brief comments.

### Formal Assessments (FAs)

Formal assessments are a tool to measure and track the progress of students in Key Stage 3. It is recommended that Formal Assessments are a **Summative Assessment**, but there is flexibility to allow Subject Leaders to decide the most appropriate assessment for their subject. Summative assessments should display a mark to monitor progress and provide pupils with meaningful feedback where appropriate.

There are three Formal Assessment windows throughout the school year. The results of all three assessments are to be recorded on Assessment Manager.

Formal Assessment	FA1	FA2	FA3
Date	November	March	June

A Statement of results will be issued to parents in Year 8 and 10 after FA1 and FA2 with a summative report being issued after FA3. In Year 9, a Statement of Results will be issued to parents after FA2 and FA3 with a summative report being issued after FA1.

### Grade Determining Examinations (GDEs)

Grade Determining Examinations are a tool to measure and track progress of students in Key Stage 4 and 5. It is recommended that Grade Determining Examinations are a summative assessment, but there is flexibility to allow Subject Leaders to decide the most appropriate assessment for their subject. There are at least three Grade Determining Examination windows throughout the school year, and the results of all GDE assessments are to be recorded on Assessment Manager.

GDE	GDE 1	GDE 2	GDE 3	GDE 4
Date	Year 11 - 14	Year 12 & 14	Year 12 & 14	Year 12 & 14
	October	December (Hall setting)	February	April
		Year 11 & 13 January	Year 11 & 13 April (Hall setting)	

A Statement of results will be issued to parents of Year 11 students after GDE 1 and GDE 2. A summative report will be issued after GDE 3.

A Statement of results will be issued to parents of Year 12 and 14 students after GDE 1, GDE 3 and GDE 4. A summative report will be issued after GDE 2.

A Statement of results will be issued to parents of Year 13 students after GDE 1 and GDE 2. A summative report will be issued after GDE 3.

*Flexibility will exist in the above schedule of Formal Assessments and Grade Determining Examinations to reflect the changing school calendar from year to year.*

### **Diagnostic Assessments**

Diagnostic Assessments, e.g. CAT 4, PTE, PTMs etc are carried out periodically in St Paul's High School

- To assist in individual and departmental target setting:
- To indicate the precise nature of difficulties students are experiencing
- To provide target interventions for under achieving students

### **External examinations**

Pupils will sit a range of Level 2/GCSE examinations during Key Stage 4. Students who undertake modular courses will sit examinations throughout Y11 & Y12. Internal Assessment in the form of Coursework, Portfolio work and Controlled Assessment Tasks, (CATs), where relevant, will be completed over the 2-year period.

Year 13 and 14 students complete at least three options from a range of Level 3 BTEC, GCE AS & A2 examinations during Key stage 5. Some GCE A Level exams are modular and AS modules are completed at the end of Y13. Internal Assessment in the form of Coursework, Portfolio work and CATs where relevant will be completed over the 2-year period.

## **ST PAUL'S HIGH SCHOOL, BESSBROOK HOMEWORK POLICY**

### **Introduction**

As a Catholic Community, inspired by the example of St. Paul, our vision is to endeavour to develop skills and capabilities to help our students grow into healthy mature and successful adults capable of making informed and responsible choices.

To complement the learning and teaching that takes place in the classroom, we in St Paul's value the important role homework plays in the development of our students as effective independent learners.

### **Rationale**

Research supports the view that students who complete homework outperform those who do not. Homework has the potential to enhance students' study skills, attainment, improve their attitude towards school and reinforce the importance of learning outside the classroom.

St Paul's values a balanced approach between school and home life. We focus on quality rather than quantity and making sure that there is a clear purpose to any homework set.

### **The purpose of homework**

- Homework consolidates, broadens and extends the school curriculum.
- Homework develops the habit of independent study.
- Homework encourages self-organisation and self-discipline.
- Homework helps prepare students for future lessons and assessments.
- Homework provides an indication of student progress.
- Homework provides feedback in the evaluation of learning and teaching.
- Homework develops the home-school partnership.

### **Types of homework**

All homework set will link to the inclusive ethos of the school. During their time in school, pupils will be set a wide variety of homework tasks. Tasks may include, but are not limited to, revision, research, preparation of presentations, extended writing, problem solving, analysis of data, evaluation of resources, reading, and making / creating.

**Monitoring homework**

Formative assessment strategies can be used, and feedback is generated by pupils and peers as well as the teacher.

**Time allocation for Homework**

The amount of time spent completing homework will vary depending on the nature and the number of class periods per week allocated to that specific subject. Students are strongly encouraged to complete their homework as early as possible.

As students vary in ability levels and in the time taken to complete homework, it would be impossible to precisely indicate the amount of time that should be spent by each individual student in the completion of homework and revision daily. However, homework tasks will be more challenging as the child moves through each key stage.

**Student Planners**

The student planner is an important vehicle for communication between parents and staff. All students are supplied with a Student Planner. This is used to record any homework set and contains useful information for students and parents. This should be signed every week and shown to the student's Form Teacher.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Pupils

The role of each pupil is to:

- Bring the student planner to every lesson.
- Listen carefully to homework instructions.
- Record instructions for the task and the deadline date.
- Ensure that homework is completed and submitted on time.
- Make use of all relevant support materials available to them.
- Attempt all work and give their best.
- Inform the subject teacher of any difficulties.
- Be aware of the consequences of the incompleteness of homework.
- Use artificial intelligence and search engines in an ethical way to support completion of work.

### Parents and Carers

*For the purposes of this document, the guardian or carer for the child will be referred to as the 'parent'.*

**Parents can enhance the child's progress by supporting their child in the completion of homework. Parents should:**

- Provide a quiet study area wherever possible.
- Ensure that sufficient time and effort are given to homework tasks.
- Encourage the independent completion of homework, utilising support materials available.
- Check and sign the student planner each week to verify that homework has been completed by the agreed deadline.
- Contact the school if there are any issues regarding the student's homework (Appendix 1).

## Subject Teachers

**It is the responsibility of each subject teacher, in line with departmental policy, to:**

- Set purposeful, well planned, and varied homework/assignments.
- Ensure that homework is appropriately differentiated for all students.
- Give full and comprehensive instructions for completion, providing help and support where necessary.
- Set deadlines for completed homework and ensure that they are met.
- Keep records of homework set.
- Record results of all formal assessments on the School Management Information System (MIS).
- Monitor and record the non-completion of homework.
- Apply procedure for persistent non completion of homework as detailed in Appendix 2
- Inform Head of Department of any concerns in relation to homework in line with policy.
- Implement school rewards and sanctions in line with policy.
- Celebrate examples of good homework.

## Heads of Department

**The role of the Head of Department is to monitor and review homework and support subject teachers in the implementation of the agreed departmental policy. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to:**

- Consult with colleagues to devise and review a subject specific homework policy.
- Ensure that homework is an integral part of the curriculum and is assigned on a regular basis.
- Lead collaborative department discussions to compile standardised annual formative and summative assessments for each year group.
- Promote standardised practice across the department by regular monitoring strategies, for example, book look, classroom observations, and engagement with students.
- Ensure that homework is appropriate in quality and quantity for all ages and abilities.
- Engage with students in all key stages about homework.
- Ensure that homework is part of the agenda at Department meetings.
- Liaise with both the student and the form teacher when persistent issues with homework arise in line with whole-school and departmental policy.
- Liaise with parents via standardised letter for persistent non-completion of homework. (See appendix 4).

## Form Teachers

### It is the role of the form teacher to:

- Check each morning that students have planners with them and issue a temporary daily planner if required. (See appendix 3).
- Ensure that students have listed the subjects taught for each day.
- Check and sign planners weekly to ensure homework is being recorded and parents are also signing the planners.
- Monitor the comments made by class teachers regarding homework.
- Implement the appropriate procedures for non-completion of homework (Appendix 2).

## Year Heads

### It is the responsibility of each Year Head to:

- Consult with the form teacher and class teacher to monitor student's failure to complete homework.
- Ensure that homework is part of the agenda at pastoral meetings.
- Monitor the signing of planners by both parents and form teachers.
- Provide regular statistical analysis of prevalence of completion and non-completion of homework for their year group.
- Communicate and meet with parents/carers of students who persistently fail to complete homework. These meetings will take place with both the Year Head and SLT present. (See appendix 5).
- Promote the importance of homework during weekly assemblies.

## Strategic Leadership Team, SLT

**The Strategic Leadership Team is responsible for the implementation of the homework policy at whole-school level.**

### It is the responsibility of the Strategic Leadership Team to:

- Inform parents/carers of the school homework policy via a range of appropriate media.
- Ensure that homework is part of the agenda at Head of Department meetings.
- Support the development of homework programmes through the appropriate provision of relevant resources.
- Monitor, evaluate and review the homework policy in conjunction with the relevant curriculum development teams e.g. whole-school book looks.
- Ensure the consistent and effective implementation of the homework policy across all departments.
- Collect, collate, and evaluate feedback on homework from all key stakeholders.
- Encourage and disseminate good practice.

## **POLICY INTO PRACTICE:**

### **Recommendations for good practice**

#### **Routine**

- Homework is recorded in pupil and teacher planner including the submission date.
- Appropriate time should be given for students to complete homework tasks.
- Homework should be marked in accordance with the Departmental Marking Policy.
- Students will be informed and have a clear understanding of the success criteria for all homework tasks.
- Students are rewarded and praised for a consistently high standard of homework. Non-completion of homework is recorded, and appropriate action taken by the subject teacher.
- Examples of good homework are celebrated and displayed in the department where possible and recorded on the schools MIS.
- Student planner is signed by Parent/Guardian and Form Teacher weekly.

#### **Methodology**

- Homework should cater for the various learner needs, styles and preferences.
- Homework should consider the variation of resources available to students.
- Homework tasks should be varied, challenging and interesting.
- Support and extension material are made available to cater for differentiated needs.
- When applicable, homework tasks should be open-ended and promote imagination, creativity, research, and enquiry skills.
- Homework tasks should promote self-reflection and evaluation.

### **Homework Incentives and Sanctions**

#### **Homework Incentives**

- Peer and self-assessment should be encouraged.
- High quality homework and a good work ethos should be sensitively praised in class.

- Where appropriate, good examples of homework should be showcased within departments.
- Sustained effort and progress in homework should be recognised and may be rewarded with a positive note on the school's MIS.
- Achievement merit award to be given for exceptional work on Achievement section of Behaviour Management Module on the schools MIS.

### **Homework Sanctions**

- When homework is not completed, teachers should initially support the student and ensure that the task set meets the student's needs.
- Teachers are advised to follow the flowchart (Appendix 2) as a guide to resolving homework issues.

## Effective Feedback Policy

### Introduction

Effective feedback is a critical component of high-quality teaching and learning. It provides students with the necessary information to understand their progress, identify areas for improvement, and enhance their learning outcomes. This policy outlines the principles and practices for providing effective feedback at St. Paul's High School, drawing on guidance from the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment (CCEA), Dylan William, and Michael Chiles.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that feedback is used effectively to promote student learning, foster self-regulation, and improve educational outcomes. It aims to create a consistent approach to feedback across the school, ensuring that all students benefit from high-quality, constructive feedback.

### Principles of Effective Feedback

- **Timeliness:** Feedback should be provided promptly to ensure it is relevant and can be acted upon while the learning is still fresh. Timely feedback helps students make immediate improvements and reinforces learning.
- **Specificity:** Feedback should be specific and clear, focusing on aspects of the student's work and providing concrete suggestions for improvement.
- **Constructiveness:** Feedback should be constructive, highlighting strengths as well as areas for improvement, and should be framed in a positive manner. This approach helps maintain student motivation and encourages a growth mindset.
- **Actionability:** Feedback should be actionable, giving students clear guidance on how to improve their work. Effective feedback should lead to specific actions that students can take to enhance their learning.
- **Consistency:** Feedback should be consistent across different subjects and teachers, ensuring that students receive a coherent message about their learning. Consistency helps students understand the expectations and standards they need to meet.

## Types of Feedback

- **Formative Feedback:** This type of feedback is ongoing and is provided during the learning process. It helps students understand their progress and identify areas for improvement before final assessments.
- **Summative Feedback:** This type of feedback is provided after an assessment and focuses on the overall performance. It helps students understand their strengths and weaknesses in relation to the learning objectives.
- **Peer Feedback:** Encouraging students to provide feedback to each other can promote collaborative learning and help students develop critical thinking skills.
- **Self-Assessment:** Encouraging students to assess their own work can help them develop self-regulation and a deeper understanding of the learning objectives. Self-assessment fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning.

## Implementation Strategies

- **Clear Learning Intentions & Success Criteria:** Teachers should clearly communicate the learning objectives and success criteria to students at the beginning of each lesson or unit. This helps students understand what is expected of them and how they can achieve it.
- **Regular Feedback:** Teachers should provide regular feedback throughout the learning process, using a variety of methods such as written comments, verbal feedback, and digital tools. Regular feedback helps students stay on track and make continuous improvements.
- **Feedback Sessions:** Scheduled feedback sessions can provide students with dedicated time to reflect on their progress and discuss their work with teachers. These sessions can be used to set goals and develop action plans for improvement.
- **Teacher Professional Learning (TPL):** Teachers should receive ongoing professional development on effective feedback practices, including training on how to provide constructive and actionable feedback. TPL ensures that teachers are equipped with the skills and knowledge to deliver high-quality feedback.
- **Student Involvement:** Students should be actively involved in the feedback process, including setting their own learning goals and reflecting on their progress. Involving students in the feedback process helps them take ownership of their learning and develop self-regulation skills.

### **Examples of Best Practice of Monitoring and Evaluation**

- **Feedback Audits:** Regular audits of feedback practices across the school can help ensure consistency and identify areas for improvement. Audits can involve reviewing samples of student work and feedback provided by teachers.
- **Pupil Voice:** Gathering feedback from students about their experiences with feedback can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of current practices. Student surveys can help identify strengths and areas for improvement in feedback practices.
- **Teacher Experience:** Teachers should regularly reflect on their feedback practices and seek opportunities for professional growth. Reflection can involve self-assessment, peer observations, and participation in professional learning communities.
- **Qualitative & Quantitative Data:** Analysing student performance data can help identify the impact of feedback on learning outcomes and inform future practices. Performance data can include assessment results, student progress reports, and other relevant metrics.

### **Challenges and Solutions**

- **Time Constraints:** Providing timely and detailed feedback can be time-consuming. Solutions include using digital tools to streamline the feedback process and prioritising feedback for key assignments.
- **Student Engagement:** Some students may be resistant to feedback or may not know how to use it effectively. Solutions include providing assistance on how to interpret and act on feedback and creating a classroom culture that values constructive criticism.
- **Consistency:** Ensuring consistency in feedback practices cross-departmentally can be challenging. Solutions include regular professional development and collaborative planning sessions.

## Implementation:

### Responsibility of the Teacher

- Provide regular feedback on assignments, tests, and class participation.
- Use a variety of feedback methods (written, verbal, peer, and self-assessment).
- Ensure feedback is understandable and accessible to all students.
- Refer to the quality of written communication and literacy where appropriate.

### Responsibility of the Pupil

- Actively engage with feedback and seek clarification when needed.
- Use feedback to set personal learning goals and improve performance.
- Participate in peer and self-assessment activities.

### Responsibility of the Parent

- Encourage parents to discuss feedback with their children.
- Provide opportunities for parents to understand the feedback process and its importance.

## Examples of Feedback to Reduce Teacher Workload:

- **Use of Digital Tools:** Employ digital platforms that allow for quick and efficient feedback, such as automated quizzes with instant feedback, audio recordings of teacher feedback or comment banks for common feedback points.
- **Peer and Self-Assessment:** Encourage students to engage in peer and self-assessment activities. This not only reduces the teacher's workload but also helps students develop critical thinking and self-regulation skills.
- **Whole-Class Feedback:** Provide feedback to the whole class on common issues observed in assignments. This can be done through a class discussion or a shared document highlighting key points.
- **Feedback Templates:** Use feedback templates that can be quickly customised for individual students. These templates can include common strengths and areas for improvement, making the feedback process more efficient.

## **Conclusion**

Effective feedback is essential for promoting student learning and improving educational outcomes.

By following the principles and practices outlined in this policy, we can ensure that all students receive high-quality, constructive feedback that helps them achieve their full potential.

## Appendix 1:

### SUPPORTING MY CHILD'S LEARNING

Research has shown that children whose parents are involved in supporting them with completion of their homework, get higher marks, have a better attitude towards learning and develop more confidence. Getting involved with your child's education can make a significant difference to his/her chances of success. As your child gets older, of course, he/she needs to become more independent.

Helping your child to get organised, providing equipment and a quiet place to work and offering lots of encouragement will get him/her off to the right start. Your child's Student Planner should outline the homework that has been set and when it is due.

You should check the Planner regularly and sign it at the end of each week.

#### How to help – some general advice

Make sure that you are familiar with your child's Student Planner.

Nominate somewhere at home as a homework area and have a set time for homework. Set up a daily routine. Plan a homework timetable, so that your child knows what to do and when to do it.

It is a good idea if your child has a break and something to eat before starting homework. Ask your child to explain the homework task and how it follows on from what he/she was studying at school.

Be interested and be on hand to talk to your child about what he/she has learnt. Help your child to become an **independent learner**. Explain how to look up information rather than simply giving an answer to get the task finished.

Turn off the television while homework is being done but do let your child listen to music if he/she finds it helpful, and it does not annoy others.

Carefully read any comments that your child's teacher makes about his/her work. Discourage him/her from copying without editing when he/she is asked to do research tasks.

Be positive about your child's attempts. If you have concerns about his/her

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progress, make an appointment to see your child's Form Teacher.

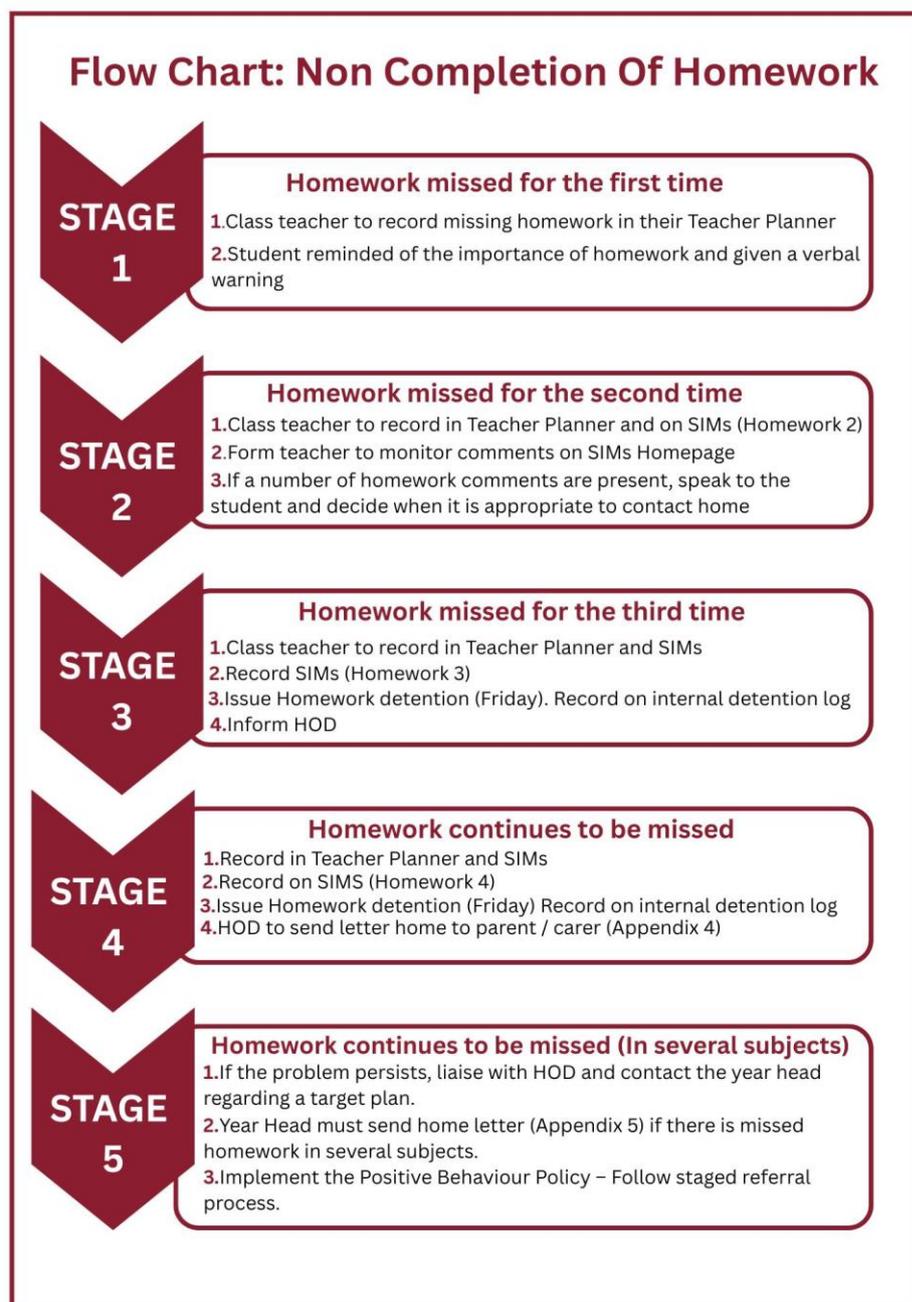
The school is keen that parents become fully involved in their children's education. However, please do not be tempted to do their homework, controlled assessment or coursework for them. If your child is to progress, we need to know how much he/she understands and can do independently.

**Here are some ways you can help:**

- Suggest doing homework as soon as it is received.
- Encourage your child to talk to you when in difficulty, as you may be able to help.
- Make sure your child has a good work-life balance and does not spend too much time going out with friends, working in a part-time job or sitting at home doing homework.
- Find out about educational resources that may support your child's learning on relevant websites etc.

## Appendix 2

Flowchart for dealing with noncompletion of homework:



## Appendix 3

 <b>St Paul's High School Bessbrook</b>  <b>Daily Student Planner</b>				
<b>Student Name:</b>			<b>Class:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>				
Period	Subject	Task	Date Due	Done √
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
<b>Please copy this into your student planner this evening</b>				
<b>Parent/ Guardian Signature:</b>				

## Appendix 4

[insert date, e.g. 22 January 2025]

Dear [e.g. Mr and Mrs Smith]

In St Paul's homework is widely recognised as a valuable way for pupils to reinforce the learning that has taken place in the classroom. It allows teachers to identify any difficulties pupils may have and to help them overcome these.

It is important that all homework tasks are completed to a satisfactory level and that they are handed in on time.

I wish to inform you that [insert pupil name] has not returned homework in the following subject: [insert name of subject]

I would appreciate if you would complete the slip below which indicates that you understand the present difficulties.

It is important to note that appropriate action will follow if the situation does not improve.

Yours sincerely

[Insert name of Head of Department]

**Head of Department**

-----  
**Pupil name:** [Insert pupil name]

**Form class:** [Insert pupil's form class]

I have discussed the importance of homework with \_\_\_\_\_, and I have ensured that he/she has now completed the homework(s).

Parent/Guardian signature: ..... Date: .....

**Please return this slip to the Head of Department**

## Appendix 5

[insert date, e.g. 22 January 2025]

Dear [e.g. Mr and Mrs Smith]

In St Paul's homework is widely recognised as a valuable way for pupils to reinforce the learning that has taken place in the classroom. It allows teachers to identify any difficulties pupils may have and to help them overcome these.

It is important that all homework tasks are completed to a satisfactory level and that they are handed in on time.

I wish to inform you that [insert pupil name] has not returned homework in the following area(s) of learning: [insert names of subject(s)]

I would appreciate if you would complete the slip below which indicates that you understand the present difficulties.

It is important to note that appropriate action will follow if the situation does not improve.

Yours sincerely

[Insert name of Year Head]

**Year Head**

-----

Pupil name: [Insert pupil name]

Form class: [Insert pupil's form class]

I have discussed the importance of homework with \_\_\_\_\_, and I have ensured that he/she has now completed the homework(s)

Parent/Guardian signature: ..... Date: .....

Please return this slip to your child's Year Head

## **Appendix 6: St Paul's High School: 4PLP as a model of Good Practice**

The 4PLP is not fundamentally different from what teachers have historically done regarding lesson planning. It simply formalises and creates a common template by which we discuss and plan lessons. It is not designed to eliminate individuality or creativity, and it is recognised that the application of the 4PLP will vary from lesson to lesson. As Mike Hughes says, **“it is a template not a straight jacket.”**

Aside from it being an effective template for planning, the 4PLP is used in St Paul's because it helps highlight that teaching and learning are different. The essence of effective learning is understanding. Students need to make personal sense of information and that requires them to engage with the information they receive in different ways. It requires students to be challenged and most importantly to think.

There is no point in adopting a lesson template if it is not going to improve teaching and learning. In both cases, it is Phase 3 that holds the key. The difference between an excellent lesson and a satisfactory lesson is often the extent to which students are engaged in their learning and the ways in which they are challenged to think and interact with information. **Socrates** has an interesting perspective on this: **“I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think.”**

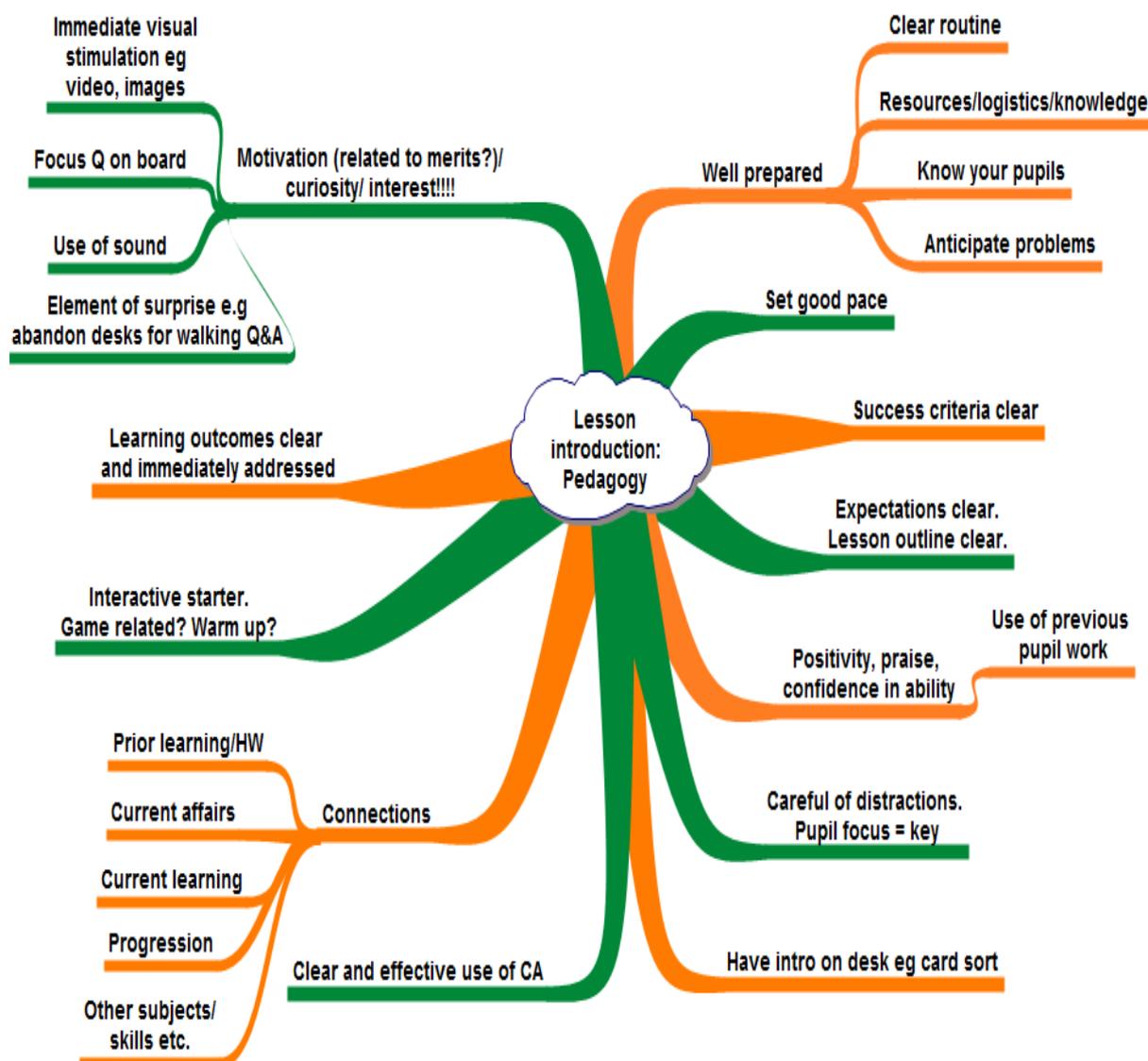
Learning is an active process – the product of doing rather than receiving. Acquiring information is not the same as understanding it and making personal sense of it – this is what learning is all about.

Mike Hughes states: **“The biggest advantage of adopting the 4PLP structure is that it emphasises the centrality of understanding in the learning process and highlights the crucial distinction between teaching and learning.”**

## Phase one: Overview/Lesson introduction

### Indicators of excellence:

- Teacher creates a relaxed yet purposeful atmosphere.
- Curiosity is stimulated.
- Work is set in the context of and connections are made with prior learning helping provide students with an overview.
- Learning objectives are shared.
- There is a sense of challenge.



## **Phase two: Input/Teaching**

### **Indicators of excellence:**

**“High quality exposition does not guarantee understanding but it does make it more likely.” (Mike Hughes)**

- Information presented in short chunks and students’ attention spans are not exceeded.
- Frequent closed questions to check shallow understanding.
- As the input phase moves to a conclusion more open questions can be asked to prime the brain for the next phase.
- New information should be delivered in a variety of ways to maximise student engagement and learning.
- Appropriate technical and subject specific language should be used and understood.

### Phase three: Processing/Learning (understanding)

#### Indicators of excellence:

- Students are fully engaged in their learning.
- Time for students to engage in activities to develop understanding.
- Tasks that require students to think and gives them the opportunity to generate their own questions (**Socratic dialogue**).
- High proportion of open questions that challenge students and encourage them to reflect.
- Opportunities for students to verbalise their understanding.
- Opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding.
- Frequent, high-quality teacher-student, student-student interactions.
- High proportion of open questions.
- Tasks that enable teachers to assess student understanding.
- Students given opportunities to process understanding in their preferred style.
- An emphasis on recreating not reproducing information. Consider reduction and transformation activities.

#### Phase 3: Beware of:

- students writing things down that they don't understand;
- copious note-taking;
- low-level comprehension exercises;
- students copying graphs, diagrams;
- using a large proportion of closed questions;
- activities that lack challenge – colouring; cutting; sticking; word searches etc.;
- students reproducing rather than re-creating information.

#### Reduction activities:

- Summarise in 100 words.
- Rank order the following statements.
- Which is the most important sentence/paragraph in describing this event/character?
- Underline six key words.

#### Transformation activities:

- Convert a text into a labelled diagram, flow chart, picture, story board.
- Describe a graph/diagram/picture in words.
- Portray this piece of text as a diagram/role play.
- Put the key words into a poem/rhyme.

**In accordance with the Northern Ireland Curriculum, it is expected that learning experiences are:**

- relevant and enjoyable;
- media-rich;
- skills-integrated;
- active and hands-on;
- challenging and engaging;
- culturally diverse; and
- varied to suit learning styles.

**Learning activities should:**

- present opportunities for investigation and problem solving;
- allow an extent of choice on behalf of the learner;
- provide for on-going reflection on learning and progress.
- Where possible address other curriculum areas.

**Effective questioning should promote thinking skills.**

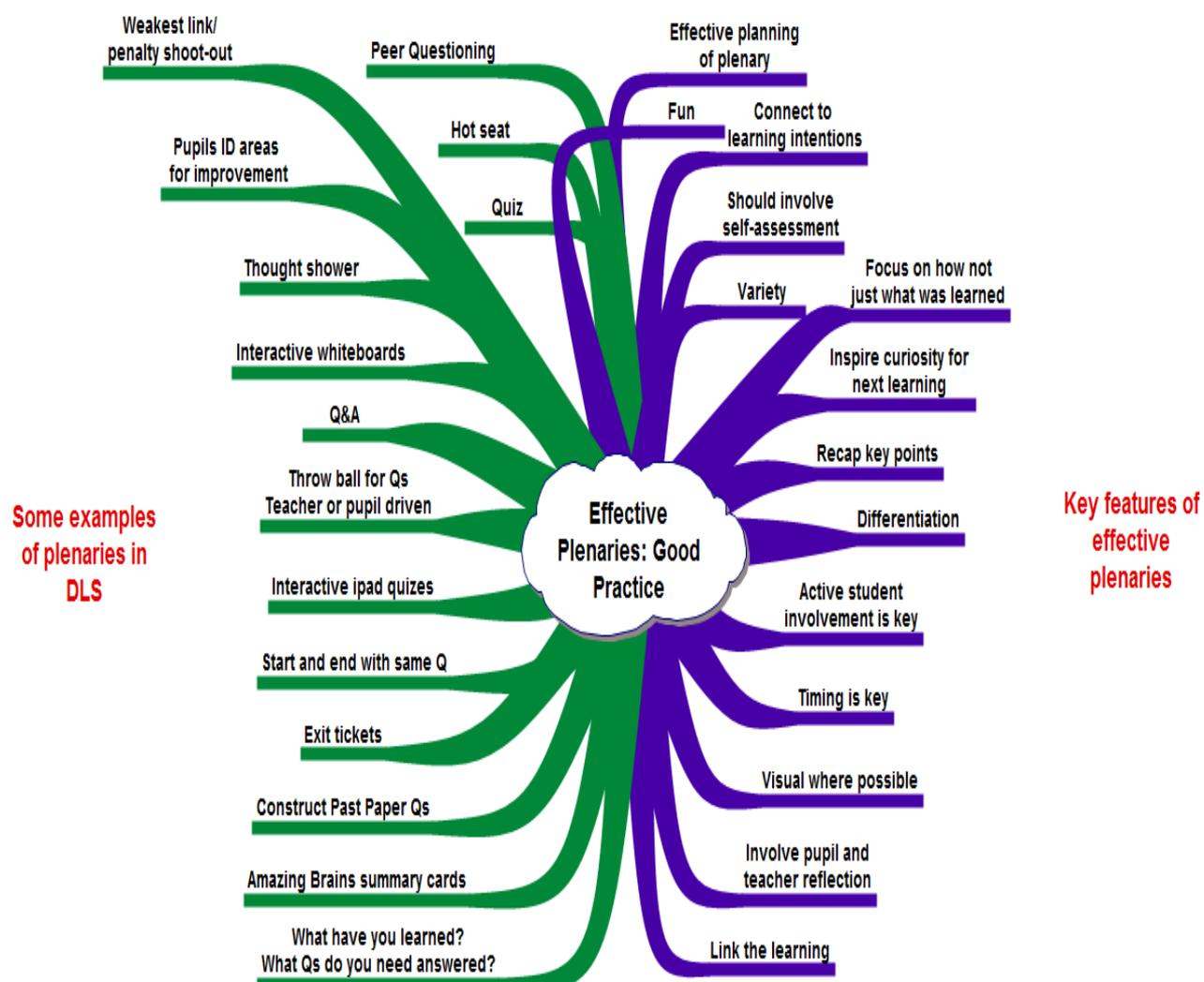
### **Effective Questioning Techniques**

1. Use open questions.
2. Provide wait time—students need time to think through their answers before replying.
3. Provide thinking time by giving an advance warning, such as ‘In two minutes I am going to ask you.’
4. Allow students to explore and articulate their thinking by giving them two minutes to discuss their responses in pairs.
5. Ensure students fully understand the question by asking them to re-word it for someone three years younger.
6. Extend and deepen thinking by asking follow-up questions to the same student.
7. Help students to think about their thinking by asking follow-up questions such as: ‘What made you think that?’
8. Students often give the first answer that comes into their heads without really thinking it through. Ask students to identify three possible answers and then select the best one.
9. Provide, or get students to generate, ten possible answers by ‘snowballing’ e.g. ‘Think of three reasons; now work in pairs to see if you can get five; now work as a group and get eight...now select the best answer’.
10. Socratic dialogue.

## Phase four: Review/Lesson plenary

### Indicators of excellence:

- Teachers should assess the extent to which students have progressed towards the learning objectives i.e. how much do they understand?
- Sufficient time planned for reviewing **what** has been learned.
- Students encouraged to reflect on **how** they learned.
- Explicit reference to learning objectives.
- Students actively engaged in the review process and asked to demonstrate their understanding.
- Stimulate thought and curiosity ahead of the next lesson.



## Appendix 8

### The Role of Adaptive Teaching in Meeting the Needs of Every Pupil

Meeting the needs of every pupil in a diverse classroom is a challenge that every educator faces. With pupils from different backgrounds, abilities, and learning styles, ensuring that all students receive the right level of challenge and support requires a flexible, responsive approach.

This is where adaptive teaching comes in. More than just differentiation, adaptive teaching is about making real-time adjustments to lessons so that every pupil can access learning effectively. It is not about having multiple lesson plans, but about being responsive, making informed decisions, and using strategies that work for different learners.

#### What is Adaptive Teaching?

Adaptive teaching is a dynamic, evidence-based approach where teachers:

- Adjust their teaching strategies, resources, and support based on real-time pupil needs.
- Use formative assessment to guide lesson pacing and content.
- Ensure that learning remains accessible and appropriately challenging for every pupil.

The Department for Education's SEND Code of Practice (2015) highlights that schools have a responsibility to deliver high-quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised. Adaptive teaching aligns with this requirement, benefiting not only pupils with SEND but all learners.

#### The Benefits of Adaptive Teaching

Adaptive teaching supports pupils by:

- Increasing engagement – When lessons are pitched at the right level, pupils are more motivated.
- Supporting individual learning paces – High-achievers can be challenged, while struggling learners get extra scaffolding.
- Building confidence – Pupils feel supported and develop greater self-belief.

- Closing attainment gaps – Helps reduce disparities in progress by ensuring every pupil has access to learning.

### **Adaptive Teaching and Inclusion**

Inclusion is at the heart of adaptive teaching. Under the Equality Act (2010), schools are required to make reasonable adjustments to ensure pupils with protected characteristics are not disadvantaged. Adaptive teaching is a powerful way to achieve this.

The Inclusive School Framework (2021) recognises adaptive teaching as essential for creating an inclusive learning environment. By differentiating resources, varying instruction, and modifying tasks, teachers can ensure that all pupils, not just those with SEND, receive the support they need.

The September 2024 Ofsted Inspection Handbook states that inspectors will look closely at how schools adapt their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils.

For school leaders, this means:

- Ensuring staff are equipped to adapt lessons dynamically.
- Providing CPD and resources to support adaptive teaching.
- Creating an environment where adaptive teaching is valued and embedded in classroom practice.

### **How to Implement Adaptive Teaching in Schools**

#### **1. Know Your Pupils**

- Engage in conversations with pupils about how they learn best.
- Use formative assessment to identify gaps, strengths, and learning needs.

#### **2. Use Formative Assessment to Guide Teaching**

- Monitor pupils in real-time to adjust teaching strategies.
- Be prepared to offer additional support, extend learning, or revisit concepts based on responses.

Further Reading on Assessment Strategies: · Headteacher Performance Management Toolkit

#### **3. Address the Challenges of Adaptive Teaching**

Adaptive teaching requires flexibility and can add to teacher workload. The National Education Union has highlighted the need for:

- Smaller class sizes to facilitate responsive teaching.
- More professional development opportunities to train teachers in adaptive methods.

Further Reading on Teacher Workload and Well-being: · Leading on Well-being

### The Role of Technology in Adaptive Teaching

AI and educational technology are increasingly being used to support adaptive teaching.

- AI-powered platforms help analyse pupil performance and adjust content in real-time.
- Tools such as Primary Quiz allow teachers to create quizzes and assessments tailored to pupils' learning needs.

However, while technology can be useful, the human element remains central. Teachers' ability to observe, connect, and make nuanced decisions in the classroom is irreplaceable.

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