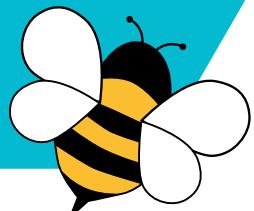


**TEACHING  
& LEARNING  
HANDBOOK**

**Issue 10**



# **ANTHECOLOGY 2025**

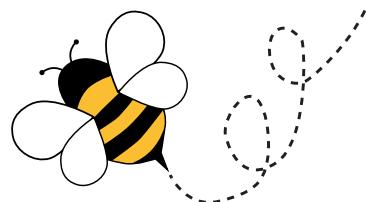




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# Welcome

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'To improve, not prove' continues to be our driving objective for our ongoing professional development and teaching improvements. We will strive to embed our five Teaching and Learning Principles in the classroom to increase engagement and improve outcomes. Our work on embedding consistent and predictable routines aims to develop student behaviours and a purposeful classroom environment.

Underpinning all our work is tried and tested research, in particular the publications of Doug Lemov and Peps McCREA, whose research will lay the foundation of our CPDL this academic year.

The goal of our 2025 Anthecology is to be a truly practical Teaching and Learning Handbook, one in which the reader can not only engage with education research, but more importantly have the opportunity to put this into practice and reflect appropriately.

The Teaching & Learning team are working to ensure that all CPDL has a clear purpose and triangulates with other processes throughout the academic year, including appraisal and subject specific CPDL. It should not be a stand-alone document but an integrated part of our professional learning and evaluation.

# SWA Teaching & Learning Policy

## Vision

Samuel Whitbread Academy's vision is to ensure all students will become the BEST that they can be.

Samuel Whitbread Academy's vision is to ensure all students will become the BEST that they can be.

## Aim

We aim for our teaching and learning to provide all students with the opportunities to achieve and excel.

## Quality First Teaching

In order to achieve our vision, our shared goal is to ensure 'Quality First Teaching', enabling inclusion by design in our 'open door' classrooms. Although this does not apply to the physical opening of classroom doors, it applies to the practice of welcoming visitors to classrooms.

Consistent Quality First Teaching at Samuel Whitbread Academy is underpinned by our 'Teaching & Learning Ladder' and achieved through the implementation of:

- 1. Literacy-rich, well sequenced curriculum**, supported by expert teachers and guided towards mastery.
- 2. Habitual routines and high expectations** through our SWA Rituals which lead to exemplary behaviour and learning:
  - a. explicit and consistent expectations via structured entry and exit routines.
  - b. crafted seating plans on Edulink to maximise learning.
  - c. insisting students take PRIDE in their own learning and work.
  - d. promoting effective behaviour for learning through use of the Behaviour Toolkit and SLANT.
- 3. Effective, well planned lessons** informed by our five Teaching & Learning Principles and structured around our **Teaching and Learning Ladder**.
  - a. deliberate Practice (Retrieval and Independent)
  - b. clear Explanation
  - c. modelling and Scaffolding
  - d. questioning and Discussion
  - e. assessment and Feedback
- 4. Evidence informed research** based on Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction and supported by engagement with recent publications, such as 'Teach Like a Champion' and 'Walkthrus'.
- 5. Prompt intervention** based upon formative and summative assessment to ensure all students achieve and excel.
- 6. Adaptive teaching** to ensure the needs of all students are met. This includes close working relationships between Learning Support Assistants and teachers

# Teaching Students of SEND at Samuel Whitbread Academy

We believe that every student should have the opportunity to achieve and excel.

## **What does this mean for a child with SEND?**

The tenets summarised in our Teaching & Learning Policy section promote excellent teaching and are measured by the reduction in students requiring additional support or interventions. Strategies that support all students but particularly those with SEN or other barriers to learning include:

- 1. Consistent routines and expectations** that lead to exemplary behaviour, as well as physical and emotional security. For example:
  - a. calm, orderly and focused working environments
  - b. clarity of expectations when entering and exiting the classroom
  - c. ensuring students have the correct equipment
  - d. seating plans to maximise learning and minimise distraction
- 2. Purposefully designed learning resources and great teacher pedagogy** that:
  - a. eliminates large amounts of copying from the board
  - b. presents new information clearly
  - c. provides appropriate scaffolding and support
  - d. focuses on supporting literacy
  - e. includes technology where appropriate
- 3. Consideration of cognitive load**, including:
  - a. a literacy rich, well sequenced curriculum
  - b. routine retrieval opportunities
  - c. resources that do not distract or over power
  - d. an environment that is calm and free from excessive noise
  - e. clear explanation and explicit instruction
  - f. explicit vocabulary teaching
  - g. regular checking of understanding
- 4. Close monitoring in the classroom**, including:
  - a. teacher, LSAs and/or learning mentors checking in with students most likely to need support first to ensure they have understood tasks.
  - b. teacher, LSAs and/or learning mentors asking pertinent questions to assess understanding of learning and tasks.
  - c. identification of errors or misconceptions quickly and addressing these immediately.
  - d. providing preparation and consolidation work via homework.
  - e. offering timetabled additional learning opportunities where appropriate.
- 5. Additional support**  
Some students require additional, individualised support. Details of which can be found in SIMS or on their personalised plans. Teachers will use this information when planning their lessons to ensure the needs of all students are being met. Where a teacher has concerns about a student's progress, they will liaise with their key worker/ SENCo.

*Recommendations made from 'EEF Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools Guidance Report', October 2021.*

# Samuel Whitbread Academy

## Subject Specialists

All staff at SWA strive for **opportunities to achieve and excel** as teachers and our pedagogy and practice is underpinned by the following:

We teach our subject with the love and passion it deserves.	We are aware the curriculum can be limiting at times, but ensure that everything we teach is shared with the passion and justice it deserves, explaining clearly the importance of the knowledge.
We have routine and rigour that allows all our students to flourish.	We embody our school values in our behaviours and expect the same of our students. We follow the routines of the Academy consistently and hold students to account as we wish for them to achieve and excel.
We know great curriculum design leads to progress.	We ensure our students make progress and excel by acquiring knowledge through our well sequenced curriculum and lesson planning. We hold ourselves to account when considering what we are teaching and when, and whether or not our students have secured the knowledge needed before moving on.
We are subject experts in our field(s).	We are constantly reviewing and improving our own subject knowledge and teaching pedagogy, including the teaching of literacy. We engage with education research and embrace CPD opportunities, striving to be the very best professionals we can be.
We understand cognitive science and its importance for learning.	We appreciate the limitations of working memory and have an understanding of the importance of cognitive load theory. We use this to ensure our students are not distracted by our resources unnecessarily and new knowledge is presented in small chunks.
We recognise something is not learnt unless in the long-term memory.	We understand that our curriculum and teaching has not been effective unless our students can recall and remember what they have been taught. To that end, we plan effectively to ensure content is revisited and not forgotten.
We consider time and know its limited.	We acknowledge that time is very precious in our classrooms and use every moment we can to maximise engagement and learning. Tasks are designed with a clear purpose in mind and are not simply 'fun'.
We teach don't just practise.	We believe that 'practise' is important but we want our student's achievement and excellence to be built on solid foundations and a breadth of knowledge. We will not simply teach students to pass examinations, but to appreciate the full power of education.
We embrace opportunities to improve our practice.	We participate fully in all CPD activities and strive to be the best teacher we can be. We believe in an open classroom culture and visit our colleagues regularly, both in our department and around the school. We use The Anthecology as a tool to develop and strive to improve as professionals.



# SWA TEACHING & LEARNING LADDER

END, MEND, COMMEND, SEND

## Deliberate Independent Practice

**Test** student understanding through their independent practice in order to ensure knowledge is embedded.

*Keeping Students on Task*

*Task Transition*

*Homework*

“Say it again”

## Questioning & Discussion

**Probe** student understanding throughout using questioning to address misconceptions.

*Census Checking*

*Think, Write, Pair, Share*

*Probing & Process Questions*

Extended writing opportunities

## Modelling & Scaffolding

**Adapt** practice to challenge all students, through collaborative activities which ensure progress.

*Worked Examples*

*Live Modelling*

*Becoming the Examiner*

Ambitious & academic reading

## Clear Explanation

**Develop** student understanding of new knowledge and/or skills through effective teacher instruction.

*What, how, why?*

*Dual Coding*

*Name the steps*

Teacher Toolkit

White boards

Address Misconceptions

A S S E S S M E N T & F E E D B A C K

MRI

**Activate** prior knowledge through planned retrieval and recall activities.

*Daily, weekly, monthly review*

*123 Retrieval Grids*

*Interrogating Knowledge*

SLANT

## Deliberate Practice

**Activate** prior knowledge through planned retrieval and recall activities.

*Daily, weekly, monthly review*

*123 Retrieval Grids*

*Interrogating Knowledge*

GREET, NEAT, SEAT, COMPLETE



# STARTING LESSONS

## **GREET**

- Samuel Whitbread Academy staff are prompt and greet students warmly at their classroom door.
- We welcome our class with a smile and reinforce that it's good to see them.
- We are positive and friendly. We use student names where possible.

## **NEAT**

- Samuel Whitbread Academy staff actively monitor student uniform on entry to the classroom and give quick reminders of school expectations.
- We keep this lighthearted but are persistent and consistent with uniform expectations.

## **SEAT**

- Samuel Whitbread Academy students immediately sit and begin their lesson task.
- If they do not, we request they stand. Students track the teacher. After the first task has been explained students are invited to sit.

## **COMPLETE**

- Samuel Whitbread Academy staff have a 'deliberate practice' task ready for students.
- We direct students straight away to complete the starter activity and whilst students are doing so, we take the register.

# ENDING LESSONS

## **COMMEND**

- Samuel Whitbread Academy staff ensure they finish a few minutes before the bell.
- We praise the class and a couple of students are selected specifically by name. Positive learning behaviours are celebrated.

## **MEND**

- Samuel Whitbread Academy staff reinforce the behaviours they expect next lesson and explain why.
- If needs be, a student may be asked to stay behind to repair your relationship or to clarify the behaviours you expect next lesson.

## **END**

- Samuel Whitbread Academy students stand behind their chairs in silence, in perfect uniform.
- We ask students to track us and thank them for the lesson, then wish them a good morning or good afternoon.

## **SEND**

- Samuel Whitbread Academy students leave their classrooms in a calm and orderly fashion after the bell has rung.
- We dismiss students by row or in small groups, not all together.



# SLANT



**Sit up  
straight**

---



**Listen  
carefully**

---



**Ask and  
answer questions**

---



**Never  
interrupt**

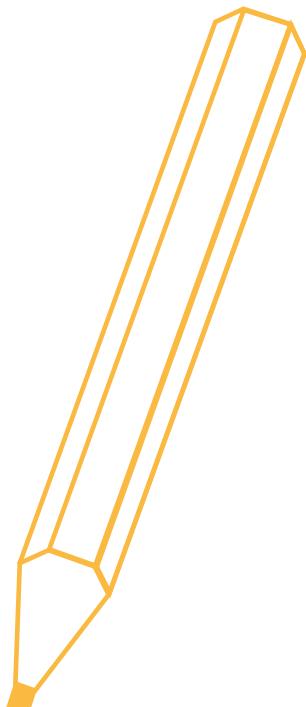
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**Track the  
speaker**

# PRIDE IN YOUR WORK

- You always take pride in your work
- Handwriting is legible
- Written work is completed in black pen or green pen when self or peer marking
- Written answers are completed in full sentences, unless stated otherwise
- Diagrams, tables or drawings are completed in pencil
- Colour can be added using colouring pencils or highlighters
- The date and title are underlined using a ruler
- Mistakes are rubbed out or one neat line drawn through the error
- Pages in books are not ripped out, skipped or graffitied
- Loose sheets are glued in
- You will be expected to redo work of poor quality and this will be recorded as a BI



## PRESENTATION OF WORK

# SWA TEACHING & LEARNING PRINCIPLES

# SWA Teaching & Learning Principles

## Deliberate Practice

- Daily, weekly & termly retrieval
- Memory platforms
- Rehearsal & performance activities
- Knowledge organisers
- Quizzing & multiple choice questions
- Guided & independent practice



## Modelling & Scaffolding

- Live modelling & visualiser use
- Prepared exemplars
- Worked examples & non-examples – 'I, We, You'
- Writing frames / sentence starters
- Reading aloud & decoding
- Practical demonstrations



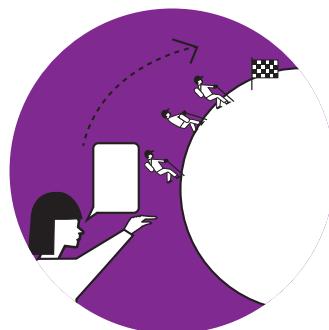
## Clear Explanation

- Predicting & ironing-out misconceptions
- Small steps / chunking
- Narrated thinking
- Thinking like a subject specialist
- Defining subject terminology
- Pre-reading materials



## Assessment & Feedback

- Dedicated improvement & reflection time
- Self & peer assessment
- Clear success criteria
- Whole class feedback – whiteboards & written
- Show call & live marking
- Feedback as actions: 'redo, redraft, revisit, relearn, re...'



## Questioning & Discussion

- Hands down / cold calling / no opt out
- Rephrasing & full sentence use
- Hinge-point questions
- Think, pair, share / Turn & talk
- Whole class response / mini whiteboards
- Probing: how, why, link, contrast, what if..?



# *RESET:* A BEHAVIOUR TOOLKIT

# What is RESET: A Behaviour Toolkit?

The RESET Toolkit is a supportive document for staff to help proactively manage behaviour for learning ensuring to maintain a positive learning environment. It includes a range of strategies that staff can adopt prior to issuing a B1.

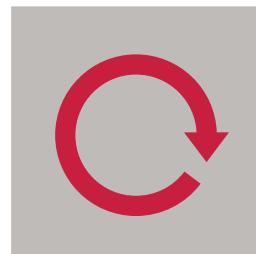


## SWA RESET: A BEHAVIOUR TOOLKIT

- R** Rapport and Restore
- E** Expectations
- S** Seating Plan
- E** Engaging Tasks
- T** Teacher Presence



# Rapport and Restore



## Building a Rapport

**Build trust and consistency:** Maintain a **predictable routine** to create a sense of security. Be patient and calm, giving extra processing time when needed. Show genuine praise for effort, not just achievement.

**Be an active listener:** Give **eye contact** (if comfortable for them) and acknowledge their feelings. Use **visual supports** (emotion cards, communication boards) to help them express themselves. **Validate their emotions** with phrases like "I understand that this is frustrating. How can I help?"

**Build a Personal Connection:** Learn about their interests, hobbies, and favourite activities. Use their **preferred communication method** (visuals, gestures, speech, etc). Greet them warmly each day and use their name often.

**Adapt to their needs as and when required:** **Offer choices** to give them a sense of control (e.g., "Would you like to write or draw your answer?"). Use **multi-sensory teaching** (visuals, hands-on activities, movement). Be flexible with expectations and **modify tasks** when needed.

## Restoring Engagement After a Challenge

**De-escalate before restoring:** If a student is overwhelmed, give them space and a quiet moment to **self-regulate**. Use calm tones, visual cues, or breathing exercises to help them reset.

**Rebuild without judgment:** Avoid blame - focus on moving forward rather than dwelling on what went wrong. Say "Let's try again," instead of "You should have done this." **Model forgiveness and patience** to help them feel safe.

**Use positive reinforcement:** Celebrate small wins and efforts with praise. Highlight their strengths - "I loved how you kept trying!" Involve them in **setting personal goals** to rebuild confidence.

**Re-engage with a fresh start:** Change the approach if something isn't working—switch to a hands-on or game-based activity. Let them take a **leadership role** in the next task to regain control. Offer choices to give them autonomy (e.g., "Would you like to work alone or with a partner?").



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further reading



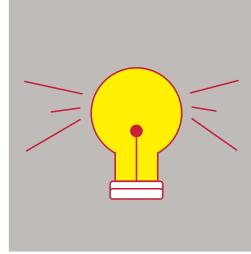
## Building Rapport with ADHD Students

**Personal connection and interest-based engagement:** Find out their **passions** (e.g. sports, gaming, music, art) and use them in lessons. Let them teach you something they love - it builds confidence and connection. Use humour, high-energy interactions, and enthusiasm to match their pace.

**Trust through predictability and flexibility-**  
**Keep routines and structures clear:** but allow some flexibility for movement breaks. Give **advance warnings before transitions** (e.g. "In 2 minutes, we'll move to writing").

Use **visual schedules, timers, and checklists** to help them stay organised.

**Active Listening and Validation:** Acknowledge their emotions - "I see you're feeling frustrated. Let's figure this out together". Give eye contact (if comfortable), nod, and paraphrase their words to show you're listening. Use **short, clear instructions** to keep communication effective.



## Solution Focused Practice

Solution Focused Practice (SFP) seeks to ask questions that enable students to build their own solutions rather than focusing on the problem or as teachers we support with guiding students towards what we think would be useful. SFP questions can be structured to accommodate any length of conversation, whether in the classroom, corridor or meeting room.

**Be pragmatic: Focus on what students can do** – When we return into the classroom what would I see and hear that would be the evidence of you showing respect towards your peers and the teacher?

**Try to not explicitly reference back to the behaviour as it reinforces it** – "That incident has just happened – you must have had a really good reason for doing it that – can you explain it to me?"

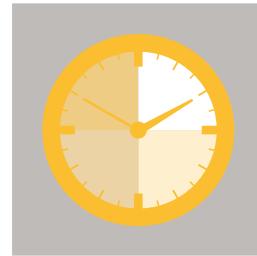
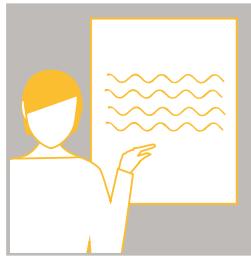
**Promote self-reflection and collaboration vs instruction.**

### 2-minute conversation framework

- 1.I'd like you to think of something you would like to express.
- 2.How would it be good for you if things improved in this way?
- 3.What have you already done that has been useful in this lesson?
- 4.What would be the first small signs of progress in the lesson today?
- 5.What would I see? How would that make the lesson better?
- 6.What else will you be noticing when this behaviour has changed?



# Expectations



## Start and End of Lessons

### **STARTING LESSONS**

**GREET:** Prompt and greet students warmly at their classroom door. Welcome your class with a smile and reinforce that it's good to see them. Be **positive and friendly** and use student names where possible.

**NEAT:** Actively monitor **student uniform** on entry to the classroom and give quick reminders of school expectations. Keep this light-hearted but be **persistent and consistent** with uniform expectations.

**SEAT:** Encourage students **sit immediately** and begin their **Do Now Task**. If they do not, request they stand. Students should track the teacher and after the first task has been explained, students are invited to sit.

**COMPLETE:** A 'deliberate practice' or **Do Now task** should ready for students. Direct students straight away to complete the starter activity and whilst students are doing so, take the **register**.

### **ENDING LESSONS**

**COMMEND:** Ensure you finish a few minutes before the bell. **Praise the class** and select a couple of students specifically by name. Positive learning behaviours are celebrated.

**MEND:** If any behaviour incidents have occurred / low level disruption has stopped learning. **Reinforce the behaviours** you expect next lesson and explain why. If needs be, a student may be asked to stay behind to **repair your relationship** or to clarify the behaviours you expect next lesson.

**END:** Students should stand **behind their chairs in silence**, in perfect uniform. Ask students to track the teacher and thank them for the lesson, before wishing them a good morning or good afternoon.

**SEND:** Encourage students leave their classrooms in a **calm and orderly fashion after the bell has rung**. **Dismiss students in an ordered manner** by row or in small groups, not all together.

## Transition between tasks

Transitions are most effective when students know exactly **what to do, in what order**, and **how** they should behave during the process.

Breaking down instructions into simple, **sequential steps**, supports all learnings, especially those with SEN needs.

Use **consistent language**, acting as a **signal**, each time you introduce a transition so students become familiar with the routine 'e.g. 3-2-1'

Use of **timers** will help to manage time and prepare students for the upcoming **shift in focus or activity**.

Define the steps for the transition and what is expected from the student, ensuring to break down the instructions clearly. eg, Here's what I need you to do:

- 1) Finish your group discussion
- 2) Open up your books
- 3) Write the date and title
- 4) Using the information, you have discussed, answer the question on the board. You will do this silently and have 3 minutes.

**Acknowledge successful transitions** by **praising** the group or individuals who follow the routine.



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## Volume during tasks

Managing volume levels in the classroom helps create a productive and calm learning environment. It also supports students, especially those with SEMH needs, by reducing overstimulation and setting clear boundaries for social interaction.

### Set Clear Volume Expectations by Task Type

Different tasks naturally require different noise levels. Define these in advance and review them regularly with the class:

**Silent:** For independent reading, writing, assessments.

*Example: "This is silent work. No talking so everyone can concentrate."*

**Whisper voice:** For paired work or quiet collaboration.

*Example: "Talk just loud enough for your partner to hear."*

**Conversation level:** For group activities or discussions.

*Example: "You can speak at a 'table voice' if I stand a few feet away, I shouldn't hear every word."*

### Teach and Practice Volume Expectations

Model each voice level and have students practice them.

Reinforce with praise when students self-regulate ("I really liked how table 3 lowered their voices when they saw we were moving into independent work.")



## On Task Behaviour

Encouraging and maintaining on-task behaviour helps maximise learning time and reduces classroom disruptions. The key is to be clear, consistent, and proactive.

**It is important that you make the expectation of the behaviour as clear as the explanation for the task. 'Children need to be taught and retaught expected behaviours explicitly'**

Don't assume students know what "on-task" means - **explicitly describe the behaviour that you want to see and model it** for different contexts.

### For example:

#### Listening to a presentation or teacher talk:

- Eyes on the speaker
- Sitting still and facing forward
- No talking unless asking or answering a question
- Hands still and off distracting items

#### Group work or discussion:

- Actively listening to group members
- Sharing ideas respectfully
- Staying with your group and keeping to the task
- Taking turns to speak
- Everyone plays a key and active role



# Seating Plans



**Seating plans should be pre-planned and teacher assigned**

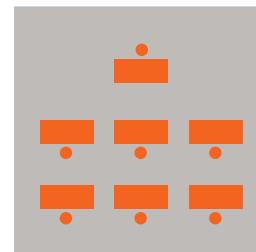
They should be uploaded to **BromCom** and accessible to any member of staff covering your lessons. This pre-planning as the classroom teacher will aid with effective teaching, learning and management of the class.

Plans should be **clearly visible to students on entrance** to the classroom (for the first few lessons) until they become habitual and embedded.

Having a **printed copy** of the plan close to hand **on your desk** will help **to reinforce names and build relationships**. It can also support and build effective questioning techniques and aid behaviour for learning.

Seating plans should **change regularly** to keep your classroom **dynamics fresh** and allow for **different discussion partners/peer relationships** to form.

Give **SEND students advanced notice** of change of seating plan to support them with adapting to change.



**Seating plans may be partially restricted to the formation of your classroom however different classroom set ups aid different learning environments**

Rows of two students, facing the front ensure focus is directed to the board but also allows some **opportunity for pair work**. Such a layout allows for the teacher and LSA to circulate around the room effectively up and down the aisles and along the rows.

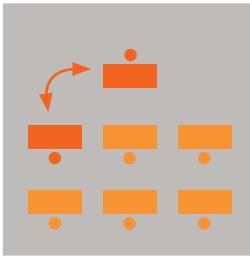
Tables of two grouped together to make quartet formations allow for great opportunities for **group collaboration and peer discussion**. They are however more conducive to off-task behaviour as students are facing towards each other whilst also presenting challenging lines of sight e.g. students' backs facing you.

Horse shoe formations are great to allow **ease of movement** for the teacher/LSA. Staff can circulate and facilitate easily in a cyclical manner however many students are side onto the board and facing the opposite side of students – which could again be more conducive to low level distractions.

Consider which plan is **most conducive** for your space?



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### When creating seating plans staff should use pupil data as the rationale for decision making

Staff should consider whether students with SEND needs are seated in the correct place in relation to their **needs, peers, TA and possible distractions**.

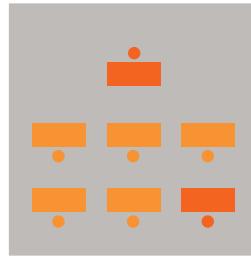
If you have students with **visual or hearing impairments**, are they seated towards the **front of the class**?

Are your **PP students** close to hand and **easily accessible** to offer **support and guidance**? Consider placing PP students next to a High Attainers in order to expose them to **challenge**.

If students have an assigned LSA, have you considered a **free chair for the LSA**? Is the student easily accessible and on the end of a row so the LSA/teacher can facilitate and circulate the space easily?

If students struggle to regulate behaviour, are they close to the front of the space to allow you **quick access to redirect and pre-empt behaviour from spiralling**. Adapt to these needs inline with their **PPP / context**.

Are students with **SEMH** needs **seated near an exit**: – if they struggle with anxiety or in the safety of a corner/near a window as a supportive intervention to **decrease triggers** etc?



### Consider how a change in seating plan can be an effective pre-exemptive technique to avoid low level behaviour to snowball and escalate

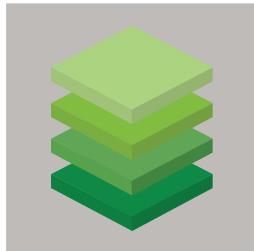
Could you have a **spare desk** at back corner of your classroom to which you can **tactically move a student**? Placing this desk towards the back of the room allows the student to be distanced from the group slightly and means they are not **pulling the focus** of the rest of the class.

Move seating plan within in the classroom prior to issuing any B's – use this as a **pre-emptive strategy**. Make your students aware that this is a desk used as a warning/redirection of unwanted behaviour. If moved here it is a clear indication that they are not getting things right, they need to amend/change their behaviour as they are risking being awarded a formal B1.

This change in seating plan could be because you are moving them away from a **distraction** that is impacting upon their learning. Or could be moving them as they are the **cause of the distraction**.



# Engaging Tasks



## Structure and Clarity

**Providing clear structure and clarity to all tasks creates** predictability which in turn helps create a safe learning environment for everybody and in particular helps to reduce anxiety and confusion for SEMH students.

### Strategies:

- Break tasks into **small, manageable steps** using “Now, Next, Then” visuals or checklists.
- Use **consistent routines** for task formats and instructions.
- Display a **clear model or success criteria**: “Your task should include X, Y, Z.”

### Example:

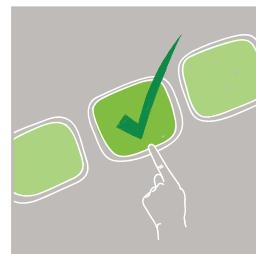
Instead of “Write a paragraph,” say:  
 Step 1: Express your opinion.  
 Step 2: Write a sentence using ‘I think...’  
 Step 3: Give two reasons why.

Use a variety of activities in every lesson to help structure, re-focus, and aid engagement.

Set short, achievable targets and praise when tasks are completed.

Use multi-sensory tasks to maximise pupils’ opportunities to learn. Allow some movement, if possible, to support. Vary the type of task set switch between video, written, discussion etc to keep attention.

Have an awareness of the need for movement breaks, which can break up the structure. Can students hand out glue sticks and worksheets? Giving them responsibilities such as board wiping etc. allows them short breaks between episodes to regulate.



## Choice and Autonomy

SEMH students will often engage more when they feel in control of a situation. Controlled choice fosters motivation and empowers students to take ownership of their learning.

### Strategies:

- Where possible, let students choose **how** to complete a task: write, draw, speak, act, record.
- Offer **task variation** with equal value: “Pick one of these two tasks.”
- Allow **opt-in participation**: share with a partner, teacher, or the group.

### Example:

You can create a mind map, a voice note, or a comic strip to explain your understanding.

Adapt: make sure that the learning objectives are realistic for every lesson, and that the pupil can experience some success.

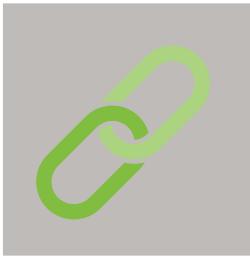
Set a range of extension tasks for all learners to ensure inclusivity in your classroom. This will allow learners to achieve success whilst being stretched and challenged. This will motivate, inspire, and help build confidence.

Use a timer or countdown to help a pupil achieve a task in a specified time. This will aid their autonomous time management. Do not talk over this time too much, as this is an added distraction.

Be prepared to allow the pupil extra time to finish a task if required. If you have concerns, log / follow up with [SEN@bestacademies.org.uk](mailto:SEN@bestacademies.org.uk)



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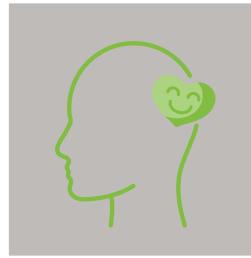
## Relevance and Connection

SEMH students often disengage when learning feels disconnected from their lives. By linking tasks to their interests, personal experiences, or real-world scenarios, you create **emotional buy-in**, foster curiosity, and build a **sense of purpose** in learning. This also helps develop **empathy, identity, and self-expression**, which are vital for students managing emotional challenges.

**Link to Interests and Passions:** Integrate topics or examples students already enjoy - music, games, sports, fashion, social media, pop culture. E.g. Design a football training plan using percentages and data.

**Connect to Real-Life Situations:** Make tasks mirror real-world scenarios to enhance functional understanding. Use role-play, scenarios, or dilemmas students might encounter in real life (e.g. budgeting, online safety, friendships).

**Make Use of Media and Technology:** Use YouTube clips, podcasts, memes, or music analysis as stimuli. Allow students to respond using familiar tools (e.g. video responses, digital collages, short slideshows).



## Emotional Safety and Regulation

For SEMH students, emotional dysregulation, anxiety, and past negative experiences with learning can create barriers to engagement. Creating a safe, structured environment with **adaptable and manageable learning tasks** helps reduce overwhelm, build confidence, and foster trust in the learning process.

### Strategies:

**Chunk tasks to reduce cognitive load:** Break learning into **bite-sized steps** with clear goals and achievable timeframes. Check understanding after each chunk before moving on, offering praise and guidance.

**Adapt learning to individual needs:** Modify **task demands, formats, or outcomes** to suit the needs of the individual student. Provide **multiple access routes:** drawing, speaking, typing, or practical engagement.

**Model tasks:** Demonstrate what to do as well as talking about it; give concrete examples, provide scaffolds and avoid the abstract.

**Use cued listening:** Give pupil a small number of questions to answer after listening to teacher or others. Use structured examples - consider visual images and episodes.



# Teacher Presence



## Use of Voice

Your tone of voice as a teacher helps **establish authority**, create a structured learning environment, and **set the tone** for the class in terms of behaviour.

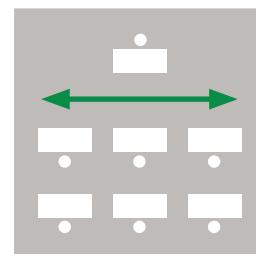
Explore varying your **vocal tone and volume** when praising students - bright lively tones will motivate and encourage.

When disciplining, **lower gravel tones** (different to your 'normal' teacher voice) are required to **create impact**. Students will be able to hear the change and realise that they have crossed a boundary. Reverting back to your '**normal voice**' once behaviour has been flagged will have a more impactful effect.

Slowing the **pace down** of your voice communicates a more **nurturing and caring side**.

Raising your volume at key points in the lesson is effective in terms of **gaining attention** through a '5,4,3,2,1 countdown' for example. But keeping a **control and levelled volume when disciplining is key**. Increasing your volume too much and taking it to a shouting/loud volume may come across as **aggressive** and will seem like you have lost control of your emotions.

A lower, calm and more **neutral tone** is key especially when students are deregulated, model for them the tone you wish to be spoken to in. This will help calm and **defuse the situation**.



## Proximity with the space

Proximity in the classroom is about how you **move within the space** and your closeness to objects or students within your classroom.

At times the **traditional flight path** (the space at the front of the classroom) is the main focal point of delivery and for others it is sat behind their desk. **Circulating the space** and choosing a variety of places to **stand/perch** with purpose is key to **managing behaviour**, keeping on top of **low-level disruption**, supporting students and taking ownership of your space.

**Front centre:** Is great for **direct address** and delivery of **taught content**. A **standing visualiser** to the side of your board is effective to support modelling whilst also allowing sight lines to be open re behaviour and engagement.

**The back corners:** Behind the students are effective when **monitoring engagement** and **scanning the whole room** for focus, engagement and whole class task participation.

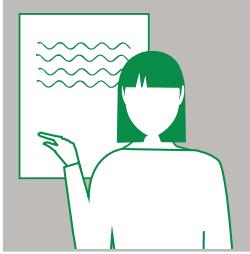
In practical subjects situating yourselves on the **periphery** allows you to view the general space with ease in order to ensure the **health and safety** of the pupils as they participate in physical activity.

If a student is displaying off task behaviour **increase your proximity towards that child**. Move into their space, hover close by and perhaps lean into their work to make them feel your **presence**.

If a student is **struggling and needs support**, bend down next to them. Get on their level and at a **safe distance** to offer guidance and support. This makes them feel seen and supported.



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## Use of body language and gestures

The use of **non-verbal cues** and interactions are key to **support verbal prompts**. They can engage and motivate, stimulate, reiterate points, exemplify examples and make children feel safe and secure.

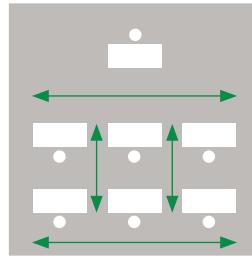
**Gestures:** Use gestures to inspire students to participate. Gesturing from the waist up can help **convey warmth and empathy**. It can visually **dual code** your verbal prompts and can even act as drills to help students embed terms.

**Facial expressions:** Showing your emotions to support what you are saying is key. An animated face supports **engagement and attention**. It can also support students to understand **emotional sensitivity** and **social cues**. Smiling shows that you are friendly and approachable.

**Eye contact:** Can **pull focus** and **flag negative behaviours**, holding **eye contact** with students for a **short-extended period** of time can help reinforce expectations and encourage off task behaviour to stop. Eye contact can also make students **feel seen**, it makes your teaching **personalised and engages them**.

**Body language:** Keeping your arms open whilst standing in a relaxed manner signals that you are comfortable, warm and **approachable**. Crossing your arms and **widening your stance** can enhance **authority and power** within the classroom when dealing with inappropriate behaviours.

**Non-verbal cues:** The use of **non-verbal cues** can help students remember verbal material. They can also be used as **prompts / scaffolds** to support less able students with questioning.



## Circulating with intent

Moving around the classroom **creates interest**. Students are kept on their toes and need to **actively engage to track the teacher**.

Being aware of your seating plan is key. Having a knowledge of your '**key players**' and where **sub groups sit** in this plan is important.

Planning a **circulation route** around the room is key, especially during independent work. Who do you check in first with? Who are your **SEND students** who may need a **task reiterating**? Who are your **behaviour students** who part way through may need **redirection**? Who are your **high attainers** who may need additional stretch and challenge? Know where they are seated and **circulate** with these key flags in mind.

The use of phrases such as '**track the speaker**' encourage students to follow your movements as you circulate which may help **support engagement** and focus.

**Circulating** and '**actively looking**' at students' work. Leaning over and reading extracts. Questioning them with further extensions means your movement around the class is purposeful. A **red marking pen** in hand to complete **live marking** not only reduces workload but is also a great **formative feedback** and **engagement technique**.

# MOTIVATED LEARNING

# What is Motivated Learning?

## *Motivated Teaching: Harnessing the Science of Motivation to Boost Attention and Effort: A Summary*

**Peps Mccrea** is a leading voice in evidence-informed education, known for distilling complex cognitive science and educational research into clear, actionable strategies for classroom teachers. His work is especially useful for busy educators seeking high-impact, low-effort teaching techniques that align with how students learn best.

*Motivated Teaching: Harnessing the Science of Motivation to Boost Attention and Effort in the Classroom* by **Peps Mccrea**. This book is part of his acclaimed “High Impact Teaching” series, designed to distill research into practical guidance for teachers. Mccrea focuses here on how teachers can boost **motivation** to improve learning outcomes.

## Overview

In Motivated Teaching (2020), Peps Mccrea explores the science of student **motivation** and how teachers can **engineer classroom environments** that increase pupil **attention**, **effort**, and ultimately **learning**. Drawing on research from cognitive science, psychology, and behavioural economics, he breaks down what motivates students and **offers strategic, actionable advice**. Mccrea argues that motivation is not just a trait but a product of **context**. Teachers can design better classroom conditions that encourage students to invest effort - **even when learning is hard**.

## Key Principles from the Book

Mccrea structures the book around four core levers of motivation, summarised as:

### 1. Boosting Value

Students are more likely to engage if they **value** the learning task.

- **Make learning feel useful**  
Connect curriculum content to real-world applications, future goals, or things students care about.
- **Help students feel successful**  
Use scaffolding, guided practice, and clear goals to ensure early wins.
- **Align tasks with student identity**  
Make work feel relevant to who they are or who they aspire to be.

### 2. Increasing Expectancy

Students must believe that they can succeed if they try.

- **Build students' sense of competence**  
Sequence tasks to ensure high success rates (around 80%).
- **Model and scaffold effectively**  
Use worked examples and gradual release of responsibility.
- **Offer clear, specific feedback**  
Feedback should be informative, not just evaluative.

### 3. Reducing Cost

Students weigh the **effort and risk** involved in learning.

- **Lower the perceived effort**  
Break tasks into small steps, automate routines, and build habits.
- **Minimise social risk**  
Use no-hands-up questioning, think-pair-share, and ensure a safe culture for mistakes.
- **Reduce decision fatigue**  
Limit unnecessary choices; keep routines predictable.

#### 4. Increasing Belonging

Students are more likely to try when they **feel connected**.

- **Foster positive teacher-student relationships**  
Show warmth, fairness, and high expectations.
- **Encourage peer collaboration**  
Use group work, paired tasks, and shared goals.
- **Affirm student identity**  
Recognise contributions and give students voice.

### Practical Strategies and Applications

McCrea threads in **classroom techniques** throughout the book. Here are some key takeaways:

#### Routines to Reinforce Motivation

- Use routines to reduce cognitive load and increase focus.
- Automate transitions and behaviours so effort is channelled into learning.
- Keep instructions clear and consistent.

#### Framing Tasks Strategically

- Present work as a challenge, not a threat.
- Emphasise the purpose behind activities ("We're doing this because...").
- Set goals that feel **just beyond current capability**.

#### Feedback as Motivation

- Immediate, task-focused feedback builds a sense of progress.
- Avoid feedback that feels like judgement.
- Praise effort, strategies, and persistence—not fixed traits.

### The Role of Attention

McCrea emphasises that **attention is the gatekeeper of learning**. Motivation drives attention, and attention drives memory.

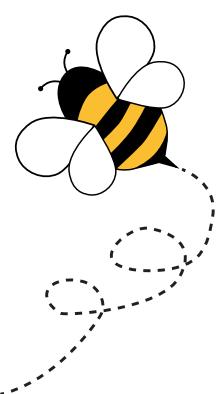
- Use surprise, storytelling, and curiosity to attract attention.
- Limit distractions by managing the environment.
- Regularly reset attention using pace, signals, and interactivity.

### Implications for Teachers

Peps McCrea's central message is **teachers can design for motivation**. It's not about trying to "inspire" pupils with charisma, but about building lessons and routines that:

- Provide **clarity**,
- Offer **challenge with support**,
- Reduce unnecessary burdens,
- And foster a **culture of belonging and high expectations**.

He advocates a **deliberate, low-effort approach** - small tweaks in planning and delivery that pay big motivational dividends.



*“We believe that every  
student should have  
the opportunity to  
achieve and excel”*

# TEACHING STRATEGIES

## STRATEGY 1

# Helping Students Feel Successful

*Using scaffolding, guided practice, and clear goals to build confidence and motivation.*

## What Does It Mean to Help Students Feel Successful?

Helping students feel successful means deliberately structuring learning so that all students experience a sense of **progress and achievement**, particularly early in the learning process. Success builds confidence, drives motivation, and creates positive momentum. This isn't about lowering expectations—it's about creating conditions where all learners are supported to meet high expectations.

## Classroom Strategies to Help Students Feel Successful

### A. Use Scaffolding Strategically

**What:** Break tasks into smaller, manageable steps with appropriate support.

**Why:** Reduces cognitive load and gives students achievable entry points.

#### Examples:

- **KS3 English:** When writing an analytical paragraph, give students a sentence starter: “This suggests that...” or provide a model paragraph to deconstruct.
- **KS4 Maths:** Show worked examples step-by-step before gradually removing parts for students to complete.

### B. Guided Practice Before Independence

**What:** Work with students on tasks before expecting them to do it alone.

**Why:** Builds competence and confidence through modelling and collaborative attempts.

#### Examples:

- **KS3 Science:** Solve the first few physics calculations as a class, then let students try a similar one in pairs.
- **KS3 History:** Together, construct a paragraph answering a source question, then assign students a new one to try solo.

### C. Set Clear, Visible Success Criteria

**What:** Tell students what success looks like and how to get there.

**Why:** Removes ambiguity, focuses effort, and lets students recognise their progress.

#### Examples:

- **KS3 Writing:** Display checklist: “Have I used capital letters? Have I added a fronted adverbial?”
- **KS4 PE:** Show model drills for mastering a specific technique (e.g., correct foot position in long jump).

**Classroom tip:** Refer back to success criteria during feedback to reinforce the sense of progress.

### D. Start with Early Wins

**What:** Begin lessons or units with tasks that are high-probability for success.

**Why:** Builds momentum, confidence, and readiness for challenge.

#### Examples:

- **KS3 Computing:** Begin a programming lesson with a recap task all students can complete to reactivate prior knowledge.
- **KS3 Maths:** Start with fluency-based warm-ups (e.g. number bonds, times tables) before applying them to problem-solving.

### E. Celebrate Progress, Not Just Performance

**What:** Reinforce the idea that effort and growth lead to success.

**Why:** Builds intrinsic motivation and a growth mindset.

#### Examples:

- Use **exit tickets**: “One thing I can do now that I couldn’t do before is...”
- Share work-in-progress to highlight improvement, not just final outcomes.

**Teacher move:** Use specific praise focused on process:

“You didn’t get it at first, but you kept trying and now it’s right—that’s what learning looks like.”

## Subject-Specific Classroom Examples

### KS3 Maths – Fractions

- Scaffold with visual models (e.g., fraction bars)
- Model solving steps together
- Begin with comparing simple fractions with the same denominator
- Offer immediate feedback

### KS3 Geography – Climate Change

- Break a complex task (write an email to a MP on climate change) into steps:
- Identify key issues
- Gather evidence
- Use persuasive techniques
- Use sentence frames and exemplars

### KS4 English – Literature Essay

- Provide a model essay and co-construct a plan
- Allow paired writing of the introduction
- Offer clear success criteria for analysis, structure, and vocabulary

### How to Monitor Impact

Tool	Purpose
Mini whiteboards	Spot-check understanding and build wins
Quizzes with feedback	Show growth over time
“Now I Can” boards	Visual display of student gains
Live marking or dot marking	Provide real-time, focused feedback on success

### Common Pitfalls and Solutions

Pitfall	Better Approach
Over-scaffolding (dependency)	Gradually remove support as competence builds
Unclear success criteria	Make expectations visible, shared, and revisited often
Only praising high achievers	Acknowledge growth and effort across all ability levels

### Summary: Embedding Student Success

Strategy	Why it Matters
Scaffolding and modelling	Supports access and reduces overload
Guided practice	Builds confidence before independent application
Clear goals and criteria	Makes success feel achievable and visible
Early wins	Builds momentum and motivation
Celebrate progress	Reinforces belief that effort leads to learning

## STRATEGY 2

# Making Learning Feel Useful

*Enhancing motivation and relevance in the classroom*

## What Does It Mean to Make Learning Feel Useful?

“Making learning feel useful” involves helping students see the **relevance, purpose, and real-world application** of what they are learning. When students perceive content as **meaningful**, they are more likely to:

- Pay attention
- Persist through challenges
- Commit ideas to memory

This is not about entertaining students or watering down academic rigour—it’s about **connecting the ‘what’ to the ‘why’**.

## Practical Strategies for Teachers

### A. Use Real-World Examples

**What:** Contextualise abstract concepts with real-life applications.

**Example (KS3 Maths):** When teaching percentages, use examples involving discounts, interest rates, or football statistics.

**Example (KS4 Science):** When teaching energy transfer, use a mobile phone battery or electric car as the anchor example.

### B. Make Future Value Explicit

**What:** Explain how today’s learning connects to future education or careers.

**Example (KS4 English):** Explain how analysis and writing skills are used in journalism, marketing, and law.

**Example (KS3 Geography):** Link a lesson on global development to jobs in international NGOs, environmental policy, or sustainability careers.

### C. Connect to Student Identity and Interests

**What:** Link content to students’ cultural background, interests, or experiences.

**Example (KS3 History):** When teaching empire, encourage students to investigate how colonisation affected countries their families may be from.

**Example (KS3 Design & Tech):** Link design principles to real products students love—e.g., why Nike uses certain typography or packaging.

### D. Use Anchoring Questions

**What:** Pose a motivating, open-ended question at the start of a lesson or unit.

**Example:**

- “*Could you survive without electricity?*” (Science/Geography)
- “*Why do people still read Shakespeare?*” (English)
- “*Can maths predict who will win the World Cup?*” (Maths/Data)

These questions create a narrative and purpose for learning, increasing perceived usefulness.

### E. Give Choice Linked to Real-Life Tasks

**What:** Allow students to choose from task formats or contexts that reflect real-world use.

**Example (KS4 Business Studies):** Choose between writing a pitch, designing a leaflet, or creating a social media campaign.

**Example (KS3 ICT):** Design a website or app interface for a real local business or community cause.

## Classroom Examples by Subject

### KS3 English – Writing a formal email

- **Context:** Students write to their MP about a local issue.
- **Usefulness:** Authentic purpose, links literacy to civic engagement.

### KS3 Science – Disease and Vaccination

- **Context:** Compare historical and modern pandemics.
- **Usefulness:** Connects biology to personal and global health issues.

### KS4 Maths – Ratios

- **Context:** Calculate ingredients for scaling recipes or mixing music tracks.
- **Usefulness:** Everyday decision-making and creative industries.

## Evaluating the Impact

Ask students:

- “How is this useful to you?”
- “Where else might this apply?”
- “Can you think of a real situation where this would matter?”

### Quick tools:

- Exit tickets: “One way this connects to the real world is...”
- Reflective journals
- Group discussions around “why are we learning this?”

### Monitor:

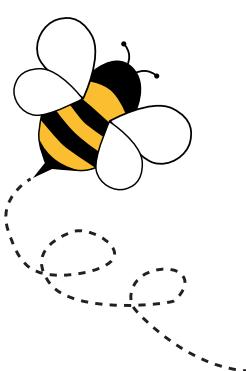
- Increased participation and attention
- Improved retention of material
- Greater student confidence or initiative

## Addressing Common Pitfalls

Mistake	Better Approach
Making everything feel “cool”	Focus on meaningful relevance, not gimmicks
Overloading students with context	Keep examples brief, clear, and aligned with the objective
Assuming students see relevance	Make connections explicit - don’t rely on inference

## Summary: Embedding ‘Usefulness’ in Learning

Embed This Practice	Because...
Use real-life examples	Anchors abstract concepts in experience
Explain future application	Builds motivation and value
Connect to student identity	Increases engagement and belonging
Pose purposeful questions	Creates a meaningful narrative for learning



## STRATEGY 3

# Collaborative Learning: A Practical Guide for Teachers

## What is Collaborative Learning?

**Collaborative learning** is an instructional approach in which students work together in structured groups to explore concepts, solve problems, or complete tasks. Unlike simply “working in groups,” collaborative learning involves purposeful interaction, shared goals, and accountability.

### Key Features:

- Structured group roles and tasks
- Shared responsibility for outcomes
- Peer-to-peer dialogue, modelling, and explanation
- Active participation from all students

### Why Use Collaborative Learning?

#### Peps McCREA'S View (Motivated Teaching, 2020):

Peps McCREA identifies **effortful learning** and **motivation** as key drivers of academic progress. Collaborative learning can:

- **Boost motivation:** Working with peers supports autonomy, belonging, and shared purpose—factors that increase engagement.
- **Increase attention:** Active discussion and peer questioning keep students mentally engaged.
- **Strengthen memory:** Explaining to others requires deep processing, aiding retention (linked to the “generation effect”).
- **Support low-stakes challenge:** Students can test and develop ideas in a supportive environment before whole-class exposure.

*“If you want students to remember something, have them think hard about it and talk about it with others.”*

– Peps McCREA

### Strategies for Effective Collaborative Learning

Strategy	Description	Example
Think-Pair-Share	Students think individually, then discuss with a partner, then share ideas with the class.	KS3 Geography: “Why do people choose to live near volcanoes?”
Jigsaw	Each student becomes an “expert” on one part of a topic, then teaches it to group members.	KS4 History: Each student learns about a different Treaty of Versailles clause.
Reciprocal Teaching	Students take on roles (questioner, summariser, clarifier, predictor) while reading texts.	KS3 English: Group reading of a non-fiction article.
Group Problem Solving	Teams solve multi-step problems or case studies collaboratively.	KS4 Maths: Solving real-world problems involving ratios.
Structured Debates	Students are assigned positions and must argue based on evidence.	KS4 English: “Is Macbeth a tragic hero or a villain?”

## Classroom Examples by Subject

### KS3 Science – “How does light travel?”

- **Activity:** Students design experiments using torches, mirrors, and barriers to explore light paths.
- **Roles:** Recorder, materials manager, spokesperson, checker.
- **Collaboration Focus:** Shared experimentation and reasoning.

### KS3 English – Poetry Comparison

- **Activity:** Pairs annotate two poems, identifying similarities in language and theme. Each pair presents their findings to another pair.
- **Collaborative Outcome:** Joint Venn diagram or paragraph plan.

### KS4 History – “What caused World War I?” (Jigsaw Method)

- Each student in a group becomes an expert in one cause (e.g., Militarism, Alliances, Imperialism, Nationalism).
- Groups reform, and students teach each other.
- Group task: Rank causes from most to least significant and justify.

## Teacher Moves for Effective Collaboration

Move	What It Looks Like
Explicitly teach group skills	Model how to disagree politely, summarise, and build on ideas.
Assign clear roles	E.g., chair, scribe, summariser, challenger.
Use success criteria	Make expectations visible for talk quality and collaboration.
Circulate and scaffold	Monitor dialogue, prompt thinking, intervene when needed.
Debrief after collaboration	Ask: What worked well? What can we improve?

## How to Review the Impact

### Assess the Learning, Not Just the Talk

- Use low-stakes quizzes, mini whiteboards, or exit tickets post-collaboration.
- Ask individuals to write or explain concepts discussed in groups.

### Monitor for Participation & Accountability

- Use observation checklists.
- Have students self-assess their contribution.
- Rotate roles in groups regularly.

### Key Reflection Questions:

- Did all students contribute?
- Did the task lead to deeper understanding or just shallow talk?
- Was group time used effectively?

## Common Pitfalls and Solutions

Challenge	Solution
Unequal participation	Assign roles; use talking tokens; monitor.
Off-task behaviour	Set time limits; build in checkpoints.
Surface-level talk	Use structured prompts; model academic discussion.
Misconceptions spreading	Circulate, ask questions, and pause to re-teach if needed.
Debrief after collaboration	Ask: What worked well? What can we improve?

## STRATEGY 4

# Effective Questioning - A Practical Guide for Teachers

## What is Effective Questioning?

**Effective questioning** is the strategic use of teacher questions to promote thinking, assess understanding, deepen learning, and maintain classroom engagement. It plays a central role in formative assessment, cognitive activation, and classroom dialogue.

### Why Is Questioning So Powerful?

#### Peps McCREA's Perspective

*In Motivated Teaching* (2020), **Peps McCREA** identifies **attention, motivation, and memory** as crucial levers for learning. Questioning influences all three:

- **Grabs attention** by creating curiosity or expectation
- **Supports motivation** by involving students actively in the lesson
- **Strengthens memory** through retrieval, elaboration, and explanation

McCREA also emphasises that “**learning happens when attention is focused on the right things at the right time.**” Questions direct and sustain attention on what matters most.

## Types of Effective Questions

Type of Question	Purpose	Example (KS3 English)
Recall	Retrieve known information	“What happened to Scrooge at the end of the novel?”
Elaborative	Deepen understanding through explanation	“Why do you think Dickens ends the novel this way?”
Application	Apply knowledge to new situations	“How would Scrooge’s actions be judged today?”
Probing	Encourage deeper thinking	“Can you explain why you disagree with that idea?”
Diagnostic	Identify misconceptions or gaps	“Why might someone think this character is a hero?”
Meta-cognitive	Encourage self-awareness of learning	“What strategy did you use to answer that?”

## Classroom Strategies for Effective Questioning

### A. Cold Calling

**What:** Call on students randomly rather than relying on volunteers.

**Why:** Ensures all students stay attentive and engaged.

**How:** Use name sticks, seating plans, or random name selectors.

McCREA recommends “*normalising participation*” by setting the expectation that everyone may be called on at any time.

### B. Wait Time

**What:** Pause for at least 3–5 seconds after asking a question.

**Why:** Increases quality and length of responses, especially for higher-order thinking.

**How:** Use non-verbal cues (e.g. counting silently, looking around the room).

### C. Think-Pair-Share

**What:** Students think independently, then discuss with a partner, before sharing with the class.

**Why:** Builds confidence and improves quality of responses.

**How:** Pose a high-level question, provide a time limit for each stage.

**Example (KS3 History):**

*“Was the Treaty of Versailles fair?”*

### D. No Opt-Out

**What:** Ensure students always engage, even if they don't know the answer at first.

**Why:** Maintains high expectations and student accountability.

**How:**

1. Student A doesn't know.
2. Ask Student B.
3. Return to Student A for reinforcement.

### E. Probing & Prompting

**What:** Ask follow-up questions to extend or clarify answers.

**Why:** Encourages deeper processing and reasoning.

**How:** Use prompts like:

- “Can you say more about that?”
- “What makes you think that?”
- “Is there another perspective?”

### Examples of Effective Questioning in Practice

#### KS4 Science: Chemistry – Acids and Alkalies

- **Recall:** “What is the pH of a neutral solution?”
- **Application:** “What happens when you mix hydrochloric acid with sodium hydroxide?”
- **Elaboration:** “Why do neutralisation reactions matter in everyday life?”

**Cold Calling + Wait Time:** Pose question → pause → call on student by name.

#### KS3 English: Macbeth

- **Diagnostic:** “Why do you think Macbeth was so easily persuaded by the witches?”
- **Probing:** “Is Macbeth fully responsible for his actions?”
- **Meta-cognitive:** “What part of the text helped you form that opinion?”

**Think-Pair-Share** used to structure group discussion before whole-class questioning.

#### KS3 Geography: Weather and Climate

- **Recall:** “What's the difference between weather and climate?”
- **Application:** “How would a drought affect a farming community?”
- **Elaborative:** “Why do some countries experience more extreme weather than others?”

## Reviewing the Impact of Questioning

### Key Reflective Questions for Teachers:

- Are all students being included and challenged?
- Are questions pitched to support and stretch learning?
- Am I balancing recall with deeper thinking questions?

## STRATEGY 5

# Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL): A Practical Guide for Teachers

## What is Inquiry-Based Learning?

**Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL)** is a student-centred approach where learning is driven by questions, investigations, and problem-solving rather than passive reception of information. It positions students as active participants in constructing their own understanding through exploration and critical thinking.

### Key Characteristics:

- Students ask and investigate meaningful questions
- Learning involves research, analysis, and synthesis
- Emphasis on process as well as product
- Encourages curiosity and independence

## Why Use Inquiry-Based Learning?

### Link to Peps Mccrea's Work

In Motivated Teaching (2020), **Peps Mccrea** argues that motivation stems from a sense of autonomy, purpose, and mastery. IBL provides:

- **Relevance:** Students investigate real-world problems, making learning purposeful.
- **Autonomy:** They direct aspects of their own learning journey.
- **Challenge:** Inquiry requires sustained attention and problem-solving, boosting effortful learning—central to Mccrea's framework.

Inquiry also supports Mccrea's idea of *managing cognitive architecture*: students learn best when new knowledge is woven into meaningful, purposeful contexts.

### Link to Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction

Although Rosenshine is often associated with explicit instruction, IBL aligns with several of his principles when well-scaffolded:

- **Principle 1 – Begin a lesson with a short review**  
→ Students link prior knowledge to new inquiry questions.
- **Principle 4 – Provide models**  
→ Teachers model the inquiry process before students take it on.
- **Principle 6 – Check for understanding**  
→ Teachers guide and assess understanding during investigation.
- **Principle 9 – Require and monitor independent practice**  
→ Inquiry includes self-directed research and application.

## How to Implement Inquiry-Based Learning

### The Inquiry Cycle

1. **Questioning** – Students pose or are guided to a central question
2. **Investigation** – They gather and analyse information
3. **Synthesis** – Students interpret data, draw conclusions
4. **Presentation** – They present findings in varied formats
5. **Reflection** – Learners and teachers assess the process and outcomes

## Practical Examples for the Classroom

### KS3 Science – “What’s the best way to purify dirty water?”

#### Process:

- Students brainstorm different water purification methods (e.g. boiling, filtration, distillation).
- Small groups test each method and compare results.
- They record, analyse and present findings.

#### Teacher’s Role:

- Model the scientific method and how to design a fair test.
- Guide students in collecting reliable data.
- Check understanding at each stage.

## KS4 History – “Was the British Empire a force for good or bad?”

### Process:

- Students investigate contrasting primary and secondary sources.
- They formulate arguments and challenge each other in debates or essays.
- Assessment includes both argument construction and source analysis.

### Teacher’s Role:

- Teach how to assess bias, context, and reliability of sources.
- Model essay-writing structure using worked examples.
- Provide scaffolds (sentence starters, planning frames).

## KS3 Geography – “How are rivers formed and why do they matter?”

### Process:

- Students explore case studies, maps, and simulations.
- They investigate causes and consequences of flooding.
- Present findings through an animation or model.

### Teacher’s Role:

- Pre-teach key vocabulary and concepts.
- Use low-stakes quizzes and cold calling to check progress.
- Offer sentence scaffolds for presentations.

### Key Strategies for Effective Inquiry

Strategy	Description
Guided Inquiry	Teacher provides a question and resources, students investigate independently
Socratic Questioning	Use open-ended, probing questions to explore issues in depth
Research Scaffolds	Templates and prompts help students plan investigations and evaluate sources
Gallery Walks	Students display work and give peer feedback
Inquiry Journals	Students record questions, research steps, and reflections

### Challenges and How to Overcome Them

Challenge	Solution
Students lack research or critical skills	Explicitly model inquiry steps and provide structured scaffolds
Risk of misconceptions or surface learning	Build in checkpoints and regular formative assessment
Time-consuming to plan and assess	Use a common framework and cross-curricular links to maximise value
Misconceptions spreading	Circulate, ask questions, and pause to re-teach if needed.
Debrief after collaboration	Ask: What worked well? What can we improve?

## Measuring the Impact

### What to Monitor:

- Quality of student-generated questions
- Depth of research and synthesis
- Engagement and participation levels
- Quality of group discussions or final products

### Tools for Review:

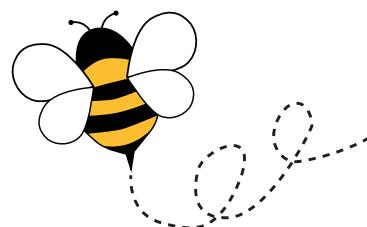
- Rubrics aligned with success criteria
- Peer and self-assessment forms
- Reflection journals
- Exit tickets on key learning

### Reflective Questions:

- Did all students actively engage and contribute?
- Did they demonstrate deeper understanding of the topic?
- Were misconceptions identified and addressed?

## Final Thoughts: Balancing Inquiry with Direct Instruction

**IBL is most effective when paired with the clarity and structure of Rosenshine's principles.** Inquiry doesn't mean leaving students to "discover" unsupported. Rather, it's a powerful phase in the learning sequence **after explicit teaching** has secured foundational knowledge. **Peps McCREA** encourages us to design learning environments that foster curiosity, agency, and challenge—exactly what good inquiry-based learning can provide when embedded in a well-sequenced curriculum.



## STRATEGY 6

# Student-Centred Learning: A Practical Guide for Teachers

## What is Student-Centred Learning?

**Student-Centred Learning (SCL)** is an instructional approach that shifts the focus of teaching from the teacher to the learner. In this model, students play an active role in their own education—making decisions about what, how, and even when they learn. The teacher's role becomes more of a facilitator or guide.

### Key Features:

- Emphasis on student choice, voice, and autonomy
- Teaching aligned with student interests, needs, and learning profiles
- Collaborative and inquiry-based activities
- Formative assessment used to guide instruction and student reflection

## Why is Student-Centred Learning Effective?

### Link to Peps Mccrea's Work

*In Motivated Teaching* (2020), Mccrea highlights that **motivation and attention are essential for effortful learning**, and student-centred practices help:

- **Enhance relevance:** Align learning with what students care about
- **Support autonomy:** Increase student agency, which boosts intrinsic motivation
- **Foster belonging:** Allow students to connect with content and peers
- **Manage cognitive load:** Design tasks around prior knowledge and learner readiness

Student-centred learning environments are motivational by design, and motivation drives attention, which is the gateway to learning (Mccrea, 2020).

## How to Implement Student-Centred Learning in the Classroom

### Strategy A: Choice-Based Learning Tasks

**What:** Offer students options in how they demonstrate understanding.

#### Example (English Literature):

After reading *Born a Crime*, students choose to:

- Write an analytical essay
- Create a storyboard of key themes
- Record a podcast discussing character development

### Strategy B: Learning Menus or Choice Boards

**What:** Students select activities from a “menu” based on interest or skill level.

#### Example (Geography):

A climate change choice board might include:

- Write a news article on rising sea levels
- Create an infographic about carbon emissions
- Research and present a solution used in another country

### Strategy C: Student-Led Inquiry or Projects

**What:** Encourage students to explore a question or topic that interests them within the curriculum scope.

#### Example (Science):

Students investigate “How can we reduce plastic pollution in our school?”

They research, collect data, and present solutions.

**Assessment:** Use rubrics based on process, research skills, and communication.

### Strategy D: Self-Assessment and Reflection

**What:** Build in time for students to assess their own learning and identify next steps.

#### Example (History):

After a writing task, students:

- Use a checklist to evaluate their essay
- Identify one strength and one area to improve
- Revise a paragraph based on reflection

## STRATEGY 7

# Feedback Strategies for a motivational classroom

## Live Marking: In-Lesson Feedback That Drives Progress

### What It Is

Live marking is the process of assessing student work during the lesson to give immediate feedback, address misconceptions, and adapt teaching in real-time.

### Why Use It

Peps McCREA (*Responsive Teaching, Motivated Teaching*) emphasises **in-the-moment adaptations** and the power of **timely feedback**. Live marking aligns with this and with **Rosenshine's Principle #6**: Check for student understanding frequently.

### How to Implement

1. **Plan for Practice Time:** Choose lessons where students produce substantial independent work.
2. **Circulate and Observe:** Check work as pupils complete it, using a highlighter, pen, or short annotations.
3. **Mark Selectively:** Use ticks, margin prompts, or highlight key errors.
4. **Provide Verbal or Written Cues:** Ask questions or give immediate next steps.
5. **Adapt Teaching:** Pause and address trends if many pupils show the same misunderstanding.
6. **Pupil Response:** Ask students to respond immediately (in purple pen or similar).

### Classroom Example (English)

While students write a paragraph, the teacher reads a few lines and notes:

*"Good start—how could you link this to the theme?"*

Another student receives: "SP: *their/there*" in the margin.

### Practical Tips

- Use symbols like VF (verbal feedback) or a colour-coding system.
- Plan for a mix of individual and whole-class feedback.
- Create seating maps for targeting specific pupils.

## Dot Marking: Visual Prompts for Self-Correction

### What It Is

Dot marking uses coloured dots or symbols to indicate areas for review. Instead of detailed comments, pupils interpret and act on the feedback.

### Why Use It

McCREA advocates for designing learning environments that **promote student agency and reduce cognitive overload**. Dot marking does both: it's quick and it encourages pupil thinking.

### How to Implement

1. **Teach the Code:** Share what each dot colour or symbol means.
2. **Use During or After Tasks:** Circulate and apply dots to areas needing revision.
3. **Embed 'Dot Response Time':** Give pupils a routine to respond—re-read, edit, rewrite.
4. **Whole-Class Follow-up:** If trends emerge, reteach or model improvements.
5. **Scaffold Reflection:** Use question prompts or sentence starters.

### Classroom Example (History)

Red dot = vague explanation

Student reviews the paragraph and revises with better contextual evidence using a sentence frame provided.

### Practical Tips

- Include a **dot marking key** in the front of student books.
- Train pupils to recognise patterns in their own feedback.
- Combine with live marking or peer review.

## Whole-Class Feedback: High Impact, Low Workload

### What It Is

Instead of marking every book in detail, the teacher reads a sample and records common strengths, errors, and targets. These are shared in a feedback session with the whole class.

### Why Use It

Whole-class feedback reduces teacher workload while increasing impact—a key theme in McCREA’s work on effort and feedback design.

### How to Implement

1. **Review a Sample of Work:** Identify what went well and what needs improvement.

2. **Fill Out a Feedback Template:**

- Strengths
- Misconceptions
- SPAG/formatting issues
- Actions for pupils

3. **Deliver a Feedback Lesson:**

- Model responses
- Address misconceptions
- Ask pupils to improve their work

4. **Build in Response Time** (see DIRT below).

#### Classroom Example (Science)

Whole-class feedback identifies:

- Good structure of conclusions
- Many pupils did not link the conclusion to the hypothesis
- Students then edit their work to explicitly reference the hypothesis.

### Practical Tips

- Use a **visualiser** to show real examples anonymously.
- Incorporate into regular routines (e.g. every third lesson).
- Link feedback to success criteria or model answers.

## Verbal Feedback: Interactive and Responsive Correction

### What It Is

Verbal feedback is oral, often live, immediate, and tailored. It includes questioning, prompting, affirming, or correcting.

### Why Use It

Peps McCREA emphasizes the value of **clarity and responsiveness**. Verbal feedback allows for both, in real-time, and reduces marking load.

### How to Implement

1. **During Independent Work:** Speak to individuals or small groups.

2. **Use the “What next?” Question:** Prompt thinking, don’t just affirm or correct.

3. **Document If Needed:** Mark “VF” in books with a short note.

4. **Use Cold Calling:** Extend verbal feedback into class discussion.

#### Classroom Example (Maths)

Teacher notices a student’s step is wrong.

Says: “Check step 2—does that match your first number?”

Marks “VF – Calculation process” in the margin.

### Practical Tips

- Use a clipboard to track who you’ve spoken to.
- Train pupils to expect and respond to VF.
- Use routines like “Whisper Coaching” or “Elbow Partner Reflection.”

## Feedback Codes: Consistent, Efficient Feedback

### What It Is

Teachers use abbreviations or symbols to indicate specific types of errors. Pupils learn what each one means and how to act on them.

### Why Use It

Feedback codes reduce teacher writing load, increase consistency, and foster **student autonomy**—a priority for McCREA's motivational model.

### How to Implement

1. **Create a Code List** (e.g. SP = Spelling, // = New paragraph, ? = Unclear meaning)

2. **Share With Students:** Post in books and display in classrooms.

3. **Mark Using Codes:** Place codes in the margin or next to errors.

4. **Response Time:** Schedule sessions where pupils correct the codes.

### Classroom Example (Geography)

Student writes “costal erosion” instead of “coastal.”

Teacher writes “SP” in the margin.

Student looks up the correct spelling and rewrites the sentence.

### Practical Tips

- Keep codes consistent across a department.

- Combine with peer feedback: one code + one improvement.

- Use as a checklist for editing final drafts.

## DIRT (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time)

### What It Is

DIRT is planned lesson time for students to respond to feedback—edit, revise, redraft, or reflect.

### Why Use It

McCREA highlights the **importance of effort** and **completion of the feedback loop**. DIRT ensures feedback isn't just given but **acted on**.

### How to Implement

1. **Schedule DIRT** regularly after feedback (weekly or biweekly).

2. **Set Clear Tasks:** Use feedback codes, questions, or targets.

3. **Use Different Pens** (e.g. purple) to show revisions.

4. **Model Improvements** before pupils begin.

5. **Celebrate Improvements:** Share strong responses publicly.

### Classroom Example (PRE)

Pupil is asked to “develop your analysis.” During DIRT, they add two more developed points, underlining the changes in purple.

### Practical Tips

- Use sentence stems or scaffolds.

- Pair DIRT with whole-class feedback sessions.

- Use the improvement work for re-assessment or progress checks.

## STRATEGY 8

# Increasing Expectancy

*Helping students believe that success is within their reach*

### What Is “Increasing Expectancy”?

**Expectancy** refers to a student’s belief that they can succeed if they try. When students think their effort will lead to success, they’re **more likely to engage, persist, and invest effort**—all essential for learning.

“Students are more motivated when they believe that success is within their reach.” – *Peps Mccrea, Motivated Teaching (2020)*

This is not about false praise or inflated confidence, but about building a **realistic, evidence-based belief** in success through experience, scaffolding, and feedback.

### Theoretical Frameworks

**Peps Mccrea: Motivated Teaching (2020)**

In his motivation equation, Mccrea states:

**Motivation = (Success x Value) / Cost**

- **Success** is about **expectancy**: the belief that “I can do this.”
- Teachers can raise expectancy by designing learning so students **experience success early and often**, and can **see their progress** over time.

“It’s not enough for students to want to learn; they need to believe they can.”

### Key Components of Increasing Expectancy (with Examples)

#### A. Build Students’ Sense of Competence

**What:** Design tasks to ensure high success rates—ideally around 80%. This balance keeps students challenged but confident.

**Why:** Repeated success builds belief in ability and encourages effort.

*Examples:*

- **KS3 Maths:** Start with fluency-based tasks students are likely to succeed at (e.g. multiplication facts) before moving into multi-step problem solving.
- **KS4 English:** Begin analytical writing with a cloze passage that guides students toward using higher-level vocabulary and structure.

*In Practice:*

- Use **Do Now**s or **retrieval practice** questions at the start of lessons to provide early success.
- Sequence tasks to move from simple to complex, with visible progress.

### Model and Scaffold Effectively

**What:** Use worked examples, I do / we do / you do, and step-by-step explanations.

**Why:** When students see how a task is done and experience joint success, they’re more likely to believe they can do it independently.

*Examples:*

- **KS3 Science:** Model how to write a hypothesis using a visualiser. Then write one together before students attempt their own.
- **KS3 History:** Use a model paragraph to analyse a source; highlight each part and its purpose.

*Strategies:*

- Gradual Release of Responsibility:
  1. *I do it* – teacher models
  2. *We do it* – guided practice
  3. *You do it* – independent attempt

## Offer Clear, Specific Feedback

**What:** Feedback should tell students how to improve, not just how they performed.

**Why:** Informative feedback helps students understand that success is within reach and gives them tools to achieve it.

### Examples:

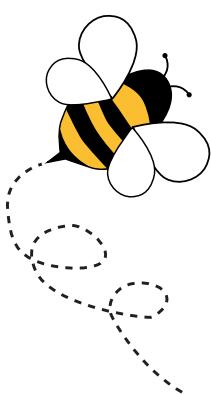
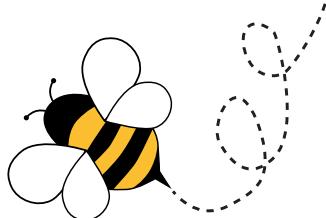
- Instead of: "Good job"  
Use: "You backed up your point with a relevant quote—next, add an explanation of how it supports your argument."
- **Maths:** "You correctly found the mean. Now check if you used all the numbers in the dataset."

### Tips:

- Use **live marking** or **dot marking** to provide fast, actionable feedback during the lesson.
- Use **success criteria** or rubrics to help students self-evaluate.

## Classroom Application Walkthrough

Phase	Teacher Strategy	Purpose
Start of Lesson	Retrieval quiz with scaffolded questions	Creates early success
New Learning	Model step-by-step using visualiser	Builds clarity and confidence
Guided Practice	Students complete task with partner + scaffold	Shared success, reduced fear
Feedback Loop	Teacher circulates, live marks work, gives micro-feedback	Real-time improvement + affirmation
Independent Practice	Students attempt task solo, refer to example	Transfer of skill, growing belief



## STRATEGY 9

# Reducing Cost

*Making it easier - mentally, socially, and behaviourally - for students to engage with learning*

### What Does It Mean to “Reduce Cost”?

In motivation theory, “cost” refers to all the **barriers, effort, and perceived risks** involved in engaging with learning. These include:

- **Cognitive cost:** “This is too hard.”
- **Social cost:** “I don’t want to look stupid.”
- **Executive cost:** “I don’t know where to start.”

“The more barriers to learning you remove, the more likely students are to engage.” — *Peps McCREA, Motivated Teaching (2020)*

Reducing cost doesn’t mean removing challenge—it means **designing the path to challenge in a way students feel able to walk it.**

### Strategies for Reducing Cost (with Examples)

#### A. Lower the Perceived Effort

**What:** Break down complex tasks into bite-sized steps, automate routines, and build habits of thinking.

**Why:** Reduces cognitive overload and makes starting easier.

#### Examples:

- **KS3 Maths:** Instead of asking students to solve a multi-step word problem cold, break it into stages:
  1. Identify the operation
  2. Extract key numbers
  3. Calculate step-by-step
- **KS3 English:** Provide a writing scaffold (sentence starters or paragraph structure) before expecting full independent work.
- **All key stages:** Begin with short retrieval tasks (“Do Now”) to automate knowledge recall.

#### Implementation Tips:

- Use **worked examples** followed by **partially completed problems** (Rosenshine + McCREA)
- Build **routines:** e.g. how to approach a new problem, how to structure a paragraph, how to annotate a text

#### Links:

- **McCREA:** Reduce effort cost to increase motivation
- **Rosenshine:** Small steps + guided practice
- **Lemov:** Do Now, Exit Ticket, At Bats (repetitive practice)

#### B. Minimise Social Risk

**What:** Reduce the fear of embarrassment or failure in front of peers.

**Why:** Fear of being wrong can be more demotivating than the challenge itself, especially for low-confidence learners.

#### Examples:

- **Think-Pair-Share** before Cold Calling:  
KS4 History: "How would you define imperialism in your own words?"
  1. Think individually
  2. Pair and share
  3. Teacher Cold Calls a few pairs
- **Anonymous quizzing tools** (e.g., mini whiteboards or exit tickets) allow all students to try without public failure.
- **Reinforce a culture of error:** Celebrate mistakes as part of learning.
  - "That's a great mistake—we can learn from that!"

#### Practical Techniques:

- Use **No Hands-Up** questioning to prevent only confident students answering (Rosenshine + Lemov)
- Frame errors positively using "**Warm/Strict**" **feedback**
- Use **Turn and Talk** to create low-risk rehearsal space

#### Links:

- *McCrea*: Students avoid effort if they fear failing in front of others
- *Rosenshine*: Check understanding frequently, correct errors supportively
- *Lemov*: Cold Call, Turn and Talk, Culture of Error

## C. REDUCE DECISION FATIGUE

**What:** Keep classroom structures predictable and choices purposeful to avoid overwhelming students.

**Why:** Every decision uses cognitive energy. Too many options can lead to inertia.

#### Examples:

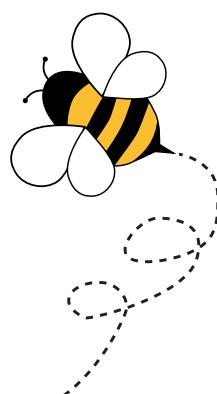
- **Classroom routines:**
  - Always begin with a "Do Now" on the board
  - Have a clear layout for every lesson (e.g., Learning Objective → Explanation → Practice → Review)
- **Limit task options:**
  - KS3 DT: Instead of "design anything you want," say "choose from these three templates."
  - KS4 English: Offer two essay questions, not five.
- **Repetition in structure:**
  - Paragraphs always follow PEEL
  - Science investigations always follow the same write-up format

#### Teacher Tips:

- Create **default behaviours** (e.g., "When I ask a question, we Think-Pair-Share")
- Make the environment **intuitive and navigable** (resources in same place, transitions clear)

#### Links:

- *McCrea*: Minimise cognitive load that doesn't serve learning
- *Rosenshine*: Routines and habits build fluency
- *Lemov*: Strong Start, What to Do, Positive Framing



## Classroom Walkthrough: “Reducing Cost” in Practice

Phase	Teacher Action	Student Benefit
Lesson Start	Do Now on board + retrieval quiz	Early success + zero decision-making
Input	Short explanation + worked example	Low effort start
Practice	Scaffolds + Think-Pair-Share + Cold Call	Risk-free rehearsal + inclusive talk
Independent	Clear task model + only two choices	Limits effort + encourages commitment
<b>Feedback</b>	Immediate, specific, supportive	Correct misconceptions safely

## Common Pitfalls and Solutions

Pitfall	Better Practice
“Reducing cost” by lowering challenge	Maintain high challenge but increase support
Over-scaffolding leads to dependence	Gradually remove scaffolds (fading)
Cold Calling causes anxiety	Use Think-Pair-Share or prep time first
Too many classroom changes	Stick to consistent routines for behaviour and tasks

## Signs of Impact

- Students are more willing to attempt difficult tasks
- Greater participation in whole-class questioning
- Fewer off-task behaviours caused by confusion or avoidance
- Increased fluency in routines and task completion

## STRATEGY 10

# The Role of Attention in Learning

*“Motivation drives attention, and attention drives memory.” — Peps McCrea*

## Why Attention Matters

Attention is the **gateway to learning**. If students aren't attending to something, they **won't process, understand, or remember it**—no matter how well it's taught.

In *Motivated Teaching*, Peps McCrea argues:

“Attention is a scarce cognitive resource. Motivation allocates attention—and attention drives memory formation.” So, effective teachers must not only capture attention but **sustain and redirect** it consistently throughout the lesson.

## Key Principles for Managing Attention

### A. Attract Attention

Use novelty, emotion, or relevance to **pull student focus**.

#### Strategies and Examples:

- **Use storytelling:**

*History*: “Imagine you’re a teenager in 1914, drafted into the trenches...”

*Why it works*: Creates emotional engagement and narrative structure.

- **Inject curiosity or surprise:**

*Science*: Begin with a weird fact or question: “What’s the most explosive substance on Earth?”

*Why it works*: Sparks interest; students naturally want resolution.

- **Use ‘Hooks’ and mystery:**

*English*: Reveal a strange image or quote to analyse later.

*Doug Lemov link*: Technique 15: The Hook—use something unexpected to engage students from the start.

### B. Sustain Attention

Once students are focused, maintain it by **reducing distractions** and **structuring tasks tightly**.

#### Strategies and Examples:

- **Tight transitions:**

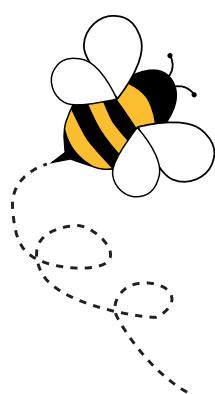
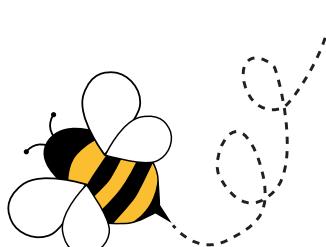
Train students to move from discussion to silence within a countdown (e.g., “3, 2, 1...”).

- **Limit visual clutter:**

Keep displays minimal during instruction. Use one slide/idea at a time.

- **Task simplicity and clarity:**

Clear instructions, one step at a time: “First write your claim. Then add evidence.”



### C. Reset Attention

Use deliberate resets to bring wandering minds back on track.

#### Strategies and Examples:

- **Pacing shifts:**

After 10 minutes of teacher talk, insert a short-paired discussion: “Turn to your partner—what was the most surprising point so far?”

- **Use cues and signals:**

Visual cues (raised hand) or auditory ones (bell, clapping pattern) signal transitions and regain focus.

- **Interactivity every 3–5 mins:**

Use mini whiteboards, thumbs up/down, or choral response.

*Why it works:* Increases engagement and resets attention naturally.

## Classroom Applications

### Sample Lesson Flow with Attention Techniques

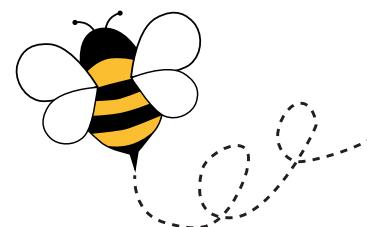
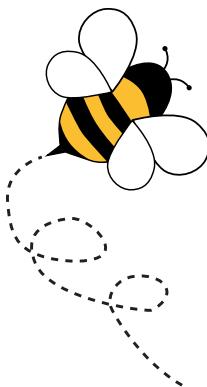
Phase	Strategy	Example	Effect on Attention
Starter	Curiosity Hook	“Why do we still study Shakespeare?”	Engages interest from the start
Instruction	Small Steps + Clear Explanations	One concept per slide; paired examples	Maintains clarity and focus
Practice	Cold Call + Guided Practice	Ask specific students to explain the process	Keeps everyone mentally engaged
Reset/Review	Turn and Talk / Whiteboards	“Summarise the main idea in 6 words”	Re-engages minds after input
Wrap-Up	Story Callback	Revisit original question via short anecdote	Reinforces learning through narrative

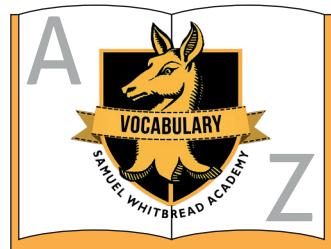
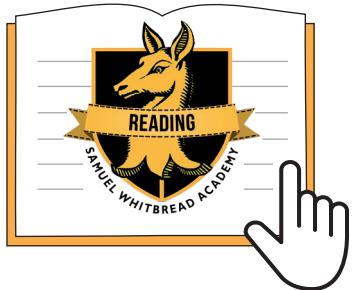
## Signs of Effective Attention Management

- Fewer side conversations and distractions
- Students respond promptly to cues
- Active participation from all learners
- Students can summarise key points after instruction
- High engagement even during guided or independent practice

## Common Pitfalls (and How to Avoid Them)

Pitfall	Solution
Overuse of passive listening	Insert interactive elements (Cold Call, Think-Pair-Share)
Inconsistent attention cues	Use consistent signals and train routines
Stimulus overload (visual/audio)	Simplify classroom visuals; keep auditory space clean
Low task clarity	Give one instruction at a time; check for understanding





# LITERACY



# What is Literacy?

Underpinning all of our teaching and learning principles are the fundamental skills of reading and writing. In order for students to access the curriculum, they must be able to read for meaning and write with fluency; this is especially important as students need the skills to express themselves clearly for an external audience when taking terminal exams and NEAs, but also in higher education and to aid employability.

According to Alex Quigley, explicit teaching of reading and writing lies at the heart of a great curriculum. The key to effective literacy is:

- helping students to decode text features and structures that make up much of their academic school reading and writing
- teaching subject-specific reading and writing strategies that are well-suited to specialist subject domains
- teaching strategies such as 'reciprocal reading', whereby students are trained (with explicit modelling by the teacher) to take on the role of 'predictor', 'questioner', 'clarifier' and 'summariser'
- the act of summarising what's been read, or asking questions - research on students shows that many average readers in fact don't read with the aid of these apparently obvious methods of building understanding
- simply modelling summarising, whether that be through utilising the Cornell note-making method or verbally summarising and synthesising a textbook chapter, helps embed approaches to reading tricky texts that will aid our students in both understanding and remembering what's been read

<b>Excelling Reading</b>	In all lessons, my activities are designed with reading in mind. When introducing subject specific vocabulary, I provide students with a glossary of key terms and take time to explain what the words mean in this context - I am very careful not to assume knowledge. In my lessons, I give all students the opportunity to read aloud and to be read to. I stop reading frequently to check for comprehension and understanding of key words. I employ a range of reading strategies such as spelling out a word phonetically or looking at the etymology of a word to help students gain meaning from unfamiliar words and phrases. Before reading, I ask students to recap and make prior connections by asking them to consider what they already know and then as reading is taking place I ask them what am I learning as I read this? And finally, I end by asking the question: what have I learnt having read this? I ask students to engage with the reading either through comprehension questions or by asking students to summarise what they have read by selecting keywords from the paragraph and locating the topic sentence in the text they have read. I am very mindful about the range of texts I offer and I often model reading for students by sharing current articles or stories that I have recently engaged with. I often give pre and post learning homework tasks based on reading and I always follow up the next lesson to gauge students' understanding of what they have read.
<b>Excelling Writing</b>	In all lessons, my activities are designed with writing in mind. When introducing subject specific spellings, I help students break down the word into syllables or give them a mnemonic to help them remember the spelling or explain the etymology of the word. Before asking students to write, I model the response beforehand using the I, we, you approach. I always ask students to consider the audience and purpose of their writing and how this might influence the tone and style. I focus on, and model, correct use of grammar and encourage students to craft their sentences for maximum impact, asking them to think of their topic sentences and how this might guide the rest of their response. I also show examples of writing from my subject/discipline and always discuss with my students how a historian/artist/engineer would write and show models of this in real world scenarios. When marking, I always correct errors and give students time to correct these as part of their MRI.
<b>Embedding Reading</b>	In nearly all lessons, my activities are designed with reading in mind. When introducing subject specific vocabulary, I provide students with a glossary of key terms. In my lessons, I give all students the opportunity to read aloud and to be read to. I stop reading frequently to check for comprehension and understanding of key words. Before reading, I ask students to recap and make prior connections by asking them to consider what they already know and then as reading is taking place I ask them what am I learning as I read this? And finally, I end by asking the question: what have I learnt having read this? I ask students to engage with the reading either through comprehension questions or by asking students to summarise what they have read by selecting keywords from the paragraph and locating the topic sentence in the text they have read. I am very mindful about the range of texts I offer and I often model reading for students by sharing current articles or stories that I have recently engaged with. I often set reading for homework with relevant tasks to help students engage with the text.
<b>Embedding Writing</b>	In nearly all lessons, my activities are designed with writing in mind. When introducing subject specific spellings, I give students time to read the words and check for understanding. Before asking students to write, I model the response beforehand using the I, we, you approach. I focus on, and model, correct use of grammar and ensure that all questions and responses are always written in full sentences with a capital letter to begin and full stop to end. I also show examples of writing from my subject/discipline and always discuss with my students how a historian/artist/engineer would write and show models of this in real world scenarios. When marking, I always correct errors and give students time to correct these as part of their MRI.
<b>Establishing Reading</b>	In most lessons, my activities are designed with reading in mind. When introducing subject specific vocabulary, I provide students with a glossary of key terms. In my lessons, I give all students the opportunity to be read to. I stop reading frequently to check for comprehension and understanding of key words. I ask students to engage with the reading either through comprehension questions or by asking students to summarise what they have read by selecting keywords from the paragraph and locating the topic sentence in the text they have read. I am very mindful about the range of texts I offer and I often model reading for students by sharing current articles or stories that I have recently engaged with. I often set reading for homework.
<b>Establishing Writing</b>	In most lessons, my activities are designed with writing in mind. I ensure students have a list of subject specific words and expect them to be spelt correctly when used. I give students sentence starters to help with their writing and to aid their sentences. I focus on, and model, correct use of grammar and ensure that all questions and responses are always written in full sentences with a capital letter to begin and full stop to end. When marking, I always correct errors and give students time to correct these as part of their MRI.

## LITERACY:

# Developing Academic voices

Academic writing is an essential skill for many of our subjects at both GCSE and A-level. Students must be able to write academically and adopt a subject specialist/expert voice within their writing that is fluent and sophisticated.

### STEP 1

#### Pre-planning

Consider the sophisticated nature of your subject's writing and the structures and nuances that exist within extended texts. Undertake some CPDL and become confident with the greater emphasis that is placed on grammar and how experts weave a line of enquiry or argument through different stages within a piece of work.

### STEP 2

#### Designing the Task

Read and select several examples of academic writing. Age-appropriate models may be difficult to find, so write a sample together as a department which clearly deconstruct academic writing and will enable you to highlight to students how the writing has been structured. The exercise should be to reverse from the final text all the way back to the original plan, thus highlighting the principles upon which the piece of academic writing is based.

### STEP 3

#### In the Classroom

Once you have carefully read the models and reduced the extended pieces to the original writing plan ask students to create word diagrams for the main ideas, grouping and linking them until there is one overarching idea that contains all of the sub-ideas. This in turn becomes the thesis of the text whereby all component parts are explored within the essay. It is likely that you will need to complete this activity several times.

Once you have deconstructed the argument, students can look at the specific grammatical features. Highlight the use of modal verbs which allow writer's to explore ideas rather than to be definitive. Three helpful categories:

Possibility: could, might, can or may

Deduction: could, may or must

Expectation: will, shall or should

### STEP 4

#### Review

Note all misconceptions and challenges that students had during this activity. Build in ample time for extended writing opportunities. It is important that students read their writing aloud. This performance element allows them to gauge the tone of their work and forces them to listen for their 'academic voice'.

### STEP 5

#### Opportunities to Extend the Knowledge

Consider the work of Hayot (2014) who defines five levels of paragraph content to create momentum and connection. You may wish to use this as the scaffold for students to complete their own academic writing.

Level 5 - most abstract

Level 4 - theoretical sub-statements

Level 3 - balances the evidentiary and conceptual

Level 2 - allows students to contextualise evidentiary content

Level 1 - most basic: plot, summary, quotation or data.

Hayot encourages the idea of an uneven U-shape to guide academic writing: 4-3-2-1-2-3-4-5, ending with the abstract, conceptual idea.

## LITERACY:

# Disciplinary Writing

Disciplinary writing is the different writing styles each subject uses. In the course of a typical school day, students may need to write about the form of a poem and also the form of a painting. They may need to write a hypothesis in science and an introduction in psychology. We, as teachers, have a responsibility to guide our students through this process and make it clear to them how to write like a...

### STEP 1

#### Pre-planning

When planning for disciplinary writing, show students as many examples as you can and use modelling and scaffolding to show the structure they are trying to emulate in their own work. In English, we refer to slow writing, where we break down the writing task, sentence by sentence for students, for example we may ask students to start their essay by using the phrasing of the question and then develop this into a point of their own. Although this takes time, by the end, students have a completed essay/story which has all of the components needed to be successful in the subject.

### STEP 2

#### Designing the Task

Think about what is needed to be successful when writing like a...

- Is the writing in continuous paragraphs or are sub-headings required?
- Is first or third person used?
- Is the active or passive voice required?
- How are quotes/evidence embedded?
- What adverbials are used?
- Within the wider document, how would each paragraph need to be structured?

As teachers, writing in our discipline is second nature, our students are having to writing in a range of styles across a range of disciplines. Breaking down what our subjects require is really important for our students as novice/budding writers. Don't take it for granted that they know.

### STEP 3

#### In the Classroom

In the classroom, focusing on key subject specific vocabulary is a key place to start. What do the command words 'analyse', 'evaluate', 'synthesise' mean within your context?

Before writing, look at a range of exemplars and models. As a class, dissect these examples and decide what makes them successful? Complete a word, sentence and text level analysis of the text and come up with a list of criteria for students to use.

Using a visualiser to complete a slow write approach or use I, We, You approach to guide students through the writing process, stopping and reflecting with students to ensure all students are able to complete one stage before moving onto the next.

### STEP 4

#### Review

Put some student examples under the visualiser and explore what makes them successful. Ask students to identify how students have written like a...make the reasons as concrete and specific as you can.

Once modelling for the class, ask students to self-assess or peer-mark their own writing against the success criteria.

### STEP 5

#### Opportunities to Extend the Knowledge

There is a wealth of research on this topic, please see some of the references below for additional information on this topic.

## LITERACY: **Say it Again**

Say it again, but better – asking students to articulate their thoughts clearly and speak in full sentences can help to develop understanding as well as support written skills. Having an expectation in your classroom where you never accept a first response can encourage deeper learning from your students.

### STEP 1

#### **Pre-planning**

This technique should enable you to set the standard for the depth of verbal responses you expect from your students and support them to achieve it. Regularly accepting shallow low-level verbal responses sets low expectations.

### STEP 2

#### **Designing the Task**

Plan a range of questions to ask students during the course of a lesson to your students.

Consider possible misconceptions which may arise.

### STEP 3

#### **In the Classroom**

Once a question has been posed give students time to think about the question and prepare a response.

Acknowledge the first response that you get and be as positive as you can. For example, “That’s a good start, let’s try to develop it further.”

Invite your students to think about specific ways they could improve their answer.

For example, “Say it again please - what is the more formal/technical term for that idea?” Or, “Say it again please - can you include a reason for that opinion to support your point?”

### STEP 4

#### **Review**

After exploring ideas that might improve their answer, ask the same student to have another attempt at answering the question.

This is important as listening to their new attempt gives you the opportunity to check their understanding as well as giving them the chance to practise and feel more successful.

Decide if the new answer is improved enough for affirmative praise or if there is value in adding more detail.

### STEP 5

#### **Opportunities to Extend the Knowledge**

The feedback process can be repeated for another response that is even better.

# Read like a LINGUIST



## Discover the context of the writing

How does the title or the introduction of the text give you clues to help you understand it?



## Look for cognates

Can you find words which look and/or mean the same in French/Spanish and English? Be careful of false friends!



## Identify the subject of the verb

Who is doing the action? Think of the appropriate pronouns (je, tu, il, elle, on, nous, vous, ils, elles)



## Identify the tense of the verb

What time phrases help you identify the tense? What prior knowledge supports you with your understanding?

"One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way."

# Write like an ENGINEER



## Documenting Engineering Processes

How can you document the steps and procedures followed in an engineering process? What details and information should be included to allow others to understand and replicate the process?



## Communicating Design Concepts

Can you articulate and convey design concepts or ideas? What strategies can you use to describe engineering designs, their features, functions, and rationale? What can you use to enhance the clarity of your written communication?



## Writing Project Proposals

How can you develop a persuasive project proposal, including the problem statement, objectives, methodology, and expected outcomes? What evidence or research can you provide to support?



## Evaluating Engineering Solutions

Can you evaluate engineering solutions based on given criteria or design specifications? What criteria can you use to judge the effectiveness, efficiency, and safety? Can you identify areas for improvement, suggesting modifications, or proposing alternative approaches?

# Read like a GEOGRAPHER



## Look for key geographical vocabulary

Do you know what all the key terms and concepts mean? How can you improve your understanding?



## Interpret data, illustrations and charts carefully

What is the data showing? What can you infer from the data? Is it what you would expect based on your geographical knowledge? Is it reliable?



## Critique what you have read

Who wrote it? When was it written? Is there bias? Is it a reliable source?



## Look for links with things you already know

Where have you heard these words or concepts before? What prior knowledge do you need to fully understand?

"The world cannot be understood without numbers, and it cannot be understood with numbers alone."

# Write like a MATHEMATICIAN



## Solving Mathematical Problems

How can you present your mathematical problem-solving process clearly and logically? What steps or strategies can you use to solve mathematical problems efficiently?



## Checking your working out and final answer

Have you used a calculator to cross-check your answers, especially for complex calculations or equations? Can you explain the steps involved in using a calculator to check your work and ensure consistency with your calculated answers?



## Clearly Displaying Data

How can you ensure that the axis of graphs or diagrams are clearly labelled with appropriate units and scale? Have you included a key when representing multiple categories in a graph?



## Justifying Mathematical Reasoning

How can you provide logical and coherent explanations? What mathematical properties, theorems, or rules can you apply to justify your steps and conclusions?

"Do not worry about your difficulties in Mathematics. I can assure you mine are still greater."

"Science can amuse and fascinate us all, but it is engineering that changes the world."

# Habits of DISCUSSION



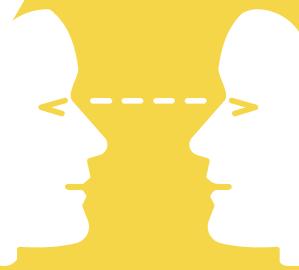
Body language



Careful listening



Volume of voice



Track the speaker



Use of names



Connect ideas

- "Can you summarise what the speaker just said in your own words?"
- "Could you repeat the main point made by the speaker?"
- "What evidence or examples did the speaker provide to support their argument?"

SAMUEL

- "Can you address your response directly to [name]?"
- "Thank you, [name] - can you expand on the idea presented by [name]?"
- "Does anyone have a different perspective to add to [name]'s comment?"

- "I would like to see everybody track the speaker, please."
- "Can you refer back to the earlier point made by the speaker and add your thoughts?"
- "Did anyone hear an important detail that was mentioned by the speaker?"

- "Could you speak a bit louder so that everyone can hear your valuable contribution?"
- "Can you adjust your voice volume to ensure that your point is heard by all participants?"
- "Remember to project your voice so that your ideas are clear and audible."

- "Can you draw a connection between the speaker's point and a concept we discussed earlier?"
- "How does the current idea relate to the previous topic we explored?"
- "Can you build on the speaker's argument by offering a counterpoint or an additional perspective?"

- "Let's make sure we are tracking the speaker as they share their thoughts."
- "Can you show agreement or support for the speaker's idea through a nod or positive gesture?"
- "Try to keep your body posture open and engaged, showing that you are actively listening."



# TRACKING MY IMPROVEMENT

# **“Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better.”**

**Dylan Wiliam**

Samuel Whitbread Academy stands by its mantra ‘To Improve, Not Prove’. All activities are designed with this at the very heart because we believe every staff member has the capacity and the desire to improve their pedagogy and practice.

The following activities enable our thread of improvement to run throughout the Academy:

- Learning observations
- Learning walks
- Book carousels
- Whole school CPD
- Subject specific CPD
- Department development plans
- Appraisal objectives
- SLT secondments
- The Anthecology
- Iris Connect
- Subscription to the National College

This section of The Anthecology enables you to track your CPDL and complete activities which in turn should improve the quality of appraisal conversations and allow you to discuss your evidence and actions with ease; as well as, shape your contributions and discussions regarding the Department Development Plan.

## CPDL Log

We have two Inset Days this academic year that are not going to be delivered in person. Instead, the Academy in line with our mantra 'to improve, not prove' have disaggregated these and you will complete personalised professional development focused on pedagogy and practice, at a time that is convenient to you. For Inset Day 4 we ask that wherever possible you use The National College platform or the CPDL packages available through Iris and record this in the table below.

CPDL Title	Date Completed	Key Learning Summary

## CPDL Log

The second disaggregated Inset Day of this academic year is to be used to complete personalised professional development focused on subject knowledge and curriculum expertise, at a time that is convenient to you. For Inset Day 5 we ask that you undertake relevant CPDL that develops your own subject knowledge and confidence, and record this in the table below.

CPDL Title	Date Completed	Key Learning Summary

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