Mossbourne Federation

Habits for expert teaching

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We are what we repeatedly do… therefore excellence is not an act, but a habit'

— Will Durant paraphrasing Aristotle in The Story of Philosophy (1926)

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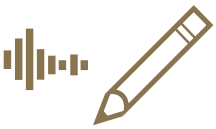

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1. Planning from a sequenced curriculum

Rationale
The curriculum is most helpfully seen as a narrative, deliberately structured so that students learn, remember, and make connections over time. It is the vehicle with which teachers guide students to develop increasingly complex mental models. All lessons should be seen as episodes within a coherent whole, using teachers' knowledge of their subject and the students in their class to develop their declarative (fact-based) and procedural (skill-based) knowledge and enhance their mastery of the subject.

We...	So that...
Know our students	
use pupil data (eg. prior attainment, SEN/ EAL/PP groupings and reading ages) to inform our planning	all students can access the lesson content and experience success.
think carefully about the needs of our pupils and adjust our lesson content accordingly	all students can access the lesson content and experience success.
Know our subject	
demonstrate strong subject knowledge	students develop a detailed and accurate understanding of the subject matter.
demonstrate strong disciplinary knowledge	students develop a shared understanding and expertise of their subject and its complexities.
Break concepts down	
identify and break down the key concepts needed to succeed in the lesson into manageable and logically sequenced chunks	all students can access the lesson content and experience success.
anticipate misconceptions and build them into lesson planning	students can understand and avoid mistakes.

We...	So that...
Sequence our lessons	
use schemes of work and curriculum maps to plan where knowledge will be introduced and revisited	students can build schema and commit core knowledge to their long-term memory.
carefully plan lessons as episodes in logical sequences of learning, considering start and end points	students can build schema and commit core knowledge to their long-term memory.
Share lesson aims	
make the aims of the lesson (what students should know / be able to do by the end) clear to students	students can understand how the lesson content is relevant to their learning journey.

Reflection questions:

Is the overall aim of the lesson (what students should know/beable to do by the end) clear?	Is new material connected to the class's existing schema of subject knowledge or skill?
Are data and schemes of work used to plan so that all students can access the learning?	Are misconceptions anticipated and addressed at the planning stage?
Does this lesson fit within the medium — and long-term curriculum?	How does core knowledge taught in this lesson support future learning?
Has lesson planning considered the prior knowledge required for students to be able to succeed in this lesson?	Where appropriate, are opportunities taken to exploit cross-curricular links to show the connectedness of subjects?

2. Behaviour and routines

Rationale

We want the climate for learning to be positive, disciplined and safe so that all students can succeed; great teachers create a supportive environment for learning. It is one in which students are motivated, supported and challenged and have a positive attitude towards their learning. This relies on teachers owning their classrooms by establishing a strong learning culture through the consistent use of whole-school routines, processes and systems. This will result in positive and professional relationships between teachers and students that will enable teachers to teach without interruption and support our students to flourish.

We...	So that...
Embed routines	
make routines simple, consistent and predictable for students (especially entry and exit routines)	students can start tasks quicker and experience success sooner.
immediately engage students in their learning at the start of every lesson	students understand that every moment in the classroom counts.
Build positive relationships	
encourage students through verbal praise, reward, and positive re-enforcement	students feel like their efforts and achievements are recognised.
promote interactions and relationships with all students that are based on mutual respect, care, empathy and warmth	a trusting culture is established, and respect for the integrity and authority of the teacher is promoted.
ensure students respect and pay attention to each other's thoughts, and feel safe to express their own thoughts	clear respect between teacher/student and student/student alike is established.
Control our classroom climate	
control the pace of the lesson through planned activities, intonation, and time keeping	students remain focused and engaged.
insist on silence and active listening when the teacher is speaking	students listen carefully and aren't distracted.

We...	So that...
Control our classroom climate (continued)	
insist on pens or pencils are down during explanations unless explicitly instructed otherwise	students' attention is focused.
use non-verbal cues to reinforce desired behaviors	learning is not disrupted.
Pro-actively manage behaviour	
enforce behavioural expectations through active monitoring, positioning, and sanctioning in line with Mossbourne guidelines	students know what to expect.
expect 100% engagement and swiftly challenge any minimally disruptive behaviours	classrooms are a productive place for learning, and progress is not impeded.
Set High Expectations	
demand high standards of work from all students	students work hard to ensure their work meets the expectation set.
demand consistent and self-motivated application to learning	students work hard to ensure their work meets the expectation set.

Reflection questions:

Are students immediately engaged upon entry?	Are routines consistent?
Is there a climate of high expectations, high challenge and high trust?	Are students encouraged through praise and positive reinforcement?
Are behavioural expectations explicit?	Are praise and sanctions used consistently to enforce expectations?
Is there zero tolerance of any disruptive behaviour, however minimal?	Are infractions responded to through the least intrusive intervention?
Is classroom space used effectively to support and monitor students?	Is there silence and active listening when teacher or student speaks to the class?
Is the pace of activities and tasks appropriate?	

3. Scaffold and challenge

Rationale

Teachers should use their knowledge of the subject and their students to set challenging learning goals, pre-empt challenges within lessons, and provide temporary scaffolds to manage the cognitive load and support the needs of their students; the scaffold and adapted teaching gives a softer entry, but the learning destination remains the same. Great teachers know that taking the scaffold away as ideas and procedures become more fluent and secure is key. Knowing your students well will enable you to make the best decisions about how to adapt your delivery and task design to ensure they learn effectively and enjoy your lessons.

We...	So that...
strive to understand the child, their abilities and learning on an individual level	we have an in-depth knowledge of their capabilities and how to support and stretch them.
meticulously plan tasks to ensure that they are accessible to every student within the classroom. This is supported by clear explanation and modelling of how to complete tasks.	students can access work and begin tasks immediately, expecting that all students will access the learning.
differentiate resources so that all students can understand and participate fully in each task	students experience success early in their understanding of content and build self-efficacy.
use targeted SEND strategies from the SEND register for individual students	student barriers to learning are minimised and mitigated, ensuring they can access and understand all content.
pre-plan extension exercises for tasks	students are always being challenged. No time is wasted.
collaborate with and deploy TAs effectively during lessons by giving specific direction and responding to TA feedback	Students receive quality support from Teaching Assistants who can aid them in their understanding.
ensure our classroom demeanour and choice of language are consistently optimistic and of a 'can-do' nature	students exhibit increased motivation during lessons and aspire to succeed.
encourage students to view mistakes as opportunities for growth and learning, rather than failures	students develop resilience and feel more comfortable taking risks in their learning.

Reflection questions:

Is the lesson planned relative to student ability and specific learning needs?

Are activities in the lesson sequenced logically to lead to learning success?

Are tasks planned that stretch and are aspirational for all students?

Are explanations broken down so that all students can access the learning?

Is support provided to secure student understanding?

Are more cognitively challenging tasks set for students who have mastered the objective?

Are tasks set that ask students to combine knowledge from this lesson with knowledge from previous lessons?

Are tasks designed to support the deepening of knowledge or proficiency by requiring students to apply what they have learnt to unfamiliar or novel situations?

Is sufficient time built in for more novice learners to master fluency?

4. Explanation

Rationale

Teachers are subject experts who should explain and present new ideas to students so that they can understand and remember them. Explanations should consider the limits of working memory and utilise strategies that guide students' focus and remove distractions. Teachers use concise, appropriate, engaging explanations that connect new ideas to what has previously been learnt, highlighting misconceptions and re-activating/checking prior knowledge.

We...	So that...
dedicate time in lessons to well-planned, pre-scripted teacher-led explanations	Students learn at a faster rate as direct instruction is more effective than asking students to discover new knowledge themselves.
pay attention to, and try to reduce, the cognitive load of new information both verbally and within visual presentations	students are less likely to give up as their working memory is not overloaded.
use concrete examples, non-examples and demonstrations in explanations	students can process and understand new and abstract concepts.
present the same information using two formats e.g. words and images (dual coding)	two routes into working memory are utilised, improving both understanding and retention.
consider economy of language on visual presentations	students can more easily grasp key concepts.
select examples which consider the prior learning and knowledge of students	students can assimilate concepts into, and extend, existing schemas.
use contextual and wider subject knowledge (such as facts, anecdotes, examples and real-world applications) to engage students	students are more likely to connect to the material on a deeper level, retain it and experience a sense of wonder.

communicate passion and enthusiasm for the subject matter	students catch the excitement and joy of learning.
make connections between different concepts or ideas	students can see the bigger picture and experience a sense of joy and wonder at the complexity and beauty of the subject, and of the world.
use language that encourages exploration and discovery, such as ‘Let’s explore this together’ or ‘What do you think will happen if…’	students feel like they’re on a journey of discovery, which can be exciting and joyful.

Reflection questions:

Are explanations concise and precise and well-structured?	Is there evidence of pre-scripting or deliberate practice for explanation of difficult concepts?
Are concrete examples used in explanations to make concepts clear for students?	Are non-examples used to support understanding of a concept?
Are extraneous words and visuals removed from slides or explanations?	Is dual coding used to lighten the load of working memory?
Are difficult concepts broken down into small steps?	Does the teacher check for understanding of these regularly?
Are subject knowledge and anecdote used to explicate and broaden student understanding of, and engagement with, new concepts?	

5. Modelling

Rationale

Through modelling, the teacher shows students the step-by-step process of how they can apply their knowledge or understanding of a skill to a task, activity or practical situation. The models provided should deepen and broaden students' own mental models of our subject disciplines by revealing the thinking of an expert.

We...	So that...
break down difficult concepts into manageable chunks	students are guided through their learning which builds confidence and understanding.
we use 'I do, we do, you do' to model new concepts or processes	students can see the stages and be prepared for practice.
regularly share proficient examples either pre-planned or live, depending on student need	students can see what success looks like — this improves motivation and confidence.
carefully use deficient models and non-examples	students can understand common errors and how to avoid them.
place deficient and proficient models side by side	students can more easily grasp the differences between them.
ensure our live or pre-written models are clear and legible for all learners	they are accessible to all learners.
presentation and layout expectations are modelled	all students meet teachers' expectations for how to layout and present their work.

Reflection questions:

Are expert answers modelled?	Are approaches for unpicking a challenging question modelled?
Are common misconceptions or errors included in deficient models or non-examples so that pupils can explore and overcome them?	Are live and pre-written models used to support student learning at different times?
Are student models shared to praise and raise aspirations?	Are pupils required to engage with models in a meaningful way?
Are the desired behaviours and practices for the classroom modelled?	Is each stage of the processes expertly planned, scripted and delivered?

6. Questioning

Rationale
Questioning should be used for two main purposes—to promote students' thinking and to assess it. Teachers should ask questions to facilitate discussion, stretch student thinking, and help them to understand what students have learnt so that they can adapt their teaching. We question students not to seek right answers, but to uncover misconceptions and address them in the lesson.

We...	So that...
frequently use questioning as a means of further challenging students beyond extension tasks/during the review of exercises	teachers can gauge student understanding and adapt their teaching to address misconceptions.
use cold-call questioning to engage and gauge what the students have understood	students are not able to opt-out of learning.
regularly ask students to explain or justify their answers	students' answers are extended and developed in complexity.
plan key conceptual and hinge questions into our lessons	students can access key concepts and knowledge.
break down complex questions and use strategies such as think-time, and paired or group conversations	students are given time and peer support to form an answer.
use follow-up questioning and support students to refine their answer until they are fully correct	students have a definitive answer to consolidate their understanding.
stay with a pupil when they give a wrong answer to help them, and the class, unpick misconceptions	misconceptions are addressed so that all can learn from them and to reinforce a no opt-out culture.
promote a climate of inquisitiveness and celebrate student curiosity	students become active participants in their learning and enjoy the process of learning.

Reflection questions:

Is open-questioning used to challenge and gauge what students' have understood?

Is closed-questioning used to check students have the necessary factual knowledge to proceed with the lesson?

Has the teacher planned for the key conceptual questions students need to be able to answer in this lesson?

Are complex questions broken down to help guide student thinking?

Are questions used to stretch and challenge student thought?

Are questions targeted at key students and student groups to support and stretch?

Is cold-call questioning used to engage students and ascertain understanding?

Does the teacher use think-time and paired discussion for more complex questions?

Does the teacher ensure answers are developed so they are fully correct by asking follow-up questions and/or rephrasing pupil answers?

7. Practice and retrieval

Rationale

Providing time for students to independently practise allows them to retrieve, apply, and embed the knowledge and skills you have taught them. The key is ensuring that any procedures that are required are fluent and accurate. The practice that students are asked to complete must be planned to allow students to demonstrate mastery of the intended learning. This must routinely take place in lessons for retention to be effective and for learning to stick. Regular, intelligent practice helps schemas to be developed and knowledge to be organised.Forgetting is normal but can be slowed or prevented by periodic revisiting and review — we ensure students practise until learning is fluent, automatic and secure.

We...	So that...
plan for rich opportunities for students to practice new skills and deepen knowledge	students become fluent and flexible with new content.
tailor practice to student need, considering whether they are learning new information, consolidating or embedding	practice is maximally effective.
regularly start lessons with a 'Do Now' activity that revisits previously taught content	students retrieve knowledge and build storage strength.
regularly use low-stakes quizzing to retrieve knowledge	students retrieve knowledge and build storage strength.
use knowledge and retrieval consolidation strategies (such as knowledge organisers) regularly	students have learning aids that support them in retaining information.
tier retrieval activities dependent on student prior attainment	students' durability and flexibility of knowledge increases.
mix topics and space previously taught content to improve retention over time	students are not overwhelmed by the scale of knowledge and are more likely to feel successful.

We...	So that...
meticulously refer to prior learning	student schemas are strengthened.
devise opportunities to practise specific knowledge/skills in isolation	students can build mastery in specific areas of weakness.
We provide opportunities for students to apply learning to novel situations	students build mental models and are prepared to use knowledge flexibly.

Reflection questions:

Is independent practice planned and built into the lesson?	Do any activities revisit previous content?
Is low-stakes quizzing used (regularly) to retrieve knowledge?	Is low-stakes quizzing used (regularly) to retrieve knowledge?
Are knowledge and retrieval consolidation strategies (such as knowledge organisers) used in to support the delivery of the curriculum?	Are different topics interleaved in different lessons to improve retention over time? How has this been sequenced and why so?
Is the planning of lessons/units carefully considered to ensure that knowledge is retained in the long-term memory?	Are students supported in applying retrieved knowledge to novel situations?
Do teachers devise opportunities to practise specific knowledge/skills in isolation, to build mastery?	

8. Literacy and oracy

Rationale
Our students must be able to articulate themselves clearly in both speech and writing to communicate ideas and information. This enhances their cognitive, personal and social development whilst equipping them with the skills required for academic and life success.

We...	So that...
Literacy	
consistently identify spelling and grammatical errors in student writing	students recognise grammatical errors in their work and can correct them independently.
provide students with texts that contain an appropriate level of challenge	students can access texts confidently.
support students' reading comprehension by scaffolding the reading process with pre-, during and post-reading activities	students gain a deeper, more memorable understanding of new vocabulary.
explicitly teach the etymology and meaning of new vocabulary and how to use in context	students gain a deeper, more memorable understanding of new vocabulary.
explicitly check understanding of key vocabulary	students know and can use the key vocabulary needed for success.
support students in identifying contextual clues to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words	students gain a deeper, more memorable understanding of new vocabulary.

We...	So that...
Oracy	
model outstanding oracy through clear and articulate explanation and instruction	students can replicate high levels of oracy in their own speech.
model verbal sentence stems	students articulate their contributions clearly and develop their ideas where relevant.
routinely use oracy prompts as part of our teaching practice	students articulate their contributions clearly and develop their ideas where relevant.
create opportunities for students to discuss, elaborate on, justify, and develop their understanding through discussion with each other	students are given the opportunities to discuss academic ideas with peers when appropriate, building their confidence and connection within the classroom community.
praise and reward students who model excellent oracy, e.g. use formal, subject-specific vocabulary; structure their talk; contribute to class discussion; pose questions; respond to peers constructively; speak clearly and audibly etc.	students are motivated to demonstrate that they can articulate themselves clearly in writing and/or speech.

Reflection questions:

Is precise and accurate use of English modelled?

Are literacy errors systematically identified in student work?

Are common literacy errors re-taught?

Is key vocabulary identified, taught, and tested systematically in lessons?

Are student oral and written responses corrected 'live,' when appropriate?

Are oracy prompts used to ensure students speak clearly?

Are oracy prompts used to extend student oral responses?

Is student oracy celebrated?

Are opportunities taken to develop oracy through responsive questioning?

Are tasks designed to promote effective peer dialogue?

Is paired and group work used effectively and appropriately?

9. Feedback and Assessment

Rationale
Responsive teaching is at the core of effective feedback and assessment. Teachers should frequently check what students have understood, where they are struggling, and where they need to be challenged further. Using this information, they should respond and adapt their teaching to support students to progress. High-quality feedback can lead to an average of eight additional months' progress over the course of a year (EEF).

We...	So that...
assess prior knowledge at the start of topics & plan accordingly	teachers are responsive and can adapt lessons to respond to common misconceptions.
make sure feedback is specific and actionable and demand high-quality corrections, modelling where needed	students know how to improve their work and further progress in their learning.
set aside time in lessons for feedback and plan carefully when students should make corrections and improvements	a culture of improvement is established, and students are supported to improve work accurately.
check-in with students with individual learning needs at the start of/during independent practice tasks	students feel supported and teachers can gauge need for further instruction or explanation.
check understanding through whole-class responses using mini whiteboards/MCQs/ hinge questions at optimal points in the lesson or sequence of learning	teachers quickly gauge whether there is a need for additional instruction or whether they can move on.
use formative and summative assessments to inform lesson planning	knowledge gaps are identified and closed.
Engage with student work and improvements to inform lesson planning	knowledge gaps are identified and closed.
utilise a range of feedback strategies such as verbal, written, and whole-class	feedback is closely tailored to pupil need.
share exemplar models of peer work during feedback	students recognise that success is within their reach and amongst their classmates.

Reflection questions:

Is timely and pertinent feedback driving student progress?

Are students provided with feedback in line with the Academy policy?

Is feedback (verbal, whole-class or individual) manageable, challenging, and actionable to drive progress?

Are teachers using formative and summative assessments to inform their planning?

Are teachers engaging with student work to identify knowledge gaps and inform planning?

Is time set aside within the lesson so that students can respond to feedback?

Is the built-in time for corrections used to circulate and explain misconceptions?

Does circulation occur during practice time to check work and offer verbal feedback?

Can students articulate the progression in their learning? Is this accurate?

What does student attainment data reveal about progress over time?

Are there any notable student progress concerns (groups or individuals)? What interventions are in place?

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