

KILLICOMAINE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



Killicomaine Junior High School

Policy title	Learning and Teaching Policy
Reviewed on	04/09/24
Reviewed by	Mrs Black
Next review date	June 2025
Date ratified by Board of Governors	Available to BOG Sept 24 - tbc

Learning and Teaching Policy 2024

Our Mission:

Working together for excellence within a caring community.

Our School Motto:

Servire Honore

Rationale:

The Governors and staff of KJHS believe that high quality learning and teaching lies at the heart of Killicomaine Junior High. We continually strive to ensure the best outcomes for our pupils, supporting their learning and celebrating both academic and non-academic learning achievements. Prioritising and promoting learning with pupils, keeps it at the centre of school life.

The basis for learning and teaching at KJHS is aligned to the rationale of the revised curriculum for Key Stage 3 which helps “prepare learners to become successful and fulfilled individuals; full participants in society; active contributors to the economy and custodians of the environment for future generations.”
(http://ccea.org.uk/curriculum/key_stage_3)

We want to equip pupils with academic, personal and social skills that enable them to do this. We cannot do this alone. Support from parents is essential, our parents will be encouraged to take an interest in school life and be actively involved in their child’s learning.

Policy Aims:

1. To provide a welcoming, safe and happy learning environment that will facilitate learning.
2. To ensure delivery of the KS3 N.I Curriculum.
3. To support ongoing teacher professional learning (TPL) by providing opportunities for collaboration
4. To encourage and support professional development and aim to further enhance a professional learning community.
5. To learn from each other, sharing good practice, harnessing skill sets within staff and regularly engaging in professional dialogue.
6. To provide an inclusive education for all children and work to ensure equity of provision and experiences for all pupils.
7. Strive to ensure pupils feel valued and supported in the learning process working to achieve pastoral, academic synergy.
8. To establish a shared understanding of what constitutes quality Learning and Teaching considering learning and teaching pedagogy.
9. Develop our pupils as independent self-regulated learners through target setting and metacognitive questioning.
10. Use of effective data to inform learning and promote improvement e.g. CAT, PASS, PTE and PTM.
11. To equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding they require to become lifelong learners.
12. To raise levels of achievement for all pupils, enabling them to achieve their personal best.
13. A whole school approach to developing high quality teaching and to monitoring its quality at departmental and whole school level.

Broadly, the key aspects of Learning and Teaching are:

1. **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:** To provide an environment which facilitates high quality learning.



2. **LEARNING:** To ensure equity of provision and experiences for all pupils and develop processes to monitor learning.

The KJHS Teacher – the Cognitive Coach

Modelling	Chunking	Sequencing	Big Picture Overview	Connecting
Talk tactics	Effective Questioning	Low stakes testing/ A of L	MFI/ Feedback	Differentiation
DIRT time	Use of visual thinking tools (TF)	WAGALL	Literacy Aids: key word lists, sentence starters	iPads/ICT

3. **TEACHING:** Provide high quality teaching by having a key focus on Teacher Professional Learning and sharing practice across the school. Teaching staff have recently engaged in TPL focusing on the role of the Teacher as Cognitive Coach.

The following themes were addressed in relation to the Cognitive Coach.

- Thinking Skills are addressed at every opportunity- explicit use of cognitive processes
- Tools and strategies such as visual mapping technique- Thinking Frames
- Intelligent Learning Behaviours- differentiating thinking skills from thinking ‘dispositions’
- Teacher knowledge- the foundation for thinking
- Reflective Questioning
- Collaborative Networking between colleagues in a Trusted Colleague Network.
- An environment conducive to thinking and learning. *See appendix for objectives.*

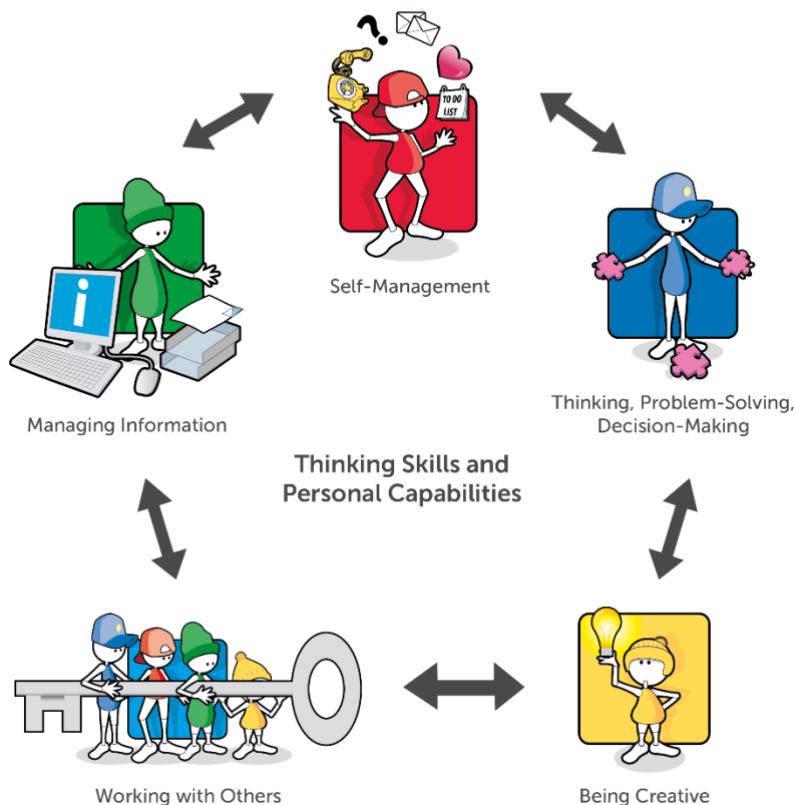
KJHS Common Vision of Learning

At KJHS, we endeavour to equip pupils with the skills and capabilities that will enable them to become independent, reflective, lifelong learners.

As a school, we are passionate and committed to engaging pupils in active learning contexts across all areas of the curriculum so that they may develop personal and interpersonal skills; capabilities and dispositions; and the ability to think both creatively and critically by integrating metacognitive tools, for example, Thinking Frames.

In seeking to intentionally develop pupils' metacognitive skills and capacities for self-regulation, the strands within the Northern Ireland Curriculum's Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities will be addressed, i.e.. Managing Information, Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making, Being Creative. Working with Others and Self-Management.

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Framework



Killicomaine Junior High School as a Thinking School



Killicomaine Junior High School has begun a journey with “Thinking Matters” to become a Thinking School and to embed thinking skills across the curriculum and the whole school. Our aim is to develop deeper and more cognitive thinkers within the student body.

At present we have introduced Thinking Frames. These are a particular type of visual tool based on distinctive visual patterns, which help organise thinking/ideas.

Eight Thinking Frames are used to help raise student awareness of the types of thinking required to complete certain tasks (see appendix). Use of the Thinking Frames can help pupils to plan and structure their thinking and can enable them to investigate their own thinking and to see their thinking displayed.

The Thinking Frames are based on an understanding of how connections are made within the brain to aid understanding and memory, especially where words and visual images are combined.

All Thinking Frames are ‘framed’ by a set of double lines which is known as a Reflective Lens. This is a questioning tool used by the teacher or student to ask questions about the thinking displayed in the Thinking Frame. It provides the ‘Lens’ through which the thinking is being viewed or constructed and the opportunity for ‘Reflection’ i.e. thinking about what has been said or put within the Thinking Frame. The Reflective Lens is an opportunity to ask high order thinking questions.

In the explicit development of skills and capabilities using thinking frames for example, we aim to:

- develop pupils’ appreciation of the learning process rather than focusing only on the products of learning;
- develop pupils as active, independent learners rather than passive absorbers of information;
- enable pupils to go beyond the mere recall of information to develop deeper understanding of topics;
- create positive dispositions and habits for learning;
- provide pupils with a new range of criteria against which they can evaluate their progress in learning and develop a greater sense of self.
- develop pupils’ understanding of the transferability of their skills and capabilities; and
- encourage pupils to take ownership of their learning and to recognise the role of the teacher as a facilitator in the learning process.

In summary, we want our pupils to learn how to learn and to think.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Classroom and corridor environment

Creation of a positive, vibrant and safe learning environment across classrooms and corridors.

HOW?

- a) Clean, well resourced, tidy, safe, and litter free classrooms and corridors where pupil work is displayed, celebrated and refreshed regularly. Displays should also aim to enhance learning and provide a stimulating learning environment.

1.2 Language for Learning

“Working relationships are characterised by a climate of openness, trust, mutual respect and care for the pupils.” *ISEF Quality of provision*

- a) All teachers are encouraged to show their commitment to respect, fairness, challenge, support and security. Using positive comments to encourage, showing faith in students’ ability and not using the language of failure.
- b) Demonstrating positive body language
- c) Listening and responding to everyone
- We want to encourage, model and give our children opportunities to say things like.... I do.... because I know.... because and I think.... because.
- d) Enthusiasm for learning from the teacher is transferred to students.
- e) A welcoming atmosphere is key, achieved by the positive relationships between teachers and pupils.
- f) Pupils learn best when they are in an orderly and safe environment. The primary responsibility for creating such an environment lies with the classroom teacher who needs to be familiar with Positive Behaviour Policy and the role every teacher has. Unacceptable behaviour should not be tolerated, and the SIMS Lesson Monitor module should be used.
- g) Consistent and fair implementation of all school policies and expectations regarding behaviour for learning is an important part. (Classroom relationships are built on such actions as: knowledge and use of names thereby greeting pupils appropriately /high expectations/classroom management strategies used effectively.

1.3 Resources

- a) High quality, stimulating resources, and a range of learning activities to stimulate, engage and challenge learners including the use of ICT to enhance learning.
- b) differentiated where appropriate
- c) HOD will have overall responsibility for schemes of work, however, all staff are expected to contribute and collaborate. SLT know that these are working documents- ongoing review is expected.
- d) Lessons are planned- use of the 5-minute lesson plan is promoted to help guide the key components (see appendix)
- e) Planning takes into account information such as SEN/Inclusion/Medical/Pastoral.
- f) Identification and provision of appropriate resources, prioritise requisitions.

1:4 School policies and procedures that will enhance learning and teaching

- a) The implementation of a Pastoral Care System designed to meet the needs of the child and promote learning.
- b) A report process which informs, identifies strengths and areas for improvement and recommends actions.
- c) An Assessment Policy which informs and supports learning.
- d) A homework Policy which supports learning.
- e) A Positive Behaviour Policy that provides clear information and help for staff.
- f) A pupil, parent and staff charter
- g) SDP with a focus on learning and teaching.

LEARNING

The goal is for all pupils to be provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to consistently high levels of pupil achievement and skills for life. There is a recognition that the quality of relationships both inside and outside the classroom, the quality of communication between pupils, staff, parents and others in the learning environment are all factors that are considered.

- a) The application of a comprehensive Inclusion policy to identify and address barriers to learning.
- b) The application of an SEN policy designed to identify and address the needs of all pupils.
- c) The provision of opportunities for Gifted and Talented pupils to be stretched and challenged.
- d) The provision of IEPs to inform lesson planning and resource suitability.
- e) Development and use of Analysis models- Departments and Pastoral
 - establishing what pupils know and can do (baselining)
 - establishing how (if) they are progressing (tracking)
 - establishing over time whether they have improved
 - intervening with those pupils identified as underperforming or struggling to achieve.
- f) All pupils are clear about how they need to improve; feedback is given as a mixture of written or oral. Pupils need to have time to reflect on feedback and work out steps to improve their achievements.
- g) Pupil ownership and responsibility for their learning journey.
- h) Pupils are encouraged to have a learner voice at KJHS. We listen to the views of pupils and/or involve them in decision-making, this is promoted at classroom level. If teachers are taught how to promote high-quality talk, evidence suggests that pupils will make greater rates of progress. *“This is not about letting children chat more in lessons. It’s about teaching talk in the same way as we teach literacy and maths.”* (Professor Neil Mercer).

In Summary, at KJHS;

- Teacher talk is minimal but purposeful,
 - Teacher questions provoke thought and deepen learning,
 - Pupils are invited to develop answers,
 - Pupils ask questions to enhance their learning and
 - Pupils talk with each other about learning.
- i) At KJHS there is a focus on AFL- Assessment for Learning (formative assessment). This is the process of identifying what the learner has or has not achieved in order to plan the next steps in the

teaching or learning. AFL involves the feedback loop of teachers gathering evidence and helps the pupil to know where they are in their learning , where they need to go and how to get there.

Typical AFL strategies may include:

- inform pupils about what they are going to learn and why it will be useful to them;
 - share exactly how their work/learning will be assessed;
 - use a comment-only marking strategy from time to time;
 - mark their work by identifying areas of success and highlighting areas for improvement;
 - encourage them to reflect on their own work, as well as the work of other children in their class, which builds and deepens their understanding of quality;
 - use effective questioning in the classroom(both written and verbal) to stimulate their thinking and deepen their understanding;
 - encourage them to 'have a go' by giving them more time to think of answers to oral questions;
 - value all answers, because making mistakes is part of the normal learning process; and encourage them to be more resourceful and independent in their learning by equipping them with helpful strategies that they can use when they get stuck in their learning.
 - Use of the Feedback Box or 'The Purple Pen.' when marking encourages pupil ownership of their learning. They respond to teacher feedback or reflect on their work.
 - self/peer marking- children will be encouraged to see for themselves what they need to do to improve and discuss it with an adult/partner or work it out independently.



TEACHING

Teaching is a lifetime's craft. *"Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better."* (Professor Dylan Wiliam)

Teachers will also engage regularly in ongoing professional development and engage with internal and external Teacher Professional Learning opportunities. New knowledge on teaching theory and strategies is celebrated and disseminated at our whole school training sessions, during informal conversations and at formal meetings. Teachers regularly engage in professional dialogue in the area of Learning and Teaching to enhance and further build our Professional Learning Community at KJHS.

This is summarised by James Mannion, *"If we are going to get to grips with how to teach children to become confident, independent learners, we need to understand the theory (the why) as well as the practice (the what). In this way, teachers can translate these ideas into practice from first principals, rather than simply taking recommendations off the shelf without a clear understanding of the underlying concepts."*

To achieve the above, consistently high standards of teaching can only be achieved if teachers are properly planned and prepared.

1. SET UP THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

a. Establish an opening routine for pupils that begins prior to entering the classroom.

1b. Class seating plan-

It offers differentiation possibilities.

b. It is evidence that you, teacher has processed the data available for the class.

2.LESSON STRUCTURE: The 5-minute lesson plan (*appendix 1*) outlines the key parts of a lesson:

Lessons will have key features in their structure:

2a. Share the learning

Explain clearly the reasons for the lesson or activity in terms of the learning objectives/intentions. Shared orally and displayed: use of WALT or L Intentions. Refer to them at the start of the lesson and during the lesson. Move away from saying 'today we are doing'....and instead say 'by the end of today's lesson you will all know/be able to/understand....

2b. Linking the lesson to prior learning: reviewing the previous lesson. Eg: *'Think about the three most important things you learnt in the last lesson – now tell your partner..... In two minutes, I am going to ask you what you learnt last lesson. You may talk to your partner if you wish.....Today's lesson is about the water cycle. Jot down on your whiteboards what you already know and work in pairs'*

2c. STARTER-the purpose is to stimulate interest, gauge prior learning and activate prior knowledge. See appendix.

2d TEACHING STRATEGIES:

- Teachers should use a wide and varied range of teaching methods and techniques to engage pupils such as-
- effective questioning- using open ended questions and providing wait time- pupils need time to think through their answers before replying;

providing thinking time by giving an advance warning, such as 'In two minutes I am going to ask you' (see appendix 2)

- taking account of different learning styles (VARK)
- appropriate structure and pace
- active learning activities
- appropriate differentiation. *"In the end, all learners need your energy, your heart and your mind. They have that in common because they are young humans. How they need you however, differs. Unless we understand and respond to those differences, we fail many learners."* Tomlinson, C.A. (2001).
- provision of constructive feedback to assist pupils with reflection and target setting.
- Retrieval practice using low stakes testing
- the appropriate use of ICT including digital learning platforms.
- support for Literacy and Numeracy.
- Appropriate use of Reading, numeracy and CAT scores to inform teaching.
- Teachers provide feedback and it can take many forms other than written comments such as: verbal feedback, questioning strategies, use of talk partners, peer assessment and/or self-assessment.
See appendix- Barak Rosenshein' s Principles of Instruction.

Below is a list of the most effective influences on pupil learning and achievement.

- Student expectations (1.44 - 1st)
- Teacher credibility in eyes of the students (0.9 - 4th)
- Providing formative evaluation to teachers (0.9 - 4th)
- Feedback (0.75 - 10th)
- Reciprocal teaching (0.74 - 11th)
- Teacher-student relationships (0.72 - 12th)
- Meta-cognitive strategy programmes (0.69 - 14th)
- Acceleration (e.g. skipping a year) (0.68 - 15th)
- Vocabulary programmes (0.67 - 17th)
- Comprehension programmes (0.6 - 26th)
- Concept mapping (0.6 - 27th)

3.ASSESSMENT POLICY-

An assessment policy that informs and supports planning. Exams provide Assessment of the learning and provide specific opportunities to review progress and intervene as appropriate.

4.MONITOR- EVALUATION – REVIEW

Staff evaluate whether the learning objectives have been achieved, review also helps inform future planning.

Self-evaluation helps departments and SLT to quality assure standards across the school.
provision of relevant curriculum, differentiated as appropriate.

5. **STAFF DEVELOPMENT** - Identification and provision of relevant staff development to meet the curricular, structural and legal needs of the school and teachers' personal and career aspirations. Teachers

are encouraged and supported to improve the quality of professional practice. RTU/CCEA/post graduate study

6. **REWARDS** Staff will make use of rewards and praise as outlined in the Merit System. Departments may also have structures in place such as praise cards /letters to parents.

At Departmental level:

- I. Each department undertake regular self-evaluation exercises which will draw on a range of sources of evidence including performance data, the views of pupils and parents, lesson observations, scrutiny of pupil work, teacher planning and departmental documentation. This helps quality assure the quality of learning and teaching within each department. Twice yearly SDP reviews are also completed. The purpose of self-evaluation is to identify strengths and areas for development.

Teachers plan their lessons on the basis of well-developed schemes of work, which are regularly reviewed and cover the statutory requirements of the NI Curriculum. **Schemes of work should highlight:**

- Content (from statutory requirements and specifications)
 - Learning Outcomes (The learner will be able to...)
 - Differentiated learning and teaching activities
 - Identified Key Questions & Technical Vocabulary- WOW words/Subject-specific terminology
 - Identify cross-curricular opportunities to develop communication, ICT, numeracy & CEIAG
 - Identify the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities being developed
- II. Individual lessons have clear objectives which are shared with the pupils. (E.g. WALT board)
 - III. There is a good balance of individual, group and whole class teaching.
 - IV. Activities which cater for a range of learning styles such as visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners will be included in lessons where appropriate.
 - V. Teachers build on pupils' prior learning as well as taking account of the personal and cultural experiences of different groups.
 - VI. Pupils receive frequent feedback on their performance, this can be oral or written.
 - VII. Each department monitors, evaluates and reviews the learning that takes place.

Each department sets time aside in departmental meetings to focus on learning and teaching and the sharing of good practice through collaboration. Head of Department will also attend HOD termly meetings and update dept. members accordingly.
 - VIII. All teachers, as lifelong learners, keep up to date with changes in teaching pedagogy and take responsibility for their own professional development. (TPL)

To conclude, the Components of good pedagogy that positively impacts learning.

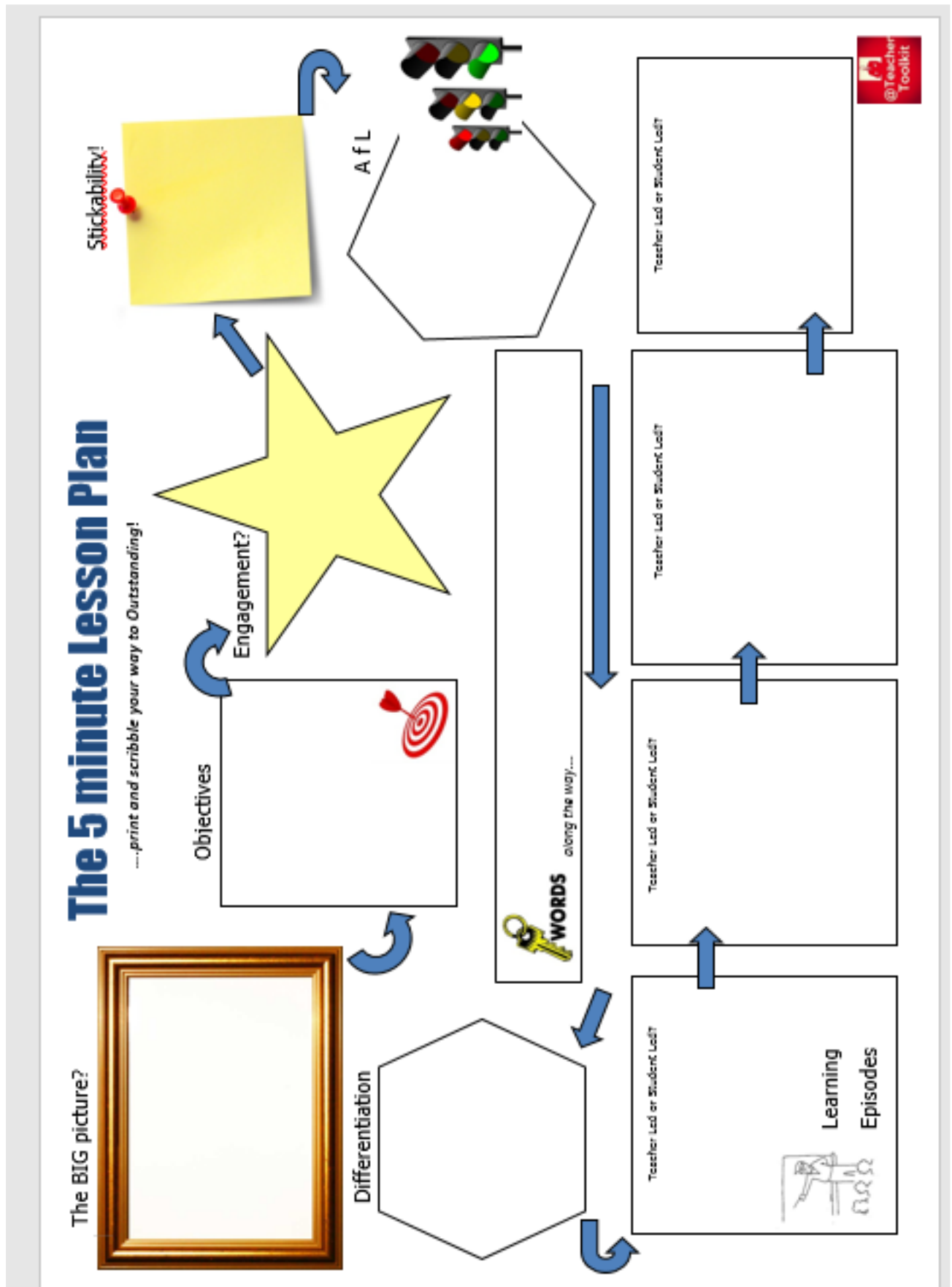
- Teacher's deep subject knowledge and understanding of how learners think and make mistakes.
- Effective questioning and use of assessment by teachers (feedback)
- High quality classroom interactions (ethos), that recognise self-worth (pupil-centered) but are also demanding.
- Effective classroom management ensures a good pace of learning.
- Teacher's belief in what they are doing and why, including their understanding of how learning happens.
- Professional practice of self-reflection (avoidance of complacency, plateau).

Robert Coe et al, Durham University.

Author(s) Mrs Murphy, Mrs
Maxwell and Mrs Black
Aug 2024

Adopted date:

Review date:



APPENDIX 2
EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING AND QUESTION MATRIX

Effective questioning should promote thinking skills.

Effective Questioning Techniques

- Use open questions – (*Bloom’s Taxonomy Teacher Planning Kit*)
- Use wait time – learners need time to think through their answers before replying. (*Pose, Pause, Pounce, Bounce*)
- Allow students to explore and articulate their thinking by giving them two minutes to discuss their responses in pairs.
- Ensure students fully understand the question by asking them to re-word it for someone three years younger.
- Extend and deepen thinking by asking follow-up questions to the same student.
- Help student to deepen their understanding by asking follow-up questions such as: ‘What made you think that?’
- Student will often give the first answer that comes into their head without thinking a problem through. Ask students to identify three possible answers and pick the best one.
- Use ‘snowballing’ to generate a range of possible answers. (*Think of three reasons; now work in pairs and see if you can get five; now work as a group and get eight... now select the best answer.*)



	is	did	can	would	will	might
What						
Where/ When						
Which						
Who						
Why						
How						

Appendix 3

Eight Thinking Frames used by all Departments to structure and support lessons.

The image displays eight thinking frames arranged in a grid, each with a title and a diagram. A central box contains the text "Thinking Frames: Metacognitive Visual Tools". A large, diagonal watermark reads "Making Thinking Visible Common Visual Language".

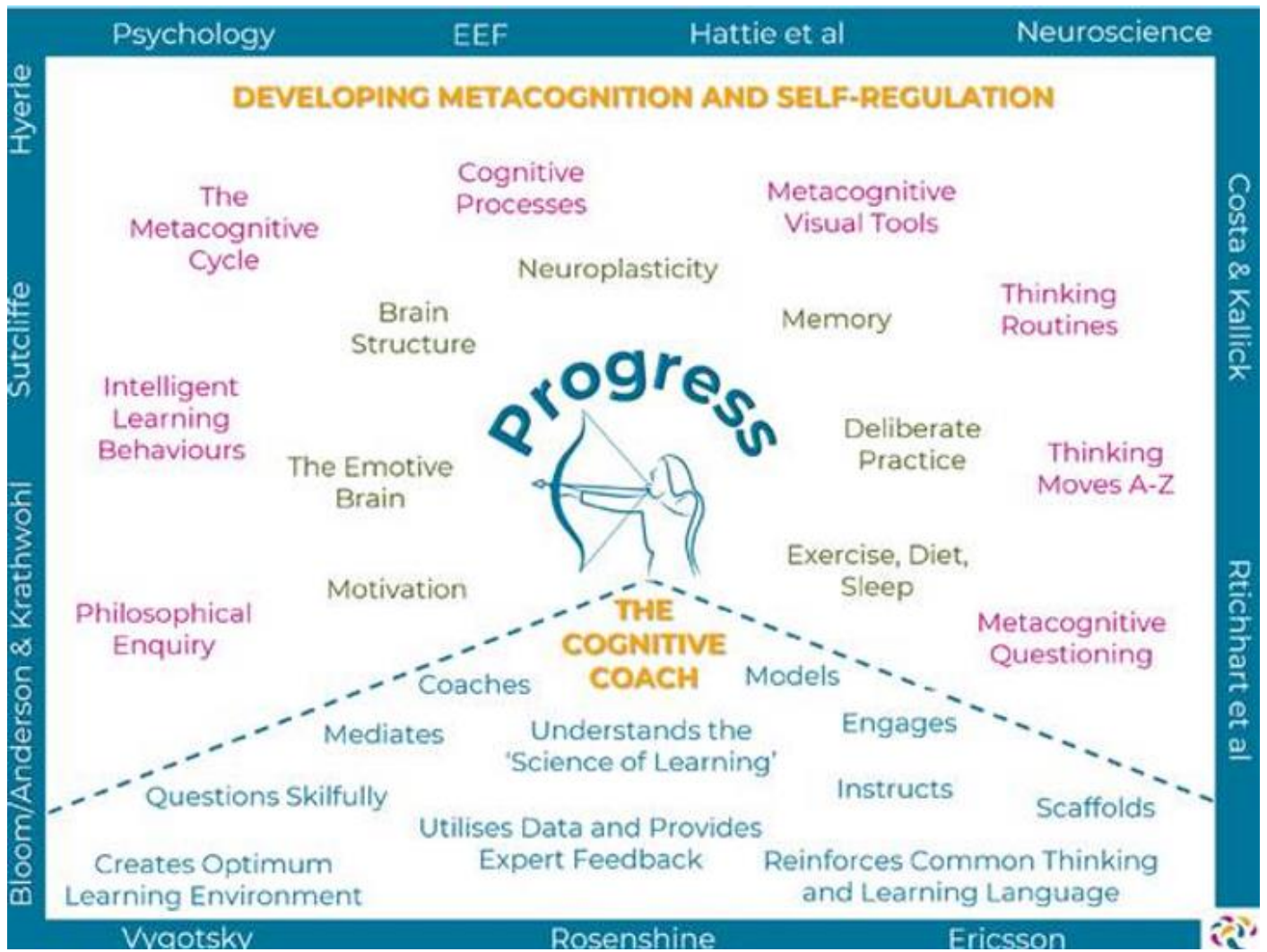
- Defining:** A diagram showing a central box labeled "Focus" surrounded by four boxes labeled "Representative" (top, bottom, left, right).
- Describing:** A diagram showing a central box labeled "Focus" with eight arrows pointing to boxes labeled "Adjective", "Noun", "Verb", "Adverb", "Preposition", "Conjunction", "Interjection", and "Pronoun".
- Sequencing:** A diagram showing a central box labeled "Focus" with four arrows pointing to boxes labeled "First", "Second", "Third", and "Fourth".
- Categorising:** A diagram showing a central box labeled "Focus" with four arrows pointing to boxes labeled "Category", "Example", "Detail", and "Context".
- Cause Effect:** A diagram showing a central box labeled "Cause" with four arrows pointing to boxes labeled "Effect", "Effect", "Effect", and "Effect".
- Whole Part:** A diagram showing a central box labeled "Focus" with four arrows pointing to boxes labeled "Part", "Part", "Part", and "Part".
- Comparing Contrasting:** A diagram showing two central boxes labeled "Compare" and "Contrast" with four arrows pointing to boxes labeled "Similar", "Different", "Similar", and "Different".
- Connecting:** A diagram showing a central box labeled "Connecting" with four arrows pointing to boxes labeled "A", "B", "C", and "D".

Thinking Frames: Metacognitive Visual Tools

Thinking Matters

Whole School Metacognition

**APPENDIX 4
THINKING MATTERS BIG PICTURE**



APPENDIX 5

Lesson Starter Example

SEE
I notice...

THINK
I think that...

WONDER
I wonder why...

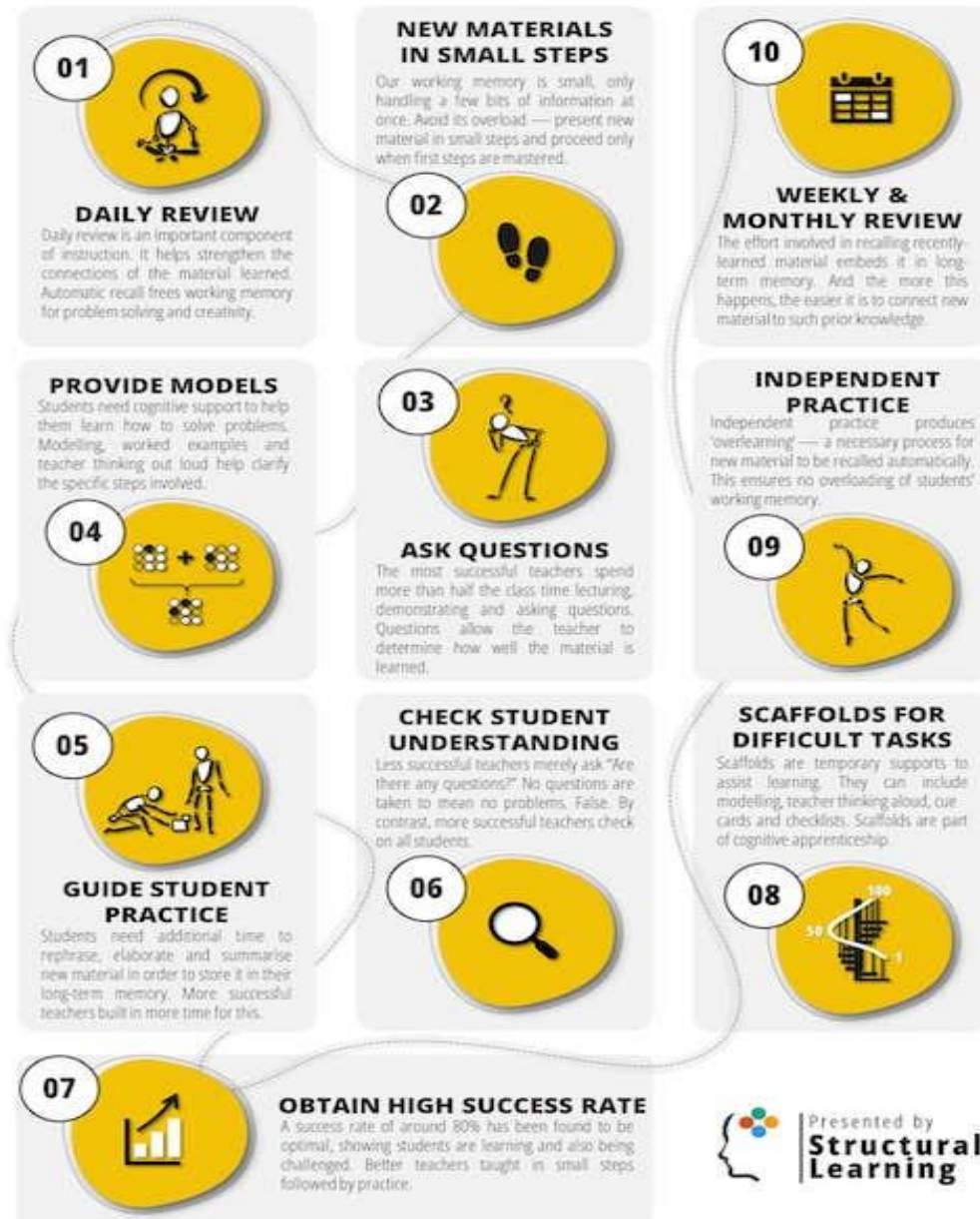
The Reading Roundup

A picture speaks a
thousand words



BARAK ROSENHINE'S

THE PRINCIPLES OF INSTRUCTION



****Ways to achieve**

1. Review/retrieve
2. New materials in small steps
3. Ask questions
4. Provide models
5. Guide student practice-planning
6. Check understanding
7. High success rate
8. Scaffolds- graphic organisers?
9. Independent practice
10. Weekly/ monthly review

