



Educate Together
Academy Trust



High-Quality Teaching

Introduction

What's this document for?

Educate Together Academy Trust aims to create an aspirational achievement culture in all of its schools and classrooms. This document is designed to support high-quality teaching that is based in research and focuses on the most effective teaching approaches. It should be read alongside our Core Offer.

Class teachers
Subject leaders
Trust and school leaders
Classroom support staff

Who's this document for?

How might this document be used?

To assist classroom practitioners in reflections on their practice

As a framework to develop self-improvement plans

To sharpen practice and effectiveness of lesson observations

To highlight where strengths exist within schools/trust

To provide areas for development relating to classroom practice

To assist in target setting for the appraisal cycle

Components of high-quality teaching

Maximising learning through high-quality teaching

“The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment. Ensuring every teacher is supported in delivering high-quality teaching is essential to achieving the best outcomes for all pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged among them.

It is important that schools consider how children learn, how they develop knowledge and skills, and how they can be supported to lay firm foundations for later learning. Teaching approaches that ensure long-term retention of knowledge, fluency in key skills, and confident use of metacognitive strategies are crucial. These are fundamental to learning and are the ‘bread and butter’ of effective teaching.” – Education

For all schools to deliver high-quality teaching, all learning opportunities must consist of 4 key components:

High expectations

Well-prepared

High-quality lesson delivery

Review of the quality of learning

Key components in practice...



High expectations

- Clear models of best practice for staff and children
- Effective staff development which addresses whole- school and individual need
 - Appropriate level of challenge and support for all



Well prepared

- Teachers need to ensure they have excellent subject knowledge
- Teachers have a clear understanding of the abilities and needs of the children in their class
- Learning is well thought through and allows for progression through a subject building on prior knowledge



High quality lesson delivery

- Lessons have a high degree of challenge and support with the necessary scaffolds in place
- New content is clearly explained and modelled for pupil success
 - Assessment strategies are used effectively
- Teachers make efficient and effective use of available lesson time
 - Pupils engaged in their learning and different learning styles are considered to support this



Review the quality of learning

- Feedback has been effective in moving pupils on with their learning
- Assessment informs future planning

Examples of high-quality teaching



Teacher explanation

Teachers are the expert in the room and they have the responsibility to teach new knowledge to their pupils. There are many ways to explain, and different contexts may benefit from different approaches.

Typical features of effective teacher explanation are:

- The process has been deliberately thought through, planned and refined where necessary.
- Teachers will care about the subject matter, and that it is valuable and interesting for its own sake.
- The pace of the lesson will be effective and enable good amounts of content or depth to be covered during the lesson.
- The teacher will know when to question pupils and when to teach directly. They will know the gaps in prior knowledge and vocabulary and will recognise when to pre-teach content.
- Multiple examples will be provided when new content is challenging or abstract. The human brain is receptive to narrative and stories; these should be used where appropriate.
- Discussion and questioning will be used when pupils have a reliable base of knowledge.
- Teachers will use varied methods of assessing understanding that will ensure the brain is not overloaded with new content.



Scaffolding

'Scaffolding' is a metaphor for temporary support that is removed when it is no longer required. Initially, a teacher would provide enough support so that pupils can successfully complete tasks that they could not do independently. This requires effective assessment to gain a precise understanding of the pupil's current capabilities. Support could be visual, verbal, or written. The teacher will gradually remove the support (the scaffold) as the pupil becomes able to complete the task independently.



Modelling is concerned with the explicit demonstration of the steps required and how to achieve the excellence necessary for the written outcome. Ultimately, by actively engaging children in the metacognitive process they are enabled to think more deeply about their learning and become more confident, independent writers.

Typical features of effective modelling.

- Tasks will be clearly explained and steps to success shared through the expanded success criteria. All pupils will be able to complete them with a clear understanding of 'What a good one looks like.'
- Lessons will tend to contain a limited number of tasks, to allow time for teachers to explore models with pupils in depth
- Even small tasks (e.g. a brainstorm, or set of comprehension questions) will include an element of modelling which promotes access and excellence
- Tasks will be both relevant and meaningful and have a good level of challenge
- Feedback on pupil work, e.g. at the end of the lesson, will refer back to the qualities shared in the modelling stage and on the expanded success criteria

When introducing a new written task, the teacher should model the process live to make visible the necessary strategies for success. Using a visualiser, writing on the whiteboard or typing on a projected document, the teacher should narrate the process, thinking aloud to explain what is being done and why. This should also include editing and reflecting on mistakes. Variations on this strategy are:

- The teacher models the entire process, with no input from pupils, demonstrating how they refine and organise their ideas.
- The teacher leads the process but asks targeted questions of the class so that they contribute to the process.
- The teacher asks for suggestions from the pupils; fellow pupils and the teacher reflect on and refine these using the success criteria as a prompt.
- The teacher models the first section/paragraph; the class contributes to the construction of the second paragraph; children write the remainder of the piece independently using the structure and techniques modelled.
- Children work in groups with an identified pupil leading the modelling.
- Children work in pairs to construct a response, talking through the process out loud.



Effective questioning

Effective questioning lies at the heart of great instructional teaching. Teachers need to ask many questions, probe in more depth and take the time to explain, clarify and check for understanding. Examples of effective questioning are:

- **Cold Calling** – through an inclusive ‘no-hands up’ approach all students can be involved in teacher-pupil dialogue.
- **No opt out** – pupils should be given the opportunity to gain confidence by consolidating correct or secure answers. If a child does not know the answer, move to other students, but go back to the first giving them a chance to say the right answer. This provides them with an opportunity for practice.
- **Say it again better** – Provide more than one opportunity to answer. First responses allow pupils to formulate answers but a second opportunity, adding depth, accuracy and sophistication. This approach models that mediocre answers are not sufficient.
- **Think, pair, share** – give groups a specific time-cued task and then ask for feedback. They can explain to the class, each other, take turns to quiz each other or build on each other's answers.
- **Further probing** - make it the default that you will ask several questions before moving on, this will encourage deeper responses. ‘That’s interesting what makes you say that? Is there a different way to say that? Can you give an example of where that happens? Can you explain how you worked that out? Do you agree/disagree with that? Why?’



Cognitive & metacognitive strategies

Cognition is the mental process involved in knowing, understanding, and learning. Cognitive strategies are skills like memorisation techniques or subject-specific strategies like methods to solve problems in maths. Cognitive strategies are fundamental to learning and are the ‘bread and butter’ of effective teaching. Metacognition refers to the ways in which pupils monitor and purposefully direct their thinking and learning. Metacognitive strategies are strategies we use to monitor or control our cognition, such as checking whether our approach to solving a mathematics problem worked or considering which cognitive strategy is the best fit for a task.

↔ Flexible grouping

Flexible grouping describes when pupils are allocated to smaller groups based on the individual needs that they currently share with other pupils. Such groups can be formed for an explicit purpose and disbanded when that purpose is met. It may be that a small group of pupils share the need for more explicit instruction to independently carry out a skill, remember a fact, or understand a concept. Allocating pupils to temporary groups can also allow teachers to set up opportunities for collaborative learning; research has indicated, for example, that collaborative learning can be effective in helping pupils to read history texts.

The cycle of key teaching components

Review the quality of learning

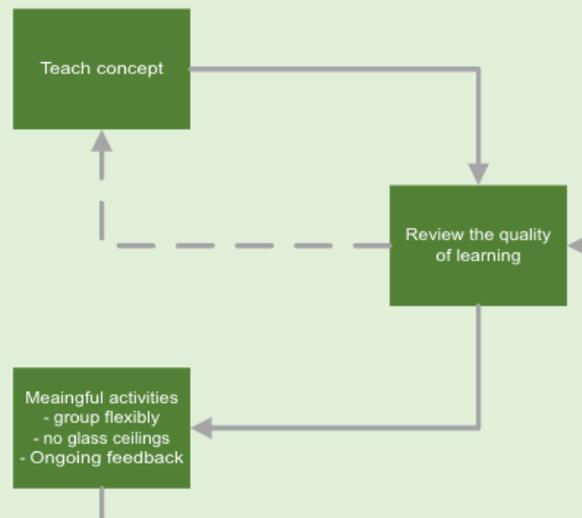
- Assess children's understanding of the lesson (in context of the sequence of lessons)
- Identify individual/group/whole class next steps

Well prepared

- Knowledge of children's starting point
- Know where children need to get to
- Purposeful activities
- Resources ready



High quality lesson delivery



High expectations

These must permeate every aspect of the teaching cycle

Well-prepared

This is intrinsically linked with high quality assessment and a deep understanding of the curriculum

High-quality lesson delivery

There are 3 main components. The interplay and development of these are highly nuanced

Review the quality of teaching

This is an ongoing process that has many different strands

High expectations

Transcend all aspects of the cycle

Career stage expectations

At Educate Together Academy Trust, we expect every teacher to be delivering high quality teaching. However, we also recognise that teachers are at different stages in their career. As such, we have three broad categories of teachers based on where they are in their career: developing teachers, accomplished teachers and expert teachers. We do believe that every teacher should become accomplished but not necessarily expert – these are those that are paid on the upper pay scale.

Developing teachers

Developing teachers are in the first 2 – 3 years of their careers. They will require support to ensure high quality teaching and that they are developing their own 'teaching toolkit'. Levels of support should decrease as they move through their career and develop their teaching practice. Support provided to developing teachers will take many forms and will be bespoke but will likely involve some use of accomplished teachers and more extensive use of expert teachers.

Accomplished teachers

Accomplished teachers will be around their third/fourth year of teaching and beyond. They will require little support to be consistently delivering high quality teaching across the curriculum. As a teacher becomes securely accomplished, some expertise in specific areas may be developed. They will also be able to offer some support to developing teachers in the form of modelling, advice, mentoring and feedback. Accomplished teachers may receive some support and advice from expert teachers.

Expert teachers

Expert teachers have been teaching for at least 6 years and they are paid on the upper pay scale. They have developed expertise in specific curricular areas and/or pedagogical practices. They can adeptly support both developing and accomplished teachers. Expert teachers add to the leadership capacity of the school through their support in developing teaching policies and practices linked. If required, expert teachers can develop support for the development of teaching practice in other Trust schools. To become an expert teacher, teachers will not only have to be highly competent but will need to provide evidence that their impact will be substantial and sustained.

Developing teachers

... require most support. They receive this from more experienced colleagues and the Trust/school teaching framework.

Accomplished teachers

... have a developed skill set. They offer some support to developing teachers and receive support from expert teachers and the Trust/school teaching framework.

Expert teachers

... have an expert skill set. They develop colleagues and help shape the Trust/school teaching framework, which in turn develops their own practice.

Trust/school teaching framework

This provides the blueprint from which all teachers within the school must operate. It consists of policies and practices, which are rooted in research and proven best practice. This framework is not static.

Our core offer

The core offer must be present in all classrooms to ensure high-quality teaching is prevalent. It is not a 'bolt on'; it must be embedded in practice by all of our teachers. It will support all children with their learning in class.

- Use simple, literal language
- Step by step instructions (with visuals as needed)
- Repeat instructions and check understanding
- Extra time for processing when asking a question/reflection time
- Pre-teach new and important concepts/vocabulary (e.g. Word Aware)
- Clarify, explain and check understanding of vocabulary
- If a sentence doesn't make sense, adult to support through use of modelling not explicit correction
- Use of talk partners (talk teams)
- General social stories for whole class use

Communication friendly environment

- Extra adult support for individual areas of need, use of key resources, individual strategies and support
- Learning/ Play buddies
- Catch up groups/boosters for maths, reading, phonics, spelling, writing

Additional support from others

- Learning which is differentiated, cumulative and multi-sensory and allows for repetition and over-learning
- Learning linked to personal interests and engaging
- Marking/ feedback/monitoring which identifies next steps and is responsive to any individual targets/plans
- Feedback which encourages a growth mindset and praise for effort as well as accuracy
- Targeted and differentiated questioning that provides challenge and encourages metacognition
- Allow understanding to be demonstrated in different ways (oral reports, video presentations, posters etc)
- Whole class learning breaks / movement breaks / sensory breaks within each learning session

Teaching and learning strategies

- Large visual timetable at front of class
- Visual prompts for rules and behaviour
- Labelling of resources
- Visual schedules for key routines
- Visual task break downs
- What a good one looks like
- Emotional literacy display
- IWB formatting to follow guidelines from British Dyslexia Association (BDA)

Additional support from others

- Sensory box with sensory toys and resources to access as needed - with support/direction.
- Cosy/quiet corner to access as needed for calm time or time outs
- Seating arrangements e.g. proximity to teachers/a buddy/ avoidance of distractions or sensory overload

Other aspects of environment

- Reading rulers/bookmarks /overlays
- Pencil grips, variety of pens/pencils to try, different coloured paper
- Word mats /lists/ vocabulary cards
- Letter and number strips
- Writing frames, sentence starters
- Colourful semantics resources
- Individual whiteboards for drafting
- Number lines / Numicon /counters /cubes etc
- Concrete resources/props/stimuli
- Handouts using BDA guidelines

Resources

- Classroom charter linked to Rights Respecting approach
- Clear rewards and consequences
- Shared approach and curriculum for emotional literacy (Zones of Regulation)
- individual roles and responsibilities within the class
- Topics which engage and reflect the lives, cultures and experiences of all our learners

The class community