ST MARY'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Developing Academic Excellence

Principles and practice for an evidence-led curriculum,teaching and learning.

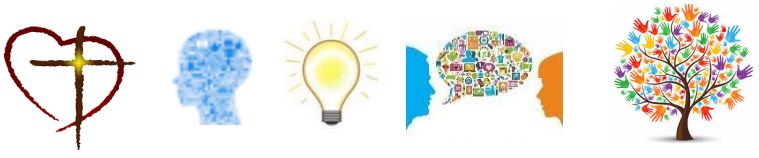
Sections of this document

1. Foundational and evidence-led principles of St Mary's Curriculum.

2. What we mean by mastery: procedural and conceptual fluency.

3. Curriculum principles and structure.

4.Teaching and learning principles and practice.



1. Foundational and evidence-led principles of St Mary's curriculum.

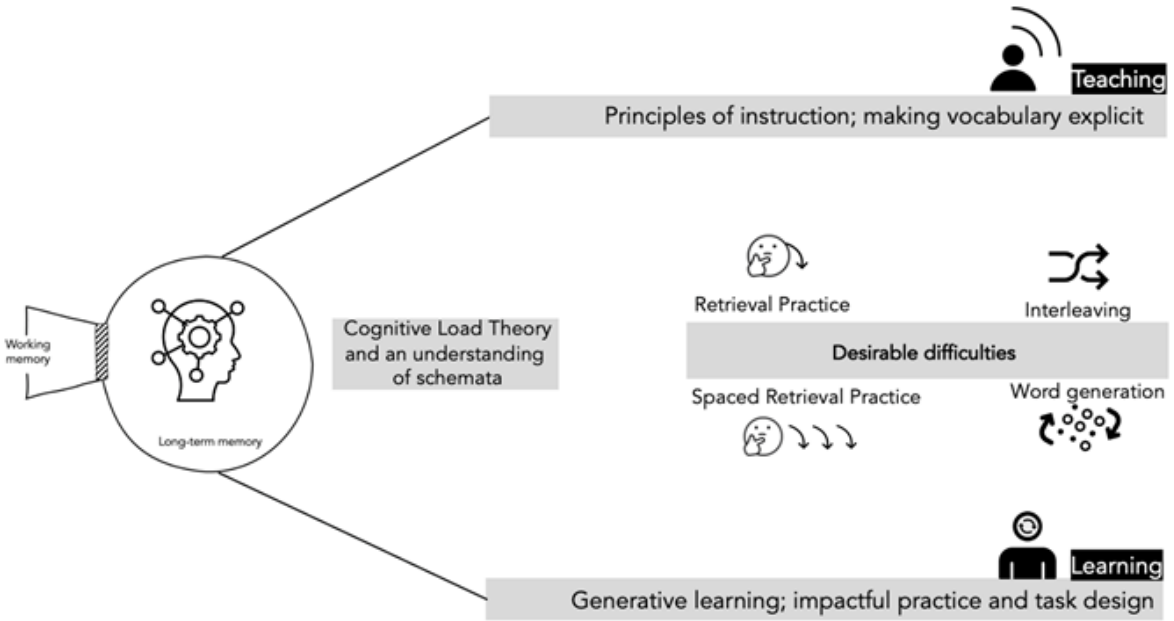
St Mary's curriculum strategy is one that outlines core content in a spaced and interleaved sequence for History, Geography, Science, Art & Design,Design & Technology, French and Computing. This is made up of a long term sequence that is supported by evidence-led learning modules and high-quality teaching resources that clearly outline what pupils should know, be able to do and remember at key points in their Primary education.

Weekly subjects are based on an evidence informed, approach, carefully sequenced schemes of learning, which maps core content in Reading, Writing, Maths, Science, RSE, PSHE and Music across the primary journey, ensuring that learning is taught and revisited over time so that pupils commit their understanding to the long-term memory.

All schemes of learning have been built around evidence-led practice. This document summarises and directs the principles and practice that leads to excellence in the classroom.

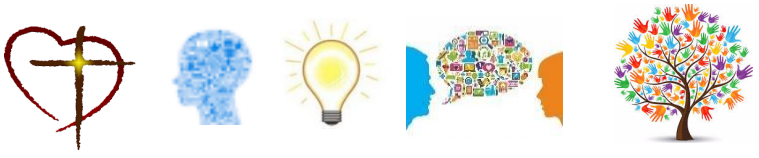
Guiding research and evidence

- Sweller's cognitive load theory
- Rosenshine's principles of instruction guided by Cain and Oakhill's vocabulary instruction
- Fiorella and Mayer's generative learning practice



Explicit vocabulary instruction shapes the structure and language provision throughout the curriculum. It is the golden thread that links and connects the breadth, depth and value of these units of teaching. All subjects at St Mary's embrace language as an absolute cornerstone in eroding social disadvantage and embedding learning.
Vocabulary map

The vocabulary curriculum exemplifies progression in key strands of vocabulary development, including etymology, morphology, idioms and colloquialisms, language for life and the language of emotion. This curriculum has been used as the foundation for plotting key language that is instructed within subjects. This ensures that pupils have the opportunity to learn and rehearse vocabulary in meaningful contexts, thus committing it to the long term memory.



2. What we mean by mastery: procedural and conceptual fluency.

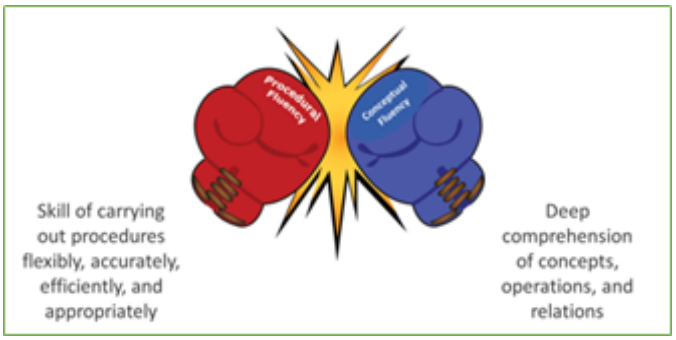
What do we mean when we talk about a mastery curriculum approach

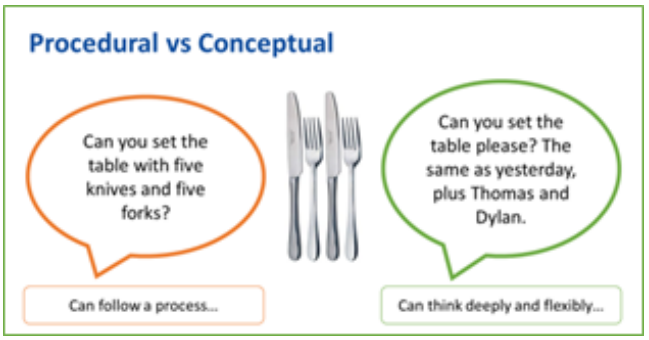
The term 'mastery' has become synonymous with a specific model of curriculum design or products which advocate teaching concepts for depth before moving on to new content. In its purest form, the term mastery refers to comprehensive knowledge or skill in a particular activity. For us to truly work towards 'mastery', we must carefully consider curriculum design, pedagogy and assessment as a single entity that make up the educational experience. Clare Sealy(i) suggests that there are three main considerations in how learning is sequenced in a way that supports this:

1. How much information is introduced
2. The pace of introduction
3. Opportunities for rehearsal and retrieval

Sequencing content for long-term learning has been a fundamental cornerstone of our curriculum. Recognising, for example, that pupils are first taught the concept of capital letters for proper nouns and to start sentences in EYFS, only to find that only 37.1% of pupils nationally could do this correctly at the end of KS2 in 2019, is a stark reminder of the importance of embedding learning. But embedding learning goes beyond a superficial view of mastery of a concept. We may, for example, master the processes and procedures involved in driving a car but it does not mean that we understand how one works!

Instead, we strive for conceptual fluency. We want pupils who work through the curriculum journey to develop both procedural and conceptual fluency.





Schemes of learning are structured to secure both procedural and conceptual fluency. For example, within science, the deliberate retrieval and sophistication of content is planned so that pupils revisit and deepen their conceptual fluency, building on their procedural understanding.

In writing, we have reduced the number of text types that each year group studies in to move the emphasis away from the memorisation of text conventions and focus on developing procedural and conceptual fluency about the mechanics and processes of writing as a craft.

3. Curriculum principles and structure

Curriculum principles

1. Our ambition is to erode deficits in cultural capital.
2. Our priority is to improve teaching through evidence-led structure and practice, so that all children get amazing teaching.
3. Our end goal is for all children to succeed, regardless of their starting points.

Schemes of learning within subjects have been built around a clearly defined set of curriculum drivers that infuse all subjects.

We have defined the content that pupils will learn, subject by subject. These are the headlines for the sequence. We have designed a cumulative curriculum structure, starting with EYFS provision, ensuring prior knowledge is always a precursor to a study. Allowing teachers to make skilful connections to prior knowledge as they are aware of the previous studies.

Schemes of Learning

The way we have decided to map and sequence curriculum connections

Prior learning is mapped into every learning module to show and remind teachers of the previous provision pupils may have encountered. This enables teachers to orchestrate meaningful retrieval and connect past learning. This has an added benefit of giving new learning an organised place to be stored in the memory, and therefore retrieved.

In the long-term sequence, we have deliberately planned relevant **inter-subject connections** that complement each other. For example, Rocks before Stone Age in Y3.

Spaced retrieval practice has been incorporated to ensure areas of study are revisited, deepened and sophisticated.

The **English offer is concentrically planned** with an impressive **rich literature spine** comprising ambitious texts that inspire and challenge pupils. It is systematically mapped to enable children to experience breadth and depth of social, moral and ethical dimensions as well as a wide range of authors and protagonists.

Curriculum for Literacy comprises both reading and writing.

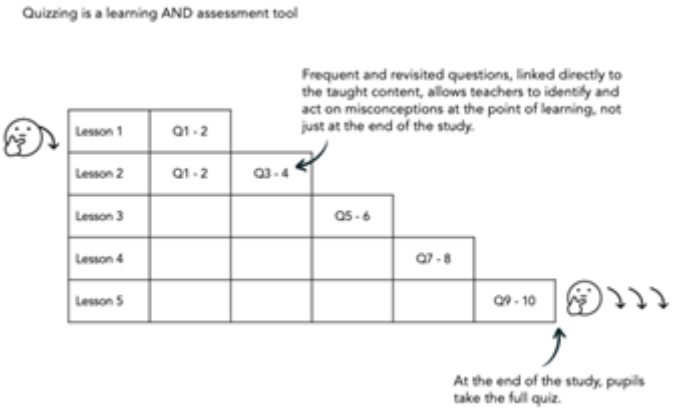
Writing draws on taught content from History, Geography and Science and from the depth study of core texts from the literature spine. Expert subject knowledge is carefully woven into each Writing module which gives teachers the opportunity to teach and rehearse key knowledge and skills before applying this learning to meaningful extended outcomes. The careful architecture of this curriculum ensures that pupils build on prior learning and maximise purposeful curriculum connections to become writers for life.

Reading is deliberately designed to be ambitious and aspirational, ensuring that every child leaves our school as a competent, confident reader. Drawing on the latest research around explicit vocabulary instruction, reading fluency and key comprehension strategies, this curriculum is a synthesis of what we know works in helping children make outstanding progress in reading and a distillation into consistent, well-structured practice. Pupils will receive a daily diet of excellent reading teaching and this will be supplemented by regular opportunities to engage with shared reading experiences, promoting the joy of reading with the whole school community. The clear structure and principles ensure that teaching is progressive, challenging and engaging and the rich, diverse literature spine acts as both a mirror so that every child can see themselves in the core texts and as a mirror to engage pupils with experiences beyond their own field of reference.

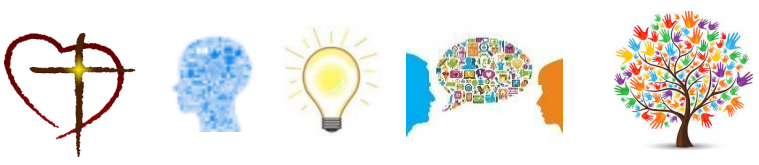
Schemes of Learning resources support a knowledge-rich curriculum structure that is coherent and cumulative.

- **Core knowledge is defined and articulated** across subjects through a focused teaching sequence that is coherent, interleaved and built around spaced retrieval practice.
- **Knowledge organisers** convey the essential knowledge in one place to reduce the split-attention effect. Tier 3 vocabulary and word generation are developed within the core concepts that the knowledge organiser projects. They are used to elaborate on the core concepts and content. Knowledge organisers redefine the purpose of pupil books. Children use their books to retrieve and reuse prior knowledge. Knowledge notes also scaffold and support the selection, organisation and integration of new understanding. These strategies strengthen cognitive connections, deepen learning and increase procedural and conceptual fluency.
- **Resources are dual coded** and designed to support easy retrieval. The use of contrasting black, simple icons is deliberate. Words and icons are designed to support decoding, use, connection and analysis of core vocabulary and concepts.

- **Vocabulary is mapped** across Y1 – Y6 for Science, geography and history. It includes Tier 2 and Tier 3 words as well as etymology, morphology, colloquialism and idioms for each learning module.
- Each **study sequence** is planned lesson by lesson using a question to focus the learning. Foundational knowledge is identified as an essential component within the sequence of learning.
- **We use cumulative questions.** These are designed to test the understanding of the taught content, lesson by lesson. They are repeatable and reusable. They also are used to ease the forgetting curve and enable quick retrieval after dialogue and conversation that prime the memory. **Lesson by lesson questions** enable teachers to know where strengths and misconceptions appear before the end of the study. **At the end of a study**, pupils will respond and answer the full quiz to show what they know. This final quiz represents all the questions encountered and summarises learning for individuals and the class, then shared with subject leaders.

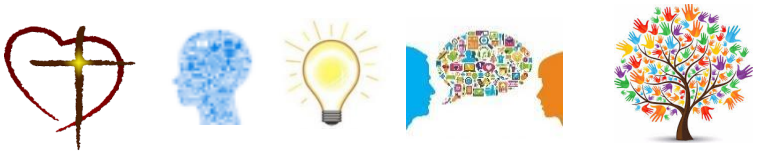


- Our thinking about how feedback can be used effectively within these sequences has been informed by the Mark less, Mark better research, DfE workload reform and EEF guidance, where feedback is used to reshape learning rather than just narrate outcomes. Assessment through observed practice, whole class marking strategies and **cumulative quiz outcomes** inform teachers and children how well the content is understood, along with any misconceptions that need addressing.
- Subject leaders **quality assure** learning by talking with a varied group of pupils using their books to explain how well they know, can use and connect learning. The process is known as Pupil Book Study – a structured and evidence-led guide to quality assuring the curriculum, teaching and learning.
- **Technology supports** teaching and learning through the use of devices in the classroom to enhance the teaching and learning practice. Chromebooks/Ipads do not replace pupil's books. Technology complements the principles of



instruction through the modelling of worked examples as well as providing scaffolds that fade for pupils. This is an integral component that supports the mastery model of effective learning.

- Pupils' books are repurposed, so they become more than just a place to collect completed work from a lesson. Pupils' books, supported by knowledge organisers, vocabulary modules and knowledge notes are used to engage children in a variety of teacher-led, guided and independent tasks to help them generate, build on and connect prior learning.
- Task design specifically takes account of the need to build pupils' conceptual fluency. By building pupils' confidence and competence in tried and tested learning approaches, we can refocus their cognitive capacity to the most important thing – the content that they are learning. An example of this could be the use of an organisational Venn diagram in multiple contexts. At first it could be used to categorise Animals, including humans in Year 1 and then later in the sequence, through spaced retrieval practice, children compare and contrast Animals, including humans, using the same diagram. Likewise, pupils may meet similar response frameworks throughout the Reading units for skills such as retrieving facts to complete a table or sequencing events from a narrative and this will allow them to approach this task in the context of ever-more challenging texts.



4. Teaching and learning

Excellent teaching is built around coherent and cumulative curriculum structures. Central to the structure is the evidence-led practice that reflects the strong curriculum offer. The curriculum structure directly supports excellent teaching and learning.

St Mary's Curriculum and schemes of learning include an impressive suite of resources to support their teaching, including:

- Knowledge organisers
- Idea maps
- Non-fiction literature recommendation
- Vocabulary modules with pupil tasks and diagnostic questions
- Study sequences, lesson by lesson with essential and desirable content identified
- Retrieval questions for each lesson
- Quiz to assess pupil retention and understanding at the end of the study
- Knowledge notes that are dual coded
- High quality images and diagrams to inspire and challenge pupils

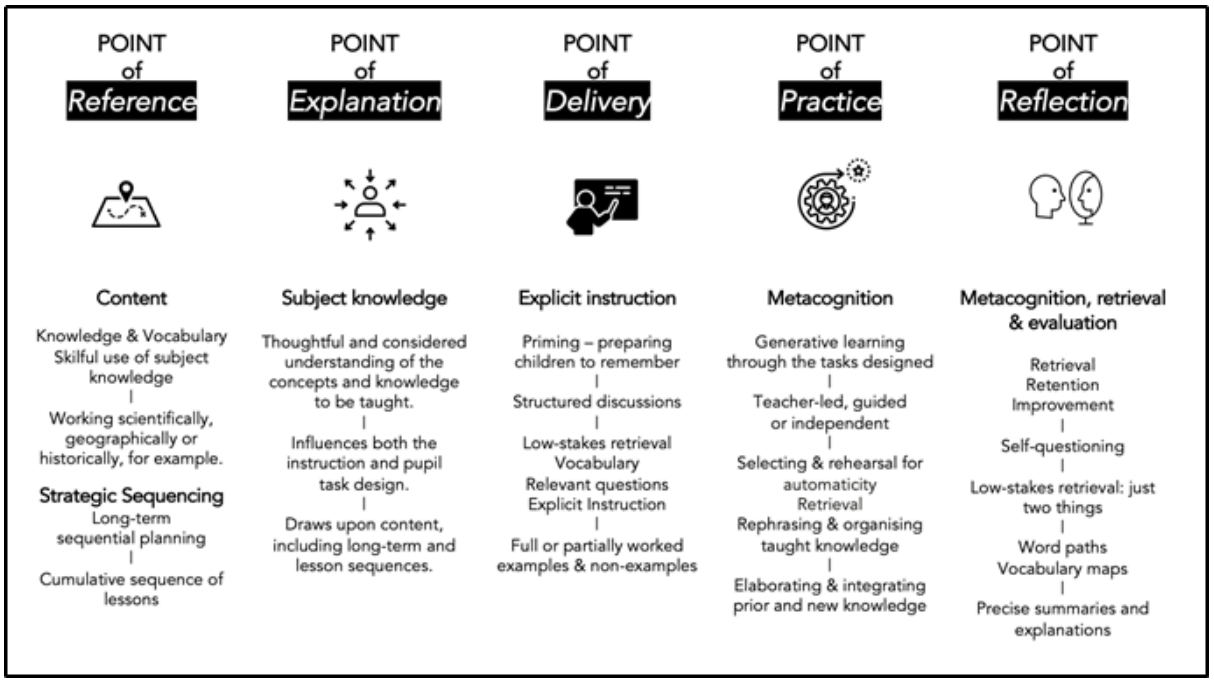
St Mary's Reading curriculum includes:

- Exceptional and inspiring text choices that make up the core literature spine
- Cumulative, sequences of learning that develop a rich and deep understanding of reading
- Vocabulary instruction
- Fluency exercises
- Taught content guidance
- Clear outcomes built across the sequence
- Daily Pupil Tasks which are proportionate and which build conceptual fluency
- Supporting model texts that offer opportunity to broaden pupils' reading experiences in a relevant context

St Mary's Writing curriculum includes:

- Relevant and connected writing experiences
- Cumulative learning sequences that are harmonised with the CUSP sequence
- Revisiting of prior learning
- Taught content guidance
- Opportunities to apply taught content
- Clear outcomes built across the sequence
- Vocabulary and content knowledge to support teacher explanation
- Dual coded knowledge notes to support the embedding of key text conventions

- Supporting model texts exemplifying relevant taught content for each unit
- Ingredients for success checklists to support self, peer and teacher assessment



- Clear connections between past, present and planned future learning are considered by teachers.
- Explicit instruction techniques are used at the **POINT OF DELIVERY**, where teachers model and explain foundation concepts and knowledge.

Mary Myatt - "What then, is the difference between support and differentiation? Well, support consists of the live conversations and additional unpacking of the material during the lesson. Differentiating materials in advance predetermines what children are able to do."

- Carefully designed knowledge notes and learning tasks underpin the **POINT OF PRACTICE.** Pupils are expected to draw upon prior learning - this could be from the last lesson or from the last term. Generative learning tasks support deliberate practice of taught content enabling pupils to become fluent and automaticity is increased.

Mary Myatt – "Above all, differentiation goes against the heart of the principles of the curriculum which is that all children should be following the same course of work, are entitled to do difficult things and are supported on the way."

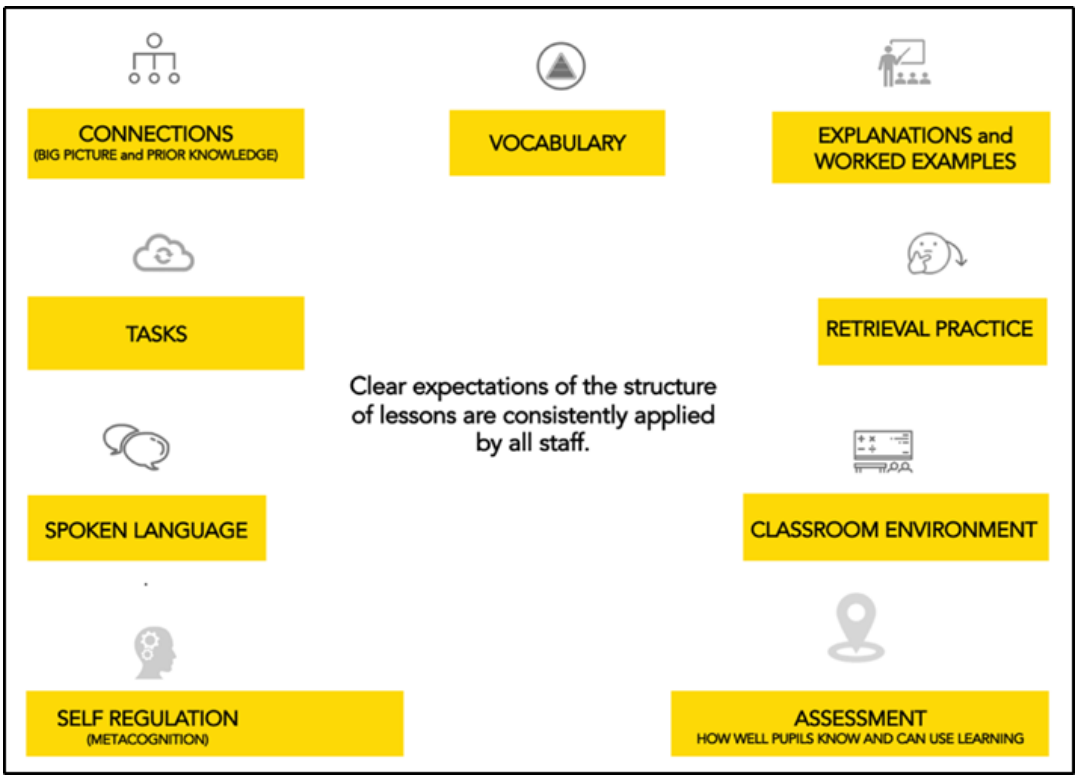
- The **POINT OF REFLECTION** is carefully deployed through specific and deliberate techniques, such as self-questioning, retrieval practice and resources like word paths. These directly support metacognitive development and enable pupils to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning with structure and depth. Vocabulary is the architecture for structuring concepts and content – we expect pupils to

develop a deeper understanding of word knowledge using our phased approach to explicit vocabulary instruction that will unlock thousands of new words.

High Quality CPD and Coaching

Explain	CONNECTIONS	VOCABULARY	EXPLANATIONS and WORKED EXAMPLES	RETRIEVAL PRACTICE	CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT	SELF REGULATION	ASSESSMENT
Example				TASKS	SPOKEN LANGUAGE		
Attempt	TASKS	RETRIEVAL PRACTICE	VOCABULARY	SPOKEN LANGUAGE	SELF REGULATION	CONNECTIONS	ASSESSMENT
Apply							
Challenge							

Great teachers use professional and evidence-led understanding along with a wide range of tools articulated in teaching toolkits. Teachers have autonomy about when and how they deploy and use these tools within lessons. The areas below form the basis of our teaching toolkit, informed by evidence-led practice.

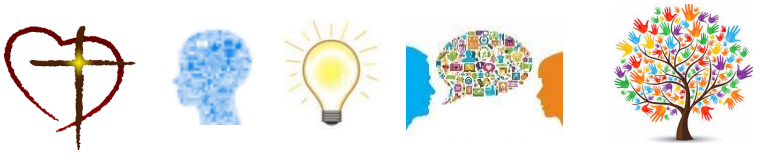


Vocabulary

- Explicit vocabulary instruction of Tier 2 and Tier 3 words. Teach a few words regularly and them all the time.
- Use vocabulary maps on working walls and incorporate into pupil practice to remember and connect meaning.
- Pupil vocabulary organisers may be used with the teaching of Tier 2 and Tier 3 words.
- Teach **etymology and morphology** of words help to unwrap meaning. This makes sense of vocabulary in context, helps pupils acquire a deeper understanding and unlocks thousands of other words.
- **Vocabulary connection maps** help construct long-term memories through oral rehearsal and conscious use.
- **Oracy:** 'Did you know…' recordings

Modelling - Worked Examples

- Where relevant, **prior knowledge** is clearly referenced and
- brought to the attention of pupils, so they can think about it.
- **Lesson questions** are posed, drawing upon prior knowledge.
- **Fully worked** examples are clearly modelled when knowledge is new.
- **Partially worked** examples are used to build upon knowledge, which has been taught.



- **Resources** clearly support explanations, including high quality books, maps, images, atlases, globes, diagrams and video (if appropriate).
- **My turn, our turn, your turn** mastery techniques are used to support guided and independent practice.
- Ensure pupils have resources to support independent practice.

Applied Learning - Tasks

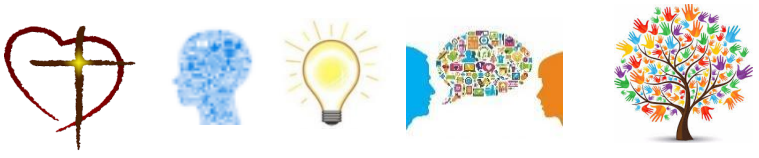
- Diagrams and drawings are not decorative or representational.
- They can be **explanative** - demonstrating cause, effect and consequence or **organisational** - showing relationships and comparative thinking.
- **Images are used to scaffold and present** structured opportunities that enable elaboration and rephrasing of the knowledge-rich content.
- **Skills are developed and applied** through vocabulary-rich and practical tasks.
- Knowledge notes reduce the split-attention effect and support children to work with more independence.
- Use 'Did you know...', for example, to live model and demonstrate how a task will be attempted and presented. Excellent for vocabulary instruction.

Retrieval

- Use the **lesson question** to activate engagement or focus attention to prior learning

Techniques used to support retrieval practice, include:

- **Cumulative questions** are built into each lesson sequence and are used diagnostically.
- The **end of study quiz** summarises what children know and can retrieve.
- Phased **vocabulary questions**, increase in breadth and depth.
- **Focused summaries** with word connections maps and explanations support pupils to draw on prior knowledge.
- **Partial diagrams** and models used alongside vocabulary instruction help increase coherent schemata formation.
- Knowledge is compared and contrasted through structured **organisational diagrams or explanatory diagrams.**
- **Self questioning** strategies increase the retrieval of **taught knowledge**
- using question and statement stems.



Planned Talk

- Scripted explanations of vocabulary are live modelled with attention paid to the phases of vocabulary **acquisition**
- Language is framed for challenge and success. Vocabulary promotes the level of ambition across the curriculum through precise disciplinary literacy.
- Define, decode, use, connect, deconstruct and analyse.
- Oral modelling and rehearsal. For example, a geographical sentence is a dynamic component of every lesson.
- A variety of models are used to affect the impact of oracy, including rote and recitation techniques, instruction, discussion and dialogue.

Self-Regulation (Metacognition)

- Self-regulation is made visible through clear modelling.
- Resources that guide and instruct are used by pupils to plan, monitor
- and evaluate their own learning.
- Pupils evaluate their studies through self-regulation techniques such as flick-back techniques, marking up on knowledge organisers and knowledge notes.
- Children are initially directed to make cross-subject connections drawing on current and new understanding.

These learners are proactive in their efforts to learn because they are aware of their strengths and limitations and because they are guided by personally set goals and task-related strategies, such as using an arithmetic addition strategy to check the accuracy of solutions to subtraction problems. These learners monitor their behaviour in terms of their goals and self-reflect on their increasing effectiveness. This enhances their self-satisfaction and motivation to continue to improve their methods of learning.

Classroom Environment

- Pupils know and use examples from live modelling – working walls
- Children can **explain** what they are for and how they help.
- Vocabulary, diagrams and explanations are **modelled** and clearly **accessible.**
- Vocabulary connections maps, explanative or organisational drawings **help pupils make sense** of the knowledge taught.
- **High quality books and images** create a sense of geographical wonder, for example, and curiosity.
- World maps and newspaper articles
- **Enhanced provision** supports skilful practice of taught knowledge

Assessment - How well pupils can know and use learning

- Formative assessment draws upon a range of tools that help pupils and teachers know where learning is strong and where misconceptions lie.
- Questions frame the lesson content. These are designed to act as a hinge for testing out how well pupils know and can use current learning and connect to prior learning.
- The results from cumulative lesson quizzes present a coherent picture for pupils and the class teacher. They outline who knows what and where pupils have struggled. As a result, post- or pre-teaching can be planned to close any knowledge gaps.
- Whole Class Assessment methods allow teachers to monitor and evaluate.