

The Blandford School

Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Report October 2024

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Introduction

2024-25 Staffing:

Learning Hub - Learning Support Assistant

Specialist English Teacher

Specialist Maths Teacher

SEND and AARA Administrator

Literacy Mentors x3

Learning Support Assistant x2

One-to-one Teaching Assistant x3

Assistant Headteacher, DSL

Mrs Burrows

Inclusion Lead/SENDCo

Mr Hayball

Governor with responsibility for SEND

'All students at The Blandford School, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, have full access to the wide range of opportunities and experiences available at school.'

At The Blandford School (TBS) we recognise that some of our young people may require additional support to achieve their potential. Each student, regardless of their starting point, is entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is relevant to their educational needs. As an inclusive school, it is our intention to ensure that all young people have their needs met within a caring and supportive environment.

1. What is the local offer?

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires Local Authorities to publish information about services and provision across education, health and social care for children and young people aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The purpose of a local offer is to enable parents and carers to see more clearly what services are available for young people with SEND in their area and how to access them. The Local Offer can be accessed via the link on our school website.

2. Definition of Special Educational Needs

‘A young person has special educational needs where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to young people of the same age.’ Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, 2014.

Children are not regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language used in their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. However, support will be available and should a student have difficulties not related to their second language skills, these will be identified and met under the SEND policy.

Special educational provision means provision, which is additional to, or otherwise different from the educational provision made generally for young people of their age in academies and schools maintained by the LEA (other than special schools) in the area.

Communication and interaction

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with some or all the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.

Children and young people with an Autism Spectrum Condition, are likely to have difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication, social interaction, and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Cognition and Learning.

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Dyspraxia.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties.

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorders, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

Sensory and/or Physical Needs.

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and /or equipment to access their learning. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties, which makes it even more difficult for them to access the curriculum than for those with a single sensory impairment.

Some children with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

3. Aims and objectives

Our aim is to use our best endeavours to ensure that:

- All governors and staff have maximum awareness of SEND and appropriate training to enhance their professional skills.
- All teachers teach to the TBS Way (please see appendix) ensuring that all classrooms are an emotionally safe environment that takes into account learning needs.
- Young people with SEND are the shared responsibility of all staff in line with the Code of Practice (2014) and the Standards for Teachers (2014).
- All young people have a broad and balanced curriculum which is adapted to enable maximum progress.
- A flexible, graduated structure of provision, according to the Code of Practice 2014, and appropriate resourcing for meeting SEND.
- Young people with SEND receive inclusive education where their needs are met within the least restrictive environment with regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, 2014 and the Equality Act, 2010.
- Parent(s) and carer(s) are involved as partners in the education of their children.
- Young people make expected progress.

4. How does TBS know if a young person needs extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have a special educational need?

We continue to encourage parent(s) and carer(s) to contact the school via their child's tutor, Head of Year, or Inclusion Lead to raise any concerns they might have about their child's rate of progress or potential unidentified needs.

TBS works closely with partner Primary Schools to identify learning needs and provision through classroom observations and interviews with young people and teachers. Information from feeder schools is transferred on entry to TBS and any identified needs recorded. All young people at Key Stages 3 and 4 are assessed on entry and then annually for literacy and/or numeracy difficulties.

Teachers and tutors regularly assess the progress for all our students. From this it is possible to identify those who have not made expected progress. Indicators could include progress which:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline;
- fails to match or better the pupil's previous rate of progress;
- fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers.

At TBS we use a graduated response, as per the Code of Practice 2014.

Our aim is to create inclusive learning environments, through high quality teaching (The TBS Way), allowing all learners access to the curriculum. If progress is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline and/or fails to match or better the pupil's previous rate of progress and/or fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers additional support or assessments will be considered.

5. Communication with parents and carers

A formal assessment of progress for every young person at TBS is published annually. A formal face-to-face meeting with teachers and tutor is held during the academic year and gives parent(s) and carer(s) the opportunity to raise concerns. In response to parental preference, Parents' Evenings have taken place virtually. In addition to this, parent(s) and carer(s) can request a meeting with their child's tutor, Head of Year or Inclusion Lead. Live information showing learning behaviours and progress can be accessed via the SIMS Parent app.

In addition to the regular assessments, reviews and reports to which every pupil is entitled, we communicate in the following ways:

- Conversations face-to-face, by phone or email as needed.
- Student Profiles.
- Annual Reviews for our young people with an Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- Reports by external agencies.

6. What emotional wellbeing support is available at TBS?

- Tutor activities focusing on emotional wellbeing.
- Knowledgeable and skilled Heads of Year.
- Student Support Worker.
- Anti-bullying ambassadors.
- Anti-bullying room.
- Student mentors.
- The Academic Mentoring Room for those with emotional based school avoidance (EBSA)
- Safe spaces at break and lunch times.
- Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST)
- Referral to CAMHS or other specialist services.

7. What specialist services are available at or accessed by the school?

- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT).
- Occupational Therapy (OT).
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).
- NHS School Nurse.
- Dorset Early Help Team.
- Dorset Hearing Support Service.
- Dorset Vision Support Service
- Social Care.

8. Staff training at TBS

During the academic year 2022-23 staff received training in the following areas:

- Assistive technology

- Emotional literacy
- ASC
- Person-centered reviews
- Social stories
- Therapeutic Thinking
- ACES - attachment difficulties
- The inclusive classroom
- ADHD
- Emotionally based school avoidance
- Vision impairment
- Literacy
- The emotionally safe classroom

Staff will receive further training this year in areas that promote emotional safety in the classroom and emotional safety in school. This will be delivered via whole school INSET and fortnightly CPD sessions.

9. How are young people with SEND included in activities outside the classroom?

The school continues to promote a comprehensive programme of extra-curricular activities and trips for all our young people. Detailed risk assessments are undertaken for every trip and arrangements made for those with additional needs. This has enabled access for all our young people to all trips and activities. Adaptations last year include additional training for PE staff, adapted PE equipment, additional staffing on school trips, adapted transport and adapted activities.

10. How accessible is the school environment?

TBS continues to upgrade facilities and methods of working to accommodate all students, visitors and staff. The school has seen some adaptations and upgrades during the academic year 2022-23. Student toilets in block 5 have been adapted to make them emotionally safer. The introduction of a one-way system in blocks 1 and 3 has helped reduce traffic and the risk of accidental injuries. Most of the school site is now accessible to wheelchair users except for the first floor in block 4. The car park was resurfaced removing trip hazards for visitors and students accessing the school via reception. Steps and edges have been painted to provide high contrast for the visually impaired.

11. How is transition to and from TBS managed?

At TBS we hold an Open Evening and an Information Evening for parent(s) and carers(s) of children in Year 6 and a transition day for young people in Year 6, and feedback from these events is pleasing. This gives parent(s) and carer(s) the opportunity to ask questions and view the facilities. In addition to the Year 6 transition day, young people with SEND have access to enhanced transition sessions.

For young people transferring to TBS at other times in the school year, we undertake literacy assessments on entry and gather information from the previous school.

Careful guidance is provided to all young people to ensure that they make successful transition to sixth form, FE/HE or to another school and all SEND information is passed on. There is a very clear programme of advice and guidance for all young people which forms a natural part of conversations with parent(s) and carers(s) of young people with SEND during review meetings. For young people with an EHCP, careers advice is a part of the transfer review.

12. How are resources allocated?

The school's resources are allocated in a variety of ways to match needs. Funding is used for a wide range of services and provisions including:

- Learning Hub staff.
- Adapted resources.
- Assistive technology
- Small group and individual specialist teaching.
- Outside agencies.
- Staff training.

13. How are parents involved in school life?

Parent(s) and carer(s) are invited to request meetings with school staff via letters, emails and phone calls. In addition to the reports and Parents' Evenings which every student is entitled to, we also consult with parent(s) and carer(s) of young people with SEND in additional ways. These include:

- Conversations face-to-face, by phone or email
- Student Profiles
- Annual Reviews for young people with an EHCP
- School events
- Parent Questionnaires

14. Complaints procedure

It is hoped that all situations of concern can be resolved quickly through discussion and early action.

However, if a parent(s) carer(s) feels that their concern or complaint regarding the care or welfare of their child has not been dealt with satisfactorily, an appointment can be made by them to speak and explain the issues with the Inclusion Lead or Governor with Responsibility for SEND.

The complaints policy can be found on the school website.

Appendix

INCLUSION THE TBS WAY

TEACHING AND LEARNING AT THE BLANDFORD SCHOOL

'All students at The Blandford School, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, have full access to the wide range of opportunities and experiences available at school.'

This guide is designed to provide you with a clear understanding of our expectations for the classroom in the school, the rationale behind them and the strategies to support them.

The TBS Way is a belief that all learners can achieve in an inclusive environment, and their ability to access learning should not be assumed or dictated by prior attainment or learning need. It is understood that all learners may need additional support at times (the least confident at that moment in time) and, where this is the case, adaptations are made. Not only do they require this support, they deserve it and therefore, "an ongoing line of enquiry in any teacher's mind should be 'am I building confidence with the lowest attainers?'" (Tom Sherrington)

This guide is designed to enhance consistency of expectations, practice and language across the school so all students feel safe and confident in every classroom, and in moving from one classroom to another.

This guide is divided into 6 key principles that we believe will drive our vision of inclusion and incorporate our REAP values.

The key principles of inclusion at TBS are:

1. THE CLASSROOM IS AN EMOTIONALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL
2. INSTRUCTION IS CLEAR AND EXPLICIT
3. TEACH TO THE TOP
4. ENGAGE ALL STUDENTS IN THINKING HARD
5. PROMOTE POSITIVE LEARNING BEHAVIOURS IN THE CLASSROOM
6. ALL STUDENTS NEED TO BE ABLE TO READ

All teaching at The Blandford School is underpinned by Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction.

THE PRINCIPLES OF INSTRUCTION

TAKEN FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATION

This poster is from the work of Barak Rosenshine who based these ten principles of instruction and suggested classroom practices on:

- research on how the brain acquires and uses new information
- research on the classroom practices of those teachers whose students show the highest gains
- findings from studies that taught learning strategies to students.

HOW2
teachinghow2s.com

01 DAILY REVIEW



Daily review is an important component of instruction. It helps strengthen the connections of the material learned. Automatic recall frees working memory for problem solving and creativity.

02 NEW MATERIAL IN SMALL STEPS



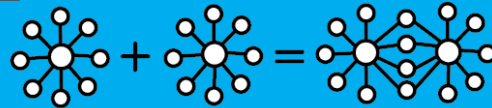
Our working memory is small, only handling a few bits of information at once. Avoid its overload — present new material in small steps and proceed only when first steps are mastered.

03 ASK QUESTIONS



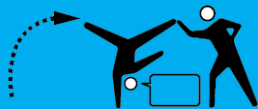
The most successful teachers spend more than half the class time lecturing, demonstrating and asking questions. Questions allow the teacher to determine how well the material is learned.

04 PROVIDE MODELS



Students need cognitive support to help them learn how to solve problems. Modelling, worked examples and teacher thinking out loud help clarify the specific steps involved.

05 GUIDE STUDENT PRACTICE



Students need additional time to rephrase, elaborate and summarise new material in order to store it in their long-term memory. More successful teachers built in more time for this.

06 CHECK STUDENT UNDERSTANDING



Less successful teachers merely ask "Are there any questions?" No questions are taken to mean no problems. False. By contrast, more successful teachers check on all students.

07 OBTAIN HIGH SUCCESS RATE



A success rate of around 80% has been found to be optimal, showing students are learning and also being challenged. Better teachers taught in small steps followed by practice.

08 SCAFFOLDS FOR DIFFICULT TASKS



Scaffolds are temporary supports to assist learning. They can include modelling, teacher thinking aloud, cue cards and checklists. Scaffolds are part of cognitive apprenticeship.

09 INDEPENDENT PRACTICE



Independent practice produces 'overlearning' — a necessary process for new material to be recalled automatically. This ensures no overloading of students' working memory.

10 WEEKLY & MONTHLY REVIEW



The effort involved in recalling recently-learned material embeds it in long-term memory. And the more this happens, the easier it is to connect new material to such prior knowledge.

<P:\RMStaff\Staff Resources\Articles of interest\Developing Culture - Instruction and reasons for it\Methods of Instruction\Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction.pdf>

It is further supported by the Great Teaching Toolkit Evidence Review (June 2020).

A Model for Great Teaching

1. Understanding the content

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Having deep and fluent knowledge and flexible understanding of the content you are teaching | 2 Knowledge of the requirements of curriculum sequencing and dependencies in relation to the content and ideas you are teaching | 3 Knowledge of relevant curriculum tasks, assessments and activities, their diagnostic and didactic potential; being able to generate varied explanations and multiple representations/analogies/examples for the ideas you are teaching |
| 4 Knowledge of common student strategies, misconceptions and sticking points in relation to the content you are teaching | | |

2. Creating a supportive environment

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Promoting interactions and relationships with all students that are based on mutual respect, care, empathy and warmth; avoiding negative emotions in interactions with students; being sensitive to the individual needs, emotions, culture and beliefs of students | 2 Promoting a positive climate of student-student relationships, characterised by respect, trust, cooperation and care | 4 Creating a climate of high expectations, with high challenge and high trust, so learners feel it is okay to have a go; encouraging learners to attribute their success or failure to things they can change |
| | 3 Promoting learner motivation through feelings of competence, autonomy and relatedness | |

3. Maximising opportunity to learn

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Managing time and resources efficiently in the classroom to maximise productivity and minimise wasted time (e.g., starts, transitions); giving clear instructions so students understand what they should be doing; using (and explicitly teaching) routines to make transitions smooth | 2 Ensuring that rules, expectations and consequences for behaviour are explicit, clear and consistently applied | 3 Preventing, anticipating & responding to potentially disruptive incidents; reinforcing positive student behaviours; signalling awareness of what is happening in the classroom and responding appropriately |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

4. Activating hard thinking

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Structuring: giving students an appropriate sequence of learning tasks; signalling learning objectives, rationale, overview, key ideas and stages of progress; matching tasks to learners' needs and readiness; scaffolding and supporting to make tasks accessible to all, but gradually removed so that all students succeed at the required level | 2 Explaining: presenting and communicating new ideas clearly, with concise, appropriate, engaging explanations; connecting new ideas to what has previously been learnt (and re-activating/checking that prior knowledge); using examples (and non-examples) appropriately to help learners understand and build connections; modelling/demonstrating new skills or procedures with appropriate scaffolding and challenge; using worked/part-worked examples | 3 Questioning: using questions and dialogue to promote elaboration and connected, flexible thinking among learners (e.g., 'Why?', 'Compare', etc.); using questions to elicit student thinking; getting responses from all students; using high-quality assessment to evidence learning; interpreting, communicating and responding to assessment evidence appropriately |
| 4 Interacting: responding appropriately to feedback from students about their thinking/knowledge/understanding; giving students actionable feedback to guide their learning | 5 Embedding: giving students tasks that embed and reinforce learning; requiring them to practise until learning is fluent and secure; ensuring that once-learnt material is reviewed/revisited to prevent forgetting | 6 Activating: helping students to plan, regulate and monitor their own learning; progressing appropriately from structured to more independent learning as students develop knowledge and expertise |

PRINCIPLE 1: THE CLASSROOM IS AN EMOTIONALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL

Evidence and context

Studies show feelings of competence, autonomy and social-relatedness as the requirements for students to be motivated and achieve. There is evidence to suggest that when teachers work on improving the warmth and supportiveness of classrooms, student outcomes improve. There is also strong evidence that both subliminal and explicit teacher expectations can influence student attainment and become, at least to some extent, self-fulfilling prophecies.

At TBS, we will work to make the classroom an emotionally safe environment, mitigating fear of failure and replacing learned helplessness with mastery orientation. We must focus and build on what students know and can do, and avoid a validation of negative perceptions.

IN THE CLASSROOM

- Routines

Establish your expectations and develop strong and consistent routines to support them
All lessons are expected to have:

- A warm greeting at the door for ALL students
- A calm and settled entry into the classroom
- Silent starter at the beginning
- Consistent, positive strategies for gaining silence and attention for instruction
- Calm and seamless transitions from instruction to task or task to task
- Consistent routines for smooth handing out of resources
- An ordered exit in which students are led into the corridor by you

- Planning

- The seating plan provides an emotionally safe environment for each student
- Your learning intention is clear for both students and you as the teacher
- Future events out of the ordinary are communicated in advance eg. assessments, lesson venue change, seating plan changes
- Your subject knowledge and planning promote a safe environment for you
- Avoid negative emotions
- All students will be warmly greeted at the door at the beginning of every lesson
- Strategies such as 'positive framing' are developed
- You model the behaviours you wish to see from students eg. respect, punctuality, preparedness, warmth, positive attitude, patience, perseverance
- You are assertive and explain when challenging their behaviour
- You provide constructive responses to errors or misconceptions to encourage risk

Key questions

- How can you build positive relationships with all students in your classes?
- How do you foster positive relationships between students to allow all to feel safe?

- What strategies can you use to promote motivation?
- How can you create a climate of high expectations, with high challenge and high trust, so students feel confident to take risks and learn from their mistakes?

PRINCIPLE 2: INSTRUCTION IS CLEAR AND EXPLICIT

Evidence and context

Decades of research clearly demonstrate that for novices (comprising virtually all students), direct, explicit instruction is more effective than partial guidance. When teaching new content and skills, teachers are more effective when they provide explicit guidance accompanied by practice and feedback. This does not mean direct instruction all day every day. Small group and independent problems can be effective but as a means of practising recently learned content and skills.

IN THE CLASSROOM

- Clarity of instruction

Instructions enable ALL students understand the task presented. Strong subject knowledge aids delivery of new information in a clear and coherent way and allows you to explain new content in a variety of ways.

- Checking the quality of instruction

Generic, vague questions such as, 'Does that make sense?', 'Is everybody happy?', 'Anyone not understand?' are not used. You explicitly ask a wide range of students to demonstrate their understanding of a concept or the task they are about to begin.

- Means of participation

All students are clear what is expected of them at different stages in the lesson. Clear consideration is given to how you wish students to respond in different tasks eg. Think-Pair-Share, mini-whiteboards or silent effort in independent practice. Phrases are precise to signal to students what is expected, when and how they will participate.

Means of participation

Use this to plan the phases of questioning within a lesson, as well as the means of participation for each and how you will clearly communicate this to pupils

Question phase (feedback from Do Now, questions after a video, comprehension questions on a text)	Means of participation (Call & Response, Hands Up, Cold Call, Turn & Talk/Think-Pair-Share, Everybody Writes)	Phrase or gesture that will clearly communicate the means of participation to pupils	Questions you will ask
Example: <i>The Do Now task was 5 a day recall, I will now go through the answers with the pupils.</i>	Example: <i>Cold Call – I expect all pupils to have attempted the answers & so will choose at random.</i>	Example: <i>"Ok, we're going to go over the answers. I'm going to choose who will give us the answer to each question, so no hands up please."</i>	Example: <i>"Question 1: On what date was the Battle of Hastings...Jack?" "Question 2: Who was the King of England at the start of the battle...Hanna?"</i>

- Small steps

New information is provided in small chunks to prevent cognitive overload. Through this, more time is spent providing explanations, modelling and guiding practice through worked examples at each stage. You ensure you are not delivering too much information in one go or asking students to practise too many steps at once. The least confident are encouraged to build

confidence step by step.

Key questions

- What areas of your subject do you find difficult to explain to novices?
- How often do you check student understanding of a task?
- How often do you use phrases like, 'Does that make sense?' What issues do you see with this?
- How much consideration in your planning do you give to the amount of new information you are intending to deliver?

PRINCIPLE 3: TEACH TO THE TOP

Evidence and context

International comparisons of student achievement indicate that the highest performing educational systems have high expectations for all. Studies suggest that pitching lesson content at the 'top end' is beneficial for all students. This means consistently teaching higher level ideas and knowledge, making it accessible for ALL students in ALL classes. It is not an approach that prioritises the learning of a few students seen as 'high attaining' whilst assuming that those with lower data or assessment scores need lower level content. At TBS, 'teach to the top' refers to the approach of pitching lesson content at the 'top end' to stretch and challenge a particular group, and then supporting ALL students to reach the top end.

IN THE CLASSROOM

- Subject knowledge

Strong subject knowledge allows you to feel emotionally safe in the classroom and promotes confidence in your students. Your subject knowledge goes beyond the content of your lesson and meets the curiosity of students. Your subject knowledge enables you to stretch the 'top end'. You take responsibility to 'know' your subject.

- Planning

You plan explicitly for the highest attaining students in your group to stretch them. Stretch and challenge is not 'added on' but embedded within the lesson. Challenging questions are planned to promote deeper thinking and higher order vocabulary is embedded with examples of how they are used. The support ALL students may require to access the 'top end' is explicit in your planning.

- Support through adaptive teaching

Scaffolds provide a breakdown of the steps that students will need to follow. Detailed support is given (eg. key terms, sentence starters and diagrams) as well as overview support (eg. structure strips, partial examples and success criteria). Questions are adjusted for the least confident to check understanding and promote success.

Modelling reduces the cognitive load and provides students with a greater understanding of WHAT they are expected to produce and HOW they are expected to present it. You allow students to gain insight into the thought process of the task. You question the least confident students throughout the process to gain appreciation of their understanding of the process up

to that point and next steps. Students have the opportunity to emulate the model as an independent task.

Key questions

- What topics or concepts are you least confident of in your teaching?
- What steps can you take to improve your subject knowledge?
- How much consideration do you give to highest attaining students in your planning?
- How much consideration do you give to supporting ALL students to access higher order content in your planning?
- Do you provide shortcuts or scaffolds in the teaching of key concepts?
- How established is the phrase, 'I do, we do, you do' in your teaching?
- How do you adapt questions to promote success and engagement of the least confident?

PRINCIPLE 4: ENGAGE ALL STUDENTS IN THINKING HARD

Evidence and context

'Memory is the residue of thought.' (Willingham, 2009) To get students to remember what we teach, we need to get them to think about the meaning of new material in the context of what they already know. Key to this is reviewing each lesson plan in terms of what the student is likely to think about. This means stripping out extraneous distractions and designing tasks so students will unavoidably think about the meaning of the content, not merely observe it. This is particularly important for those with additional needs or poor attention.

At TBS, we need ALL students to be thinking deeply about the content you are teaching them. To do so, consider both the strategies and the environment that will allow thinking hard.

IN THE CLASSROOM

- Clear learning intentions

Students are absolutely clear on the learning intentions of the lesson and what they are being expected to think about. It is referred to at appropriate points in the lesson.

- Questioning, formative assessment and responsive teaching

A large number of questions are asked. There is no opt-out. At worst, the question is moved to another student to answer and then re-directed back.

Strategies are used to check the understanding of ALL students. Answers give feedback.

- Cold-calling – questions are directed to the least confident, and the same question may be directed to a number of students or built on. There is no 'hands-up'.
- Think-Pair-Share – you pose a question to the whole class to think about in silence. They then share their thoughts with their partner. You move around the class to listen to discussions. You then cold call a number of students.
- Mini-whiteboards – you pose a question and ask students to write down their answer in silence. On your signal, ALL students raise their boards at the same time. You scan the class to make sure ALL students have answered.

- Choral response – you pose a question or introduce a key word. On a count, the students provide the answer as a chorus. You scan the class to make sure all students are participating and repeat until ALL are.

The means of participation for each of these strategies is explicit.

Students are expected to answer fully as they would if these answers were written. If needed, you ask them to 'say it again better'.

- Practice

Students practise retrieval of previous learnt content in the silent starter. This is a quick test of recall that ALL students can access and achieve success. Students recall previously learnt content when learning new material to provide links to form schema.

Worked examples (guided practice) aid understanding of the thought process involved in completing the learning task. Students do not move onto independent practice until you are confident ALL students understand. Students practise independently in silence.

Key questions

- How do I know everyone is thinking?
- How do I know that everyone is making meaning?
- How do I know that everyone is practising?

PRINCIPLE 5: PROMOTE POSITIVE LEARNING BEHAVIOURS IN THE CLASSROOM

Evidence and context

A large body of evidence supports the use of proactive behaviour management strategies to promote learning. Studies have presented evidence of correlations between measures of attainment and classroom management from 1,000 classrooms. For newly qualified teachers the generalisation is that there tends to be too much co-operation and a lack of assertiveness within the classroom, sometimes confusing a friendly approach with wanting to be liked. However, it is important to note that, as a generalisation, somewhere between six to ten years into teaching a number of teachers lose their sense of care and co-operation, tending towards a "blitzkrieg" approach that is too dominant and damages relationships.

IN THE CLASSROOM

- Front-loading instructions

You put your means of participation at the front of your instruction, where you anticipate the point at which students might stop listening to you and start thinking about something else (like the answer to the question) and get all the important information in before that point.

Eg. "Ok, I'm going to ask a question and you are going to one [hold up a finger] write your answer on a mini whiteboard [hold up two fingers] two keep it face down and [hold up three fingers] three show me only when I say. Write down [one finger], face down [two fingers], show me [three fingers.] Ok who can say the instruction back to me....David?...Excellent. Write down, face down, show me [use the fingers again.] What is the word equation for photosynthesis?"

- Gaining attention

Clear strategies are used to signal you require the attention of ALL students. The next phase of the lesson does not begin until you have full attention from ALL students.

This is achieved through different strategies although the following is most effective:

- Narrated Count down – *'calling your attention in 3, finishing your conversations in 2, don't be the last one, and 1', and pause for complete silence.* Be seen looking.

You insist on SLANT, where students:

S – sit up straight

L – listen

A – ask and answer questions

N – have nothing in their hands

T – track the teacher

- Maintaining consistency of language

'One voice' – phrase used when you are preparing to give instructions or an explanation

'Take turns' – phrase used when you are preparing to ask questions of the class

'Silent effort' – phrase used when you are preparing the class for independent practice

Key questions

- How much thought do you give to the way you deliver instructions?
- What key phrases do you use regularly to gain attention or set means of participation?
- How do you ensure that rules, expectations and consequences for behaviour are explicit, clear and consistently applied?
- How do you prevent, anticipate and respond to potentially disruptive incidents?

PRINCIPLE 6: ALL STUDENTS NEED TO BE ABLE TO READ

Evidence and context

'Young people who leave school without good literacy skills are held back at every stage of life. Their outcomes are poorer on almost every measure, from health and wellbeing to employment and finance. The most recent estimates suggest that low levels of literacy cost the UK economy at least £20 billion a year... by attending to the literacy demands of their subjects, teachers increase their students' chance of success in their subjects.'

At TBS, all teachers need to be able to teach reading. We need a systematic way of teaching tier 2 and 3 vocabulary and practising reading in class.

IN THE CLASSROOM

- We plan which words to teach
(tier 2 – academic vocabulary words; and tier 3 – subject-specific language)
- When introducing new vocabulary, we follow the 5-step plan:

1. Model Lead Teach
Model – teacher pronounces word and identifies irregular spelling patterns, if relevant
Lead – teacher choruses with class
Teach – class chorus back independently
 2. provide synonyms, not just definitions
 3. teach the etymology (biography)
 4. give examples of correct uses
 5. give examples of misuses
- All teachers are trained in how to practise reading in class.
 - All students track the text using a ruler.
 - All students participate in reading aloud during the course of the unit.
 - Teacher pauses at tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary to ensure students fully understand the sentence they are reading.
 - Teacher does not assume that all students understand tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary.

Key questions

- How do you know that every student in your class can read?
- What strategies can you use to support students who find reading more challenging?
- How much independent reading do you expect students to complete outside of lessons?
- How do you know that they can access the texts you expect them to read independently?
- How much reading/tier 2 tuition takes place in your lesson?
- How are you meeting the reading demands of your GCSE paper in lessons?

Glossary to aid further understanding of terms used in this guide:

Learned helplessness	Where an individual feels failure is inevitable and is out of their control
Mastery orientation	Where an individual sees failure as a learning experience and success will be achieved through improvement and acquisition of new knowledge and skills
Cognitive Load (Sweller)	The amount of information that our working memory capacity can hold at one time. Therefore, instruction needs to avoid overloading it with too much information or activities/input that do not directly enhance learning.
Responsive teaching	The 'minute-by-minute, day-by-day' readings that we take from our students that will allow us to respond to their needs.
Adaptive teaching	Planning that provides scaffolds for those students who need support to access higher level content
Front-loading instruction	Used to provide students with explicit, predetermined guidance and reminders for applying necessary skills, strategies, and behaviours to be successful in the task.
Means of participation	The rules by which we expect students to engage in learning tasks.