Teaching and Learning Principles

2025-2026

Introduction

At Nonsuch, we believe that exceptional teaching transforms lives. Our approach to learning is grounded in high expectations, academic curiosity and a culture of reflection and improvement. This document sets out the principles that shape our practice and ensure that every student is challenged, supported and inspired.

Our teachers focus on six key principles to ensure that teaching practices are consistent, evidence based and aligned with whole school expectations. These principles are:

1) High Expectations
2) Lesson Structure
3) Cognitive Engagement
4) Adaptive Teaching
5) Feedback and Assessment
6) Literacy and Oracy

The purpose of this document is to explain each of the six key principles of teaching and learning, outline the evidence that underpins them, illustrate what they look like in practice in the classroom and signpost relevant training and resources.

While these principles provide a shared framework, they are not intended as a one-size-fits-all model. Where appropriate, departments may adapt or develop their own subject-specific approaches to ensure implementation aligns with the unique demands of their curriculum and disciplinary practices. Subject specific approaches can be seen in the appendices. (Please note that subject specific appendices are inward facing documents)

Ultimately, the aim of these principles is simple: to ensure that every student experiences consistently excellent teaching and learning. By grounding our practice in research, adapting thoughtfully to the needs of our learners and continually developing our expertise, we create classrooms where students are challenged, supported and inspired to thrive, both academically and beyond.

Developing and monitoring teaching and learning

The professional development programme at Nonsuch is structured around these principles, enabling staff to deepen their understanding, refine their practice and engage with current research. CPD opportunities, including whole-school training, subject-specific development and self-directed learning, are designed to support teachers in applying these principles purposefully and confidently in their classrooms. In doing so, we foster a culture of continuous reflection, collaboration and improvement.

	CPD focus
2025-26	Assessment and Feedback, Adaptive practice,
2026-27	High Expectations, Cognitive engagement
2027-28	Lesson Structure, Literacy

We promote an open-door culture where teachers routinely observe one another, ensuring effective practice is shared across the team. Over the course of the year, each teacher receives supportive feedback from peers, line managers, and members of the extended leadership team to strengthen and refine their teaching. This approach allows for ongoing reflection and marginal improvements within what is already strong practice.

Nonsuch's Six Key Principles of T&L

High Expectations	Lesson Structure	Cognitive Engagement
In lessons, by establishing a culture of mutual respect, we create an environment where all pupils feel valued, supported and encouraged to take responsibility for their own progress. Our students' opportunities to learn are maximised because **effective routines** are in place and staff have clear expectations. Staff consistently model and reinforce learning behaviours underpinned by the principles of **metacognition**. This promotes independence and self-regulation, so pupils become confident, active participants in their own academic progression. With these high expectations in place, pupils are focused, motivated and empowered to take ownership of their learning.	Consistency plays a crucial role in creating a predictable learning environment that supports student engagement and therefore knowledge retention and skill development. A lesson structure based around the following principles ensures that new concepts are accessible; students are supported to internalise new knowledge and skills; and students are prepared for future application of knowledge. **Retrieval practice** supports our students to reinforce and activate connections in their long-term memory. **Clear explanations** followed by practice, both guided and **independent practice**, allows our students to apply their learning. **Review and consolidation** of their understanding reinforces clearly explained **lesson objectives** and prepares them for future retrieval practice.	Teachers at Nonsuch create engaging and dynamic learning experiences that develop intrinsic motivation among pupils. In a stimulating environment, students are encouraged to explore, question and interact with new materials and concepts. Passive participation is not an option; all learners are accountable for demonstrable cognitive engagement. This not only fosters individual curiosity and a sense of scholarly enquiry but also allows for teachers to achieve the correct balance between support and challenge. By actively participating in their learning, students build confidence and resilience and become more invested in their personal progress as opposed to achievement. A blend of **engaging activities, collaboration** and **desirable challenge** cultivates a passion for life-long learning beyond the classroom.
Adaptive Teaching	**Feedback & Assessment**	**Literacy & Oracy**
Teachers have an excellent knowledge of both their students and their subject which allows them to tailor instructions, explanations and tasks to meet individual student needs. Through this inclusive approach, teachers expertly modify difficulty, pace or delivery methods ensuring that all students have equitable access to the course studied. **Explicit instruction**, s**caffolded practice** and **flexible grouping** ensure that students at all levels are challenged to make excellent progress. Teachers encourage student self-assessment and reflection to promote autonomy and growth. This dynamic approach fosters a supportive learning environment where every student feels valued, is motivated and recognises their own personal improvement. All students benefit from this approach but the impact for those with SEND or those who are multiply disadvantaged is greater.	**Assessment for learning** is embedded in lessons, allowing teachers to gather insights into each student's understanding and progress and informs future planning. It enables teachers to tailor **feedback** to best support individual growth. Students receive high quality feedback via a wide range of mechanisms which are timely, specific and focus on improvement. By embedding feedback into daily practice students are encouraged to be reflective and own their learning, identifying strengths and next steps. At Nonsuch, **homework** is an important tool in the feedback cycle. Summative assessment is used to take a snapshot of current attainment. This approach to assessment ensures that feedback is meaningful, ongoing, and central to student progress.	Strategies to develop literacy and oracy are integrated into lessons to support language development, deepen understanding and engage students in purposeful learning. Disciplinary literacy is a focus in every lesson and teachers provide **explicit vocabulary instruction**. **Writing** is developed through structured tasks, modelled writing and scaffolding, helping students to express ideas clearly. **Disciplinary reading** and **reading for pleasure** build understanding of key concepts whilst improving comprehension and encouraging a love of reading. **Listening skills** are taught through active listening activities and discussions whilst **oracy** is developed through targeted questioning and group work. Developing both oracy and literacy equips students with the essential skills to think critically, communicate effectively and engage confidently across all areas of the curriculum.

High Expectations

1.1 High expectations: Principles

In lessons, by establishing a culture of mutual respect, we create an environment where all pupils feel valued, supported and encouraged to take responsibility for their own progress. Our students' opportunities to learn are maximised because **effective routines** are in place and staff have **clear expectations**. Staff consistently model and reinforce learning behaviours underpinned by the principles of **metacognition**. This promotes independence and self-regulation, so pupils become confident, active participants in their own academic progression. With these high expectations in place, pupils are focused, motivated and empowered to take ownership of their learning.

1.2 High Expectations: Classroom practice

1.2.1 Effective routines and clear expectations

Our students thrive because the classroom environment is predictable and expectations are clear.

Effective routines include, but are not limited to:

- Clear entry and exit routines
- Consistent start and end of lesson procedures
- Smooth, disruption free transition between activities
- Consistent signals for attention
- Regular checks for understanding

In all lessons teachers clearly demonstrate high expectations for behaviour, engagement and effort. Clarity surrounding teacher expectations comes from the promotion of our school values:

- *Positivity*: Teachers expect students to tackle their learning with an open mind and a willingness to try, supporting students to focus on solutions and not problems by using encouraging and constructive language.
- *Respect*: Teachers expect students to listen actively; value different perspectives, backgrounds and contributions; and to look after their learning environment and resources.
- *Integrity*: Teachers expect students to do the right thing, even when the choice is hard, for example, ensuring their work is their own and owning their choices and the impact of these decisions.
- *Courage*: Teachers expect students to take part in their learning even when they are unsure or nervous; to welcome challenge; and to not be afraid of taking academic risks.
- *Endeavour*: Teachers expect students to always try their best.

Consistent application of rewards and consequences (as detailed in our behavior for learning policy) support students to meet teachers' high expectations.

1.2.2 Metacognition

Our practice is informed by the EEF guidance report: Metacognition and self-regulated learning.

- Teachers support student to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning through structured reflection tasks.
- Students are explicitly taught metacognitive strategies in relation to specific content and tasks.
- Teachers verbalise their own metacognitive thinking to model the process for their students.

- Where appropriate, scaffolded tasks, like worked examples, allow students to develop their metacognitive and cognitive skills without placing too many demands on their mental resources.
- Classroom dialogue is used purposefully to develop metacognitive skills.
- Students are taught how to organise and effectively manage their independent learning.

1.3 High Expectations: Resources to support teachers

Teachers can access EEF guidance and a range of tools on metacognition here:

EEF_Metacognition_and_self-regulated_learning.pdf

Metacognition and Self-regulated Learning | EEF

Teachers have access to Steplab and can engage with the following training resources to support their practice in relation to high expectations. Each area has a study module (linked below) with models, evidence summaries, misconceptions and case studies to support development of practice.

Study module	Units covered	
Reinforce positive behaviours | Steplab	Clarify and Introduce systems Communicate clear expectations Connect and reset out of class Narrate links between class and school rewards systems	Insist early Narrate hard work and effort Scan for cooperation Position to praise.
Establish routines | Steplab	Do it again Insist on 100%	Publicly narrate met expectations Scan effectively
Use an active listening routine | Steplab	Insist on 100% Use a clear routine for gaining student attention Publicly narrate met expectations	Monitor cooperation Give anonymous public corrections
Establish an entry routine | Steplab	Do it again	Set clear entry expectations
Respond to negative behaviours | Steplab	Give anonymous public corrections	
Build metacognition | Steplab	Teach summarization Use hierarchical note taking Provide knowledge organisers Teach retrievable note taking Teach paragraph summarisation	Use concept mapping Use diagramming Use sense-making pause points Encourage student reteaching Link to prior learning

1.4 High Expectations: Our subject specific approach

Please see Appendix A for further information of the routines that are embedded in different subject areas.

Lesson Structure

2.1 Lesson Structure: Principles

Consistency plays a crucial role in creating a predictable learning environment that supports student engagement and therefore knowledge retention and skill development. A lesson structure based around the following principles ensures that new concepts are accessible; students are supported to internalise new knowledge and skills; and students are prepared for future application of knowledge. **Retrieval practice** supports our students to reinforce and activate connections in their long-term memory. **Clear explanations** followed by practice, both guided and **independent practice**, allows our students to apply their learning. **Review and consolidation** of their understanding reinforces clearly explained **lesson objectives** and prepares them for future retrieval practice.

2.2 Lesson structure: Classroom practice

At Nonsuch, our shared lesson structure promotes consistency and supports learning but is not restrictive or formulaic. It is not intended to be a rigid sequence or a one-size-fits-all model. Instead, these elements represent features that would be expected in most lessons, though not necessarily in the same order or with equal weighting. Teachers apply professional judgment to adjust pace, balance and emphasis based on subject content, lesson purpose, and the needs of students.

2.2.1 Lesson objectives

In most lessons, teachers:

- Clearly communicate learning objectives. This can be verbal or visual and takes place at a point in the lesson that supports learning.
- Provide success criteria to help students to understand what excellence looks like
- Revisit learning objectives during and after learning to support reflection

2.2.2 Retrieval practice

When it best supports student learning, teachers:

- Use low-stakes recall activities to activate prior knowledge.
- Prompt students to recall and connect prior learning to new content.
- Use diagnostic retrieval tasks to identify misconceptions and adjust teaching accordingly.

2.2.3 Clear explanations

When it best supports student learning, teachers:

- Deliver concise, accurate explanations that follow a logical and manageable sequence.
- Use modelling, worked examples, or visual representations to illustrate thinking or processes.
- Check understanding through questioning before progressing to further learning

2.2.4 Independent practice

When it best supports student learning, teachers:

- Provide opportunities for students to apply new learning independently.
- Offer scaffolds where needed and gradually remove them to build confidence and autonomy.
- Prioritise sufficient time for students to practise, refine, and secure knowledge or skills.

2.2.5 Review and consolidation

When it best supports student learning, teachers:

- Guide students to reflect on key learning points.
- Use feedback, including self-assessment or peer assessment, to support improvement and accuracy.
- Reinforce essential concepts at the end of the lesson to support future retrieval.

2.3 Lesson structure: Resources to support teachers

Teachers have access to Steplab and can engage with the following training resources to support their practice in relation to lesson structure. Each area has a study module (linked below) with models, evidence summaries, misconceptions and case studies to support development of practice.

Study module	Units covered	
Plan well-structured units and lessons | Steplab	Plan objectives responsively Plan lessons around key knowledge points Choose the most efficient path	Make objectives manageable Make objectives measurable Plan objectives before activities
Use retrieval quizzes | Steplab	Include prior content Plan coverage systematically Use quizzes to motivate homework Establish a quizzing routine Frame quizzes as low stakes Allow selected students to use notes	Have model answers clear and ready Encourage self-marking Select questions for deep feedback Repeat tricky concepts Record and re-teach Link quiz questions to revision material
Explain for deeper understanding | Steplab	Provide outline before detail Provide examples and non-examples Provide multiple and varied examples Use minimally different examples Use maximally different examples	Use repeated sentence structures Use repeated image structures Proactively address misconceptions Link to broader concepts
Plan, run and monitor independent practice | Steplab	Prioritise independent practice Tailor tasks and scaffolds Use hinge question routines Let silence settle fore responding to questions Ensure that practice is quiet Increase the challenge	Set achievable sub-goals Use competition to motivate practice Plan check points Motivate practice by linking to assessments Pre-plan success criteria and identify likely errors Format workbooks for efficient assessment

2.4 Lesson structure: Our subject specific approach

These lesson features are common to all lessons and therefore we expect to see minimal variation between departments.

Cognitive Engagement

3.1 Cognitive Engagement: Principles

Teachers at Nonsuch create engaging and dynamic learning experiences that develop intrinsic motivation among pupils. In a stimulating environment, students are encouraged to explore, question and interact with new materials and concepts. Passive participation is not an option; all learners are accountable for demonstrable cognitive engagement. This not only fosters individual curiosity and a sense of scholarly enquiry but also allows for teachers to achieve the correct balance between support and challenge. By actively participating in their learning, students build confidence and resilience and become more invested in their personal progress as opposed to achievement. A blend of **engaging activities, collaboration** and **desirable challenge** cultivates a passion for life-long learning beyond the classroom.

3.2 Cognitive Engagement: Classroom practice

3.2.1 Engaging activities

In order to sustain student interest and balance cognitive load, teachers plan lessons to use a variety of low stakes activities that avoid repetition and over reliance on passive listening. Examples include but are not limited to:

- *Retrieval and recall activities*: mini white board question and answer, low stakes quizzes, brain dumps, exit tickets
- *Explicit instruction and modelling*: teacher explanations with worked examples, live modelling (I do-we do-you do), think aloud reasoning or problem solving, text or diagram annotations
- *Guided practice and scaffolding*: Structured worksheets, sentence starters, writing frames, graphic organisers
- *Discussion and dialogue*: Hands down questioning, Socratic questioning, , student led presentations, teacher led debate
- *Applied learning*: Practical work, case study analysis, role-play, scenario-based tasks
- *Assessment for learning*: traffic light self-assessment, scaffolded peer feedback, plenaries

3.2.2 Collaboration

Collaborative tasks are used in the majority of lessons to support and sustain deeper cognitive engagement. Collaboration is purposeful and scaffolded having been carefully designed in anticipation of common student misconceptions. Common examples of collaboration include but are not limited to:

- Think-pair-share
- Group problem solving
- Rotating roles e.g. de Bono's hats
- Peer assessment
- Expert in the room

Collaboration works best when it is followed by individual reflection or assessment for learning.

3.2.3 Desirable challenge

Teachers design their lessons to stretch students just beyond comfort into a zone where thinking is effortful but remains achievable; students are cognitively challenged in all lessons. To create desirable challenge, teachers at Nonsuch draw on a range of knowledge:

- *Subject expertise*: All teachers are experts in their field. They contribute insight from their individual academic backgrounds while aligning this knowledge to the curriculum so it is accessible and accurate for students. Within departments, teachers collaborate by openly sharing their specialist knowledge to strengthen collective expertise.
- *Common difficulty and misconceptions*: To pitch learning at a level where students must think carefully rather than guess or recall automatically. Teachers use their extensive knowledge of the level of difficulty of each area of the curriculum and knowledge of common misconceptions that are likely to arise.
- *Student profiles*: Teachers have a detailed understanding of the students they teach. Supported by whole school systems for sharing information, teachers build knowledge of their students through in class monitoring of learning, confidence and responses over time. Teachers' understanding of individual students enables the planning of tasks that are challenging enough to stimulate effort and thinking, but not so difficult that students disengage.

3.3 Cognitive Engagement: Resources to support teachers

Teachers have access to Steplab and can engage with the following training resources to support their practice in relation to cognitive engagement. Each area has a study module (linked below) with models, evidence summaries, misconceptions and case studies to support development of practice.

Study module	Units covered	
Add challenge or scaffolds whilst questioning | Steplab	Provide response templates	Provide strategic clues and prompts
	Avoid rounding up	Prompt to extend
	Insist on full sentence answers	Push for how or why
	Insist on use of academic language	Ask for evidence
Plan, run and monitor independent practice | Steplab	Increase the challenge	

The early careers framework also has a useful study module focused on cognitive engagement which can be found here: How Pupils Learn.pdf

3.4 Cognitive engagement: Our subject specific approach

Teacher subject specific expertise varies within departments. Please see Appendix C for further information on the academic specialisms of teachers within each department.

Adaptive Teaching

4.1 Adaptive Teaching: Principles

Teachers have an excellent knowledge of both their students and their subject which allows them to tailor instructions, explanations and tasks to meet individual student needs. Through this inclusive approach, teachers expertly modify difficulty, pace or delivery methods ensuring that all students have equitable access to the course studied. **Explicit instruction**, **scaffolded practice** and **flexible grouping** ensure that students at all levels are challenged to make excellent progress. Teachers encourage student self-assessment and reflection to promote autonomy and growth. This dynamic approach fosters a supportive learning environment where every student feels valued, is motivated and recognises their own personal improvement. All students benefit from this approach but the impact for those with SEND or those who are multiply disadvantaged is greater.

4.2 Adaptive Teaching: Classroom practice

'The best available research evidence suggests that there are five approaches that teachers should consider adopting for pupils with SEND. These five teaching approaches are likely to broadly support all pupils, while particularly supporting many pupils with SEND.' (EEF)

4.2.1 Explicit instruction

Guided by Rosenshine's principles of instruction, in our classrooms teacher-led approaches focus on the following five steps:

- Clear explanations
- Modelling
- Frequent checks for understanding
- Guided practice
- Independent practice.

We frequently refer to this as the 'I do, we do, you do model'.

4.2.2 Cognitive and metacognitive strategies

Please see section 1 for our approach to embedding metacognition and section 3 for our approach to ensuring high levels of cognitive engagement

4.2.3 Scaffolding

In our classrooms, scaffolding is used to provide a temporary framework to ensure that students can complete tasks that they would not be able to do independently. Effective assessment allows teachers to gain a precise understanding of who may require encouragement to engage with the scaffolding that is available to all. Techniques that teachers use to scaffold tasks can be verbal, visual or written and can include, but is not limited to:

Writing frames	Partially completed examples	Knowledge organisers
Essay prompts	Sentence starters	Word banks/Glossaries
Guided questioning	Visual cues	Check lists

4.2.4 Flexible grouping

Teachers give seating plans regular, careful consideration to ensure that students are sitting in a position that gives them the best chance to thrive. The location in the room and the surrounding students' mastery of the subject and behaviour are all considered.

Occasionally students benefit from temporary rearrangement of the seating plan to support flexible grouping, bringing together a group of students who need:

- additional teacher support to fully master a topic
- an improved seating plan to support collaborative learning
- to focus on a specific element of a task e.g. mastering literacy required to succeed in the topic.

It is Nonsuch policy that students are always placed into groups by the teacher rather than students choosing their own groups in order to:

- ensure balanced groups and that the group matches the purpose of the task
- prevent exclusion and social anxiety
- promote fairness and productive collaboration

4.3.5 Using technology

Technology is used widely to support student learning at Nonsuch.

Technology is best used to support our students when it:	**Examples of technology:**
Provides instant feedback	Quizzing tools e.g. MSForms, Quizlet, Kahoot, Padlet
Allows students to work at a different pace, chunk information and replay content.	You tube videos, Up Learn, Sparx maths
Tracks student performance and individualises retrieval.	Up Learn, Sparx Maths
Tailors work to a student's ability	Sparx Maths
Clarifies instructions	See use of MS Teams to set homework

4.3 Adaptive Teaching: Resources to support teachers

Teachers can access EEF guidance on adaptive practice in the following blogs:

EEF blog: Moving from 'differentiation' to 'adaptive teaching' | EEF

EEF Blog: Five evidence-based strategies to support… | EEF

Teachers have access to Steplab and can engage with the following training resources to support their practice in relation to adaptive practice. Each area has a study module (linked below) with models, evidence summaries, misconceptions and case studies to support development of practice.

Study module	**Units covered**	
Give clear and memorable	Limit new content Script explanations and models	Use dual coding Weave information into narrative

explanations | Steplab	Situate the learning Highlight relevance Link to prior learning Illustrate connections between concepts Keep teacher talk lean Provide student friendly definitions Repeat target vocabulary Highlight and repeat key ideas and information	Captivate through conflict Make it relatable Use mnemonics Share misconception stories Use analogies Use song or rhyme Use volume and tone Build in processing time
Use modelling as a scaffold | Steplab	Create a success criteria Prepare a model Set a culture of consideration Make responses visible Explain the purpose of the model Narrate the model Live model the process Live model improvement	Form a collaborate live model Compare examples Identify strengths and areas of development Annotate a model Give students a chance to improve their work Prove challenging practice time Fade modelling scaffolds Use checks for understanding whilst modelling
Explain for deeper understanding | Steplab	Provide outline before detail Provide examples and non-examples Provide multiple varied examples Use minimally different examples Use maximally different examples	Use repeated sentence structures Use repeated image structures Proactively address misconceptions Link to broader concepts
Add challenge or scaffolds whilst questioning | Steplab	Provide response templates Avoid rounding up Insist on full-sentence answers Insist on use of academic language	Provide strategic clues and prompts Prompt to extend Push for how or why Ask for evidence

4.4 Adaptive Teaching: Our subject specific approach

Scaffolding, flexible grouping and the use of technology can vary from subject to subject. Please see Appendix D for each department's subject specific approach to adaptive practice.

Feedback & Assessment

5.1 Feedback & Assessment: Core Principles

Assessment for learning is embedded in lessons, allowing teachers to gather insights into each student's understanding and progress and inform future planning. It enables teachers to tailor **feedback** to best support individual growth. Students receive high quality feedback via a wide range of mechanisms which are timely, specific and focus on improvement. By embedding feedback into daily practice students are encouraged to be reflective and own their learning, identifying strengths and next steps. At Nonsuch, **homework** is an important tool in the feedback cycle. **Summative assessment** is used to take a snapshot of current attainment. This approach to assessment ensures that feedback is meaningful, ongoing, and central to student progress.

5.2 Feedback & Assessment: Classroom practice

5.2.1 Assessment for Learning & Feedback

Informed by Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, the techniques that teachers use to regularly check the skills and knowledge that students acquire during a lesson and provide feedback based on these checks include, but are not limited to:

	Assessment for Learning Strategy	Feedback opportunity
Whole Class	▪ Questioning (including cold call and no-hands-up questioning) ▪ Mini whiteboards ▪ Retrieval practice tasks ▪ Low-stakes quizzes ▪ Confidence checks ▪ Modelling and worked examples linked to shared success criteria ▪ Exit tickets analysed collectively	Teachers provide collective guidance to move learning forward by: ▪ identifying and clarifying common misconceptions ▪ adjusting teaching in real time ▪ reinforces success criteria
Group	▪ Think-Pair-Share ▪ Small group discussions ▪ Group tasks with success criteria ▪ Peer assessment in pairs or small groups	Students can provide feedback to each other by: ▪ comparing understanding ▪ clarifying thinking ▪ addressing shared misconceptions ▪ refining work based on peer dialogue Teachers support the process with planned circulation, observation and redirection where necessary.
Individual	▪ Live marking ▪ Verbal feedback during tasks ▪ DIRT: directed improvement and reflection time for written feedback in exercise books. ▪ Self-assessment using traffic lights, checklists or rubrics	These strategies allow teachers to provide personalised feedback that identifies strengths and next steps in order to support individual progress.

All students are strongly encouraged to record and monitor the feedback they receive, using the record as a tool to prepare for planned summative assessment. See appendix E for a generic tracker sheet.

5.2.2 Homework

Homework is defined as any work that students are asked to complete outside of lesson time. It plays an important role in a student's learning, developing responsibility for learning and providing students with an opportunity to **p**ractice required skills, **a**ssess their understanding, **r**evise for upcoming assessments and **c**onsolidate knowledge acquired in lessons (PARC). To ensure that homework is effective:

The Education Endowment Fund study showed that homework is most effective when:	Implementation of the EEF study:
Homework has a clear link to the work that has been completed in the classroom. The focus is on quality and not quantity (there is some evidence to show that the positive impact of homework diminishes as the amount of time pupils spend on it increases). Homework is a planned, integral part of student learning, not just a bolt on to fill time.	- Homework is set at a time that is pertinent to learning, rather than confined to a prescriptive homework timetable. - Teachers use well designed tasks that are linked to classroom learning. - Teachers ensure that students have been explicitly taught the cognitive strategy(ies) required to complete the homework. - Teachers provide students with sufficient time to complete the homework (KS3&4: 3 days for 30min or 5 days for 1hr KS5: shorter deadlines accommodated in consultations with class). - To ensure consistency within each subject area, key homework tasks are stated on the schemes of learning. - KS3 students are not set homework outside of term time.
The purpose of the homework is made clear to all students. Digital technology is effectively used.	- All homework is communicated to students via MS Teams assignments. - Each homework assignment clearly states instructions for the task and the maximum amount of time that a student should spend completing it. - Teachers can choose to populate the students' outlook calendars with the deadline for the work.
Students are provided with high quality feedback on their work.	- Plan how feedback will be constructed and delivered
Students who are eligible for free school meals receive additional benefits from homework.	- Teachers understand and address barriers to completion, considering varying access to support and materials for individuals in disadvantaged groups, for example: young carers may require flexibility with deadlines, PP students may need access to specialist resources.

5.2.3 Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is predominantly used across a year group, designed and coordinated by heads of department rather than class teachers. Careful design of assessments ensure that they are robust and therefore both accurate and reliable in identifying learner's knowledge, understanding and skills. Methods of summative assessment are carefully selected to ensure that the integrity in each assessment is maintained. Methods of summative assessment mechanisms used include, but are not limited to:

- Mock exams and end of year exams
- Formal NEA, including practical performance assessments and oral examinations
- End of unit/topic tests
- Assessment of work completed under controlled conditions

5.3 Feedback & Assessment: Resources to support teachers

Teachers have access to Steplab and can engage with the following training resources to support their practice in relation to feedback and assessment. Each area has a study module (linked below) with models, evidence summaries, misconceptions and case studies to support development of practice.

Study module	Units covered	
Build a culture of feedback | Steplab	Normalise shared work Praise bravery Normalise error Lead with praise	Welcome errors Celebrate student feedback Preempt unsupportive comments
Specify success and plan for feedback | Steplab	Plan feedback for the most important content Pre-plan exemplar answers Annotate exemplars with success criteria Plan for likely errors	Identify moments to check for understanding Classify student errors Create hinge questions
Check whole-class understanding | Steplab	Check understanding not perception Design efficient assessments Embed routines to gather data quickly Use a clear and consistent cue Specify a confusion signal Ensure independent work Scan systematically	Sample all students Sample randomly Sample those students likely to be incorrect Positively narrate responses Avoid a teacher tell Ask 'Are you sure?'
Circulate to check for understanding | Steplab	Design a tracking sheet Create and annotate an exemplar List likely errors Standardise work layout Plan a circulation route	Prime before circulating List and tally student errors Identify and analyse exemplary work Position for accountability
Give individual feedback | Steplab	Give precise praise Make feedback precise and actionable Raise error awareness Ask prompting questions Provide a clue Break problems down	Provide scaffolds Insist on full answers Provide additional practice Have students explain an incorrect answer Teach an error avoiding process Have students make self-corrections
Give whole-class feedback | Steplab	Select powerful examples Set a culture of consideration Make responses visible Exemplify success criteria Compare examples Use think pair share Identify strengths and areas for development	Highlight key learning Use 'tick with me' Insist on corrections Give students a chance to improve work Re-teach, re-check Highlight changed thinking Use a whole-class feedback template
Use exit tickets | Steplab	Keep to core content Design for Quick analysis Specify a threshold for success	Ensure independent completion Sample exit tickets Divide, dig, decide

Teachers also have access to Walkthrus which provides similar support and we also encourage teachers to engage with the following EEF report: Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning | EEF

5.4 Feedback & Assessment: Our subject specific approach

For information, by subject and key stage, regarding the nature of feedback and the purpose and frequency of homework please see appendix E.

Literacy & Oracy

6.1 Literacy & Oracy: Principles

Strategies to develop literacy and oracy are integrated into lessons to support language development, deepen understanding and engage students in purposeful learning. Disciplinary literacy is a focus in every lesson and teachers provide **explicit vocabulary instruction**. **Writing** is developed through structured tasks, modelled writing and scaffolding, helping students to express ideas clearly. **Disciplinary reading** and **reading for pleasure** build understanding of key concepts whilst improving comprehension and encouraging a love of reading. **Listening skills** are taught through active listening activities and discussions whilst **oracy** is developed through targeted questioning and group work. Developing both oracy and literacy equips students with the essential skills to think critically, communicate effectively and engage confidently across all areas of the curriculum.

6.2 Literacy & Oracy: Classroom practice

6.2.1 Explicit vocabulary instruction

Teachers in every subject provide explicit vocabulary instruction to help students access and use academic language. To help students understand and remember tier 2 and 3 vocabulary (that they are less likely to encounter in everyday life), teachers:

- Provide concise, student friendly definitions with examples and non-examples.
- Teach the etymology and morphology of the word to help students decode meaning and recognise patterns.
- Link new vocabulary to what students already know to strengthen comprehension and long-term understanding.
- Accurately model and practise using the word, followed with structured opportunities for students to use new vocabulary in speaking and writing.
- Revisit new vocabulary over time to secure fluency and retention.

6.2.2 Disciplinary reading

Informed by reading age data, teachers strategically support students to improve disciplinary reading skills, using techniques including, but not limited to:

- Pre reading supports: glossaries and prior knowledge checks before reading a text to improve comprehension.
- Think-aloud: teachers model how an expert approaches a text in their discipline e.g. a historian analysing a source, a scientist interpreting data.
- Close reading routines: reading the same text multiple times for different purposes e.g. skim, scan, analyse, evaluate.
- Structured questioning: carefully designed questions and prompts to encourage deeper interpretation or understanding.

Teachers encourage students to read independently and as a part of their learning in each subject.

6.2.3 Reading for pleasure

Where possible, teachers also promote reading that is related to but not a compulsory part of their curriculum, providing students an opportunity to develop a love of reading, linked to their subject.

6.2.2 Writing

Teachers provide students with explicit instruction on how to develop writing styles specific to their subject, for example analytical essays, structured reports and technical explanations. Scaffolding is used to break writing down into manageable tasks and modelling is used to guide students towards success criteria. Teachers focus on the importance of structure, organisation and purpose in their students' writing, ensuring that written communication is effective.

Spelling, punctuation, and grammar (SPaG) is monitored to ensure high standards and teachers give constructive feedback on SPaG in set pieces of work. See Appendix F for SPaG marking codes.

Wherever possible, writing instruction is combined with reading as this improves students' skills in both areas (EEF).

6.2.4 Listening skills and Oracy

Teachers create ample opportunities to engage students in discussion, debates and presentations to support listening skills and development of oracy. To support development in this area, teachers use a range of strategies, for example:

- Sentence starters and language scaffolds: I agree with _____ because. The evidence suggests that_____. Another perspective might be _____.
- Questioning and accountability: Teachers ask, 'Can you build on what X said?' or 'Can you challenge the last point raised?'
- Modelling how to paraphrase: 'So you are saying that…'
- Think-pair-share used with hands down questioning to build student confidence in their own oracy.
- Listening quizzes during student presentations.

6.3 Literacy & Oracy: Resources to support teachers

Our approach to literacy has been informed by the EEF's Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools | EEF. The case studies in this report are a valuable resource for teachers to read.

Teachers have access to Steplab and can engage with the following training resources to support their practice in relation to literacy and oracy. Each area has a study module (linked below) with models, evidence summaries, misconceptions and case studies to support development of practice.

Study module	Units covered	
Teach new vocabulary with active practice | Steplab	Select words deliberately	Teach etymology
	Teach pronunciation	Practise sentences with parameters
	Explain the meaning	Use examples and non-examples
	Use dual coding	Use think-share-pair
	Pause for reading	Make links
	Model multiple examples	Use exit tickets and retrieval quizzes

	Explore word meaning with comparison Teach word roots and patterns	Check understanding and tackle misconceptions
Increase opportunities for student oracy | Steplab	Plan for student discussions Prepare students for disucssion	Hold students accountable during discussion Respond to student answers
Use group discussion | Steplab	Expect silence during discussion Use choral response Marke prompts clear and visible Sample multiple answers Avoid a teacher tell Model active listening	Prompt to involve speech Insist on tracking Ask students to paraphrase Have students build on each other's answers Display and discuss student responses Follow the discussion with summary writing

6.4 Literacy and Oracy: Our subject specific approach

Please see Appendix F for each departments' subject specific approach to literacy and oracy.