First Class Inclusive Collaborative Forward-thinking

KITE ACADEMY TRUST

High Quality Teaching Toolkit

An Introduction

This tool comprises supportive and informative, evidence based, 'best bets' to enable academies to support their teaching staff in focusing on areas of their practice that have the greatest potential to improve the children's learning and outcomes.

It should enable academies in the Trust to focus on professional development for their teachers which will help them to become confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged in their own PD. It enables teachers to make better decisions about what they can best do to improve their effectiveness in any of four priority areas, known as **Dimensions**:

1. understand the content they are teaching and how it is learnt
2. create a supportive environment for learning
3. manage the classroom to maximise the opportunity to learn
4. present content, activities and interactions that activate the children's thinking

The Kite Academy Trust expects that leaders will invest time and effort to support staff in working on a specific competency, skill or knowledge developed through formative feedback, in a supportive professional learning environment.

It is not expected that it be used as a tool to measure teacher effectiveness but to help every teacher focus on their learning, evaluate their impact and track their professional growth. Every teacher, no matter how experienced, can improve, if they want to and have the necessary support.

How is the Tool made up?

The top sheet gives an overview of the four Dimension and the 17 component aspects of the Dimensions ('Elements').

The four Dimensions overlap in a number of areas. Most of the Elements will look very different in different classrooms but the generic principles form the basis of teaching for all ages, contexts and subjects.

Each of the subsequent Element diagrams details:

- a definition
- features of practice
- examples of good practice
- what this is not

Use of these descriptors enables teachers and their peers to critically evaluate their practice and identify aspects for focus and further development.

Great teachers understand the content they are teaching and how it is learnt.

- **1. Understanding the Content**
- 1.1 Content Knowledge
- 1.2 Pedogogical Knowledge
- 1.3 Knowledge of Curriculum Tasks & Activities
- 1.4 Knowledge of Pupil Thinking

Great teachers create a supportive environment for learning.

- **2. Creating a Supportive Environment**
- 2.1 Quality of Teacher - Child Relationships
- 2.2 Child-Child relationships in the classroom
- 2.3 Children's Motivation
- 2.4 Teachers' Expectations

Great teachers manage the classroom to maximise opportunity to learn.

- **3. Maximising Opportunity to Learn**
- 3.1 Use of Time & Resources
- 3.2 Consistent & Fair Application of Rules
- 3.3 Preventing & Responding to Disruption

Great teachers present content, activities and interactions that activate their children's thinking.

They think hard about the material they need to learn.

- **4. Activating Hard Thinking**
- 4.1 Structuring
- 4.2 Explaining
- 4.3 Questioning
- 4.4 Interacting
- 4.5 Embedding
- 4.6 Actvating

Dimension One – Understanding the Content

Great teachers understand the content they are teaching and how it is learnt

This means teachers should have deep and fluent knowledge and flexible understanding of the content they are teaching and how it is learnt, including its inherent dependencies. They should have an explicit repertoire of well-crafted explanations, examples and tasks for each topic they teach.

1.1 Content Knowledge

Definition

Having deep and fluent knowledge and flexible understanding of the content you are teaching

Features of Practice

- ✓ teacher is fully prepared when asked the question 'why?' or 'what would happen if…?' OR
- ✓ teacher asks the question 'why?' or 'what would happen if…?' to promote higher-order thinking
- ✓ teacher displays knowledge and understanding of the theory behind the subject being taught
- ✓ teacher knows how ideas in their subject are linked or are distinct

Examples of Good Practice

- teacher uses their knowledge of etymology to explain 'auto' and its use as a prefix
- teacher uses their knowledge of the subject to answer enquiries surrounding it
- teacher uses model answers exhibiting the skills and knowledge they need their children to learn

What This is Not

- knowing only the surface of the content knowledge
- focusing in an English lesson on a text that the teacher is unfamiliar with

1.2 Pedogogical Knowledge

Definition

Knowledge of the requirements of curriculum sequencing and dependencies in relation to the content and ideas you are teaching ('Pedagogical Content Knowledge')

Features of Practice

- ✓ teacher shows they know the 'building blocks' and have considered what prior knowledge the children need to understand an idea/technique
- ✓ planning sequence makes links with prior knowledge clear
- ✓ scheme of work shows that prior knowledge is built-upon

Examples of Good Practice

- use of strategy 'Fluent in Five' in Maths Mastery
- teacher uses progression maps to form the basis of their planning
- teacher considers what connections learners need to make with previous knowledge when teaching a new idea
- teacher responds to the developmental stage of the children in EYFS and identifies next steps

What This is Not

- recapping on 'what you learnt when you were in Year 2'
- revision or reactivation of prior knowledge that has no bearing on the current learning

1.3 Knowledge of Curriculum Tasks & Activities

Definition

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

** 'didactic'- information is explicitly transferred to the learner*

Features of Practice

- ✓ teacher selects appropriate activities for level of challenge or are diagnostic about the children's thinking
- ✓ teacher uses carefully chosen, appropriate resources for the topic being learned
- ✓ teacher presents information in an informed way that children 'get'
- ✓ teacher may use analogies, models and representations to help learners visualise concepts

Examples of Good Practice

- teacher uses manipulatives in maths to help engage with abstract number concept
- teacher uses the Frayer model concept using 'examples' and 'non-examples' to explain new vocabulary
- teacher tries different ways of explaining until the child 'gets it'
- teacher explains an abstract concept using an analogy from the child's experience

What This is Not

- explaining something or presenting an idea in only one way and expecting a child to 'get it'
- relying on spontaneous explanation (without prior preparation)

1.4 Knowledge of Pupil Thinking

Definition

Knowledge of common child strategies, misconceptions and sticking points in relation to the content you are teaching

Features of Practice

- ✓ teacher accurately predicts and addresses misconceptions
- ✓ pre-teaching is used

Examples of Good Practice

- teacher directly and explicitly addresses misconceptions typical errors are addressed e.g. modelling writing a sentence with a capital letter and full stop by starting a new sentence at the end of the last, rather than a new sentence on a new line
- teacher models a common mistake and asks 'what have you noticed?' or 'whoops, what mistake have I made here?'
- new tier 2 vocabulary is taught through direct instruction prior to reading part of a text in an English lesson

What This is Not

- glossing over misconceptions that arise within a lesson
- knowing likely misconceptions but omitting addressing these when structuring and delivering lessons
- allowing a child to continue to explain a wrong mathematical method in front of a group of others

Dimension Two – Creating a Supportive Environment

Great teachers create a supportive environment for learning

A supportive environment is characterised by relationships of trust and respect between children and teachers, and among children. It is one in which children are motivated, supported and challenged and have a positive attitude towards their learning.

Note: Overall, it seems unlikely that devoting effort to improving this dimension will be a high-leverage strategy for improving outcomes for most teachers. However (a) there is good evidence that it can have at least a small impact on learning in general classrooms; (b) there may be some contexts or individuals for whom the impact is much larger; and (c) there is good evidence for its impact on wider outcomes, such as child wellbeing and attitudes.

2.1 Quality of Teacher – Child Relationships

Definition

Promoting interactions and relationships with all children that are based on mutual respect, care, empathy and warmth; avoiding negative emotions in interactions with children; being sensitive to the individual needs, emotions, culture and beliefs of children

Features of Practice

- ✓ teacher knows each child well as an individual and has strategies to accommodate their specific needs (including SEND)
- ✓ children reciprocate with respect for all adults
- ✓ teacher is respectful and sensitive to the cultural values and identities of children
- ✓ teacher's care is shown with the absence of negative behaviours

Examples of Good Practice

- regular meaningful Learning Conversations
- teacher meets and greets each morning, is friendly and interacts confidently with families
- adults in class are a positive role model at all times
- children willing and ready to share
- children care for one another at playtimes

What This is Not

- treating the class as a homogenous group
- displaying negative behaviours when interacting with children e.g. sarcasm, shouting or humiliation
- being unaware or disrespectful to a child's cultural identity

2.2 Child – Child Relationships in the Classroom

Definition

Promoting a positive climate of child - child relationships, characterised by respect, trust, cooperation and care

Features of Practice

- ✓ children are co-operative and have positive learning interactions with their peers
- ✓ children respect and listen to one another's thoughts and views
- ✓ teachers are proactive in promoting these relationships

Examples of Good Practice

- buddy systems e.g. reading buddies, playground buddies
- peer feedback that is used developmentally
- restorative conversations after conflict
- facilitation of classroom discussions where children listen to and build upon other's contributions, sharing of opinions and polite disagreement

What This is Not

- reluctance to support a peer when asked to do so
- children talking during an explanation by an adult or another child

2.3 Children's Motivation

Definition

Promoting learner motivation through feelings of competence, autonomy and relatedness

Features of Practice

- ✓ a climate of autonomous motivation is promoted in which children choose their behaviour
- ✓ children feel able to produce desired outcomes (and avoid undesirable ones)
- ✓ children feel mutually supported and connected with others

Examples of Good Practice

- children sharing learning they're proud of on SeeSaw or Tapestry
- children settle to learning rapidly
- teacher allows children to 'get going' when they're ready and children know they can do so at the point of their choosing
- teacher uses motivations that promote wellbeing and development as much as performance

What This is Not

- children waiting for permission to start work
- a child being told off when asking another child for help or to clarify an explanation

2.4 Teachers' Expectations

Definition

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

Features of Practice

- ✓ teachers demand high standards of work and behaviour from all children
- ✓ teacher's ambitious goals enable children to feel safe in 'having a go' and taking a risk
- ✓ less confident children are given the same amount of time before teachers intervene, as others, when they are 'stuck'
- ✓ children recognise what they did to succeed or fail and attribute this to how hard they worked or the strategies they used (rather than things out of their control, like luck or ability)

Examples of Good Practice

- children show tenacity and resilience in response to challenge
- celebration of positive outcomes (with a focus on what they did)
- teacher recognises effort and celebrates 'can do' attitude
- children understand that getting stuck and becoming 'unstuck' supports their learning e.g. Learning Pit
- children talk excitedly about the challenge in a lesson

What This is Not

- giving praise to children for poor effort to encourage them
- avoiding asking challenging questions of children who seem less confident

Dimension Three – Maximising Opportunity to Learn

Great teachers manage the classroom to maximise opportunity to learn

Managing lessons so that time is used productively is a core teaching skill. Specific practices, such as giving clear instructions and establishing routines and rules, support this. Managing behaviour comes under this heading too: dealing with disruption, but, crucially, preventing it happening in the first place.

3.1 Use of Time & Resources

Definition

Managing time and resources efficiently in the classroom to maximise productivity and minimise wasted time; giving clear instructions so children understand what they should be doing; using (and explicitly teaching) routines to make transitions smooth

Features of Practice

- ✓ teachers plan activities and resources so that everything works smoothly
- ✓ teachers give clear and simple instructions that are easily understood
- ✓ teachers establish routines through explicitly teaching children a pattern of behaviour that will be used regularly

Examples of Good Practice

- children settle quickly at the start of a lesson or after a transition
- children get started straight away on meaningful work and focus right to end of the lesson
- the children regularly use behaviour routines that have been explicitly taught (such as pencil and ruler ready for the start of maths lesson)
- early morning activities are routinely set for smooth transition on arrival at school
- children chant times tables whilst hand washing or during PE warmups
- a high-quality continuous provision is in place
- routines for 'extension' learning or other routine practice for early finishers are embedded
- visual timetables support learners with routine and minimise anxiety

What This is Not

- using excessive time, after transitions, to settle children resulting in lost learning time
- swapping or changing routines regularly without good reason
- using holding activities, such as colouring-in or 'get out your reading book'

3.2 Consistent & Fair Application of Rules

Definition

Ensuring that rules, expectations and consequences for behaviour are explicit, clear and consistently applied

Features of Practice

- ✓ all children clearly understand and accept rules
- ✓ violations are rare; the teacher is consistent in their response and predictable consequences follow

Examples of Good Practice

- classroom rules, in child-friendly language, are clearly displayed
- classroom rules are consistently applied and known by all stakeholders
- a culture of 'deliberate botheredness' where adults notice and reinforce behaviour expectations
- staff use consistent language in responding to expected and unexpected behaviour
- consistent expectations regardless of location in school or supervising adult

What This is Not

- applying a different set of expectations from one day to the next
- giving a consequence that is inconsistent with school policy

3.3 Preventing & Responding to Disruption

Definition

Preventing, anticipating and responding to potentially disruptive incidents; reinforcing positive child behaviours; signalling awareness of what is happening in the classroom and responding appropriately

Features of Practice

- ✓ teacher has 'eyes in the back of their head' or 'withitness'
- ✓ teachers use praise and positive reinforcement to support desired behaviour
- ✓ teacher has targeted approaches tailored to individual needs, especially for children with a history of challenging behaviour

Examples of Good Practice

- teacher 'gives a look' to x who is about to flick paper at another child, as a warning that they are being watched
- teacher says 'well done for staying 'in the learning bubble' by ignoring x'
- child experiencing difficulty in settling after lunchtime is asked if they need time with a book and headphones as part of an agreed self-help to settling strategy
- teacher anticipates a trigger for child x and uses an avoidance strategy
- Zones of Regulation is embedded in classroom routine/practice
- adaptations are evident for children with additional needs, that enable their behavioural needs to be met

What This is Not

- reluctance to support a peer when asked to do so
- children talking during an explanation by an adult or another child

Dimension Four – Activating Hard Thinking

Great teachers present content, activities and interactions that activate their children's thinking. They think hard about the material they need to learn.

This may be the hardest part to learn of the job of teaching, partly because it is rare to get reliable feedback about whether it is working: children's learning is invisible, slow and non-linear, so how can we tell if it is happening?

4.1 Structuring

Definition

Giving children 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 removing them so that all children succeed at the required level

Features of Practice

- ✓ teacher shares the kind of problem children will be able to do/questions they will be able to answer if they achieve the aim
- ✓ teacher shares learning aims so that children know what success looks like, linked to the subject's intent
- ✓ teacher explains how and why each example meets the aim
- ✓ teacher explains how current learning fits into the wider picture
- ✓ tasks promote deep thinking, rather than reproducing facts
- ✓ level of difficulty is hard enough to move children forward but not so hard they cannot cope (given existing knowledge and resources)

Examples of Good Practice

- teacher shares key ideas on the learning 'journey'
- teacher builds in reviews to check that children have fluent prerequisite skills and knowledge and adapt their plans if not
- teacher uses scaffolding, according to need, to make learning manageable and this is gradually removed as children become secure and fluent

What This is Not

- children copying objectives from the board
- providing the same scaffold template for all children
- children working on different end goals

4.2 Explaining

Definition

Presenting and communicating new ideas clearly, with concise, appropriate, engaging explanations; connecting new ideas to what has previously been learnt (and re-activating/checking 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

Features of Practice

- ✓ teacher ensures new elements are limited in number and complexity; complex ideas are broken into small steps; irrelevant or distracting input is minimised (Cognitive Load Theory)
- ✓ expositions are refined for maximum effectiveness (Direct Instruction)
- ✓ teachers ensure prior knowledge is activated and reinforced in children, who use this to connect new ideas and create schema

Examples of Good Practice

- teacher gives 'completion problems' where children are given partial solutions and asked to complete them - children focus on the examples but are able to manage the difficulty level
- children can articulate 'the skill I am learning is….I already know….'
- teacher talk is used judiciously and selectively to maximise learning time and drive thinking
- use of WAGOLL as a teaching tool
- dual coding is used to provide a visual and verbal representation of information

What This is Not

- modelling and use of examples that do not make the end product explicit
- modelling and expositions that have an overreliance on process and procedure at the expense of thinking and understanding
- an over-reliance on teacher talk
- inconsistency between verbal and visual explanations/instructions

4.3 Questioning

Definition

Using questions and dialogue to promote elaboration and connected, flexible thinking among learners (e.g., 'Why?', 'Compare', etc.); using questions to elicit children thinking; getting responses from all children; using high-quality assessment to evidence learning; interpreting, communicating and responding to assessment evidence appropriately

Features of Practice

- ✓ teacher uses questioning, oracy and dialogue to promote deep thinking
- ✓ teacher uses questioning for assessment; meaningful and appropriate questioning targets essential learning

Examples of Good Practice

- teacher uses interactive questioning to clarify that a child has understood a concept
- teacher uses questioning to check the responses of all children
- teacher uses questioning to decide which children know, and which children do not yet know

Varied Questions:

- Questions that prompt children to give explanations and justifications for their answers
- Questions that allow children to describe their thinking processes
- Questions that allow all children to engage in authentic and challenging dialogue

What This is Not

- teacher asking a lot of questions with no clear purpose to the questioning
- teacher asking questions allowing too little thinking time prior to responses
- teacher saying 'keep thinking, I'll come back to you' and not coming back!
- discussions which are dominated by a small number of voices

4.4 Interacting

Definition

Responding appropriately to feedback from children about their thinking/knowledge/understanding; giving children actionable feedback to guide their learning

Features of Practice

- ✓ teacher understands and interprets child feedback/assessment correctly and makes appropriate decisions about next steps
- ✓ teachers use knowledge and experience of similar situations to know what is likely to work best, for example, by clarifying success criteria, drawing attention to a gap, or indicating productive next steps

Examples of Good Practice

- teacher uses a wide range of strategies to check for understanding during lessons against a model of success to gain insight into whole class understanding
- teacher accurately predicts where errors and misconceptions may emerge during lessons and is responsive to subtle cues from children about their understanding
- teacher gives focused and precise verbal feedback within the lesson and child responds 'in real time'
- children are given time to reflect on-and respond to- feedback
- teacher prepares and executes opportunities to check knowledge retention over time and is able to make changes to ongoing lesson and unit design

What This is Not

- broad and non-specific feedback that does not provide clarity for next step
- providing lavish non-specific praise e.g. 'well done, you've written a great sentence'
- focusing on task completion rather than quality of the content

4.5 Embedding

Definition

Giving children 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

Features of Practice

- ✓ teacher ensures children 'overlearn' by practising procedures regularly required to ensure fluency and accuracy
- ✓ teacher understands and plans to monitor and support children through practice, consolidation and embedding phases
- ✓ teacher plans opportunities for 'spaced practice'
- ✓ teacher uses low-stakes testing to recall information from memory and use deep and connected thinking in order to increase long-term retrieval (often used with spaced practice)

Examples of Good Practice

- opportunities for regular practise are included in planning until learning is fluent, automatic and secure
- opportunities for practise are well spaced out to allow time to 'forget'
- use of low stake 'tests' to allow learners to generate answers and recall information from memory
- children use knowledge organisers to support the recall of learnt information/concepts and make connections with other learning

What This is Not

- a formal 'test' atmosphere where children may feel that the stakes are high
- an overreliance on one strategy for retrieval e.g. written responses to questions
- an overreliance on questions that only promote simple recall and surface-level thinking and do not allow deep and connected thinking

4.6 Activating

Definition

Helping children to plan, regulate and monitor their own learning; progressing appropriately from structured to more independent learning as children develop knowledge and expertise. Promoting child metacognition.

Features of Practice

- ✓ Teacher supports novice children by presenting limited, structured content and worked examples but changes this to a problem-solving approach for learners with the required background knowledge
- ✓ Teacher explicitly teaches children strategies to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning

Examples of Good Practice

- learning is planned through a series of steps—beginning with activating prior knowledge and leading to independent practice before ending in structured reflection
- teacher makes use of worked examples which allow children to develop their metacognitive and cognitive skills without placing too many demands on their mental resources
- teacher talks their thinking aloud (metacognitive thinking), modelling their thought processes when completing complex tasks e.g. What do I know about problems like this? What ways of solving them have I used before?
- teacher encourages children to 'self-explain' their thinking

What This is Not

- children expected to complete a task cold with little or no support in how to complete it successfully
- a focus on procedure of task completion at the expense of understanding the purpose of the chosen strategy/strategies
- relying on 'one approach fits all'

Deliberate Botheredness	*A phrase coined by Paul Dix in his book, When the Adults Change Everything Changes* (2017). He recommends adopting 'deliberate botheredness'. Being relentlessly bothered is characterised by establishing rapport, building emotional currency and positive relationships. Dix says that a meet and greet at the door is essential for setting the standard coupled with having clear expectations of the behaviour you want.
Didactic	Information is explicitly transferred to the learner.
Dimension	A 'dimension' is defined as an overarching priority that exemplifies what teachers can best do to improve their effectiveness to allow their children to learn more.
Direct Instruction	A teacher-directed teaching method where the teacher presents the information and gives explicit, guided instructions to the children. The children are given the opportunity for guided practice followed by feedback and then apply their learning through independent practice.
Dual Coding	Combining words and visuals (such as pictures, diagrams, graphic organisers) to provide two different representations of the information, both visual and verbal. This is to help learners encode information in their brains more effectively, enabling it to be more easily retrieved later on.
Element	An 'element' is defined as something that may be worth a teacher investing time and effort to work on to build a specific competency, skill or knowledge, or to enhance the learning environment.
Etymology	The origin of a word and the historical development of its meaning.
Expositions	A comprehensive description and explanation of an idea or theory.
Frayer Model	A graphic organiser that can be used for vocabulary building. The technique requires children to define the target word or concept and apply this information by generating examples and non-examples. This information is placed on a chart divided into four sections to provide a visual representation. * Each Element of this *High-Quality Teaching Identification Tool* is presented using a Frayer model.
Inherent Dependencies	A dependency describes the relationship among activities and specifies the particular order in which they need to be performed. Dependencies arise in every decision making, planning and developing process and are ideally predetermined. In this context, this means knowing what to teach, when to teach it and how best to teach it.
Oracy	Being able to express yourself well; having the vocabulary to say what you want to say and the ability to structure your thoughts so that they make sense to others.
Novice children	A child who is new to or inexperienced in a subject area, certain task, situation etc.

Pedagocial Content Knowledge	The domain (subject) specific knowledge that teachers develop over time, and through experience, about how to teach particular content in particular ways in order to lead to enhanced understanding.
Relatedness	The fact of being related or connected.
Tier One words	Words that most children will pick up through natural, everyday conversation. They include common nouns like ‘clock’, ‘chair’ or ‘house’, verbs like ‘walk’ and ‘run’, or adjectives like ‘sad’ and ‘happy.’ These words don’t normally require explicit teaching.
Tier Two words	They are ambitious words, such as ‘emerge’, ‘analyse’, ‘peculiar’ and ‘context’, that children are likely to come across in a variety of contexts and across all subjects, but aren’t used much in everyday conversation. As Beck and McKeown say, these words “are not the most basic or common ways of expressing ideas, but they are familiar to mature language users as ordinary as opposed to specialised language.” For example, the Tier 2 word ‘soar’ can add more sophistication and specificity to a child’s understanding of the word ‘fly’. They will be able to understand that soaring isn’t just flying, but flying very high in the air.
Tier Three Words	Subject-specific words, used within a particular field. This is the language of scientists, mathematicians, historians. For maths, this includes words like ‘denominator’, while science lessons might require children to understand ‘photosynthesis’. Often, these words are integral to teaching content for certain subjects.
Withitness	The term ‘withitness’ was coined by Kounin (1977) to describe a teacher’s awareness of what is happening in the classroom, even when their attention appears to be elsewhere. Great teachers do not actually have eyes in the back of their head, but their children may think they do. A key part of this skill is that the teacher signals their awareness, perhaps with just a look or movement, so children feel they are under surveillance.