



Teaching & Learning Policy

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Type of Policy:	School Level Policy

Revision Number	Date Issued	Prepared by	Approved	Personalised by school	Comments
3	March 2026	Senior Leadership Team	Senior Leadership Team	N/A	

<i>Type of Policy</i>	<i>Tick ✓</i>
DCAT Statutory Policy	
DCAT Non-statutory Policy	
DCAT Model Optional Policy	
Academy Policy	✓
Local Authority Policy	

Aims

At Dudley Infant Academy, our aim is to create a learning environment in which every child can become a successful learner, a confident and aspirational individual, and a responsible, educated citizen. We believe that all children are entitled to a high-quality education where knowledge and skills are carefully built over time, leading to strong achievement and meaningful progress for all learners.

Our Teaching and Learning Policy is underpinned by our Dudley values of kindness, respect, honesty, determination, resilience and outstanding citizenship. These values shape the culture of our school and guide the attitudes, behaviours and relationships that support effective teaching and learning.

This policy promotes best practice and establishes a consistent, high standard of teaching and learning across the school. Our approach to teaching and learning is delivered in line with the expectations of the National Curriculum, ensuring that children gain the knowledge and skills needed for their stage of education while allowing teachers to plan meaningful and engaging learning experiences for our pupils. Our approach is informed by research-based practice, including Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction (2012), which emphasise clear explanations, structured learning, regular practice and effective feedback to help pupils embed knowledge and deepen their understanding.

We strive to provide learning experiences that are engaging, memorable and carefully structured so that children receive the best possible quality of education. We believe that high-quality teaching and learning help children lead happy and fulfilling lives and enable them to make positive contributions to their communities and wider society. Through a clear cycle of planning, teaching and assessment, we ensure that all children are appropriately supported and challenged according to their needs and starting points. In doing so, we prepare pupils effectively for the next stages of their education and support them in developing the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to thrive.

Guiding Principles

At Dudley Infant Academy, we believe that effective teaching and learning are built upon a clear understanding of how children learn best. Our guiding principles shape the learning environment, curriculum design and classroom practice across the school.

Pupils learn best when:

- Their basic physical and emotional needs are met, and they feel safe, secure, valued and part of a supportive community, where positive relationships help them develop a sense of belonging.
- They are **engaged, motivated and curious**, developing a **love of learning** across all areas of the curriculum through meaningful, stimulating learning experiences.
- Learning is **carefully planned and sequenced**, enabling children to build on prior knowledge, understand the purpose of their learning and see the **relevance of what they are doing**, while making connections to previous experiences and across different curriculum areas.
- They have **equal access to the full curriculum**, with learning adapted appropriately so that all children are supported and challenged according to their needs and starting points.

- They **understand the task**, have access to the **appropriate space, tools and resources**, and learn within **calm, purposeful environments** where they can focus without unnecessary disruption.
- They receive **clear teaching, modelling and guidance at appropriate times**, and have opportunities to **work independently or collaboratively**, depending on the nature of the task.
- They are given time to **practise, apply and consolidate learning** in both familiar and new contexts so that knowledge and skills become secure.
- The curriculum includes **enriching experiences**, including practical activities, visits, visitors and trips, which help bring learning to life, broaden children's experiences and inspire curiosity.
- They are encouraged to **persevere when learning is challenging**, develop resilience, manage their emotions when things do not go as expected, and recognise that **mistakes are a natural and valuable part of the learning process**.

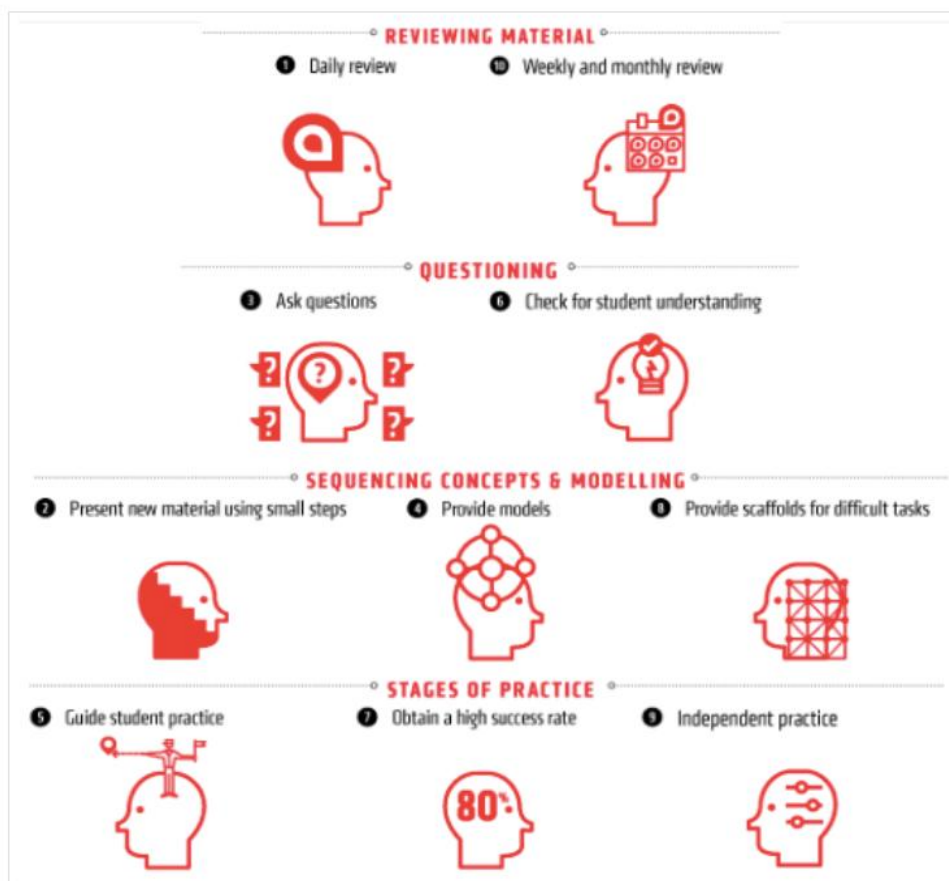
Effective Teaching (underpinned by Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction):

Our school's understanding of best practice in Teaching and Learning takes account of the research-based Principles of Instruction outlined by Rosenshine as core ingredients for effective learning.

- Daily Review
- Present new information using small steps
- Ask questions
- Provide models
- Guide student practice
- Check for student understanding
- Obtain a high success rate
- Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks
- Independent practice
- Weekly and monthly review

We recognise the importance of the key elements within Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, particularly the areas of review, questioning, modelling and practice, as illustrated in the image below. These elements play a vital role in supporting effective learning across all subjects and age groups.

At Dudley Infant Academy, our key teaching and learning processes are underpinned by these principles, ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to revisit prior learning, respond to purposeful questioning, observe clear models of learning and practise new knowledge and skills so that understanding becomes secure.



I. Reviewing Material

We recognise the risk that knowledge can sometimes be taught in isolation and then forgotten as pupils move on to new learning. When knowledge is not secure, pupils cannot easily draw upon their long-term memory, which can place too much demand on their working memory. This may lead to difficulties such as incomplete recall, challenges in following instructions or pupils giving up on a task.

To support pupils in securing their learning, we place a strong emphasis on regular review and retrieval of prior knowledge. By revisiting and recalling previously taught content, pupils strengthen their understanding and build stronger connections in memory. To ensure knowledge becomes embedded over time, we incorporate retrieval practices in the following ways:

- **Lesson Structure: Reviews**
Lessons begin with a 'Do Now' activity, providing pupils with an opportunity to review and recall prior learning. This may take the form of a key question, a short activity, or a stimulus such as a photograph to prompt discussion and thinking.

Children also have opportunities to demonstrate what they have retained in recent weeks through short, low-stakes *quizzes*, as well as through activities that revisit learning from previous year groups.

- **Knowledge Organisers**

Knowledge Organisers are used throughout most subjects and provide a single point of reference to support memory and are used regularly for short retrieval activities. They also support weekly and monthly review, helping to ensure learning is revisited and spaced over time to strengthen retrieval and long-term understanding.

2. Questioning

At Dudley Infant Academy, pupils are encouraged to be active participants in their learning rather than passive recipients. To promote this, teachers develop their practice as skilled questioners, using purposeful questioning throughout all stages of a lesson to deepen understanding, check knowledge and stimulate curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. We achieve this in the following ways at Dudley:

- **Teacher's Talk / Children's Talk**

We avoid overemphasis on teacher talk in favour of children being involved and engaged in their learning as much as possible. Teachers, as experts, will provide explicit instruction and modelling in class for pacy inputs but will ensure children are participating wherever possible. The use of 'Turn and Talk' strategies allow pupils to briefly discuss their ideas with a partner, giving every child the opportunity to think, articulate their understanding and hear different perspectives. This approach increases participation, deepens understanding and helps pupils to clarify their thinking before sharing with the wider class, supporting a more active learning environment.

- **Cold Calling**

In ensuring that every child is active in their learning, teachers use questioning carefully to prevent one or two individuals responding to all questions, leading to their peers becoming increasingly demotivated.

Strategies for doing this include 'Cold Calling' (asking everyone the question with no hands up, then selecting someone to answer) and 'No Opt Out' (if a child does not know the answer or gets it wrong, going back to them to check they know afterwards). These strategies are used sensitively and respectfully, creating a supportive classroom environment where children feel comfortable to contribute, take risks in their learning and understand that mistakes are a natural part of the learning process.

Asking questions helps teachers understand how well pupils have grasped the learning. It provides valuable feedback about how effectively the material has been taught and allows teachers to check understanding so that any misconceptions can be quickly identified and addressed.

3. Sequencing Concepts and Modelling

We recognise that classrooms can be busy and stimulating environments, and that the curriculum includes a wide range of knowledge and skills. If learning is not carefully structured, pupils can experience cognitive overload, where too much information is presented at once

and it becomes difficult for children to process and remember. We are therefore committed to presenting learning in clear, manageable steps so that pupils can focus, understand and build their knowledge successfully. Teachers carefully sequence learning, provide clear explanations and model new concepts so that children can develop confidence and independence over time.

To reduce cognitive overload and support effective learning, we use the following approaches:

- ***Mental Models***

For many pupils, learning can be abstract and difficult to unpick mentally. Whilst there is a place for automatic recall in some areas of learning, teachers are mindful of the need to provide visuals and to reinforce verbal explanations with written or drawn models. In mathematics, teachers ensure that concrete manipulatives are used to support understanding and, where appropriate, written questions are combined with visuals.

- ***Scaffolds for Independent Practice***

At Dudley Infant Academy, scaffolds are used to support children in the early stages of learning so that they can successfully access new knowledge and skills. These supports may include resources, models or clear step-by-step instructions to guide pupils as they begin a task. As children become more confident and competent, these supports are gradually reduced so that pupils can work with increasing independence.

For example, in mathematics, scaffolds may include worked examples that children can refer to when completing their own practice.

Scaffolds may also provide:

- language support to help children explain their ideas and develop oracy
- a clear structure for how ideas or answers can be presented
- prompts or sentence starters to help pupils construct responses in their writing.

- ***Teacher Modelling***

As the experts in the room, teachers recognise their role in walking children through the processes they are being expected to follow. Modelling occurs constantly throughout lessons, but will always be seen when:

- Introducing an activity (showing exactly what the children need to do, not relying on oral instructions)
- Leading a mini plenary (most frequently when addressing a misconception)

Teachers model through speech and through written examples, narrating the thinking process as they do so. This provides a model of 'expert thinking' which pupils will not readily be able to access elsewhere.

Teachers may choose to model writing through the use of WAGOLLs (What A Good One Looks Like), in-the-moment teacher modelling, sharing of high-quality

children's work, or shared writing with the class. It is through the process of modelling that a teacher can ensure the children all know what success looks like.

4. Stages of Practice

- **Guided Practice to Independent Practice**

We recognise that children learn best when new learning is introduced in small, manageable steps. Teachers avoid presenting too much information at once and instead provide clear teaching followed by guided practice, where children practise new skills with support. This helps pupils use their working memory effectively and build confidence in their learning.

During guided practice, teachers aim for a high level of success, ensuring that misunderstandings are quickly identified and addressed before children move on to work more independently.

As pupils become more confident, teachers gradually reduce the level of support so that children can complete tasks through independent practice. This is an important part of learning, as it allows pupils to practise and strengthen their understanding so that knowledge and skills become secure and easier to recall.

We recognise that making mistakes is a natural and valuable part of learning. Teachers support children in understanding that mistakes help us improve and deepen our understanding. Tasks are therefore carefully pitched to provide an appropriate level of challenge, encouraging pupils to think, persevere and develop confidence in their abilities as learners.

*Our Teaching and Learning Policy is underpinned by our **Pedagogy on a Page**, which clearly outlines the key pedagogical approaches at Dudley for all staff, and can be found on the final page of this policy.*

Adaptive Teaching

At Dudley Infant Academy, teacher's classroom practice will utilise Adaptive Teaching strategies. Adaptive Teaching is a responsive, evidence-informed approach where teachers adjust instruction in real-time to meet diverse pupil needs, ensuring all pupils meet the same high expectations. It involves anticipating learning barriers, using ongoing formative assessment, and providing targeted support (scaffolding) rather than relying on pre-planned, rigid differentiation.

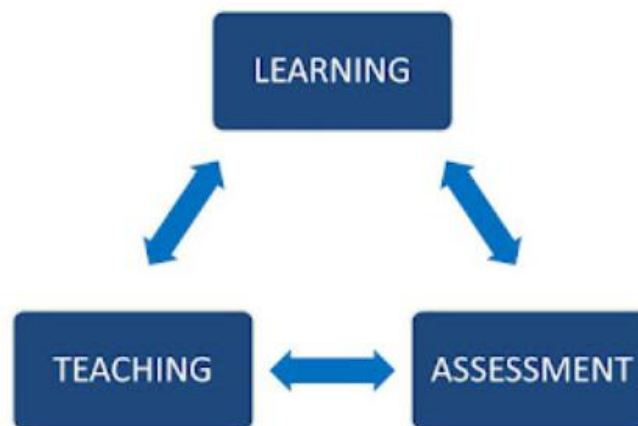
Key Components of Adaptive Teaching

- **Real-time Adjustments:** Modifying lessons based on ongoing formative assessment (e.g., using "hinge questions" or mini-whiteboards to gauge understanding) rather than relying on pre-planned, fixed-ability groups.
- **High Expectations for All:** Avoiding lower-level tasks for struggling learners; instead, providing temporary scaffolds to help them access the same curriculum.

- **Anticipating Barriers:** Proactively planning for potential misconceptions or gaps in prior knowledge.
- **Flexible Grouping:** Frequently changing student groupings based on needs, rather than rigid, long-term grouping.

Teaching, Learning, Assessment

Teaching, learning and assessment are deeply interconnected and happen as part of a continuous ongoing cycle over the course of a lesson and a sequence of lessons. Our approach to teaching and learning recognises that assessment is central to the process of learning; without knowledge of whether intended knowledge has been understood, further learning cannot be achieved.



Effective Formative Assessment:

All lessons are built around the use of a key Learning Objective that is shared with the children at a relevant point in their learning to ensure they understand what they are focusing on within the lesson. Learning Objectives are constructed carefully to ensure they are meaningful to children and help teachers in planning their sequence of learning. Questioning and staff circulating the room to make in-the-moment assessments allows for misconceptions to be caught quickly and addressed before they embed. Where whole-class or a pattern of consistent misconceptions emerges, mini-plenaries are used to address at whole-class level.

At Dudley Infant Academy, **feedback** is an ongoing part of the learning process and takes place throughout lessons and as close to the point of learning as possible. Teachers provide clear and helpful feedback that supports pupils in understanding their next steps and helps move their learning forward.

Through responsive teaching, teachers give immediate feedback so that misunderstandings can be quickly identified and addressed. Regular opportunities to revisit and practise learning help children to learn more, know more and remember more over time.

Summative Assessment Procedures:

Whilst formative assessment is utilised on a daily basis for small-step evaluation of knowledge and progress, at key points in the children's educational journey through the school summative judgements are made through the use of the following systems:

Reception

Within the Early Years Foundation Stage, our pupils are assessed on entry in line with statutory assessment requirements for the Baseline Assessment.

Over the course of the academic year, the children's progress against the Early Learning Goals is captured at regular intervals and judgements are made in Term 6 about whether the children have achieved Good Level of Development (GLD). Assessments are recorded on the school's platform 'Insight' and shared with the Trust (DCAT).

Phonics

In line with statutory assessment requirements, pupils in Year One (and in Year Two if not achieving the previous year) sit the Phonics Screening Check in Term 6. In preparation for this, practice checks take place each term to identify any pupils in need of further support. Assessments are recorded on the school's platform 'Insight' and shared with the Trust (DCAT).

SATs

Children in Year Two use the optional end of key stage assessments (SATs) to assess pupil progress and attainment in Term 6. Assessments are recorded on the school's platform 'Insight' and shared with the Trust (DCAT).

Summative Tests – (PIRA/PUMA) Children sit maths and reading assessments in Terms 2, 4 and 6 to ensure tracking of progress and attainment to inform future planning and intervention. Assessments are recorded on the school's platform 'Insight' and shared with the Trust (DCAT).

Pedagogy on a Page



DUDLEY
INFANT
ACADEMY



Retrieval Practice – “Do Now”



New Learning – WALT



Oracy



New material in small steps



Vocabulary Development



Questioning



Collaborative Learning –
Turn & Talk/Talk Partners



Modelling & Worked Examples



Adaptive Teaching



Scaffolding



Independent Practice



AfL – Feedback

Plenary – Review

Spaced Practice – Mini Quizzes



Classroom Organisation – Mixed Ability Groups

