Teaching Policy Principles

Policy Details	
Policy Title:	Teaching policy principles
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Owner:	Senior Director School Improvement
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Scope

This is an aligned policy. The principles set out at the start apply to all of our schools and to all of our staff. The specific phase and then school policy follows and can also be found on the school website.

Principles

These principles should be read in conjunction with the principles set out in our approach to the curriculum and professional learning alongside the Teaching Standards, our HR policies, School Improvement Strategy, Success for All Commitment, EEDI Strategy and our People Strategy.

Rationale

At the Haberdashers' Academies Trust South (HATS) we aim to ensure that all our students can flourish and be successful at school and in their future lives. Central to this is ensuring that they achieve the very best that they can – academically and socially. Our teachers are therefore our greatest resource and asset. It is important that we look after them and support them to be the very best that they can be in their roles. Central to our Haberdashers' Model of School Improvement is Great People.

Teaching in our schools must support pupils to make great progress. They should know more, remember more and do more because of a strong curriculum coupled with effective pedagogy and assessment. Our approach should be supported by evidence and research but not formulaic. Teaching is a creative process and therefore our teachers need to be able to 'bring themselves' to the classroom to bring their subject to life.

We recognise, however, that there is a need for a common framework in developing teaching across the Trust. This framework should reflect our ethos and our approach. The Haberdashers' Principles are used across all our schools. These are underpinned by the Rosenshine Principles and supported by the techniques of Teach Like a Champion. This evidence-informed approach has proven to be key in enabling pupils to be their most successful and is supported by the most recent developments in pedagogy. These Principles create an inclusive classroom environment for *every* pupil for them to reach their full potential.

These Haberdashers' Principles form the basis of our professional learning offer at Trust and school level. This offer is high quality, bespoke and targeted so that all teachers can develop their practice – regardless of their stage. Subject expertise is crucial and understanding how the principles are applied within the context of

subject pedagogy should form a large percentage of a schools professional learning offer. Opportunities for professional learning should be maximised including using meeting time to develop practice.

We believe that we can always be better as teachers, regardless of how good we currently are. It is, therefore, important that we have an accurate understanding of where there are strengths in our schools and where there are areas for development. Only by knowing these can we, as individuals, get better and, as a Trust, share expertise and provide support to others. Each school develops its own approach for this but there is an expectation that leaders will, on a regular basis, visit lessons, look at books, talk with pupils and staff and scrutinise progress information to review the impact of our curriculum and its delivery on our students. This review will be focused on development and support and where feedback can be given, it will be. Appraisal discussions are an excellent opportunity for doing this. A school-based coaching model is the framework for doing this – where teaching is not a significant concern – enabling a focus on key priorities. Where teaching is a cause for concern the development approach will be more directive and is likely to involve a support plan.

Any discussions on the quality of teaching are open and transparent, with a focus on feedback in the moment. No numerical grades are awarded. Any written feedback will be shared. Where a school uses a standard pro-forma for this, it aims to be free flow text with minimal 'tick boxes'. However, schools are on different journeys, and we recognise they may need different approaches. It is important that teachers feel motivated to do even better for our young people and so the way in which we carry out any review of teaching is important. Our only motivation for doing this, is to improve.

Our approach to the Haberdashers' Principles is outlined below Within these, each school has its own teaching policy detailing how teaching will be developed and reviewed in individual schools.

Haberdashers Teaching Principles

The Haberdashers' Principles enable all children to acquire new learning in a highly structured way. Our curriculum is meaningful because it links to the world children live in today and delivers cultural capital to all. Students are provided with opportunities to become active in their learning and feel able to make mistakes because this is the climate we value. Key behaviours such as collaboration, thinking skills and being aspirational are as important as knowledge itself.

The Haberdashers' Principles enable each child to become the best version of themselves by equipping students with the knowledge, skills and drive they need to transition to the next step of their learning journey, whether this is secondary school, sixth form, higher education or beyond. By delivering innovative, research-driven teaching and learning to all, pupils can embrace the challenges of their generation and flourish as 21st Century global citizens.

The 'Core Four'

At Haberdashers Academies Trust South we align our teaching and learning approach to Trust-wide Principles, driven by Vision 2031: 'From 3 to forever, we thrive'. Our mission is to deliver excellence for every child and young person through our 'core four' Haberdashers' Principles, ensuring every learner is:

Ready to Learn: Learners are prepared and eager to embrace learning experiences. They engage actively, independently and collaboratively.

Knowledgeable Learner: Every child and young person is curious, asks questions and contributes meaningfully to the wider world. They build their knowledge as they progress through their school journey.

Confident Communicator: Learners share their thoughts and ideas. They use communication skills to foster understanding, teamwork and connection.

Independent Learner: Every child and young person wants to learn, has the tools to investigate and the aspiration to be excellent – from 3 to forever.

These principles, underpinned by our values (dream, grow, create) are integrated into our daily practices and routines. They guide us in modelling and teaching empowering habits crucial for lifelong success. By clearly articulating the importance of each principle, we foster robust learning habits, enabling teachers to maximise learning experiences from **3 to forever.**

By implementing the 'Core Four' effectively, we will ensure excellence for every child and young person, including all starting points and needs.

Implementation: What this looks like in practice

The tables below set out what each of the Haberdashers' Principles looks like in practice, grounded in the Rosenshine Principles of Instruction and wider evidence-informed approaches to pedagogy.

Ready to Learn

A 'Ready to Learn' environment is the essential foundation upon which all effective teaching rests. The features below describe what this principle looks like in daily practice.

Area	What this looks like in practice
Lesson beginnings	• **Meet and greet:** Teachers welcome pupils at the threshold, checking uniform and ensuring a calm, settled entry to the classroom. • **'Do Now' activity:** A three-to-five-minute retrieval or thinking task is displayed and underway as pupils arrive. This immediately activates prior knowledge and focuses attention.
Routines and expectations	• **Routines are explicitly taught:** Teachers do not assume pupils know how to behave; they teach and rehearse expectations so that transitions and activities are smooth and predictable. This reduces cognitive load, freeing pupils' working memory for learning. • **Countdown signal:** A consistent signal (e.g. 3, 2, 1) is used to transition between activities, establishing quiet and directing attention to the teacher before instruction begins. • **Strong starts and finishes:** Lessons begin and end purposefully. At the close of a lesson, pupils tidy their space and are dismissed in an orderly way.
Behaviour management	• **High expectations are front-loaded:** Teachers communicate expectations clearly and consistently. What is permitted is what is promoted: low-level disruption is never acceptable. • **Least-invasive strategies:** Teachers use proximity, non-verbal cues, eye contact (as appropriate) and redirection to maintain the conditions for learning without disrupting its flow. • **Positive framing:** Teachers prompt pupils by stating clearly what they should be doing, using confident and encouraging language to reinforce the right choices.
Praise and environment	• **Precise, specific praise:** Praise is linked to the school's values and to the specific behaviours teachers wish to see, reinforcing expectations and building a positive learning culture. • **Organised learning environments:** Classrooms are tidy, well organised and purposeful, including displays that support current learning. Pupils arrive equipped and ready, and teachers model the high expectations they hold for all.

A Knowledgeable Learner

Becoming a knowledgeable learner requires a curriculum that is thoughtfully sequenced and deliberately taught, so that knowledge builds cumulatively and is retained in long-term memory. The features below describe what this looks like in daily practice.

Area	What this looks like in practice
Sequenced curriculum	• **Knowledge is built step by step:** New material is presented in small, carefully managed steps, with pupil practice built in after each stage. Teachers do not present too much at once: working memory is limited, and overloading pupils prevents knowledge from being stored effectively. • **Clear end points:** Pupils understand what they are learning, why it matters and where it fits in the broader sequence of their education.
Explicit instruction and modelling	• **I do – We do – You do:** Teachers demonstrate and think aloud before pupils attempt tasks, making expert thinking visible and reducing the cognitive load on working memory. • **Worked examples and models:** Visualisers, WAGOLLs (What A Good One Looks Like) and pre-planned exemplars show pupils precisely what successful outcomes look like. • **Anticipating misconceptions:** Teachers address common errors and misconceptions directly during instruction, rather than allowing them to become embedded.
Questioning	• **High-volume, high-quality questions:** Teachers ask a large number and range of questions throughout lessons - not merely to check surface recall, but to deepen understanding, probe reasoning and connect new learning to what pupils already know. • **No Opt Out:** Teachers do not accept minimal or absent responses. They prompt, reframe and return to pupils to ensure full and precise answers. 'Cold Call' ensures all pupils are thinking, not just those who volunteer. • **Planned question sequences:** Questions build from closed to open to probing, stretching all pupils to think harder and make connections. Targeted questions support assessment for learning.
Knowledge review and retrieval	• **Regular recall activities:** Knowledge recall is woven into every lesson. The act of retrieval itself strengthens memory: the more often knowledge is retrieved, the more readily it can be accessed in future. • **Weekly and monthly review:** Important knowledge is revisited and strengthened over time, consistent with Rosenshine's principle of weekly and monthly review to build well-connected, automatic knowledge. • **Knowledge organisers:** Where appropriate, knowledge organisers identify the most important content and vocabulary that pupils need to learn, revisit and remember across a unit or topic.
Vocabulary	• **Explicit vocabulary instruction:** Key vocabulary is identified and taught across all subject areas, with subject-specific terminology introduced, contextualised and returned to systematically. • **Academic language:** Pupils are expected to use academic language with precision and confidence. Teachers model the standard of language they expect.

A Confident Communicator

Confident communication - spoken and written - is both a goal of our curriculum and a tool through which learning deepens. The features below describe what this looks like in daily practice.

Area	What this looks like in practice
Oracy expectations	• **Full sentences:** Pupils are expected to respond in full sentences using subject-specific vocabulary accurately. Teachers use prompts such as 'loud and proud' and 'I say, you say' to develop precision and register. • **Active listening:** Pupils face the speaker, maintain open body language and demonstrate genuine engagement with what is being shared. These habits are explicitly taught and consistently reinforced.
Structured discussion	• **Think, Pair, Share:** Embedded as a routine structure, this gives all pupils time to rehearse and refine their thinking before sharing publicly, reducing anxiety while increasing the rigour of contributions. • **Oracy prompts:** Key prompts are used to support class discussions, e.g. ABC Oracy, to allow pupils to agree, build on, or challenge what a classmate has said, promoting the habits of collaborative intellectual discussion: 'Do you agree with that?'; 'How can you build on that?'; 'What challenge is there to this view?' • **Thinking time:** Teachers give adequate thinking time for deeper, higher-order questions, and extend responses with prompts such as 'Tell me more', 'Why?' and 'How do you know?'
Full participation	• **Cold Call:** Teachers direct questions to any pupil, creating a culture in which all are expected to think and contribute. This is not punitive - it is a signal that every learner's thinking matters. • **Collective response strategies:** Mini-whiteboards, thumbs up/down and choral responses are used to assess understanding across the whole class quickly and efficiently. • **Willingness to make mistakes:** Pupils and staff are open to feedback. A culture in which 'having a go' is valued builds the confidence pupils need to communicate and learn effectively.
Reading and vocabulary	• **Reading across the curriculum:** Reading and vocabulary are embedded in all subjects. Every teacher is a teacher of language. Teachers read aloud fluently and expressively, modelling the prosody and accuracy they expect pupils to develop. • **Targeted vocabulary instruction:** Key vocabulary and phrases are identified as part of curriculum planning in every subject, to extend pupils' vocabulary both spoken and written. Tier 2 vocabulary is prioritised. • **Use of disciplinary language:** Teachers provide explicit vocabulary instruction to help students access and use disciplinary language.

An Independent Learner

Independence is built step by careful step. The path to independent learning runs through well-structured, well-supported guided practice. The features below describe what this looks like in daily practice.

Area	What this looks like in practice
Scaffolding and support	• **Scaffold don't simplify:** Tools such as sentence starters, knowledge organisers, worked examples and word banks ensure that all pupils - including those with additional needs - can access learning and achieve success. • **Gradual removal of scaffolds:** Supports are progressively withdrawn as pupils develop fluency and confidence. The aim is always to build independence, not to sustain dependency. • **Teach to the top:** Tasks are designed to stretch all pupils. Scaffolding raises access from below; it does not lower expectations from above.
Guided to independent practice	• **Guided practice precedes independence:** Pupils work through tasks with teacher support before being expected to work independently. Independent practice is not for discovering new content unaided - it is for consolidating, deepening and automating what has already been taught. • **Preparation for independent tasks:** Teachers ensure pupils are well prepared before independent practice begins and have clear success criteria to guide their learning. Tasks are closely aligned to what has been modelled and practised in the guided phase. • **Purposeful circulation:** During independent work, teachers circulate with purpose, using live feedback and marking to identify misconceptions and provide real-time guidance that moves learning forward.
Feedback and reflection	• **Live marking:** Teachers mark in the lesson at the point of learning - using brief annotations, underlining or symbols - so pupils can respond to guidance in the moment and address errors before they become embedded. • **Feedback routines:** Pupils engage meaningfully with feedback, make revisions and refine and redraft their work. Self and peer assessment are used to develop the metacognitive habits of self-regulating learners. • **Explicit success criteria:** Pupils understand what excellent work looks like and can use success criteria to self-assess their progress towards it.
Retrieval and study skills	• **Retrieval practice:** Pupils regularly revisit prior knowledge. The act of retrieval strengthens memory and deepens understanding. Spaced practice and regular recall are embedded habits, not occasional activities. • **Study skills:** Study skills are taught explicitly and are appropriate to the stage of learning, equipping pupils with the tools they need to learn effectively both inside and beyond the classroom. • **High expectations culture:** A culture in which 'failure' is understood as part of the learning journey encourages intellectual risk-taking. Pupils aspire for excellence and are self-motivated to learn and progress.

Appendix A – Rosenshine Principles: I do / We do / You do

Teaching new material should be facilitated in manageable amounts, with effective modelling, breaking down of complex information, guiding students' practice, helping them when they make errors, and provide space and time for sufficient practice and review. Implementing and trying experiential, hands-on activities, should be considered after, not before, the basic material is absorbed and learned.

Lessons begin with a high-quality review of prior learning that deepens knowledge and understanding. Students also engage in weekly and monthly reviews, ensuring all students' needs are considered.

The Haberdashers' Principles include 'I do, We do, You do' and the pedagogy behind these principles is rooted in Principles of Instruction. This can be read for more detailed information on each principle in the model below.

I Do	We Do	You Do
Present new material in small steps with student practice after each. Provide models or prototypes (use of live and pre-planned examples, and in a variety of mediums, including visual tools, diagrammatic, verbal, in written form). Provide scaffolds and adaptations for difficult and complex tasks to support all students, including SEND and disadvantaged students.	Ask a number and range of questions to engage learners. Check for student understanding. Provide additional models and examples to demonstrate the students how new material can be applied to familiar and unfamiliar concepts.	Guide regular and specific student practice with time frames and support give . Obtain a high success rate to ensure that all Students, including SEND and disadvantaged students, make rapid and sustained progress within each lesson and over time. Require and monitor independent practice to ensure Students cover the curriculum content sequentially.