

## **Pedagogy Principles**

Before we talk about Coppice pedagogy principles, it is important to have clarity over what we mean by 'pedagogy'.

- Pedagogy is 'how' we teach. However, there is not a checklist of specific things that have to be seen in every lesson.
- Pedagogy is not a formula – it is the teaching strategies used by a teacher and therefore will reflect them and the class/cohort they are teaching.

As is referenced with our third curriculum principle (The curriculum should be built around effective pedagogy), the 'enacted curriculum' – the pedagogies used to bring the curriculum off of the page and to the children – are what make the real difference. As good as a curriculum is on paper, its value can only be truly seen through the way that it is taught to children so that they learn and experience it effectively.

At Coppice we understand the benefits, and limitations, of research evidence. We know that there are no silver bullets for pedagogical approaches, but understand that, through the wide range of research that has been carried out, there are some practices that are likely to be effective if delivered consistently well. Our pedagogy principles are constructed with this in mind.

### **Principle 1: Behaviour and Relationships are the core foundation of pedagogy**

In order for any teaching or curriculum to be successful, the children need to be in a positive place to learn, understand the learning and behavioural expectations on them and feel safe with their teacher and peers.

- A calm and purposeful learning environment is fundamental to good teaching and learning. When teaching, the children need to be able to see and hear the teacher without distraction so that they can focus on the important information being shared. Classrooms need to be conducive to positive learning so resources and displays should be clear and easy to access so that the classroom does not contain any barriers to teaching and learning.
- Teachers need to ensure that children know and understand the expectations of behaviour and that these are explicitly taught to the children so that nothing is left to chance. We cannot assume that children will naturally believe or understand our expectations of behaviour unless we share this with them and show them how to do it. Having strong and consistent routines and norms can free up teaching time. Following school policy is vital so that children feel a sense of belonging and so staff can support each other with consistency.

- Teachers need to know and teach their children. Building strong relationships based on respect will support teaching in the classroom. For children to learn, they need to feel safe, and for them to feel safe, they need to trust that the adults around them will do that. This trust can be built through the development of positive relationships.

### **Principle 2 – Assessment is the key to unlocking learning**

Assessment is inseparable from teaching, and the quality of the latter is – in many ways – dependent on the quality of information derived from the former. Assessment, as Dylan William says, is the bridge between teaching and learning.

The focus on curriculum mapping and sequencing has perhaps led to less focus on assessment. However, any curriculum, bought in or written in house, is not aimed at specific children. This is not possible as this is always changing. This is why assessment is the key. Without strong and effective assessment, learning cannot be effective. As well as we teach a lesson/concept, it will only have a positive impact on children's learning if it is the right lesson/concept for them to be learning, and the only way we know this is through assessment.

- Assessment needs to be ongoing so that there is deep understanding of what children have learned – not just what has been taught. This assessment needs to be inform the next steps of teaching, whether this is through adapting a lesson in the middle of teaching it, or adapting a sequence of learning.
- Checking ALL children's understanding at regular points is vital in making the appropriate decisions about a lesson or sequence's adaptations. The more information we have about the largest number of children, the more accurate it is likely to be.
- Alongside assessing children (both formatively and summatively) we need to ensure that children know what they need to do to improve. As has been referenced above, the quality of any feedback we give will depend entirely on the quality of evidence that we have about the children's learning. The starting point for effective feedback is making sure we have the best evidence. We also need to understand that feedback is about improving the child, not the work, which means that the only thing that matters about feedback is what the children do with it. Teacher feedback is, therefore, information that is given by a teacher (adult) to a child or children about their performance that aims to improve their learning. The following pedagogical principles will build on this. However, the EEF highlight three core principles for effective feedback
  - i. Lay the foundations for effective feedback
  - ii. Deliver appropriately timed feedback that focuses on moving learning forward
  - iii. Plan for how pupils will receive and use feedback

### **Principles 3-5**

Effective instruction is key for supporting children's learning. Different pedagogical theories will break this down in different ways – for example, in constructivist models of pedagogy, children take a more active role in their learning (through play or inquiry) whereas in behaviourist models, there is a high focus on teacher as instructor through explicit instruction. At Coppice, we do not have a more favoured overall theory. These can vary based on the age of children, subject being taught or specific lesson being taught in a sequence/series of lessons.

### **Principle 3 – Teachers deliver high quality instruction for all pupils**

Regardless of which pedagogical approach is used, there are some pedagogical practices that work across all approaches. These support teaching and learning and the application of them is the decision of the teacher, based on how they feel their children will learn best.

- **Modelling** - When we think about the things we ask children to do, very often, they do not know what we are aiming for! We might have something in our heads, but they may not be able to make a link to this. Having a model that shows a finished example helps to make the abstract more concrete. The processes to get to a final product also vary and can't always be seen. Children need guiding through the process, or have the process deconstructed to make it more accessible. Modelling shines a light on both of these.
- **Explanation** - At the core of a great teacher's skill-set is the ability to explain the concepts, theories and techniques that make up their subject. Explanation is at the heart of what we as teachers do day in and day out. An explanation is not all teacher talk and not necessarily in one chunk, but a way of transforming complicated and abstract material into something clear and meaningful. To be successful, both subject specific and pedagogical content knowledge are important.
- **Questioning** – We know from research that more effective teachers ask more questions, involving more students, probing in more depth and taking more time to explain, clarify and check for understanding. In addition, they ask students to explain the process they have used to answer a question – to narrate their thinking. To maximise the impact of our questions, we should use them to support our checking of children's understanding, to promote children thinking hard and to help with providing feedback and corrections. Questioning also contains an unintended benefit of supporting the formation and maintenance of the classroom and school culture by highlighting the level of expectation and develop strong relationships.

### **Principle 4 – Practice makes progress**

The age-old analogy of Practice makes Perfect has its flaws. We know that practising the wrong thing will not lead to improvements, but rather will embed a misconception. However, practice is

still a vitally important pedagogy. Without practice, children will not have the opportunity to apply the skills and knowledge that have been taught. Through high quality and targeted practice, children will be able to make progress.

- *Building to independence* – it is important that children can apply their learning independently. However, not all children will be able to move directly to this and so it is important that practice builds towards independence. At Coppice, we follow the ‘I do, we do, you do’ approach, but with an understanding that the process is not directly linear. The extended handover period in the ‘we do’ phase is vital in securing children’s understanding before moving to ‘you do’. There are also other ways to support the build towards independent, such as the use of scaffolds and other interventions.
- *Worked examples* – as with modelling and explanations, it can be difficult for children to complete ‘full’ examples straight away. The use of worked examples supports the process of guided to independent practice. By showing and working through a number of examples, children can gain a deeper understanding of what they need to do.
- *Stretch Zone (or High Challenge, Low Threat)* – Practice should be set with high expectations. We want to push our children just far enough so that they are in productive struggle, but not so far that they drown in a sea of panic. If the bar is set so that there is high challenge, we need to effectively adapt/scaffold downwards from this point so that children are able to practice being successful and work towards scaffolds being removed.
- *Rehearsal and/then retrieval* – There is a strong evidence base around the benefits of retrieval practice – we know that forgetting happens and in order to prevent forgetting, learning needs to be retrieved. However, for this to be effective, there needs to be something to retrieve in the first place. Providing children with enough opportunities to rehearse a new concept so that connections are built that make meaning will build a foundation of something to retrieve and support the development of long term memory.

### **Principle 5 – Plan precisely and adapt appropriately**

In the Coppice Curriculum Principles, the analogy of the cake is used to explain how we see curriculum. In this principle, the focus is really on how the ingredients of the cake are used specifically in your context. You, the teacher, are the baker of the cake, bringing the ingredients together in the right way for your class.

- *Specific learning intentions and success criteria* – although the ingredients are mapped out through the curriculum, the specific learning for individual lessons is still set by the teacher. What is the *specific* thing I want the children to learn in this lesson and how will I know that

they have learned it? This means that Learning intentions and Success criteria (using whichever terminology you use) have to be dynamic and focused on the specific needs of the children in your class.

- Small steps – you don't get better at running marathons by running lots of marathons. The process is broken down into small component parts and then put together. The same applies to learning, both within and across lessons. You need to consider how new learning could be broken down into a series of steps, consider what your assumptions are about students' prior knowledge and then check that students all have this knowledge before proceeding. Using a 'Teaching Backwards' approach can help here, by identifying the final product/outcome and working backwards to identify the key learning steps along the way – just be aware of the course of knowledge by thinking about the steps a child in your class needs!
- Well chosen tasks – task that we choose for children to complete should give children practice in the small steps as well as show evidence of what we wanted them to know, understand or do. If it doesn't, then it may not be supporting learning. We need the tasks we design to reveal what children are thinking so that we can make accurate and appropriate decisions about how we move forwards.
- Adapted and adaptable for all – plans are just plans. They can – and should – change when required based on your assessments both within and across lessons. Experience tells us that children will develop certain misconceptions, so planning for how to overcome these can avoid them becoming embedded. Plans can also not be one size fits all. Whilst we want to encourage high expectations for all children, we need to support them to reach these ambitious goals using a range of scaffolding processes. Consider the difficulties that children will face and then design specific resources that will support them to overcome those difficulties (link to small steps). This is even more important when considering the needs of children who have SEND. They are likely to need different and/or additional scaffolds to support their learning and we need to ensure that our planning caters for the individual and specific requirements of our most vulnerable learners.