

## E-ACT Pathways Academy Teaching and Learning Policy

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<b>Department Owner</b>	E-ACT Pathways Academy
<b>Section Owner</b>	Pathways Principal
<b>Approver</b>	Education Committee
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## E-ACT Pathways Academy Teaching and Learning Policy

### Introduction

Learning is something that we all do, whether we like it or not, whether in formal or informal situations. It is something which happens throughout our lives. The way that we learn has aspects which are common to us all, whatever age we are, and we also have preferred styles of learning.

I think that we would all agree that the way we learn when we are aged 3 or 4 is the same way that we learn when we are 10 or 11 or 45 or 46. The way we are asked to learn, or are taught, may be different, but the learning process is the same and the characteristics of effective learning are the same:-

- Finding out and exploring
- Experimenting and playing with what you know
- Having a go
- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying and achieving what you set out to do
- Having your own ideas and being able to extend your own ideas
- Making links and connections
- Choosing ways to do things
- Reflecting and considering
- Learning with and through others

So why is it that the way we are taught differs so much? Why is teaching in the Foundation Phase so different from the teaching in Year 6, or in High School, or in University?

Pedagogy develops in response to research in relation to the most effective methods for enabling learning to occur, but the demands of an accountability-based education system, together with differences in curricula often force us into pedagogies which may not be the most successful in enabling learning to occur at its optimum rate. Why do methods employed in science differ so much from methods employed in literacy? Why is it that Foundation subjects are often more 'hands-on' than core subjects? Why is it that the more accountable we are, the more we resort to techniques which, for the most part, only develop shallow learning?

Ordinarily, what we usually see within core subjects, where accountability is highest, is the teacher doing a lot of the work, usually within the following type of organisational model:

Introduce Learning Objective/ Success Criteria----Teach the main concepts/ skills----Children engage in practice of the concept/skill in groups/ independently----Teacher summarises learning within a plenary.

This model promotes shallow learning only because:

1. It is teacher directed, rather than child-directed and therefore it is superimposed on learners – it is top-down, outside-in;
2. It is predominantly reliant upon auditory and visual techniques and therefore only appeals to particular kinds of learners;
3. It is structured and therefore unable to fully respond to the needs of all children in terms of their individual learning pathways;
4. The teacher is active, the children are predominantly passive;
5. Children are instructed, told and shown, rather than finding out for themselves through exploration, experimentation and active connection-making.

## What do we want learning to be like?

We want to develop learners who:-

- Find out and explore
- Experiment and play with what they know
- Have a go
- Are highly engaged and concentrate
- Keeping trying
- Enjoy and achieve what they set out to do
- Having their own ideas and are able to extend their own ideas
- Make links and connections
- Choose ways to do things
- Make active choices about their learning
- Reflect, consider and think
- Apply skills knowledge and understanding
- Learn with and through others

## What is Deep Learning?

Deep learning involves all of the above and results in understanding and the creation of learning which is firm, fluent and can be generalised to other situations. It involves a process of beginning to learn, developing learning and being able to master learning. The deep learning results in an immersion in learning activities resulting from High Engagement.

## What is High Engagement?

High Engagement occurs when we are immersed in learning activities, where we experience 'flow', where time goes quickly, where there is an enjoyment in the act of learning.

It occurs best when:-

- We have a question we want to be answered/ we have something to find out
- We are learning through and with others
- We have 'penny drop' or 'lightbulb' moments
- We can experiment and explore
- We are reflecting on our learning
- We have a goal or a target
- We have choices about our learning pathway and how we learn
- We have hope that we will success
- Our experiences are relevant
- The level of challenge we experience is just above our comfort levels
- We feel safe

## Types of learners

As well as being given opportunities to learn as described above, human being also have preferred ways of learning, or learning styles. These are most commonly understood at the moment as being VAK- Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic. However, in reality, these three 'styles' are, in effect, ways of percieivng, and therefore only make up on aspect of style. Style is a result of both the preferred way of perceiving, and the preferred way of learning or process. Each of the grid quadrants below include both the preferred way of perceiving and the preferred process for learning, in different combinations. The grids illustrate the four basic styles of learning.

1 Perceive: Experienter (kinaesthetic/ doing/active) Process: Reflector	2 Perceive: Experienter (kinaesthetic/ doing/active) Process: Experimenter
3 Perceive: Considerer (thinking/ listening – visual and auditory) Process: Reflector	4 Perceive: Considerer (thinking/ listening – visual and auditory) Process: Experimenter

#### Quadrant 1

This kind of learner is very hands on and actively learns through doing. They also learn through reflecting on learning.

#### Quadrant 2

This kind of learner is very hands on and actively learns through doing. They also learn by experimenting, trying things out, hypothesising, trial and error.

#### Quadrant 3

This kind of learner prefers to learn through listening to someone teach them, through being shown, through seeing and having demonstrated, through thinking about what they have been taught. They also learn by reflecting on what they have learnt.

#### Quadrant 4

This kind of learner prefers to learn through listening to someone teach them, through being shown, through seeing and having demonstrated, through thinking about what they have been taught. They also learn by experimenting, trying things out, hypothesising, trial and error.

### **How do we teach to enable this learning to occur?**

The styles quadrant above can be linked with the quadrants in the grid below which illustrate our teaching responses.

#### Quadrant 1

This kind of learner needs opportunities to learn through experience, and opportunities to reflect on learning

#### Quadrant 2

This kind of learner needs opportunities to learn through experience, and opportunities to experiment

#### Quadrant 3

This kind of learner needs opportunities to learn through listening, demonstrations, modelling, and opportunities to reflect on their learning.

#### Quadrant 4

This kind of learner needs opportunities to learn through listening, demonstrations, modelling, and opportunities to experiment.

1 Offer experiences and reflection	2 Offer experiences and opportunities to experiment
3 Offer demonstrations, explanations and reflection	4 Offer demonstrations, explanations and opportunities to experiment

If we are to develop learning opportunities so that all children can succeed, we need to plan experiences which offer:

- Time to think and listen and be shown
- Time to experiment
- Time to reflect

In terms of outstanding teaching which leads to deep learning, we expect to see:

- Challenging learning
- Open-ended problem solving
- Experiential learning
- Collaboration
- Learning driven by pupil constructed questions
- Active experimentation
- Inquiry
- Effective reflection
- Enablement of independent learning with children purposefully making learning choices

Therefore the following model is offered:

#### Phase 1

Tune in and find out (experience; explore and construct own learning; inquire; open-ended collaborative inquiry)

#### Phase 2

Sorting out and pondering (reflecting and thinking about phase 1)

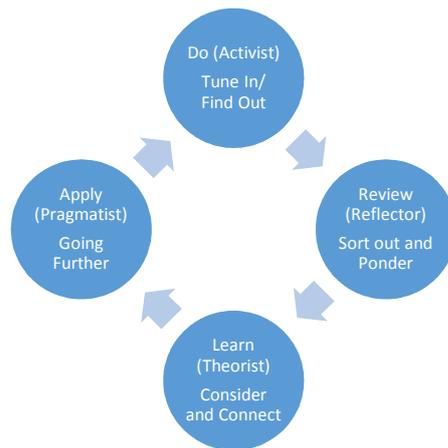
#### Phase 3

Considering and connecting (new learning)

#### Phase 4

Going Further (practicing new learning)

This can be linked to the Kolb Learning Cycle which is used to describe the development of specific skills such as serving at tennis or writing an essay:-



The idea is that we learn by DOING, then REVIEWING (or reflecting). The result of this review and reflection is that we LEARN. The next step is to APPLY this learning.

### Elements Required for Deep Learning

If we wish to see deep learning, we need to have the following in place:

- Competent facilitators
- Conducive learning environments
- Confident learners
- Cognitive process

### Competent Facilitators

'Teaching means systematically helping children to learn so that they are helped to make connections in their learning and are actively led forward as well as helped to reflect on what they have already learned'.

'As partner to the child, the teacher is inside the learning situation.' (Hewett, 2001)

If teachers are to facilitate learning, the following must be extremely well developed:

- Understanding of how children develop
- Understanding of the children being taught
- Understanding of the curriculum
- Understanding of available methods and approaches
- Organisational ability
- Ability to respond, in the moment, to learners' needs
- Ability to pare down teacher talk to instruction and question – facilitation, assessment for learning
- Ability to plan suitable challenging cognitive pathways

### Conducive Learning Environments

If learning environments are to support deep learning they must have:

- Examples of target work
- Working walls which provide scaffolds to independent learning
- Reflection walls
- Outlines of the 'big picture'
- Meta-cognitive strategies and steps to success
- Guidance for independent learning – eg. BBBB, good partner work, good co-operation, guidance on how to be an effective coach, guidance on effective questioning etc.

## **Confident Learners**

If we are to have confident learners, we must enable learners to:

- Understand their aspirations and have a clear understanding of their learning journey
- Understand their current learning skills, knowledge and understanding
- Understand their target learning skills, knowledge and understanding
- Understand the choices they have in how to achieve these next steps in learning
- Be able to take full responsibility for their learning behaviours and choices
- Be able to coach others
- Be effective listeners
- Be good at organising themselves for learning
- Be resilient
- Have a range of ways of learning independently – eg. research skills, referencing skills etc.
- Be able to ask effective questions

## **Cognitive Process**

The teacher is responsible for planning appropriate cognitive processes for development of deep learning. These will include the model outlined above but will also require the teacher to plan for:

- Assessment loops
- Reflection opportunities
- Teaching questioning skills
- Plan questions
- Consider challenging collaborative tasks linked to Bloom's
- The effective organisation of learning time so that there is sufficient learning
- High engagement

Woodlands Academy expect that the above is fully integrated into everyday practice. We believe that, by doing this, children will be fully challenged and will learn at a deep level. This will therefore lead to outstanding progress. In order to secure this, we have developed a list of certainties for all teaching and learning sessions:-

## **Certainties for all teaching and learning sessions**

### Pitch and challenge

- The differentiated lesson is based upon previous lesson assessments, marking and feedback and previous lesson evaluations so that pitch and challenge are accurate for all children throughout the lesson and children are appropriately scaffolded and supported – this is highly effective in extending all pupils' knowledge, skills or understanding
- Children know what they are learning, why they are learning it, and how they are learning it
- Teacher and TA questioning is perceptive and enhances and challenges knowledge, skills or understanding

### Sufficiency

- Time is organised extremely well and includes collaboration, so that learning occurs at the maximum pace and depth throughout all parts of the lesson
- Assessment for learning questions and actions ensure the teacher and TA are aware of learners' progress and adapt learning accordingly

## Engagement

- Expectations for the quality and quantity of work are high for all learners throughout the lesson
- High expectations for learning behaviour are evident throughout the lesson so that children display positive learning behaviours, dispositions and attitudes
- The teacher is enthusiastic and hooks children so that children are highly motivated throughout the lesson