

Teaching and Learning Policy



Embedding Cognitive Science and Metacognition for High-Impact Learning

Learning and growing together as we follow Christ

Vision:

At Tittensor we nurture wonder and faith and are full of hope and enthusiasm, as we worship together. We encourage all to persevere and grow in learning to our God-given potential. We look after one another and our world, with love and respect, seeking the common good for all.

Signed by:

Headteacher

Date: September 2026

Chair of governors

Date: September 2026

1. Purpose

This policy establishes a whole-school approach to teaching and learning that is informed by robust cognitive science principles and metacognitive strategies. Its aim is to ensure that every learner develops secure knowledge, deeper understanding, and the ability to regulate their own learning effectively.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy

2. Core Principles

Teaching and learning across the school are underpinned by the following evidence-informed principles:

2.1 Cognitive Science Foundations

- Learning is a change in long-term memory; therefore, teaching must support encoding, retention, and retrieval.
- Working memory is limited, so instruction must reduce unnecessary cognitive load.
- Frequent retrieval practice strengthens memory and improves long-term retention.
- Spaced and interleaved practice enhance durability and transfer of learning.
- Dual coding (combining words and visuals) supports understanding when used deliberately.

2.2 Metacognitive Foundations

- Learners benefit from explicit instruction in planning, monitoring, and evaluating their learning.
- Teachers model metacognitive thinking to make expert strategies visible.
- Children are taught to reflect on their learning processes, not just outcomes.
- Self-regulation is developed progressively and age-appropriately.

3. Expectations for High-Quality Teaching

3.1 Curriculum and Lesson Design

Teachers will:

- Sequence learning to build schema and avoid cognitive overload.
- Activate prior knowledge at the start of lessons to strengthen connections.
- Provide clear learning goals and success criteria.
- Use worked examples and modelling to reduce extraneous load.
- Incorporate opportunities for guided and independent practice.

3.2 Instructional Delivery

Teachers will:

- Present information in small, meaningful steps.
- Check for understanding regularly using low-stakes, responsive techniques.
- Use questioning that probes thinking and deepens understanding.
- Provide scaffolds that are gradually removed as competence increases.
- Use dual coding intentionally, avoiding decorative or distracting visuals.

3.3 Retrieval and Practice

Teachers will:

- Embed retrieval practice daily or weekly through quizzes, questioning, and summarisation.
- Space practice over time rather than massing content in single blocks.
- Interleave related but distinct topics to strengthen discrimination and transfer.

- Encourage Children to explain concepts in their own words to consolidate understanding.

4. Expectations for Developing Metacognition

4.1 Teacher Modelling

Teachers will:

- Model expert thinking aloud (e.g., problem-solving steps, reading strategies).
- Demonstrate how to plan tasks, monitor progress, and evaluate outcomes.
- Make explicit the strategies used by successful learners.

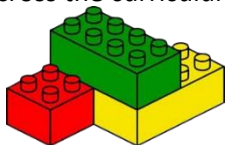
4.2 Student Metacognitive Practice

Children will be taught to:

- Plan: identify goals, choose strategies, and anticipate challenges.
- Monitor: check understanding, adjust strategies, and seek clarification.
- Evaluate: reflect on what worked, what didn't, and what to do next time.
- Understand the science of cognition through the use of symbols in teaching and learning:

Building on knowledge:

Across the curriculum/Making Links



Reactivation of learning:



Deeper thinking:

Questioning



4.3 Reflection and Self-Assessment

Teachers will provide structured opportunities for:

- Reflections.
- Self-assessment against leading question.
- Peer feedback.

5. Assessment for Learning

Teachers will:

- Use formative assessment to identify misconceptions, gaps in learning and adapt teaching.
- Provide feedback that is specific, actionable, and focused on improvement.
- Avoid overloading Children with excessive marking; prioritise feedback that moves learning forward.
- Use summative assessments to evaluate long-term retention, not short-term performance.

6. The curriculum

The school follows the National Curriculum. Teachers will use the relevant schemes of work to support teaching and learning:

Subject	Scheme of work (if appropriate)
Reading	Vipers – Literacy Shed
Writing	Literacy Shed to support planning
Spellings	No Nonsense Spelling
Maths	White Rose Hub

Science	Cornerstones (Curriculum Maestro)
History	Cornerstones (Curriculum Maestro)
Geography	Cornerstones (Curriculum Maestro)
Design Technology	Cornerstones (Curriculum Maestro)
Art and Design	Cornerstones (Curriculum Maestro)
PSHE	PSHE Association
Music	Charanga
MFL (French)	Kapow
PE	Supported by Bee Active Planning
RE	Staffordshire agreed syllabus
Online Safety	Evolve
Computing	Purple Mash

The school will ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced. It will be carefully timetabled, and the content will be suitable for the age, context and ability of the children. In addition, the curriculum will be made accessible to all through differentiation and the provision of the necessary resources. The school will also ensure that other aspects of learning, such as the development of social skills and self-esteem, also form a significant part of children's education.

7. Planning and preparation

Teachers will be expected to plan effectively and appropriately to ensure all children are given the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Teachers will be provided with appropriate preparation, planning and assessment (PPA) time.

In line with expectations set across the whole school, when planning lesson, teachers will consider and ensure lessons:

- Are clearly linked to the curriculum.
- Are adapted, to clearly show how children of all abilities are catered for.
- Have clearly identified leading question, showing continuity from one lesson to the next.
- Clearly state the activities that will be undertaken.
- Show how TAs will be utilised to enhance learning.
- Contain resources to be used to complement teaching.
- Use feedforward sheets for assessment and evaluation.
- Take account of prior learning; ensuring this is 'reactivated' via retrieval and assessment processes.

Teachers will ensure their lessons are planned so they can be flexible and adapted to ensure the needs of all children are met.

Expectations:

Routines for All Lessons

Starting Lessons:

Positive Entry Routines

Behaviour for Learning

Showing Excellence and Positive

Affirmation/ Highlighting 'good' work

- Smile/Welcome/Greeting at door – Teacher MUST be in classroom, prepared and ready to 'go'. Clear entry routines established.
- Learning starts immediately.
- Set expectations – All pupils looking and listening when signalled. Clear routines established and understood.
- Pupils engaged/on-task/inquisitive – enquiry-based learners (Questioning staff and peers). Active learning – Respect pupil's time by using every minute productively.
- Good relationships/Positive talk – Positive behaviour strategies.
- Use of visualisers to promote/celebrate expectations.
- Children to model work/ talk through thinking.
- Use of praise – Dojos, 'star pupil', etc. Celebrate learning as you go.
- 'Feed-forward' discussion.
 - Work displayed on working walls.

Ending Lessons:

Positive Exit Routines

- Instant feedback, praise children (Positive ending).
- 'What have you learned today?'/ Recap learning - Review learning – questions.
- Clear ROUTINES in place – exit classroom calmly & orderly.

Common Pedagogical Elements: 'Old stuff New stuff Practice & Feedback Test & Review'

Specifying knowledge elements

- Review prior knowledge – provide lots of practice of mastering knowledge.
- Introduce new vocabulary - Introduce explicit new knowledge. Breaking new concepts down – small steps.
- Leading questions.

Retrieval Practice / Spaced Retrieval

- Awareness of potential misconceptions/barriers – Adaptive teaching.
- Review/revisit prior knowledge – mini-tests, quick-fire, brain dumps, multiple choice, etc.
- Flashbacks – connections made.

Modelling and Practice

- Scaffold thinking and model expectation - 'Thinking out-loud' – modelled by staff & pupils (Reasoning & thinking). Verbalise process.
- Intelligent practice – variation, problem solving, reasoning – creativity and risk-taking.
- Model 'up-levelling'.

Structured, targeted questioning. Enquiry-based classrooms.

- A range of questioning – provide question stems. Pupils to generate own questions. Model good/effective questioning – Provide 'wait time'/'thinking time'.
- Questions on display – working walls.
- Practice/model metacognition.
- Communication/oracy promoted.
- Give opportunities for children to explain their understanding- Thinking time.

Responding to Feedback

- Self/peer marking for instant feedback. Instant feedback.
- Opportunities need to be given to respond to feedback and understand it.
- Draft – edit – improve.
- Use of 'feedforward'.

Features of Good Speech/Oracy. Vocabulary development

- Reasoning/ debate/ explanation/ discussion opportunities.
- Encourage children to answer in sentences (sentence stems).
- Encourage pupils to self-correct - prompt children to re-model into proper

Adaptive Teaching

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) states that 'making higher quality teaching normally available to the whole class is likely to mean that fewer pupils will require such [different from or additional to] support.' (Para. 6.15)

At Tittensor we believe that there is no 'lid' on learning. All children are immersed in quality first teaching and access learning and challenge at their level. Success criteria is personalised: SEND/Working Towards, Expected and Exceeding. All children can access all success criteria at their appropriate level. If children require support this will be through reasonable adjustments: alternatively, planned activities, independent support aids (word mats, visual cues, concrete maths aids, etc) or teacher/teaching assistant time. All children will receive adaptive teaching.

8. Classroom Environment

Classrooms will:

- Promote a culture of high expectations and challenge.
- Minimise distractions to support cognitive focus.
- Encourage productive struggle and resilience.
- Celebrate effort, progress, and effective learning strategies.

9. Professional Development

The school will:

- Provide ongoing training in cognitive science, metacognition, and evidence-informed practice.

- Encourage collaborative planning, peer observation, and instructional coaching.
- Use lesson studies and academic inquiry to refine teaching approaches.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers

- Implement the principles and strategies outlined in this policy.
- Reflect on their practice and engage in professional learning.

Subject Leaders

- Monitor the quality of teaching within their subject or phase.
- Support staff in embedding cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

Senior Leaders

- Ensure the policy is enacted consistently across the school.
- Provide resources, training, and time for staff development.
- Collaborate with staff around effective practice.
- Involve parents and other professionals in the monitoring process.

Governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations;
- Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;
- Ensure that staff development and performance development policies promote highly effective teaching and learning, with a desire to strive for constant improvement;
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include meetings with subject leaders, monitoring and the termly headteacher's report to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

Children

- Engage actively in learning and metacognitive reflection.
- Take increasing responsibility for their learning behaviours.
- Enjoy learning and coming to school.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

The impact of this policy will be reviewed through:

- Learning walks and lesson observations.
- Pupil voice and work scrutiny.
- Assessment data and progress measures.
- Staff feedback and professional dialogue.

Review Due Date: September 2027