

CURRICULUM AND TEACHING AND LEARNING PRINCIPLES

2022-2023

At The Duston School our core aim is to help students climb the tree of knowledge, so they can access University, Higher Education, Employment or an Apprenticeship.

- Our curriculum is embedded in a knowledge rich approach and we firmly believe that knowledge begets knowledge.
- Through the enacted curriculum there is an expectation that students retain what they have been taught in their long term memory (schema).
- There is a strong emphasis on retrieval practice, sequencing and interleaving, with the curriculum seen as a progression model.
- Powerful knowledge gives students the cultural literacy they need to become active citizens in society and further their personal aspirations and ambitions.

Knowledge matters

- There is a strong emphasis on the **core** (key knowledge) and the **hinterland** (the concepts, stories, techniques etc. to hang it on).
- We teach **rich** and **powerful knowledge** and language, which is specified, taught, assessed and securely learnt in the long term student schema.
- Coherent, **cumulative factual** knowledge is vital for reading comprehension, literacy and critical higher-order thinking skills.
- Knowledge **empowers** students to make informed choices.
- Desirable skills, such as analysis, explanation, creativity, evaluation, interpretations are only possible when a **wide knowledge base is secure**. Pupils can then connect the knowledge together.

Sequence Matters

- Careful and skilful curriculum sequencing and planning is essential if pupils are to secure and retain knowledge.
- Pre-determined misconceptions are planned for.

- When and how core concepts and core knowledge will be recursively-revisited form an integral part of our sequencing. Additionally, cross-curricular links are actively promoted.
- Exemplar responses are used to model the standard of response expected at TDS.
- Interweaving and interleaving of subject content through careful sequencing of topics and planned retrieval, aids better retention of knowledge in the long-term memory (Schema).

Memory Matters

- Rigorous planning of the subject curriculum ensures retrieval practice is frequent and perceived as low in stake.
- Careful consideration of questioning, and the powerful knowledge that we want to test, reinforces and links prior and new learning.
- Retrieval practice gives pupils the confidence in their own knowledge and therefore automaticity and fluency.
- Knowledge Organisers allow pupils to ‘see the bigger picture.’ This allows pupils to make explicit links in their learning, independently review knowledge and recite core knowledge to support retrieval practice.

Assessment Matters

- Effective teaching uses assessment and feedback appropriately within the classroom.
- Formative assessment plays a crucial role and formative assessments should be centrally planned, agreed and shared within each subject community.
- All assessments should provide pupils and teachers with meaningful and purposeful feedback.
- Low stake assessments are of critical importance, with a clear bias and emphasis on knowledge based retrieval practice.

Teaching Matters

- Teachers must possess a **deep knowledge** of their curriculum.
- Teachers must meet and greet their pupils at the classroom door, engage them with a **‘DO NOW’** retrieval practice starter and hinge their lessons around a **BIG QUESTION**.
- A significant proportion of a lesson should be **retrieval practice**.
- **New material** and **delivery** should be presented in a manner that best suits the class, the knowledge and the subject.
- Time should be spent to both **scaffold** and **model** the learning.
- The needs of all students should be met through careful **scaffolding, personalised support** and **targeted questioning**.

WHAT IS THE VISION FOR TEACHING?

The Duston School approach to teaching is research-informed, drawing on Rosenshine's *Principles of Instruction* and making the teacher as the expert.

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A knowledge rich approach

1. Maintain deep and fluent knowledge of the curriculum content they teach
2. Use of long term planning including mapping against the National Curriculum, as well as curriculum end points in order to ensure knowledge is **sequential**.
3. Embed opportunities for students to widen their literacy repertoire to include disciplinary literacy, as well as academic language.
4. To anticipate common misconceptions and plan teaching in order to address these.

The enacted curriculum

1. Plan lessons with a single focus through the use of a Big Question – this is used as a hinge point through which students will access a range of deep knowledge to widen their thinking.
2. Use workbooks to ensure that content is well planned and delivered using direct instruction principles, so that the content is clear and every student can access the lesson and tasks.
3. Ensure all planned activities are high quality and teach to the top, with the use of “I do, We do and You do” modelling to ensure that all students are supported to achieve all tasks.
4. Avoid low-value or filler tasks, as these do not lead to the creation of deep knowledge.
5. Where appropriate technology such as visualisers should be used to allow students to receive live modelling of how to apply abstract knowledge to explicit contexts.
6. Ensure that high attaining students are effectively provided for, allowing opportunities for deeper thinking.
7. Ensure that SEND students are effectively provided for, through high quality teaching, and following strategies from the SEND profiles.
8. Include regular periods of silent, independent work during lessons. This is essential to help students to concentrate and manage distraction.

Retrieval practice, sequencing and interleaving

1. All lessons begin with an engage task, ideally consisting of 5 questions to activate prior knowledge and prepare students for the learning to come.
2. Use workbooks to ensure that lessons are sequenced to help students develop their schema and link prior knowledge with new knowledge.

3. Include regular low-stakes quizzing to assess where students have retained knowledge and where content needs to be revisited.
4. Ensure that once content is taught, it is revisited throughout the course to ensure that students have a deep and complete knowledge and can recall this when needed.
5. Assessment focuses on knowledge from across the course, not just that which has been recently learnt, to ensure that key knowledge has been retained.

Powerful knowledge gives students the cultural literacy they need

1. Lessons include a focus on knowledge from both the core and hinterland. Teachers enhance students' understanding through a range of examples from the real world and stories in order to develop a more complete understanding.
2. Reading is prioritised across the curriculum. Opportunities to read high quality academic texts relevant to the subject are frequently provided with teachers carefully guiding students through the content to ensure understanding.
3. Students are expected to have their own reading book with them at all times and staff should encourage them to take opportunities to continue their own personal reading whenever possible and appropriate.
4. Character culture lessons are delivered to all students on a weekly basis with staff delivering content to engage students in the aspects of citizenship, RE, PSHE and literacy to help them build the cultural literacy needed for the wider world.

HOMEWORK

1. All homework is set through Knowledge Organisers which are available on the website.
2. We set homework in order to consolidate students learning outside of the classroom to allow deeper thinking around the subject and key knowledge.
3. Suitable homework activities will include reading, creation of notes, practicing of a specific area or skill in order to move learning to the long term memory.
4. Subjects should set open-ended research homework particularly KS3, nor tasks such as model making unless explicitly relevant to the subject e.g. Art or Design Technology
5. Reading is central to students' personal development. The aim is for students to read for pleasure which is inspired through our academic reads.
6. All homework will filter into the regular, low stakes retrieval tasks in order to establish the extent of students learning.

EXEMPLIFICATION

For the exemplification of the principles outlined in this document, please see the **Teaching and Learning** in Action booklet. These principles are designed to provide identification and guidance for elements of teaching practice which make the most difference to student learning i.e. how this might look in the classroom.

These principles exemplify:

- Modelling
- Checking for understanding
- Developing student responses
- Classroom Management
- Homework
- Low-stakes testing
- Whole School CPD

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **All teachers** are responsible for delivering the curriculum coupled with the assessment in line with faculty planning. Teachers are expected to have deep curriculum knowledge and are labelled as the 'expert of the classroom' for students to learn from.
- **All faculty / middle leaders** are responsible for ensuring the approach to curriculum and assessment are clearly planned, resourced and followed within each subject area. This includes the upkeep of schemes of work, work booklets and knowledge organisers. Faculty / middle leaders will ensure all teachers promote and permit the highest of standards and expectations in line with our Student Care approach. The calm classroom environment within each subject area will allow teachers to successfully deliver the curriculum.
- **All Senior Leaders** are responsible for overseeing the successful implementation, constant refinement and evaluation of the schools approaches to Teaching and Learning.

Implementing the Curriculum and Teaching Principles at a Faculty Level

Planning, documentation and organisation of curriculum

In order to enact the terms of the Curriculum and Teaching Principles, the following documentation should be centrally provided to teachers in faculties and updated copies such as kept in the Governing Body room:

- Departmental Curriculum Vision through which the vision and curriculum intent is clearly defined, as well as the units for each year group is outlined.
- Key Stage Curriculum Overview in which the links between the key stages are identified, as well as links to other subjects or areas of study.
- KS3 National Curriculum Map outlining the curriculum content covered mapped against the National Curriculum expectations.
- Curriculum end points outlining the core knowledge and/or skills that students should have gained at the end of each year group
- Learning journey graphic outlining the programme of study for students
- Schemes of work for individual topic and units, which give a clear sense of what content teachers should know in order to deliver and what knowledge students should learn.
- Standardised high quality resources for students including:
 - Workbooks for each term/unit containing a glossary of key terms, specified banks of relevant and powerful knowledge which has been carefully sequenced.
 - Standardised model answers contained with the Knowledge Organisers, along with guidance of how to use these
 - Standardised formative assessments in the form of low stakes knowledge quizzes, mid-term tests and interim assessments. Further details can be found within the **Assessment Principles** document.
 - Standardised summative assessments including essays, end of unit tests and mock exam papers