



Thinking Schools Academy Trust

“Transforming Life Chances”

Teaching and Learning Policy

Meon Junior School

This policy was adopted in July 2018

The policy is to be reviewed in June 2019

TSAT Teaching and Learning Policy

The policy will reflect the Trust Vision of “Transforming Life Chances”. We aspire to enhance the learning of the pupils in a manner that will equip them for life outside of school. Teachers are among the most powerful influences in learning and will ultimately impact the pupil’s relationship to their learning in all areas of life, influencing how they engage with new ideas and attitudes.

Children first: To provide a stimulating learning environment for all where learners feel safe to explore knowledge and understanding. We believe that children learn best when they are motivated, clear about expectations in their work and behaviour, feel valued, secure and confident, are challenged and receive constructive feedback about their performance.

Aspire: To be the best they can be. We believe that all staff and pupils can aspire for personal and professional prowess.

Challenge: To actively shape the minds, attitudes and habits of young people through a framework of cognitive education that enables them to become the master of their own destiny. We believe that pupils require an accurate reflection of what they are good at and need to develop personal insight and manage uncertainty confidently. Developing skilled, independent, reflective learners is part of our Vision.

Achieve: For all stakeholders to demonstrate the highest levels of thinking and habits. We want our pupils to be questioning in nature, achieving the highest levels of independent and interdependent prowess.

Our ‘Thinking School’ approach is consistent with the aims below and helps to ensure that:

- a) Pupils in TSAT are supported to think for themselves, through the development of a thorough understanding of purposeful thinking tools that they can use to aid and monitor their own progress.
- b) Staff in TSAT are encouraged to think accurately and reflectively about their practice and understand a range of thinking tools that can be used to support student motivation and progress.

All new teaching staff undertake a bespoke programme on joining the Trust and this ensures their understanding of the ethos and expertise in integrating the tools to best effect. Further documentation relating to the successful implementation of our tools in each specific learning context is available from each school.

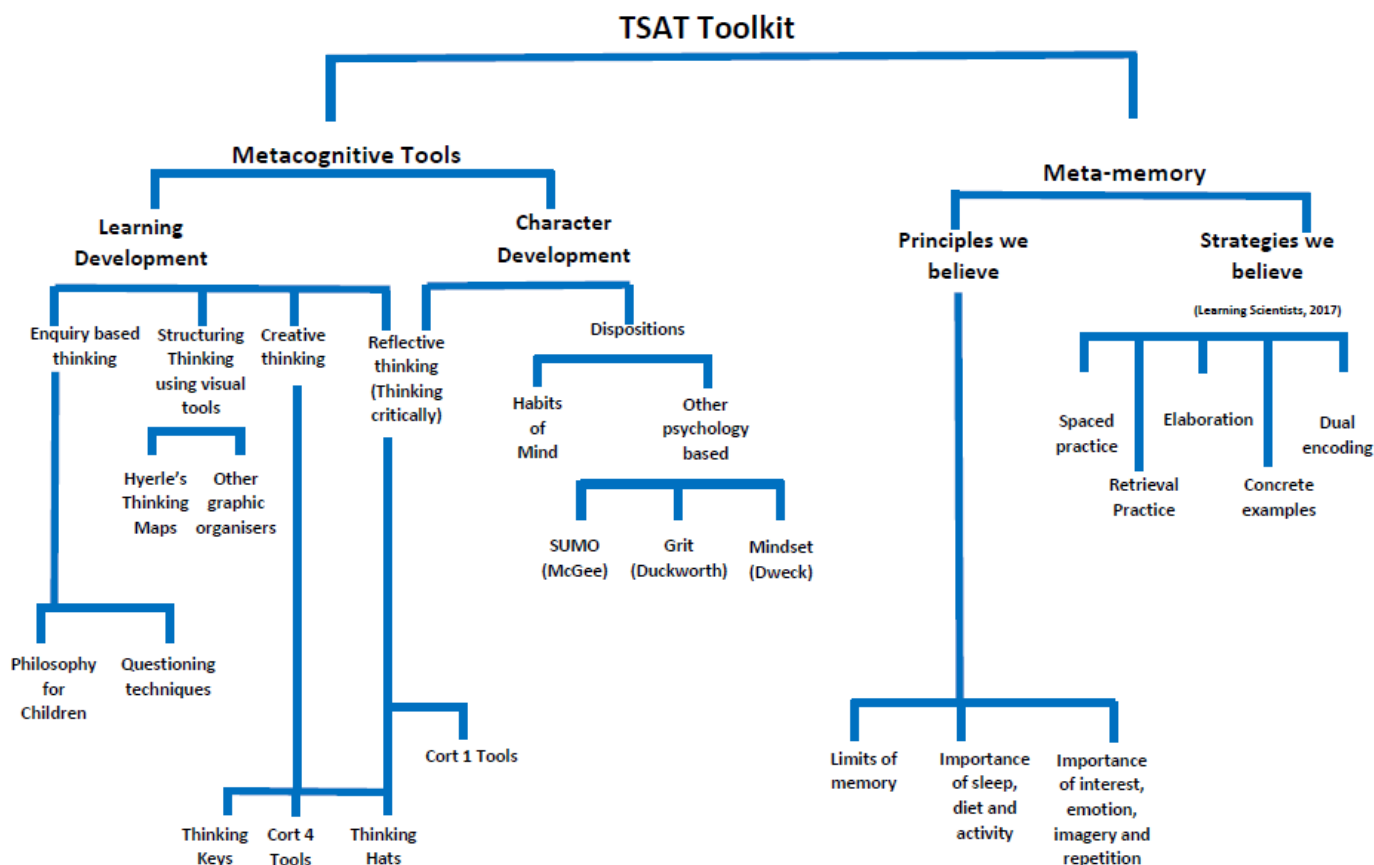
It is an expectation that all staff members ensure their understanding of the Thinking philosophy and their fluency in using the Thinking School approaches, therefore enabling them to implement appropriately and purposefully in all aspects of their practice to support maximum student progress.

Central to our Teaching and Learning policy are the *Core principles that underpin great teaching and learning in our Trust*. These should form the basis of our lesson planning.

The 7 principles of highly effective teaching and learning: the fundamental facets of what we do whilst also providing a way to keep the self-improvement of teachers manageable and sustainable at all levels.

- **Subject knowledge** – what do they need to know at that age group.
- **Explanations** – connecting to what they know, telling the story, providing metaphors and analogies, providing examples, being aware of cognitive load, doing it themselves.
- **Questioning and responding** – sequences of questions, differentiated, probing, thinking time, retrieval practice, active engagement of all students.
- **Feedback to feed forward** – accurate identification of current status and steps forward.
- **Modelling** – content, mindset and dispositions.
- **Metacognition** – tools and self-regulatory methods.
- **Memory** – encoding and retrieval practice.

We use metacognitive tools and meta-memory to support and meet these principles so the principles sit above the rest of the Tree Map



Aims

Our aim is to have a common framework for learning which breeds consistency but allows for creativity and thinking. The outcome of which is enthusiasm, engagement and excitement with the content and skills required to succeed, in every classroom.

To make learning 'visible' in lessons:

- To ensure standards of teaching are high through internal and external judgements.
- Pupils will be fully aware of the purpose of their learning.
- Pupils will be active and resilient participants in their learning.
- Pupils will look for the 'big picture' and seek patterns in the information presented to them.
- Pupils will make links across the curriculum and beyond the classroom.
- Pupils will apply their learning in unfamiliar situations with confidence.
- Pupils will use ICT positively, knowledgeably and proportionately.
- Staff have strong subject knowledge and use this to engage, enthuse and excite their students. Their lessons will include a balance between surface and deep level learning.
- Staff ensure that all pupils make excellent progress and achieve above age related expectations.

To make thinking 'visible' in lessons:

- Pupils will be encouraged to develop the necessary interpersonal skills to communicate effectively with others.
- Pupils will be able to find and process information independently using a variety of appropriate and purposefully selected Thinking Tools.
- Pupils will be able to exercise criticality when exploring different sources of information.
- Pupils will develop high-order thinking skills which will allow them evaluate and create effectively.
- Pupils will develop successful dispositions to ensure knowledge and understanding is accurately, consistently and purposefully applied - The Habits of Mind are valued by teachers as a way to cultivate an environment where students develop dispositions which will support them inside the classroom and beyond.
- Staff will teach students to think about their thinking to provide them with the skills required for the new curriculum and for life-long learning.
- Staff will promote students' persistence and resilience in overcoming challenges.

To make progress 'visible' in lessons:

- Pupils will be able to work effectively as individuals or part of a team to solve important problems.
- Pupils will develop self-confidence, self-motivation and self-regulation towards their learning.
- Clear learning objectives and success criteria are used to ensure all students know how they can make progress.
- Staff will tailor provision to meet the needs of every pupil so that all can access our shared aims. They have high expectations and a belief that all pupils can achieve their potential.
- Staff will continually seek to research, innovate and improve the learning experience of all pupils.
- Staff feedback regularly to students to recognise and celebrate achievements, whilst challenging them in a constructive manner to strive for improvement and learn from their mistakes.
- Teachers use questioning to evaluate student understanding and progression.
- Staff regularly reflect on learning and students' depth of knowledge and understanding.
- Staff within departments use a consistent approach to assessment to ensure accuracy of data and intervention.

At Meon Junior School our aim is to develop a common language to identify what we mean when we talk about quality teaching and learning. We believe that the features identified below are fundamental for the children in our school to give them the best possible life chances.

Teaching and learning is engaging.

Teachers manage time in lessons effectively and know when to move on the learning. Pupils ask questions, are on task and share their thinking. Learning captures pupils' interests and imagination and includes tasks that are memorable and purposeful. Teacher model enthusiasm for learning and are able to motivate pupils through their teaching.

Pupils make great progress within and across lessons.

Pupils demonstrate success in their learning, achieving objectives within and across lessons. Teachers use assessment well to know where their pupils are in their learning and plan clear next steps. Progress is shared through great feedback and moves learning forward.

Learning is differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils

Resources including adults, apparatus and scaffolds are used well to impact on the leaning of all groups of pupils.

Individual pupil's barriers to learning are understood and ranges of strategies are used to overcome them.

Lessons challenge all pupils

All pupils are challenged through purposeful learning tasks. Pupils play an active role in lessons, applying themselves to tasks set and demonstrating resilience.

Teaching is reflective and leads to high levels of pupil understanding

The tasks are communicated well to ensure that pupils know and understand what they are learning. Pupils are encouraged to be reflective and feedback promote this. High quality questioning is used to check understanding and develop pupils thinking.

Learning is purposeful with clear and understood learning objectives.

Contexts for learning are creative, clearly linked to national curriculum objectives and use real life and cross-curricular when appropriate. Teachers show adaptability and are flexible with lesson structures to adapt to the needs of the pupils. Working walls are relevant and impact well on the learning taking place.