James Bateman Middle School

Teaching & Learning Policy

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Reviewed	06.11.2025
Review due	November 2027

1. Purpose

This policy establishes the guiding principles, theoretical foundations and practical expectations for teaching and learning within our school. It aims to:

- Align instructional practice with contemporary cognitive science.
- Provide a clear framework for lesson design, delivery and assessment.
- Support teachers in developing expertise from Developing through to Excelling levels.

2. Scope

The policy applies to all teaching staff, support staff involved in curriculum delivery and learners across all key stages.

3. Policy Statement

All teaching and learning activities shall be designed and delivered in accordance with the principles outlined below, ensuring that cognitive load is optimised, knowledge is stored in long-term memory and learners are actively engaged in retrieval, reflection and application of new concepts.

4. Underpinning Principles

- ✓ Cognitive Load Theory (CLT)

Type of Load	Description	Implications for Teaching
Intrinsic Load	Complexity inherent in the material and the learner's prior knowledge.	Sequence content from simple to complex; provide/activate prerequisite knowledge before introducing high-intrinsic tasks.
Extraneous Load	Load imposed by poor instructional design (e.g., cluttered visuals, redundant text).	Eliminate unnecessary information; integrate sources of information to reduce split attention.
Germane Load	Cognitive effort directed to schema construction and automation.	Use worked examples, modelling and guided practice to foster deep processing.

- ✓ Information Store Principle

Long-term memory (LTM) serves as a vast store of primary and secondary knowledge. Skilled performance in any domain relies on the ability to retrieve tens of thousands of problem states from LTM. Instruction should therefore aim to encode knowledge efficiently into LTM.

- ✓ Borrowing and Reorganisation Principle

Learners acquire much of their knowledge by borrowing from the long-term memories of others (e.g., teachers, peers, texts) and then reorganising it using existing schemas. Effective teaching therefore models expert thinking and provides opportunities for learners to reorganise information meaningfully.

Key Pedagogical Principles

- Worked-Example Effect: Present fully solved problems to novices, modelling each step.
- Expertise-Reversal Effect: Gradually withdraw worked examples as learners gain expertise.
- Redundancy Effect: Avoid presenting the same information in multiple forms unless it adds value.
- Split-Attention Effect: Integrate related sources of information to prevent mental integration overload.
- Modality Effect: Distribute information across visual and auditory channels to increase working-memory capacity.
- Retrieval Practice: Use low-stakes quizzes, spaced repetition and other retrieval activities to strengthen schemas and promote metacognition.

Our Pedagogy Model

Our pedagogy is organised into six inter-linked phases. Each phase contains clear expectations for teacher practice and learner outcomes.

1. **CONNECT – Linking Prior Knowledge**

Purpose: Activate existing schemas and make explicit the relevance of new learning.

Key Actions:

- Pose probing questions to surface prior knowledge.
  Use visual mind-maps or digital tools to illustrate connections.
- Set the learning intention and success criteria.

2. **EXPLAIN – Introducing New Concepts**

Purpose: Deliver concise, clear explanations that minimise extraneous load.

Key Actions:

- State learning outcomes explicitly.
- Teach essential vocabulary using multiple contexts.
- Model expert thinking (think-aloud) while highlighting the underlying schema.

3. **EXAMPLE – Worked Examples & Modelling**

Purpose: Provide scaffolded demonstrations that illustrate the target process.

Key Actions:

- Present worked examples in small, manageable chunks.
- Use dual-coding (visual + verbal) to support the modality effect.
- Include non-examples to delineate concept boundaries.

4. **ATTEMPT – Guided Practice**

Purpose: Transition learners from observation to active participation while maintaining support.

Key Actions:

- Offer structured tasks that gradually fade teacher scaffolding.
- Circulate to provide immediate, specific feedback.
- Encourage learners to rehearse, elaborate and summarise in their own words.

5. **APPLY – Independent Practice**

Purpose: Consolidate learning through authentic, challenge-rich tasks.

Key Actions:

- Design tasks that require learners to encode knowledge into long-term memory.
- Embed formative assessment routines (e.g., exit tickets, peer review).
- Use feedback to inform subsequent instruction.

6. **CONNECT (Consolidation) – Reflection & Forward Linking**

Purpose: Reinforce learning, promote metacognition and preview upcoming content.

Key Actions:

- Conduct spaced retrieval activities.
- Facilitate reflective discussions about what has been learned and what remains uncertain.
- Highlight connections to future topics and real-world applications

Teacher Development: This table supports teacher in self-assessing their own practice and helps leaders to strategically map CPD.

Phase	Developing	Secure	Excelling
CONNECT	Begins linking new content to prior knowledge; limited use of retrieval techniques.	Consistently links prior and new knowledge; uses low-stakes quizzes and prompts.	Strategically integrates interdisciplinary links, uses sophisticated retrieval tools, and anticipates future learning pathways.
EXPLAIN	Provides basic explanations; vocabulary support uneven.	Clear, concise explanations; systematic vocabulary teaching.	Delivers rich, scaffolded explanations with multiple contexts, anticipates misconceptions, and embeds metacognitive prompts.
EXAMPLE	Uses worked examples but limited dual-coding.	Consistent dual-coding; includes non-examples.	Innovatively designs worked examples with layered scaffolding, integrates multimedia, and fosters expert thinking.
ATTEMPT	Guided practice present but feedback informal.	Structured guided practice with targeted feedback.	Proactively circulates, uses data-driven feedback, and adapts tasks in real time.
APPLY	Provides practice opportunities; challenge modest.	Challenge-rich tasks with embedded formative assessment.	Designs dynamic, authentic tasks that promote deep thinking; seamlessly integrates assessment data to refine instruction.
CONNECT (Consolidation)	Basic recap activities.	Structured retrieval and reflection.	Sophisticated metacognitive strategies, spaced retrieval, and forward-linking to curriculum pathways.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Head of Teaching & Learning (DHT): Champion the policy, oversee professional development and lead/monitor implementation.
- Subject Leaders: Align curriculum maps with the policy's principles; model best practice.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants: Use the six-phase cycle; use formative assessment to inform instruction.
- Students: Engage actively with retrieval practice, reflect on learning and take ownership of progress.

Monitoring, Review & Evaluation

- Monitoring: Monitoring will be completed in line with agree timetable and principles.
- Data Analysis: Examine student achievement data, focusing on retention and transfer of knowledge.
- Professional Development: Clear CPD curriculum on offer for all teaching staff.

Policy Review:

Update the policy biennially to incorporate emerging research and feedback from staff and learners.

References

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