Bligh Primary School

Pedagogy Policy 2024-2026. The Trinity approach.

'Memory is used in almost any everyday activity. But as soon as we learn something, we immediately start to forget it' (Weinstien *et al,* 2019).

Definition of pedagogy: The strategy of how educators teach in practice and in theory.

Aims

This policy aims to set Bligh Primary Schools' approach to learning. It is intended to allow readers to better understand how teachers at Bligh Primary School ensure that learning is effective and meets the needs of our children.

We believe that learning is quite often invisible and takes place over time. Judging what learning looks like in a snap shot (lesson observations or learning walks) only shows a small fraction of the learning that is happening in the classroom.

At Bligh Primary school we believe that learning pedagogy should be based on proven, evidential practice.

Bligh teaching can fit into three pedagogical approaches referred to as the trinity of teaching and learning:
Retrieval practice
The gradual release of responsibility
CPA (Concrete, Pictorial and Abstract)

Although this is a school wide approach, we understand that that approach will look different in different parts of the school to match the children's level of cognitive development.

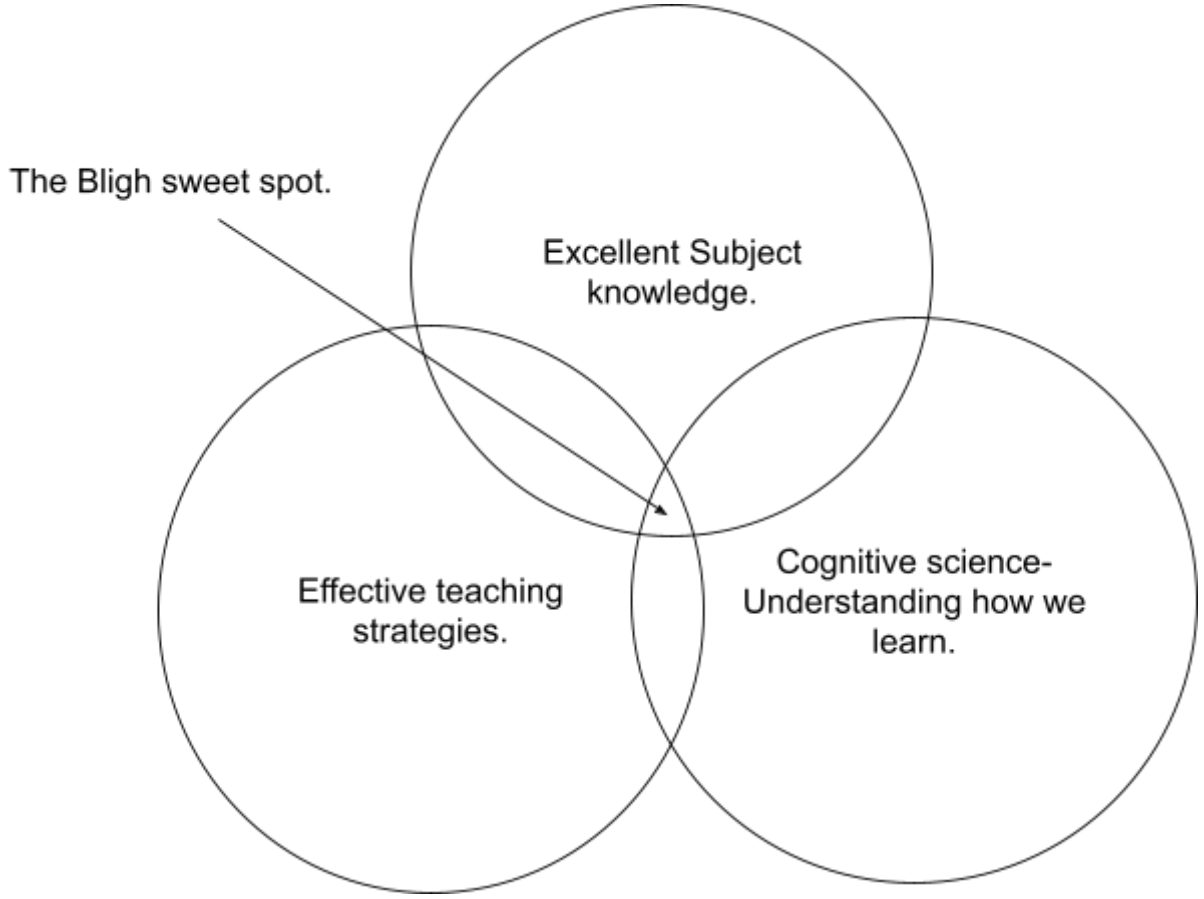
Intention

Our intention is that children learn the skills and obtain the knowledge that they need to make a successful transition onto the next phase of their education. Indeed, they are able to make positive **choices** about their futures beyond their compulsory education.

Our children are expected to be 'Secondary Ready' by the end of year 6. We believe that this is the best way in ensuring that our children have the best life choices moving through their educational careers.

We intend to aid learning by ensuring knowledge and skills are fixed into our children's long term memory.

We believe we must mix three important elements in order to create a useful and effective pedagogical model.



Implementation

We understand that learning is a complex process. We also understand that there are several learning strategies that, if applied appropriately and consistently across our school, will lead to greater, deeper and more impactful learning for our children.

This document sets out the minimum expectation for our school pedagogy. It is a starting point which we expect new staff to adopt and more experienced staff to develop. We understand that this is not a complete and full picture of what learning should or could be. But we do expect all features of this policy to be embedded in our school and that evidence of its use is in staff planning as well as lesson delivery.

Cognitive Science

Our school uses one key text that all teaching staff have access to. This is 'Understanding how we learn' by Weinstein *et al, 2019*. We understand that this is not the only text available but feel this is the most accessible and digestible text and serves the purpose of being our schools reference and starting point for learning discussions.

We expect all learning or sequences of learning to reference one or more of the elements set out in this policy.

The basic 6 strategies for effective cognition are:

1) Spaced learning
2) Retrieval Practice
3) Elaboration
4) Interleaving
5) Concrete examples
6) Dual coding

In the academic year 2022-23, we will be focusing on **retrieval practice** as our technique for ensuring children's learning is fixed in their long term memory.

The curriculum is specifically designed to cover and recover (in greater depth) both substantive and disciplinary knowledge.

'Retrieval Questions' in science, geography, history and RE will help ensure knowledge is fixed in the long term memory of our children.

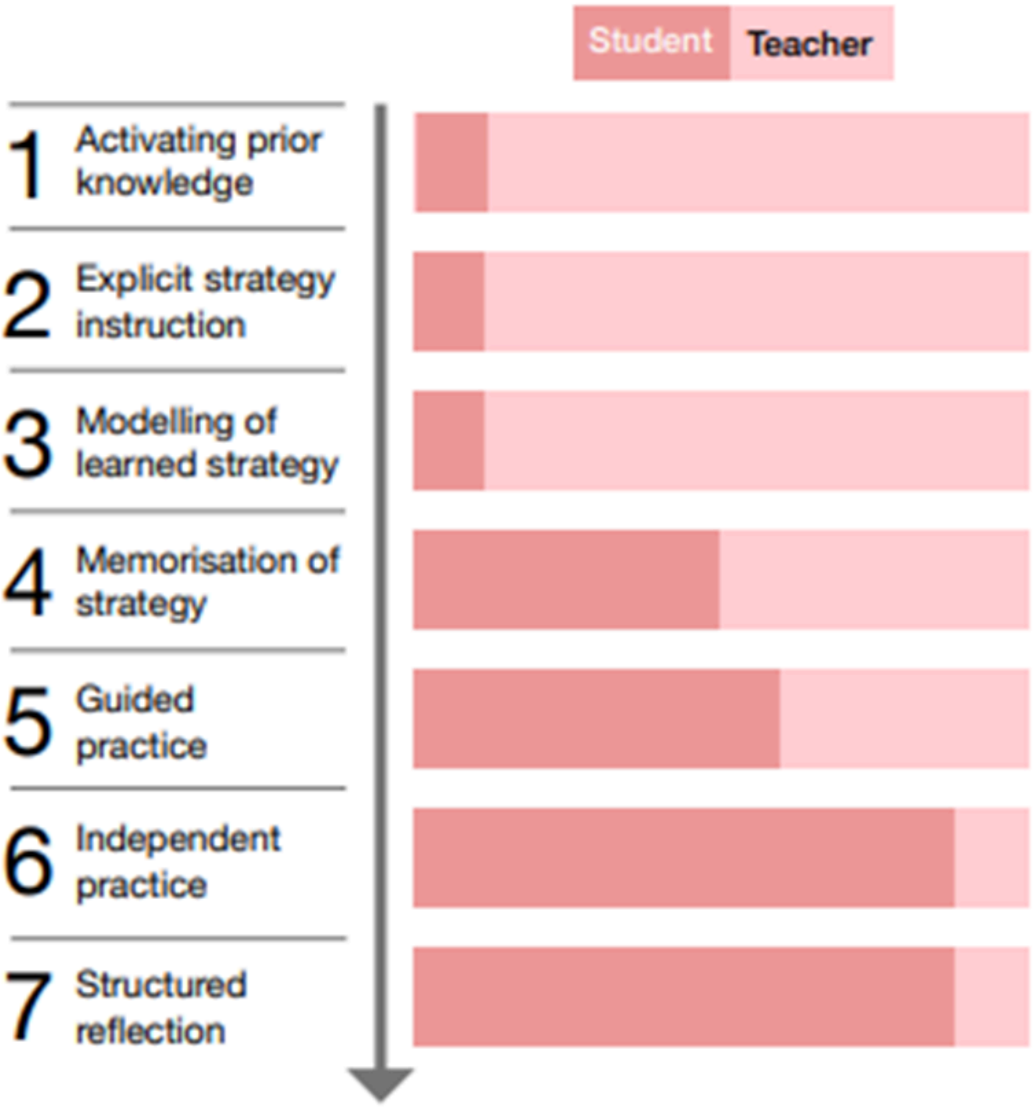
Subject Knowledge

We expect all our staff to demonstrate excellent subject knowledge across the national curriculum. Leaders support this by ensuring teachers have up to date information and support as well as CPD time with subject specialists to discuss the content of their lessons. This is further supported by curriculum teams and clear resource signposting.

Effective teaching strategies (learning routines)

We acknowledge that children flourish when they have set routines for learning (and indeed behaviour). We aim to establish learning routines which help children and their adults learn in the most effective and efficient way.

We apply the principles of the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model as shown in the figures below.


Student
Teacher
1 Activating prior knowledge
2 Explicit strategy instruction
3 Modelling of learned strategy
4 Memorisation of strategy
5 Guided practice
6 Independent practice
7 Structured reflection



[Gradual release planning template]

The Gradual Release Model is supported in practice with the use of Rosenshine's principles of instruction (ECT's will be familiar with this). This provides our staff with the tools to use in class with their children. The key features are:

- Begin the lesson with a review of previous learning.
- Present new material in small steps.
- Ask a large number of questions (and to all students).
- Provide models and worked examples.
- Practise using the new material.
- Check for understanding frequently and correct errors.
- Obtain a high success rate.
- Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks.
- Independent practice.
- Monthly and weekly reviews.

Concrete, Pictorial and Abstract (beyond mathematics)

CPA (Concrete, pictorial, abstract).

1. **Concrete**: Children first use physical objects (like blocks or counters) to explore and understand concepts.
2. **Pictorial**: Next, they transition to using pictures or drawings to represent the physical objects, bridging the gap between the concrete and abstract.
3. **Abstract**: Finally, children use mathematical symbols and numbers to represent the concepts, applying what they've learned in a more abstract form.

This progression helps students build a deep, conceptual understanding of content by connecting hands-on experiences with visual and symbolic representations.

1. **Bruner's Theory of Instruction (1966)**: Jerome Bruner, a cognitive psychologist, emphasised the importance of moving through different levels of representation in learning. His work laid the foundation for the CPA approach, suggesting that students learn better when they progress from concrete (enactive) experiences to pictorial (iconic) representations and finally to abstract (symbolic) thinking. This process helps students understand complex ideas more thoroughly.
2. **The Singapore Maths Method**: The CPA approach is a core component of the Singapore Maths curriculum, which has been extensively studied and shown to improve chilldrens' mathematical understanding and problem-solving skills. Research by Verschaffel and De Corte (1997) found that children using this approach demonstrated better conceptual understanding and were able to apply their knowledge more effectively in different contexts compared to those taught through traditional methods.

3. **Research by Witzel, Riccomini, and Schneider (2008)**: This study focused on children with learning disabilities and found that the CPA approach significantly improved their ability to understand and retain mathematical concepts. By using concrete materials, then moving to pictorial representations, and finally to abstract symbols, students were better able to grasp and apply mathematical ideas, leading to improved performance in mathematics.

The CPA approach beyond maths.

While it is most commonly associated with mathematics, the principles of CPA can be applied to a variety of subjects to enhance understanding and learning.

1. **Science**: In science education, the CPA approach can help children grasp complex concepts. For example, in physics, students might start with hands-on experiments (concrete), then move to diagrams and visual models (pictorial), and finally, use mathematical equations and scientific notation (abstract) to represent the principles they've learned. This helps children build a deeper understanding of scientific phenomena.
2. **Language Learning**: In language education, especially in teaching grammar or new vocabulary, the CPA model can be effective. For instance, children might begin with physical actions or objects to understand new words (concrete), use images or storyboards to represent sentences or ideas (pictorial), and finally, apply grammatical rules or abstract linguistic concepts in written or spoken language (abstract). This progression aids in the retention and application of language skills.
3. **History and geography**: The CPA approach can also be applied in history or geography, where students might start by examining artefacts or primary sources (concrete), then interpret these through timelines, maps, or visual representations of historical events (pictorial), and finally, engage with abstract concepts such as democracy, freedom, or cultural change through discussion and writing (abstract). This helps students connect tangible evidence with broader historical ideas.

In all these cases, the CPA approach supports a gradual deepening of understanding, helping students make connections between concrete experiences, visual representations, and abstract concepts, leading to more effective and meaningful learning across disciplines.

Supporting our lowest 20%

Using well established research, we recognise that some of our children are held back due to the gap in their understanding and access to a broad and rich diet of vocabulary. Our pedagogy focusing on the importance of vocabulary throughout the curriculum. We pre teach the tier 2 and 3 words children need to allow them to access the learning process. This is a fundamental part of our curriculum offer to those children who need it most.

Impact

Impact in 2024-26 (in line with the SDP) will be evident in the two following ways:

1) Teaching staff will understand the trinity of teaching pedagogies in the school in line with the school development plan.

2) Teaching staff can articulate why they have chosen to sequence their lessons in the way they have and are comfortable explaining their rationale by referencing ‘Understanding how we learn’, Rosenshine or The Gradual Release of Responsibility Model.

3) Leaders will monitor impact through learning walks and planning in T1 & T2.

This will start to give leaders the ability to triangulate outcomes, planned learning and monitoring.

Impact in 2024-26 will be evident in triangulation between outcomes, staff voice, pupil voice, planning and book outcomes.