

OUR CO-OPERATIVE ACADEMIES TRUST

Teaching and Learning Policy



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Teaching and Learning vision

Inspire. Challenge. Achieve.



“For staff and students alike to be **inspired**,
challenged and supported to **achieve**
excellence.”

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Teaching and Learning ethos

The Academy is open to all, unlocks potential and raises aspirations of all students. Teaching and learning is at the heart of the Academy and is of vital importance. There is nothing that supersedes learning and the focus of all staff is to achieve the best possible outcome for all students. Underpinning this is the desire:

“For staff and students alike to be inspired, challenged and supported to achieve excellence.”

This is the key purpose of the teaching and learning policy, as aiming for and achieving excellence can only mean that students will thrive and progress within lessons, extra-curricular activities, in our local community and wider society.

Achieving grades 5-9 at GCSE and ‘upgrading’ A-levels or Level Three qualifications in KS5 are a product of high quality teaching and learning. However, we aim not only to focus on grades but develop a culture for learning, which includes building life skills, enhancing cultural capital and developing well rounded individuals.

Whilst teachers do the best for all, students also have a duty to take responsibility for their own learning. Staff will encourage students’ independence, promote high levels of resilience and confidence. We want our students to reflect on their own learning, understand their targets and assess their own and others’ learning to make progress.

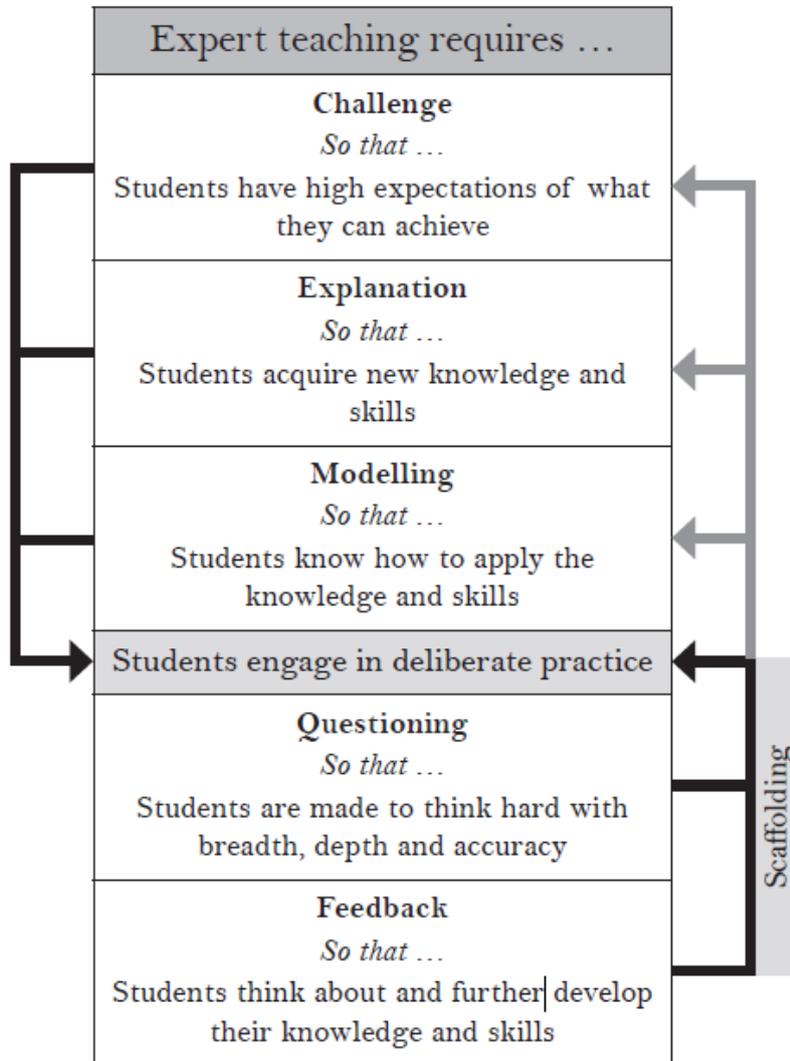
This policy is the framework for our approach to teaching, and has been created to provide clarity and consistency. We will share best practice, collaborate and refine our own skills as dedicated professionals. Using the metaphor of a Rubik’s cube – there is no one solution. Many things will be tried and tested to find what works best. This is a working document, which will evolve over time to accommodate new initiatives, educational research and wonderful ideas from the staff in the Academy.

The application of this policy will be monitored to ensure that progress is being made by students over time. The aim is to move away from the need to prove, but rather improve practice. As we apply what is set out, this will become a natural by-product as we inspire, challenge and achieve excellence as staff and with our students.



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Teachers within the Academy will stand by the six key principles of teaching, as set out by Andy Tharby and Shaun Allison in *Making every lesson count*:



There is no prescribed format for teaching, however, the fundamental principles outlined above must appear in lessons. Each is elaborated on further in this policy (see contents). Training, when necessary, will be provided in each area to ensure that each student receives high quality instruction. Teachers will also build expertise over time in each area, and will develop confidence in the knowledge that they share essential characteristics with colleagues in every subject across the Academy.

Planning

At Beaufort, the fundamental purpose of planning is to support effective teaching and is essential for excellence in teaching and learning. Plans are an illustration of the thinking process, but should not become a proxy for learning.

Subject Leaders

1. The key focus of each department meeting must be teaching and learning. Administrative tasks/discussions should be brief and/or should be conducted by other means.
2. Subject Leaders should encourage and/or facilitate collaborative planning. John Hattie states in his book *'Visible Learning for Teachers, maximising impact on Learning 2012'*:
'planning can be done in many ways, but the most powerful is when teachers work together to develop plans, develop common understandings of what is worth teaching, collaborate on understanding their beliefs of challenge and progress, and work together to evaluate the impact of their planning on student outcome'.
3. Long Term Plans must be written for each Key Stage, giving an overview of what will be taught each term, with direct links to the National Curriculum. Schemes of work must also be written and in place to assist lesson planning.

Teachers and Specialist and Higher Level Teaching Assistants (SLSAs/HLTAs)

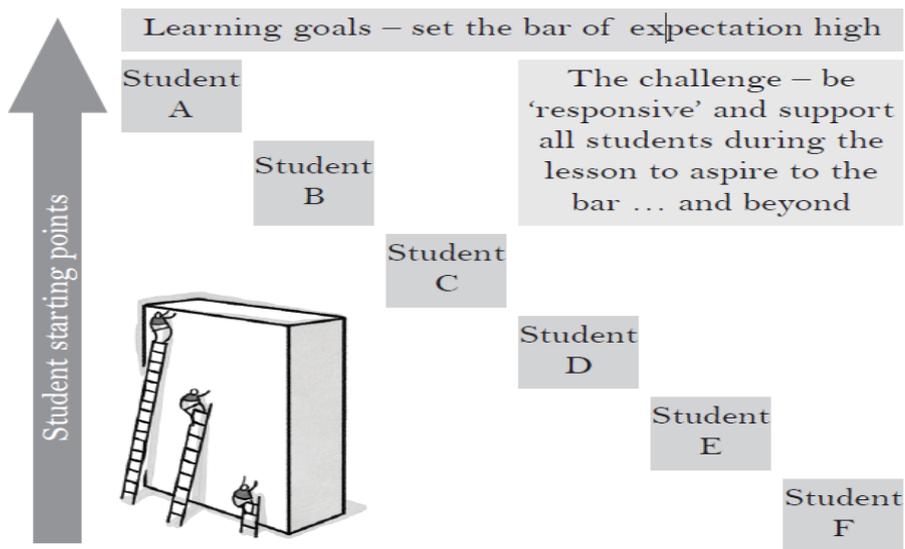
1. In keeping with Teaching Standard 4, all Teachers/SLSAs/HLTAs must teach well planned lessons. All plans should be shared with any additional adult who will assist, prior to the lesson.
2. No Teacher/HLTA will be expected to produce a written lesson plan for observed lessons. Unless:
 - a) You are a trainee teacher
 - b) You are a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT)
 - c) Planning has been identified as an area of development
 - d) You are subject to capability procedures
3. All teaching should assess students' prior knowledge. Evaluate what they know, understand and can do at the start of a topic/unit and then plan according to this information.
4. Careful consideration should be given to what you would like students to learn. Once lessons are planned it is advisable to check that all activities support the intended learning and do not hinder progress. It is better to plan a sequence of lessons than on an individual lesson basis.
5. Students should be clear about what is being learnt, how they will be learning, why they are learning and how to make progress.

6. Seating plans should be created for each class and amended when required.

Flexibility in planning is essential and should respond to the needs of students as they arise. More experienced staff will be able to 'go with the flow' of learning. Lessons will still be thoroughly planned, but the classroom is organic and teaching and learning opportunities should not be missed to follow a lesson plan. At Beaufort, we value and trust teachers/SLSAs/HLTAs to use their intuition and expertise to maximise learning.

Challenge

At Beaufort challenge for all is crucial. Regardless of prior attainment levels there should be high expectations of all students. We should challenge students to think about subject content; use of vocabulary and the academic register; alternative viewpoints and further research beyond the classroom. When planning lessons, teaching staff should consider how capable the highest attainer in their class is first, and then provide appropriate scaffolds for other students.



Graphic from Making every lesson count

When pushed just outside of their ‘comfort zone’ students make the most gains in their learning. Resilience is a skill that students need to develop to approach challenging tasks, without giving up or even making an attempt. Students should also be challenged to produce work of a high standard; aiming for excellence and working to the best of their ability at all times. Students should be reminded that the aim is not to pass, but to excel.

Often students only know the knowledge teachers impart, and it is for this reason that we encourage all staff to regularly enhance their subject knowledge. As well as independent enrichment, fortnightly Subject Development Sessions will be part of the CPD programme, giving staff the chance to learn and share new information. A professional library has also been set up, within the Academy library, where you are free to borrow and recommend books which boost knowledge.

Challenge should be an intrinsic part of curriculum design. Long term plans and schemes of work should build in progression and rigour. By meticulously planning what students should know and sequencing information systematically, students will not only succeed in each lesson, but also in the long term.

Explanation, modelling and deliberate practice

Explanation

High quality explanation is important. Secure and confident subject knowledge coupled with clarity and the ability to make learning memorable is the key to good teacher talk. As experts, we have become fluent in academic language and concepts, however, we must ensure that all students are able to grasp what we are saying. Visual aids may be used to assist explanation, but should not distract from the key things being taught.

Teacher explanations may vary dependent on students and concepts. There is no preferred length of teacher talk. We trust teachers to use their professional judgement and be responsive to their classes.

Modelling

Coupled with a clear explanation, modelling is an essential part of teaching. Students should regularly be shown examples of high quality work. It is important for students to see as well as hear how to do something. Models can guide students through the process and can also be deconstructed to look at vital elements, which lead to success. Models can be pre-prepared or used from students' work. Staff are also encouraged to model 'live'. It is just as beneficial for students to see the thinking process behind decisions. There is also power in students being able to see experts make and correct mistakes whilst creating a piece of work.

Deliberate practice

It is often said that practice makes perfect, however Doug Lemov correctly states in his book, *Practice Perfect*, that 'practice makes permanent'. Students should be given time to practice applying difficult concepts and also to embed skills. It is far better to have in depth knowledge about fewer things, than to have surface knowledge or a weak skills base. Whether good or bad, habits are formed with repeated practice and teachers should shape learning so that misconceptions and misunderstandings do not become permanent. Students should be encouraged to practice regularly, even when they find something difficult.

Practice may come in the form of regular low stakes quizzing; a recap of what was learned in the previous lesson/week/term; retrieval practice as homework; a reflective task to review learning without notes or examination practice. Whichever method is chosen, carefully placed and well-timed practice will result in greater student progress.

Questioning

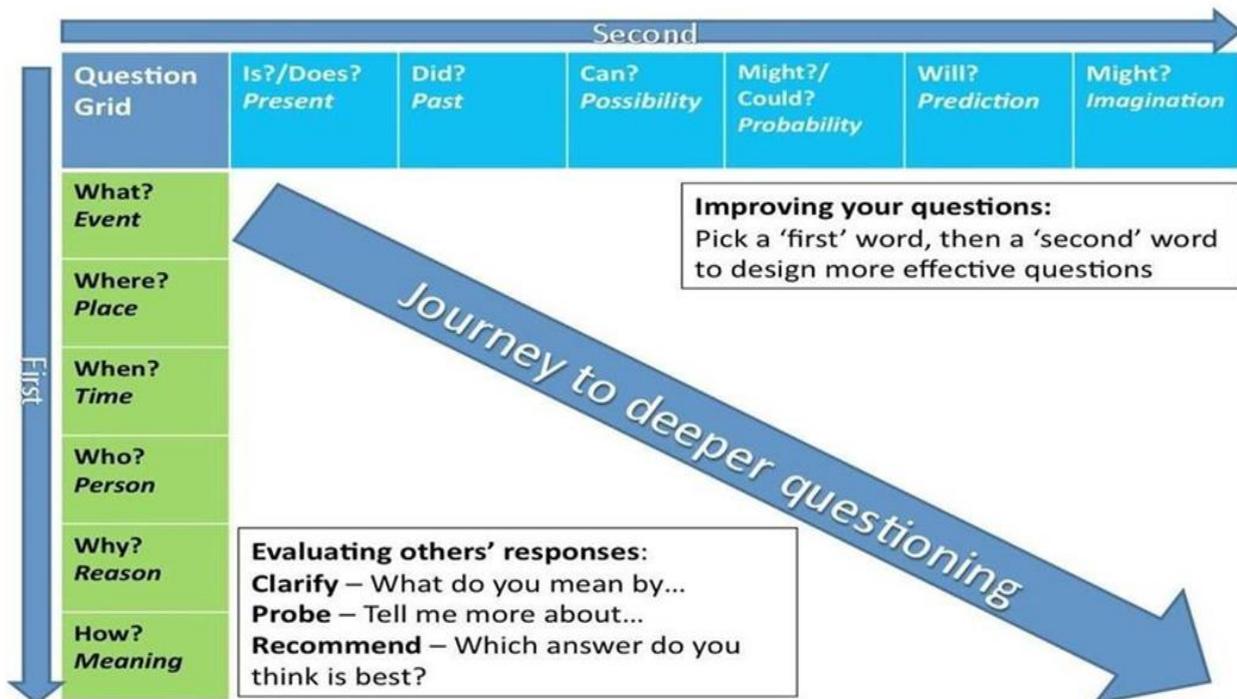
Questioning is an essential element of each lesson. In the classroom questioning is used to teach (by eliciting information, causing thinking, to deepen understanding, retain attention etc) and to assess (identification of prior knowledge, consolidation of knowledge, committing information to memory etc).

Although an essential part of student progress, questions will only be effective if they are clear and outweigh simply telling students the information. We are only able to think about things we know. If students have very little or no knowledge of a topic, time is better spent giving a clear and relevant explanation, rather than fielding random guesses to questions they are simply unable to answer.

When planning questions teachers may wish to consider:

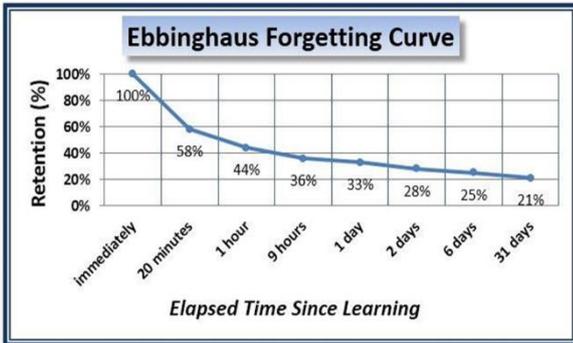
- How much students know about a subject and whether it’s worth asking them to think.
- When might it be better to ask open or closed questions?
- What would there be more time to do if fewer questions were asked?
- Does the question move learning forward?
- How does the question help students articulate their learning and progress?

Students should not be able to be passive in lessons and a selection of questioning methods (Socratic, Hinge, Targeted Pause, Pose, Bounce and Pounce etc) should be used. A question grid is shown as an example below and other resources/ideas for questioning can be found on the ‘G-Drive’. Workshops will be available to help strengthen the skills of those who request or require it.



Revive

“Memory is the residue of thought”, states Professor Daniel T. Willingham. In a time of increased rigour and new linear examinations, memory, retention and retrieval of information is of paramount importance.

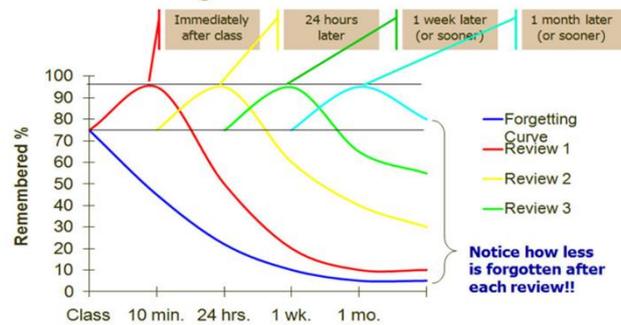


Research shows that as soon as we learn something we begin to forget it. In order for information to be stored the ‘forgetting’ must be deliberately interrupted. The most effective retention (and storage in long term memory) allows a period of time to pass, before it is reintroduced. Information should be spaced and revisited and the brain should be allowed to try and recall information to enable it to become embedded.

Students attend five classes a day, each week for the whole academic year, but how much do they remember?

Revive is regular retrieval practice, in all subjects, which allows key information to be revisited. Information should not solely be recalled, but should also be applied in different contexts. Deep understanding of concepts and ideas allows for flexibility. Once information becomes autonomous it can be used in a variety of ways and frees students’ working memory to focus on answering the question set or solving the problem.

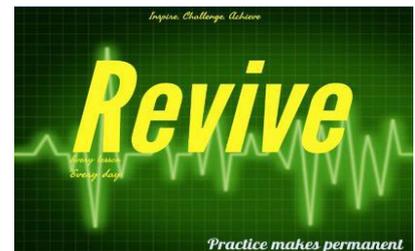
Overcoming the Curve



Students are set questions/activities/quizzes etc on information learned last lesson, last week and the previous term. The regular ‘revival’ of information, which may about to be lost, ensures that students are thinking regularly about subject matter and applying it in different situations. ‘Low stakes’ testing also assists the formative feedback cycle as gaps in learning and misconceptions can be addressed.

When planning teachers should consider:

- Have students really learnt or just ‘done it’?
- Has the information been sufficiently revisited?
- Have we consolidated the information in their minds?
- Have they mastered it?
- Is the information automated in their long term memory?



Literacy and Oracy

As all subjects require students to read and write, all teachers are teachers of literacy. This is something which should not be overlooked. We must equip our students with excellent literacy and oracy skills, whether this be in the science lab or on the sports field. These skills will give students the opportunity to communicate confidently in professional and social situations.

At Beaufort, all staff should apply the following:

1. **Model good speech and expect students to answer in full sentences using standard English.** Students need to hear, use and be corrected in standard English. Most of us, by default, write how we speak. Accuracy in speech improves accuracy in written work, especially grammar. As most students within the academy are not adept at switching between slang and standard English they should, therefore, practice speaking 'properly'. Prompting students to answer in full sentences, instead of one word answers, will also help their written responses. Praise should be given for the way something is said, and not just the content.
2. **Use a wide range of vocabulary** - Subject specific vocabulary should be taught regularly until used naturally by all students. When explaining or modelling, technical terminology should be used by teachers and students. David Didau states in *The Secret of Literacy*:
'We can only say what we can think...if you can't think in academic language that means you're not going to be able to speak in academic language either.'

Ambitious vocabulary should also be used, and students should be prompted to think of alternatives to the first word which they may think of.

3. **Check spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) in all subjects** – SPaG errors should be corrected in all subjects. There are often common errors which can be corrected and simple rules should be used as reminders for students. When marking, the marking codes should be used for consistency across the academy.

S= Mis-spelt word

P= Punctuation

Gr= Grammatical error

//= New paragraph required

^ = Word missing

^^^= incomplete

4. **Extended writing** – Students should be able to practise the skills of writing at length. Writing should be a suitable length in order to develop ideas.
5. **Promotion of reading** – Everyone should promote use of the library and wider reading around each subject and for pleasure. Teaching methods to decode or infer meaning to build reading resilience should encourage students to continue reading even when it is a struggle.

Please refer to the Literacy Policy for further guidance.

Feedback Policy

Feedback is a two-way process between student and teacher and is responsive to teaching and learning. Overtime, however, the definition of feedback has become synonymous with marking; it is not.

The rationale for this policy stems from consultation with members of staff at Beaufort Co-operative Academy:

- Effective marking is an essential part of the education process.
- Providing written feedback on pupils’ work **must be proportionate**.
- The quantity of feedback should not be confused with the quality. It is quality and not quantity which is important.
- In many cases the view is that you must spend hours marking to be a good teacher; that writing pages of feedback makes you more effective; and that there is a link between the quantity of marking and pupil progress. These are myths that need to be debunked.
- **There is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach**. A balance needs to be struck between a **core and consistent** approach and trusting teachers to focus on what is best for their pupils and circumstances.

In summary, we recommend that all marking should be meaningful, manageable and motivating. (Marking Policy Review Group 2016)
Meaningful: marking varies by age group, subject and what works best for the pupil and teacher in relation to any piece of work. Teachers are encouraged to adjust their approach as necessary and are trusted to incorporate the outcomes into subsequent planning and teaching.
Manageable: marking practice is proportionate and considers the frequency and complexity of written feedback.
Motivating: Marking should help to motivate pupils to progress. This does not mean always writing in-depth comments or being universally positive: sometimes short challenging comments or oral feedback are more effective. If the teacher is doing more work than their pupils this can become a disincentive for pupils to accept challenges and take responsibility for improving their work.

The findings and recommendations of the review group have been embraced by the Department for Education, and the said recommendations form the basis of Beaufort’s feedback policy.

Fundamental principles of feedback at Beaufort:

1. Feedback is solely for students to make improvements and informing teachers’ future planning and teaching.
2. Improvements made to written work by students, as a result of teacher feedback, must be evident and identifiable in exercise books. This will assist teachers when checking improvements, and students as they review work.

3. Feedback can be in any of the following forms - verbal feedback, marking, whole class feedback, peer and self-assessment. Where peer and self-assessment are used, adequate training must be given to students. Teachers will exercise their professional judgement when deciding which form of feedback to use. Teachers should consider the impact on student progress when deciding on the appropriate form.
4. Feedback must be regular. Students should be given regular opportunities to correct errors and make progress. Regularity of marking should be proportionate to the number of lessons taught and the length of time spent marking should not outweigh the benefits to students.
5. Marking must use the academy marking code, which is displayed in each classroom.
6. Marking must be formative, unless marking summative assessments. The chief focus is demonstrating to students what they have done well and how they can improve.
7. There must be a 'deep mark' in accordance with subject specific policies.
8. During the KS4/5 Public 'examination season' departmental policies may be relaxed, in some instances, and the predominant form of feedback will be verbal due to the increased examination workload.

Consistency – Subject specific marking policies

To achieve consistency across departments within the Academy and to embody the sentiment that "there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach", each department will create their own subject specific feedback policy. Subject Leaders are responsible for the creation of such a policy, with the consultation of their departments.

Subject Leaders must create a policy which a) embraces the fundamental principles outlined above, b) is sustainable and c) has a direct impact on student progress.

The said policy will be reviewed by the Lead Teacher of Teaching and Learning, before it is implemented. Subject Leaders will be responsible for ensuring consistency across their department. The marking policy which was followed during the 2016/17 academic year will be followed, until each department has created their specific policy.

A range of feedback strategies can be found in the book *Feedback* by Isabella Wallace and Leah Kirkman. A copy is in the Professional Library.

Learning Support Assistants -

Specialist Learning Support Assistants and Higher Level Teaching Assistants

Learning Support Assistants (LSAs, SLSAs and HLTAs) are an invaluable part of our Academy. They are not a 'bolt on', but professionals, who should be treated as such. It is essential that LSAs are used effectively within the classroom to achieve the best possible outcomes for students; ensuring they achieve the outcomes on their My Plan or ECHP. All teaching of SEN students should be linked to these crucial documents as they underpin their progress. Whilst deployed by the SENDCo, it is important to note that the day to day management of LSAs within the classroom is the responsibility of the class teacher. Each classroom is different and it is down to the teacher and LSA to carefully plan what is most effective in their context.

The role and purpose of SEN support staff can vary:

- **LSA**- supports the learning and progress of EHCP students, as well as other students with My Plans, in the classroom alongside teachers.
- **SLSA**- as above, but additionally has responsibility for supporting the SENDCO with the progress of specific groups of SEN students. They can also link to a subject area and may support the delivery of targeted interventions to small groups or individuals.
- **HLTA**- may also support SEN students in the classroom but the role includes contributing to the planning, teaching and marking of interventions or accreditations that are taught to small timetabled groups of SEN students.

To help define this role, the Department for Education (DfE) commissioned a group of experts to draft some professional standards for LSAs. Although not legally binding, the standards provide excellent guidance for LSAs and Teachers. It is recommended that all staff read *The Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants (2016)*.

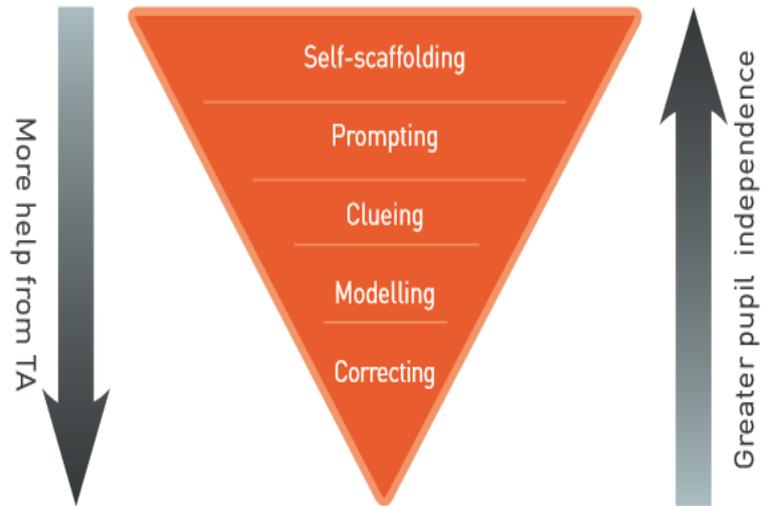
In addition, the Education Endowment Foundation made recommendations about effective LSA use. At Beaufort, we embrace the recommendations made and encourage teachers to consider the following when working with a LSA:

1. **LSAs should not be used as an informal teaching resource for low attaining pupils.**
2. **LSAs add value to what teachers do, not replace them** - the expectation should be that the needs of all pupils are addressed, first and foremost, through high quality classroom teaching. Students who struggle most have as much time with the teacher as others.
3. **Use LSAs to help pupils develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning** - LSAs should concentrate on helping pupils develop ownership of tasks.
4. **Ensure LSAs are fully prepared for their role in the classroom** - During lesson preparation time ensure LSAs have the essential 'need to knows': Concepts, facts, information being taught; Skills to be learned, applied, practised or extended. At Beaufort LSAs have planning time between 2.55pm – 3.30pm.

5. **Use SLSAs and HLTAs to deliver high quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions** - Research on LSAs delivering targeted interventions in one-to-one or small group settings shows a consistent impact on attainment of approximately three to four additional months' progress. Crucially, these positive effects are only observed when LSAs work in structured settings with high quality support and training.

For students to thrive, independence is a key skill which must be acquired by all students; irrespective of individual needs. Considering this, we encourage all LSAs to follow the scaffolding model set out by the *EEF's Scaffolding framework for teaching assistant-pupil interactions*:

LSAs should move down the layers in turn. The initial expectation is that pupils self-scaffold whilst the LSA observes their performance. LSAs should then intervene appropriately when pupils demonstrate they are unable to proceed. **It is important the tasks set by teachers, and supported by LSAs, provide pupils with the right level of challenge.**



Self-scaffolding - Self-scaffolding represents the highest level of pupil independence. LSAs observe, giving pupils time for processing and thinking. Self-scaffolders can: plan how to approach a task; problem solve as they go; and review how they approached a task.

Prompting - LSAs provide prompts when pupils are unable to self-scaffold. Prompts encourage pupils to draw on their own knowledge, but refrain from specifying a strategy. The aim is to nudge pupils into deploying a self-scaffolding technique. For example: 'What do you need to do first?'; 'What's your plan?'; 'You can do this!'

Clueing- Often pupils know the strategies or knowledge required to solve a problem, but find it difficult to call them mind. Clues worded as questions provide a hint in the right direction. The answer must contain a key piece of information to help pupils work out how to move forward. Always start with a small clue.

Modelling - Prompts and clues can be ineffective when pupils encounter a task that requires a new skill or strategy. LSAs, as confident and competent experts, can model while pupils actively watch and listen. Pupils should try the same step for themselves immediately afterwards.

Correcting - Correcting involves providing answers and requires no independent thinking. Occasionally it is appropriate to do this, however, LSAs should always aim instead to model and encourage pupils to apply new skills or knowledge first.

Improving Practice

We have a commitment to the continual improvement of practice, with a key focus on things which should make a difference for our students. The Academy also wish to provide time and capacity for members of staff to develop subject knowledge, pedagogy and enhancement of their professional careers. In light of this, Beaufort adhere to the *Standard for Teachers Professional Development*, which was published by the DfE in July 2016.

The standards are concise and clear:

- 1. Professional development should have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes.**
- 2. Professional development should be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise.**
- 3. Professional development should include collaboration and expert challenge.**
- 4. Professional development programmes should be sustained over time.**

And all this is underpinned by, and requires that:

- 5. Professional development must be prioritised by school leadership.**

As a result the following CPD will be in place at Beaufort:

- Inset days, which are relevant and specific.
- Fortnightly Subject Development sessions (1.5 hrs) for joint planning, collaboration and the sharing of good practice.
- Weekly 30 minute 'THRIVE' sessions to enhance subject knowledge and practice of Teaching Assistants.
- An intensive NQT programme.
- Time given to observe other colleagues.
- Attendance of specific courses/conferences.
- Appropriate activities/initiatives to meet needs as they arise.

We encourage all members of staff to be pro-active with their professional development. No one is the finished article and we all have something new to learn or improve. Books on educational practice and pedagogy will be available in the library for staff to borrow. Articles and ideas will also be available on the Teaching and Learning Board in the staff room.

Read, research, discuss and share ideas, try new things, take risks, support and assist each other to make positive change. Most importantly, reflect and evaluate the impact on your own practice and on the outcomes of the students.

Appendix

Eliminating unnecessary workload around marking

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/511256/Eliminating-unnecessary-workload-around-marking.pdf

Eliminating Unnecessary workload through planning and teaching resources

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/511257/Eliminating-unnecessary-workload-around-planning-and-teaching-resources.pdf

EEF Guidance TAs

https://v1.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/uploads/pdf/TA_Guidance_Report_Interactive.pdf

EEF's Scaffolding framework for teaching assistant-pupil interactions:

https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Campaigns/EEF_-_TA_Supplementary_Scaffolding_Framework.pdf

TA professional standards <https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2016/06/TA-Standards.pdf>

Standard for Teacher's professional development

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/537030/160712_-_PD_standard.pdf **Implementation guidance**

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/537031/160712_-_PD_Expert_Group_Guidance.pdf

The following books mentioned in this policy can be found in the Professional Library

Making Every Lesson Count – Shaun Allison and Andy Tharby

Visible Learning for Teachers, maximising impact on Learning – Hattie

Practice Perfect – Doug Lemov

Feedback – Isabella Wallace and Leah Kirkman

Quick reference guide

At Beaufort, we inspire, challenge and achieve by:

Planning – Well planned lessons are expected. No lessons plans are required for formal observations, unless you fall under the exceptions list (see page 7). Plan a series of lessons considering: prior knowledge, differentiation, use of the library and any additional adult in the room. Subject Leaders must ensure there are Long Term Plans and SoWs.

Challenge – Have high expectations for all. Set the bar high and support at appropriate levels to get there. Use data to monitor student progress. Stretch the most able and don't underestimate low attaining students. Challenge should be an intrinsic part of all lessons.

Explanation, modelling and deliberate practice – Clarity of expression is crucial to high quality instruction. We must check understanding and ensure instructions are given in manageable chunks. High quality models must be demonstrated to students, as examples of excellence. Students should be shown the process and encouraged to redraft work regularly.

Questioning – This is a compulsory and common feature of every lesson. Questions should be targeted and pitched at the correct levels for students. It should be used to assess learning, probe deeper thinking and identify gaps in knowledge.

Revive – Regular retrieval practice is an essential part of all lessons. Students should be prompted to remember information from the previous lesson, week and term. The aim is to enhance memory, retention and retrieval skills.

Literacy and Oracy – All staff are teachers of literacy. It is essential to embed key spelling, punctuation and grammar rules in every subject. It is our duty to make students 'word rich' by introducing new vocabulary. We are role models and must demonstrate accurate speech, whilst encouraging students to speak clearly and correctly.

Feedback policy – Feedback must be regular for students to make improvements to work. All improvements to written work must be evident in exercise books. Feedback can be given in the following forms: verbal, marking, whole class feedback, peer and self-assessment. Marking is not more important than the other forms of feedback; it must be formative, meaningful, manageable and motivating. Use the marking code. For consistency, all staff must follow their subject specific feedback policy.

Learning Support Assistants (LSAs, SLSAs & HLTAs) – Learning Support Assistants are an important part of the Academy. LSAs should supplement, and not replace, direct instruction from the teacher for low attaining students. LSAs must - be informed about SoWs and plans prior to the lesson; be pro-active within the classroom, under the direction of the teacher and all staff should familiarise themselves with the Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants.

Improving Practice – Observe each other, take risks, read and research, share, reflect, embrace CPD and remember – "Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better." Professor Dylan Wiliam.