



Thinking Schools Academy Trust

“Transforming Life Chances”

Teaching and Learning Policy

The Portsmouth Academy

DRAFT

This policy was adopted in 2024
The policy is to be reviewed in 2026

TPA 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, digitally literate 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.

Digital: Digital technologies offer multi-modal approaches to teaching and learning which provide students with opportunities to learn in a variety of ways. Embedding technology in teaching and learning also offers the opportunity to develop students’ digital literacies and skills such as problem solving, communication and collaboration. Digital teaching and learning shall promote inclusive, authentic learning environments underpinned by the thinking schools’ vision. In particular, digital teaching and learning should empower students as agents of their own learning and foster a sense of community.

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

- a) Pupils at TPA 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 at TPA 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.
- c) Teachers at TPA will feel confident and empowered to use digital technology in a blended and pedagogically innovative way, allowing them to take a more facilitative role, ‘freed from the front’, providing student-centred guidance and feedback, and engaging more frequently in exploratory and team-building activities with students

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.

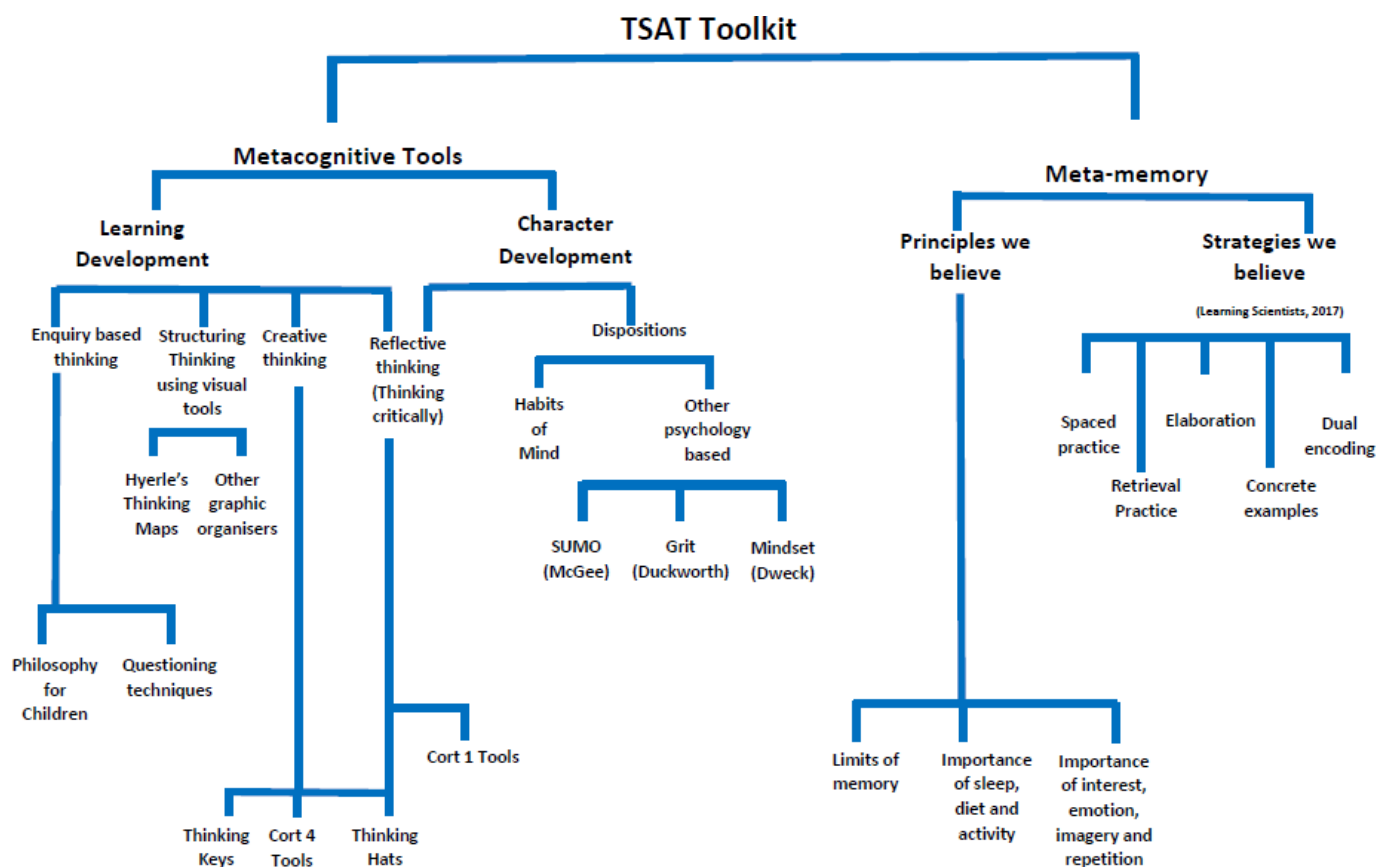
It is an expectation that all staff members ensure their understanding of the Thinking philosophy and their fluency in using the Thinking School approaches, therefore enabling them to implement appropriately and purposefully in all aspects of their practice to support maximum student progress.

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 digital tools 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 to evaluate and create effectively using a range of digital media.
- Pupils will develop successful dispositions to ensure knowledge and understanding is accurately, consistently and purposefully applied - The Habits of Excellence 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.
- Staff will have the appropriate digital skills to enhance teaching and learning, supporting students to create and innovate so that they are engaged in managing their own learning goals and activities,
- Staff will equip students with vital transferable digital skills which will enable them to participate fully in modern 21st century society and the workplace.

To make progress 'visible' in lessons:

- Facilitated by innovative digital practice, 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 use a range of digital tools to 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.
- Staff 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.

Digital Transformation:

'Generation Z' have never known a world without the internet or cell phones; younger Z's have never known a world without smartphones. Google has always existed. They take Wi-Fi for granted. In order to achieve our aims for 'generation z' we should endeavour to be innovative and provide an outstanding digital learning curriculum to ensure that our students are ready for an aspirational next step in life. At TPA we believe that the latest generation, raised on technology and the internet, will benefit from a digital focus in their learning. A curriculum based on 1:1 devices, employing innovative use of the 7 principles in a digital setting will allow more students to reach their full potential and engage fully with their learning. Equipping each student with their own device will serve to achieve the following:

To "Free teachers from the front" of the classroom:

- Each student has their own screen, so the traditional scene of a teacher stood at the front of the class will become a thing of the past. Teachers will be able to create student-centred learning opportunities for students to work at their own pace and with all the resources needed at their fingertips, thus allowing teachers to direct their personal support where it is most needed.
- Teachers use this opportunity to support the most vulnerable students and accelerate their learning through innovative and effective use of the technology available. For example, the immersive reader.
- Teachers provide timely and targeted interventions to enhance the differentiation and scaffolding available to vulnerable students.
- Teachers plan for and provide depth of learning development work for those students who excel and can progress independently and at pace.
- Teachers plan for and provide collaborative opportunities for students to work interdependently towards a stated goal.
- Students are required to engage in extended or multi-modal communication in support of their learning.
- Students are provided with learning questions and success criteria in advance of their work and are given the opportunity to use metacognitive skills to plan, monitor and revise their own work.
- Teachers provide opportunities for students to solve problems and relate those problems to "real-world" scenarios, thus making the learning relevant to the 21st century and developing "future-ready skills" in our students.
- Teachers use the technology innovatively to allow students opportunities for effective knowledge construction. For example, through the thoughtful selection and direction of online resources and media.

To "Make learning last":

- Teachers will enable students to use their device as a virtual memory, storing work and resources in easily accessible locations for quick retrieval. For example, through organised

pages in OneNote.

- Teachers will provide ample opportunities for recall and retrieval tasks both independently and collaboratively.
- Using digital inking, students will continue to use the thinking tools freehand to develop their thought processes. Teachers will construct opportunities where students can choose to use these tools naturally rather than having them prescribed by the task.
- Teachers will provide frequent and varied opportunities to return to key learning and consolidate the knowledge gained.
- Teachers will plan to distribute key learning throughout the curriculum, using the convenience of the device to circle back to key themes and prior learning.
- Teachers will utilise the unique opportunities of digital learning to interleave key themes and skills throughout their curriculum plans.
- Teachers will make frequent use of low stakes testing to develop memory skills. Using programs such as Microsoft forms will allow teachers to provide instant feedback to students.
- A key strength of having 1:1 devices is portability. Teachers will consider opportunities for hybrid learning, where students can continue their learning from home or any other location. Teachers will carefully consider their use of appropriate learning spaces.

To “Reduce teacher workload”:

- Departments will work collaboratively to make the most of the opportunities for sharing resources and planning.
- Effective use of the devices will reduce the amount of work teachers spend creating physical resources.
- Leaders will create the conditions for teachers to utilise a wide range of strategies for providing formative feedback, for example the use of audio and visual feedback, whole class feedback and digital inking.
- Leaders will accept a range of assessment and marking strategies utilizing the device.

It should however be remembered that the digital devices are a “tool” for teaching, one that teachers may choose to utilise as they may choose to use Thinking tools, and we do not insist that every lesson uses digital devices, we instead encourage a “hybrid” approach where students are also exposed to traditional methods of teaching and learning.

Curriculum intent: Teaching the TPA way.

This is how we learn at The Portsmouth Academy



ASPIRE



Our intention is that our curriculum ignites curiosity in our students, so that they engage with life-long learning and see themselves as both local and global citizens.

We have high aspirations for our students, and through a broad range of cultural enrichment opportunities, our one-to-one digital curriculum and strong careers provision, we nurture ambition in our students.

Our curriculum provides our students with the clearly-sequenced steps they need to take to achieve their aspirational goals and understand the potential they have to implement change.

ACHIEVE



The curriculum we offer to all students is broad, balanced and inclusive. It is coherently sequenced to support all learners, regardless of their starting points.

Building knowledge is key to our curriculum planning, and the mastery of skills enables students to experience success through learning. Our metacognitive approach, use of Thinking Tools, and self-reflection allows us to challenge our students with ambitious and varied content.

All subject areas contribute to the development of literacy, oracy and numeracy, to emphasise the value of these skills in preparing students to meet the world.

RESPECT



Our curriculum supports students to reflect on, and develop, their best selves, learning to recognise and appreciate the importance of respect, tolerance and community.

Students will have a strong sense of how their actions contribute to the wellbeing of others and the important role they play in building our school culture, and our wider community.

Throughout their learning journey, we teach students core values, routines and resilient habits of mind so that they are best prepared for the demands of adult life.

To support the curriculum intent at TPA, we aim to develop skills of independence, inclusivity and communication in our students.

To develop independence, we encourage regular modelling and scaffolding to ensure that students understand what is expected of them. And we take homework seriously as an outlet for independent study.

To ensure inclusivity across the academy we focus on adaptive teaching to ensure that all students are able to make the most of their learning time. We focus on reading strategies to ensure that students from all backgrounds are able to access learning. Teachers must know their students well, in order to ensure that SEN needs are appropriately provided for.

To develop students skills of communication, teachers at TPA will ensure many opportunities for the development of literacy and oracy skills. This approach is supported by regular and high quality questioning in lessons. Students are given regular feedback on their work, using a range of strategies, so that they have the opportunity to reflect upon their work and develop their skills at an accelerated rate.

Curriculum intent and Teaching the TPA Way

Independence (Aspire)

Independent practice
Modelling and scaffolding
Homework

- GHT
- Knowledge organiser
- Success criteria/rubrics
- WAGOLL'S
- Dual coding
- Gradual release of support
- I do, We do, You do
- Visualisers
- Homework on CC

Inclusivity (Achieve)

Adaptive teaching
Reading
SEN strategies

- TPA Top 5
- Task Board
- SEN ppt
- Reading the TPA way
- AI to change reading age of texts
- Lessons adapted in response to AfL
- AfL used to indicate support or challenge
- Support and challenge evident

Communication (Respect)

Literacy and Oracy
Feedback to feedforward
Questioning and Responding

- Think Pair share
- Say it again better
- Tier 2 and 3 Vocabulary
- Structured discussion
- Thinking time
- CoRt tools
- Loop closed
- WWW EBI
- SR's completed in red pen

