



The 9 Principles of High-Quality Inclusive Teaching at St John’s CE Primary Academy

Our framework is built upon nine interconnected principles. Together, they form a coherent, research-informed approach to teaching and learning that supports every pupil to thrive.

- 1

Behaviour & Relationships

High standards of behaviour and positive relationships mean all pupils feel valued, safe, and ready to learn.
- 2

High Expectations

High expectations and high levels of challenge help all pupils to achieve their full potential.
- 3

Explaining & Modelling

Clear explanations and models ensure pupils learn new knowledge and skills effectively, including how to be successful.
- 4

Practice & Rehearsal

Practice and rehearsal cement new knowledge and skills into long-term memory, enabling pupils to work independently.
- 5

Questioning

Questioning is essential to identify prior knowledge, assess learning, adapt teaching, and consolidate and extend understanding.
- 6

Adaptive Teaching

Adaptive and responsive teaching meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND, ensuring teachers respond to pupil learning.
- 7

Effective Feedback

Effective feedback is crucial to pupil progress, cementing learning and avoiding misconceptions.
- 8

Retrieval & Review

Spaced and retrieval practice strengthens long-term memory and helps pupils retain what they have learned.
- 9

Teacher Knowledge

Deep teacher knowledge underpins every element of effective teaching and learning.



Principles at a Glance: Rationale & Key Strategies

The table below provides a concise overview of all nine principles - their rationale and the core strategies that underpin each one. This serves as a quick-reference guide for staff across the school.

Principle	Rationale	Key Strategies
1. Behaviour & Relationships	Positive behaviour and relationships create a calm, orderly environment where all pupils feel valued and safe.	Explicitly teach expectations and routines via the ‘ <i>St John’s Way</i> ’behaviour curriculum; positive and preventative classroom management; specific praise; attention and motivation strategies; least -invasive behaviour correction; role-model respectful behaviour; intentionally build relationships; teach self-regulation.
2. High Expectations	High expectations and challenge help all pupils achieve their full potential.	All pupils access challenging content, tasks and texts; all pupils expected to think hard and be fully engaged; high standards of work and quality responses demanded; scaffolding provided to support access.
3. Explaining & Modelling	Clear explanations and models ensure pupils learn new knowledge and skills effectively.	Link to and build on prior knowledge; chunk explanations; use examples and non-examples; include questioning; use dual coding; model complex skills including thinking aloud; use worked examples; explicitly teach vocabulary, reading and writing.
4. Practice & Rehearsal	Practice cements new knowledge and skills into long-term memory, enabling independent completion of tasks.	Rehearse new content; provide guided practice with scaffolding; gradually reduce guidance; use extensive independent practice; ensure tasks require hard thinking; use interleaved practice; set problem-solving tasks; provide feedback; space practice over time.
5. Questioning	Questioning identifies prior knowledge, assesses learning of all pupils, adapts teaching, and consolidates understanding.	Plan questions in advance; use whole-class response systems; involve all pupils (cold-calling, no opt-out); give adequate thinking time; use paired discussion (Think-Pair-Share); use responses to inform future teaching; use factual, process, probing and higher-level questions; expect excellent responses.
6. Adaptive Teaching	Adaptive teaching meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND.	Plan to meet all pupils' needs; respond to learning evidence within and across lessons; deploy TAs effectively; use scaffolding for equal access; utilise technology; use flexible, needs-based groupings; enable peer tutoring.
7. Effective Feedback	Effective feedback is crucial to pupil progress and avoiding misconceptions.	Timely and specific feedback; feedback must be acted on by pupils; task-based feedback over grades/scores; use verbal feedback effectively; use written feedback efficiently; avoid excessive workload; develop peer and self-feedback skills.
8. Retrieval & Review	Spaced and retrieval practice strengthens long-term memory and retention.	Revisit learning regularly to prevent forgetting; focus reviews on most important content; revisit topics multiple times in different formats; keep retrieval low-stakes; match format to subject and purpose; teach metacognitive strategies explicitly.
9. Teacher Knowledge	Teacher knowledge underpins all elements of effective teaching and learning.	Develop strong subject and curriculum knowledge; know common misconceptions; understand how pupils learn; use evidence-informed pedagogy; know systematic synthetic phonics and early maths strategies; know pupils individually; understand child development; know how to meet individual needs.



PRINCIPLE 1

Behaviour and Relationships

Positive behaviour and relationships mean all pupils feel valued and safe, and can learn in a calm, orderly environment.

Expectations & Routines – The St John’s Way

Expectations for behaviour should be explicitly taught to pupils, including concrete examples of wanted behaviours (see The ‘St John’s Way’ Behaviour Curriculum). This should be revisited regularly. Whole school routines for both inside and outside the classroom, highlighted in the ‘St John’s Way’ behaviour curriculum, should be taught and rehearsed until they become habit.

Praise, Acknowledgement & Motivation

Praise should be specific and should concentrate on behaviour, effort and learning rather than personal attributes or ability. Acknowledgements - rather than praise - should be used when a pupil simply meets expectations, keeping praise meaningful and valuable.

Attention is the gateway to learning. Strategies to ensure attention include limiting distractions, highlighting crucial information, and questioning techniques that involve all pupils. Motivation strategies include effective feedback, ensuring success through retrieval practice and scaffolding, and the cultivation of positive relationships.

Building Positive Relationships

Positive relationships can significantly aid learning and can be developed through showing a genuine interest in pupils as individuals, greeting them positively, using humour when appropriate, and behaving warmly. These relationships should be intentionally cultivated over time.

Positive & Preventative Classroom Management

The focus of classroom management should be to reinforce positive behaviour and prevent negative behaviour. Effective techniques include greeting pupils positively, giving clear behavioural instructions, narrating positive behaviours, deliberately watching behaviour, and taking the least invasive intervention to correct behaviour.

Least Invasive Corrections & Role Modelling

Taking the least invasive intervention to correct behaviour helps to retain a positive classroom culture. Interventions may include proximity, gestures, whole-class reminders of expected behaviours, anonymous individual corrections, and keeping corrections private. Teachers must role model positive, polite and respectful behaviour at all times - addressing pupils politely, using a supportive tone, and avoiding sarcasm.

Pupil Self-Regulation (Zones of Regulation)

Pupils should be taught to recognise their own emotions and learn strategies to help them self-regulate (linked to ‘Zones of Regulation’ in the ‘St John’s Way’ Behaviour Curriculum). They should be given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour, including its causes and consequences and, where possible, be supported to manage their own behaviour independently.



PRINCIPLE 2

High Expectations

High expectations and high levels of challenge help all pupils to achieve their full potential.

Challenging Content & Tasks

All pupils should be expected to access challenging content. Content should not be changed or removed for specific groups. All pupils should complete tasks that require in-depth thinking. 'Soft' activities that do not present a high level of challenge should be replaced. Additional guidance and support — such as breaking tasks into smaller steps, additional models, guided practice and increased scaffolding — should be provided where required.

Complex Skills & Texts

All pupils should be expected to develop complex skills such as extended writing, solving complex problems, and completing complex tasks. All pupils should also engage with challenging, subject-specific texts. Teachers can scaffold this by activating prior knowledge, pre-teaching vocabulary, and utilising strategies such as guided reading where pupils summarise each paragraph and the text as a whole.

Full Engagement & Hard Thinking

Techniques that require all pupils to think hard about what they are learning are crucial. This is achieved through whole-class questioning techniques such as mini whiteboards, cold calling, all-pupils writing, and paired discussions. Classroom management — clear task instructions, narrating positive behaviours, and circulating the room — reinforces full engagement for all.

High Quality Work

Teachers should demand high standards of work from all pupils, being careful not to convey lower expectations for any group. Scaffolding should be used to allow all pupils to succeed and produce work of a high quality — this may include writing frames, checklists, or additional guidance. Teachers should monitor work regularly and intervene when necessary, including requesting pupils to redraft work where appropriate.

High Quality Responses to Questions

All pupils should be expected to answer in full sentences and to explain and elaborate on their initial answers when appropriate. All pupils should also be expected to use the correct Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary. Teachers should ask pupils to improve their answers when needed. Pupils should never be permitted to 'opt out' of answering questions.

PRINCIPLE 3

Explaining and Modelling



Clear explanations and models ensure pupils learn new knowledge and skills effectively, including how to be successful.

Linking to & Building on Prior Knowledge

We learn more quickly and are more likely to remember new information when it is linked to what we already know. It is important to activate pupils' prior knowledge — for example, through a retrieval practice activity — and then explicitly explain the links between prior and new knowledge. Explanations should build on what pupils already know, filling any learning gaps and addressing misconceptions.

Chunked, Clear & Concise Explanations

Explanations should be planned in advance and contain only the most important information. Any redundant information should be removed. Introduce a small amount of new material at one time so that pupils are not overloaded with too much information. This careful chunking ensures that working memory is not overwhelmed.

Examples & Non-Examples

Examples can be used to help pupils understand new ideas. Multiple examples strengthen understanding. Non-examples should be missing a critical aspect of the concept and should be used to highlight the critical elements, helping pupils to discriminate between what is and is not an example.

Questioning During Explanations

Questioning should be used throughout explanations both to check pupils are listening and to verify their understanding of the new material. This can include asking pupils to repeat parts of the explanation or answer short, factual questions about the content being explained.

Dual Coding & Graphics

Combining images with verbal explanations — dual coding — should be used where an image is appropriate. This helps pupils remember more of the new information and prevents cognitive overload. Graphics, diagrams, and visual representations are powerful tools when used purposefully alongside spoken or written explanation.

Modelling Complex Skills

Modelling should be used to show pupils the meaning of success criteria and how to achieve them. Initially, pupils should observe the teacher completing the task, narrating each step and thinking aloud. This can progress onto class-completed models and deconstructing examples — discussing why they are successful and how they might be improved.

Worked Examples

Worked examples provide a full step-by-step guide to solving a problem or completing a task. They prevent pupils having to hold the method in their working memories. The explanations of the steps should be integrated into the example so pupils do not have to consult two separate sources of information simultaneously.

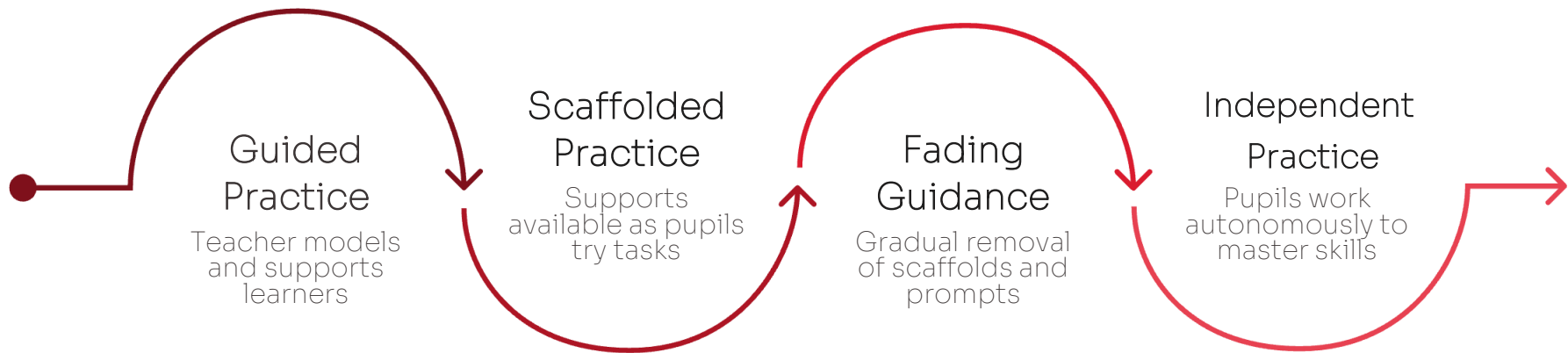
Explicit Teaching of Vocabulary, Reading & Writing

Vocabulary should be explicitly taught to pupils — for example, through explicit instruction during reading, the Frayer model, and key word spotlights. The teaching of reading and writing should also include explicit, structured instruction rather than being left to implicit acquisition alone.

PRINCIPLE 4

Practice and Rehearsal

Practice and rehearsal cement new knowledge and skills into long-term memory and allow pupils to complete tasks independently.



The progression from guided to fully independent practice is central to this principle. Pupils move through a carefully sequenced journey - from supported initial rehearsal to fully independent application - as their knowledge and skills develop and become secure.

- **Rehearsal of New Content**

Rehearsal ensures new content is transferred to long-term memory. It should take place after pupils have been introduced to new knowledge or skills and may include practice tasks, answering questions, or explaining to a partner.
- **Guided & Scaffolded Initial Practice**

Providing support during initial practice prevents overload and allows all pupils to achieve success. This may include teacher-led practice, verbal reminders, partially-completed tasks, sentence starters, checklists, working walls, manipulatives, models and worked examples.
- **Gradual Fading of Guidance**

Guidance should be reduced over time as pupils' knowledge and skills develop, preventing pupils from becoming reliant on scaffolds. This can include providing fewer prompts, reducing guidance, or increasing the proportion of a task completed independently by pupils.
- **Extensive Independent Practice**

Independent practice is needed to ensure pupils can complete tasks without support and for skills and knowledge to become automatic. It can include explaining to a partner, writing, completing tasks or solving problems without any support.

Tasks Must Require Hard Thinking

Pupils remember what they think about. This means that all tasks must ensure that pupils think hard about the most important content, rather than the task format itself. Poorly designed tasks can lead to pupils being busy without being cognitively engaged with the core learning.

Interleaved Practice

Once pupils' knowledge of individual concepts is secure, interleaved practice - mixing up similar or easily confused concepts - can deepen understanding and improve retention. This should not be used before individual concepts are firmly established.

Problem-Solving Tasks

Once knowledge is secure, tasks requiring pupils to investigate and solve problems for themselves will aid learning. These tasks should not ask pupils to 'discover' new knowledge, but to apply knowledge they have already practised and secured.

Feedback on Practice

Feedback should be given on all practice, including independent practice. This can include individual feedback such as highlighting mistakes for pupils to correct, and whole-class feedback such as sharing good examples of work and alerting the class to common errors.

Spaced Practice

Practice spread out over time — revisiting previous learning at intervals - helps to prevent forgetting, as opposed to massed practice where a topic is studied in one long session and not revisited.

PRINCIPLE 5

Questioning



Questioning is essential to identify prior knowledge, assess learning, adapt teaching, and consolidate and extend understanding.

Plan Questions in Advance

Questions should be planned in advance to ensure they assess pupils' understanding of the most important content, anticipate misconceptions, and respond to likely pupil answers. Planned questions are sharper, more purposeful, and more effective than improvised ones.

Assess the Learning of All Pupils – Show-Me Boards

Teachers need to assess the learning of all pupils, not just those who volunteer answers. Whole-class response systems should be used, including mini whiteboards (show-me boards), hand signals, and multiple-choice questions. Crucially, pupils should display their answers simultaneously, on a signal from the teacher.

Involve All Pupils – Cold Calling and No Opt Out

Questioning should involve all pupils. Cold-calling (selecting a pupil to answer without them raising their hand), No Opt-Out, and Everybody-Writes techniques can all be used here to ensure universal participation and engagement with the question.

Thinking Time

Thinking time is the time given after asking a question for pupils to formulate their answer before responding. Teachers should give pupils 3–5 seconds of wait time after asking a factual question. More time may be needed for more complex questions. Rushing pupils to answer reduces the quality of thinking and the depth of response.

Paired Discussions – Think, Pair, Share

Paired discussion should be used, especially when pupils seem unsure of an answer. Individual thinking or writing time should always be given before a paired discussion takes place. Discussions should be short, with clear instructions and precise questions. The teacher should circulate the room while discussions are taking place.

Use Responses to Inform Future Teaching

Pupils' responses should be used to plan future instruction. For example, if pupils' understanding is poor or reveals a misconception, it may be necessary to re-teach the material. This responsive use of assessment data is at the heart of adaptive, effective teaching.

Expect Excellent Responses – Say It Again Better

Pupils should answer in full sentences, explain and elaborate on their initial answers, and use correct Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary. Teachers should ask pupils to improve their answer when needed and ask pupils to respond to the answers of classmates – agreeing, disagreeing, or building upon them.

A Range of Question Types

Factual questions cement learning and check understanding. **Higher-level questions** – covering reasons, causes, consequences, justifications, comparisons, and evaluations – deepen learning. **Probing questions** involve asking several follow-up questions to the same pupil to explore understanding in good depth. **Process questions** involve asking questions that push learners to explain their process for finding an answer.

Avoid Self-Reporting

Self-report questions such as "Does everyone understand?" are ineffective at assessing learning because it is very difficult for pupils to accurately judge their own understanding, or to admit they do not understand. These should be replaced with questions and tasks that allow teachers to assess understanding directly and reliably.

PRINCIPLE 6

Adaptive and Responsive Teaching



Adaptive and responsive teaching meets the needs of all pupils, including pupils with SEND, and ensures teachers respond to pupil learning.

Planning to Meet All Pupils' Needs

Teachers should plan to meet the needs of all pupils. This includes planning to use strategies most useful for pupils with additional needs – such as explicit instruction, scaffolding, and dual coding – as well as specific techniques for individual pupils. Teachers should draw on prior assessment data and information from pupil passports or education plans when planning.

Responding to Evidence of Learning

After checking for understanding, teachers must respond to what they learn about pupil progress. This may include reteaching material, addressing misconceptions or errors, removing or adding scaffolding, moving on to further new material, or providing additional challenge. This can be done within the lesson or in a future lesson, as appropriate.

Effective Deployment of Teaching Assistants

TAs should not solely be deployed to support individual pupils, as this can limit those pupils' independence and access to quality-first teaching. When working with pupils, TAs should be encouraged to avoid prioritising task completion, and instead to scaffold for independence. TAs should be equipped with strategies effective for struggling pupils such as dual coding, metacognitive questioning, and giving additional scaffolding.



Scaffolding for Equal Access

Giving additional support allows all pupils to access the same content and tasks and achieve success. Scaffolds may include increased teacher-led practice, verbal reminders, partially-completed questions, sentence starters, checklists, working walls, manipulatives, models, and worked examples.



Technology to Adapt Teaching

Technology can be utilised to meet pupils' individual needs. Examples include using a visualiser to model, share student work, and give feedback; recording software for pupils to record their thinking; and giving pupils access to recordings of teacher presentations for pre-teaching or reference when completing a task.



Flexible Groupings & Peer Tutoring

Groupings should be flexible and based on pupils' current needs, given the curriculum area and task at hand. Formative assessment should inform groupings. It may also be beneficial to provide opportunities for collaborative learning and peer tutoring across groups of pupils with a range of attainment levels.

PRINCIPLE 7

Effective Feedback



Effective feedback is crucial to pupil progress, cementing learning and avoiding misconceptions taking hold.

Timely Feedback

The most effective time to deliver feedback depends on the task. Feedback during learning may be most effective during initial learning or practice to address misconceptions or errors. Delayed feedback should be given after relatively short gaps - delays of two weeks or more can mean pupils are unable to recall the task context.

Feedback That Improves Learning

Feedback should enable pupils to improve their learning or performance. It should be based on the specific task, the processes used across the subject (e.g. the need for subject-specific terminology), or pupils' self-regulation - how they plan, monitor, manage, and evaluate their own learning.

Actionable & Acted On

Feedback should always be used by pupils during lesson time. This may mean improving the current piece of work or completing an additional task that takes account of the feedback given. Pupils should be required to act on feedback as a matter of course - it is only effective when it changes what pupils do.

Specific & Task-Based

Task-based feedback has been found to be most effective. It should highlight what the pupil has done well and include a small number of specific, actionable ways to improve. Formative comments are generally more effective than grades or marks alone, as they direct pupils' attention to the work itself.

Verbal Feedback

Verbal feedback is more time-efficient and allows for increased clarification and elaboration. Effective approaches include live individual verbal feedback, use of a visualiser to discuss models or pupils' work, and whole-class verbal feedback - explaining common strengths, sharing examples of best practice, and indicating how to improve to the whole class.

Avoiding Excessive Workload

Providing extensive written feedback has the potential to add hugely to teachers' workload. Written feedback should therefore be used alongside other more efficient forms of feedback such as verbal feedback and live marking, ensuring maximum impact with manageable effort.

Written Feedback

When used, written feedback should be timely, specific, and actionable. Effective written feedback approaches include live marking (given as pupils complete a task), selective marking (focusing on a specific aspect), and the use of marking codes to communicate feedback efficiently and consistently.

Peer & Self-Feedback

Peer and self-assessment can develop pupils' understanding of the material, task requirements, success criteria, and how to improve their work. It is crucial that pupils are explicitly taught how to assess work and give feedback effectively. Checklists may be used to provide a structure for the feedback process.

PRINCIPLE 8

Retrieval and Review



Review, including spaced practice, retrieval practice and revisiting, strengthens long-term memory and retention.

Revisit Learning to Prevent Forgetting

Revisiting material prevents forgetting. This can be achieved through retrieval practice - where pupils retrieve previously learned information from their long-term memory - or spaced practice, which spreads study over time and re-exposes pupils to previously learned materials after a gap of days, weeks or months. Research indicates pupils need to encounter and process material approximately four times for it to be cemented in long-term memory.

Focus Reviews on the Most Important Content

It is not possible to review everything that pupils have been taught. Reviews must therefore concentrate on the most important parts of the topic - the main elements of previous learning, and crucial knowledge and skills that need to become automatic. It may be helpful for this to be identified explicitly within the scheme of learning.

Revisit Multiple Times in Different Formats

Pupils will remember what they retrieve or review. Each review can therefore focus on different aspects of a topic and take different formats; short-answer questions, longer-answer questions, reproducing content as an image, or free recall tasks. Variety helps pupils to remember all elements of the topic and maintains engagement with review activities.

Keep Retrieval Low-Stakes

Being asked to recall prior learning from memory can feel like a test and cause anxiety. Any retrieval practice activities should therefore be no- or low-stakes - not used to formally assess pupils, with no scores given or recorded. It may also be beneficial to offer hints or access to resources such as exercise books if pupils are unable to recall content, once they have genuinely attempted recall from memory.

Match Format to Subject & Purpose

The format of the review should match the subject, topic, and purpose. Short-answer questions may be effective for recalling scientific facts; practising previously learned skills may be more appropriate in art or PE. Shorter questions are generally better for factual recall, while longer tasks suit larger concepts or more in-depth understanding. For younger pupils, additional scaffolding should be provided throughout.

Metacognition: Teaching Pupils How to Learn

It is important that we teach pupils how they learn and the strategies - including spaced practice and retrieval practice - that are most effective. This can be done through explicitly teaching pupils about learning and memory, ensuring they have experience of these strategies in lessons and homework, and encouraging pupils to reflect on the processes they used to complete tasks successfully.

PRINCIPLE 9

Teacher Knowledge

Teacher knowledge underpins every element of effective teaching and learning.



Subject Knowledge

Teachers must have the subject knowledge required to explain new content clearly and in good depth. They should be able to solve the kinds of problems they help pupils to solve, and produce model answers that exhibit the skills and knowledge they need their pupils to learn. Strong subject knowledge enables confident, accurate, and inspiring teaching.

Curriculum Knowledge

Teachers need a thorough knowledge of the curriculum they are teaching - including the content, end points, depth of learning required, any examination or assessment requirements, and links to prior learning or other areas of the curriculum. This knowledge enables purposeful sequencing and coherent teaching.

Common Misconceptions

Teachers should have good knowledge of the common errors and misconceptions related to the topic they are teaching. This enables them to design their presentations and learning activities to anticipate and address these misconceptions proactively, preventing them from becoming embedded in pupils' thinking.

How We Learn

Understanding how we learn - including the limited capacity of working memory, long-term memory, encoding, and retrieval - is essential for identifying effective teaching strategies and implementing them most impactfully. Teachers who understand cognitive science are better placed to make informed decisions about their practice.

Evidence-Informed Pedagogy

Evidence-informed pedagogy - such as the principles set out in this framework - represents our best bets for helping pupils to learn most effectively. Teachers should understand these strategies and use their professional expertise to implement them in the way that works best for their pupils, their context, and their subject.

Phonics & Early Mathematics

Teachers of our youngest pupils should have a thorough knowledge of how to teach systematic synthetic phonics and the strategies most applicable to the teaching of early mathematics and number. Secure foundational knowledge in these areas is essential for ensuring all children get the best possible start.

Knowledge of Pupils

Knowledge of pupils - including their barriers to learning and how best to overcome them - is crucial in ensuring all pupils make progress. Pupil data can ensure that teaching is adapted where necessary. Knowing personal details about pupils can also help to build the positive relationships that underpin effective learning.

Child Development

Understanding child development allows teachers to understand how students develop and grow - helping them to meet pupils' physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs, and identify potential developmental delays. Understanding developmental stages also allows teachers to set appropriately ambitious expectations for their pupils at each stage of their education.

Meeting Individual Needs

Teachers should be aware of the strategies most useful in helping pupils with additional needs to learn. This includes general strategies such as explicit instruction, scaffolding, and dual coding, as well as techniques tailored to the needs of individual pupils. This knowledge, applied with care, ensures every pupil can access and succeed in their learning.