



SOUTHWARK INCLUSIVE LEARNING SERVICE
SILS
Teaching and Learning
Policy
2022-2023

“Learning is driven by what goes on in the classroom”

- Dylan Wiliam (Inside the Black Box)

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

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Note: This policy should be used in conjunction with our Marking and Assessment policies

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Vision

The education we provide to our students at Southwark Inclusive Learning Service (SILS) is both liberating and empowering. We believe firmly that every pupil has a “birth right” to a world class education, and that the end goal of education should be to furnish students with choices. This belief is founded upon an absolute conviction that each of our students has the capacity to become knowledgeable, articulate, compassionate and industrious young people. We are committed to the communities we serve, and encourage our students to think of themselves as future leaders within these communities.

All teaching staff and students will be supported and challenged to be highly self-reflective, allowing both to fully participate in a rapidly changing knowledge based economy.

Aim

This policy serves to outline the core principles underpinning the instructional design, classroom practice and professional learning of teachers at SILS. The purpose is to ensure a shared foundation of understanding with regards to the most important ideas shaping our beliefs about what constitutes world class teaching and learning. It is not intended as an exhaustive guide to these ideas: Our hope is always that teachers will continue to pursue the development of their own individual knowledge, skills and understanding by engaging with educational research, their wider subject communities and, of course, their colleagues at SILS.

Principles of Learning

In guiding our students along the path from novice to expert, teachers at SILS consider the Principles of Learning (Ambition Institute, 2019). These provide us with answers to some of the key questions we believe it is essential to ask ourselves during the process of instructional design:

- 1. How can I help students to attend to learning?**
- 2. How can I help students focus on what matters?**
- 3. How can I help students encode information in long-term memory?**
- 4. How can I find out what students already know?**
- 5. How can I help students to remember what they learn?**

The Principles of Learning, and some of their implications for our classroom practice, are outlined in full below. Where teachers are unfamiliar with the theory and research evidence relating to Cognitive Load Theory, the relationship between working memory and long-term memory and their role in pupil learning, it is recommended that they undertake additional reading at the direction of their Cluster Leads and/or the Teaching and Learning Team.

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Principle 1 – People can only consciously attend to a handful of stimuli at a time

What is the principle?

People experience thousands of stimuli each moment, but they can only consciously attend to a handful. Teachers must ensure that students focus on what is to be learned and are able to overcome competing demands on their attention.

What are the key classroom implications at SILS?

- Classroom environments are calm and purposeful, and distractions from thinking are minimised.
- Where possible, and except in practical subjects such as PE, classrooms are laid out in rows.
- Independent tasks are more often than not carried out in silence to aid students' focus.
- Visual distractions are minimised: illustration and images are used sparingly in lesson resources and only when necessary; classroom displays are minimal and do not serve as a distraction.
- Information that students will need is provided *where* they will need it, e.g. labels on a diagram.
- Expository text on slides is limited, and instead verbal explanations are used to deliver content.
- Students' attention is guided throughout lessons: teachers use tone of voice to stress key words when speaking, and use highlighting, arrows or pointing with text or images.

Principle 2 – Working memory is limited

What is the principle?

Working memory – the site of conscious thinking – has limited capacity. Teachers must ensure students focus on a few chunks (ideas, processes or pieces of information) at a time. While individual students' working memory capacity differs, there is no known way to increase this capacity. However, *practice* helps students commit knowledge to long-term memory: this reduces the need for them to rely on their working memory.

What are the key classroom implications at SILS?

- Teacher explanations are concise, utilise economy of language and are often scripted in advance. Teachers consider the language comprehension limitations of their students when planning their exposition.
- Extensive modelling and 'thinking aloud' provides cognitive support to students.
- Tasks are designed to limit the number of 'moving parts' that students are required to think about. Ideally, students are expected to focus their attention on just one key idea at a time.
- Complex processes are extensively scaffolded, or even broken down into component parts so that students can practise each skill deliberately and in isolation.
- Teachers think carefully about whether they ask students to 'read along' when a text is being read to them. Students with reading ages below their chronological age may listen only.
- Working walls are used to record information that students will need to use but that is not yet committed to long-term memory, e.g. new vocabulary or spellings are written on the whiteboard.

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Principle 3 – Memory is the residue of thought

What is the principle?

Students transfer information into their long-term memories when they think hard and deeply about its meaning. Teachers must encourage students to think hard about the meaning of what is to be learned.

What are the key classroom implications at SILS?

- Tasks are designed to ensure that students think deeply about the key ideas, e.g. if learning the causes for an historical event, over time students explain the importance of each factor rather than just summarising the information.
- Teachers avoid activities that encourage students to think about the surface features of a task rather than the meaning of the information, e.g. practical tasks are avoided in non-practical subjects; experiential tasks, such as playing games, are understood to distract from the key learning.
- Teachers use extensive questioning in lessons to both elicit and deepen pupil thought.
- Teachers ensure all students engage in thinking about key ideas, e.g. when teachers ask a question, they pause and then select a pupil, so that all students have thought about the answer.
- When an important piece of information lacks obvious meaning (e.g. times tables, scientific formulae), teachers use mnemonics, songs or repetition to help students commit it to memory.

Principle 4 – Prior knowledge determines what students can learn

What is the principle?

Students make sense of new information by reference to what they already know: new information enters long-term memory by connecting to existing knowledge.

What are the key classroom implications at SILS?

- Lessons are planned to take into account students' prior knowledge, and sequences of lessons are planned to ensure that new knowledge builds upon existing knowledge. Work in books is routinely reviewed so that the teacher is always up-to-date with what and how well students know the lesson material.
- Teachers check students' prior knowledge at the start of a unit or lesson through quizzing and questioning that allows them to identify and address specific gaps in prior knowledge.
- Questioning at the start of a lesson, and throughout a lesson, helps students activate and retrieve prior knowledge that is necessary for them to grasp new ideas.
- The use of elaborative interrogation (asking students *why* a fact they have been told is true) is used for declarative knowledge to help students tie new knowledge to their existing knowledge.
- Teachers are aware of common misconceptions that students may hold and plan to explicitly raise and address these.

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Principle 5 – Knowledge sticks through practice and retrieval

What is the principle?

Learning is a persistent change in long-term memory, not just a temporary increase in pupil performance. Introducing students to an idea once is highly unlikely to be sufficient for them to recall it after a month, a year or beyond. Teachers must secure students' knowledge by giving them practice in using and retrieving this information once students' memories are beginning to fade. Practice increases recall, particularly if it is spaced and mixed. The gaps between practice should be allowed to increase – especially if students remember items correctly – and practice should be varied to increase the number of stimuli which help students remember the item and the usefulness of the information. The more students' knowledge develops, the more this frees their working memory to process new ideas.

What are the key classroom implications at SILS?

- Lessons begin with a Do Now task so that students engage in retrieval practice in every class.
- Teachers plan when and how to return to key ideas and concepts using other forms of low-stakes retrieval quizzing. Ideas and concepts are revisited sooner if questions are answered incorrectly or delayed if questions are answered correctly. This utilises the spacing effect.
- Students engage in extensive guided and independent practice when learning new material.
- Curricula is designed to return to key concepts over time.
- Practice is made increasingly challenging when students are successful: scaffolding is removed and practice tasks mix a variety of ideas, topics or procedures to promote greater depth of thought.

The SILS Way - Lesson Design and Delivery

Lesson Routines - Do Now

Every lesson at SILS begins with a Do Now task, and this is a key routine that supports the development of a climate for learning in the classroom. The Do Now task must be designed so that pupils engage in **retrieval practice** through the completion of a series of questions that recall previously taught knowledge, vocabulary, concepts or procedures.

Further information can be found in the **Subject Specific T&L Guides** (See Appendix B)

Lesson Structure - Structure Liberates - I, We, You

Most teaching sequences at SILS follow the **I do, We do, You do** structure, also described as the gradual release of responsibility model (Pearson and Gallagher 1983; Fisher and Frey, 2007). This model provides teachers with an instructional framework for moving from teacher knowledge to pupil understanding and application. As the pupil acquires new knowledge and understanding, the responsibility for learning shifts from teacher-directed instruction to pupil processing activities. The model ensures pupils are adequately supported in their acquisition of the knowledge, understanding and strategies necessary for success.

The **'I do'** phase occurs when new material is being introduced. The teacher has a prominent role in the delivery of the content. In the **'We do'** phase of learning, the teacher continues to model, question, prompt and cue pupils. As pupils move into the **'You do'** phase, they rely much more on themselves and less on the teacher to complete the learning task. Lessons are not expected to follow this structure rigidly: learning may require more than one 'I do, We do, You do'

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cycle or there may be several iterations of 'I do, We do' within the modelling phase before pupils progress onto independent work. A summary of the roles and responsibilities of the teacher and pupils at each stage is outlined in the table below (Levy, 2007):

	Teacher	Pupil
I Do <i>Direct Instruction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provides direct instruction ● Establishes goals and purpose ● Models and/or thinks aloud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Actively listens ● Takes notes ● Asks for clarification
We Do <i>Guided Instruction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interactive instruction ● Works with pupils, e.g. 'I do/You help' or 'You do/I help' ● Checks, prompts, cues ● Provides additional modelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Asks and responds to questions ● Works with teacher and peers ● Completes process alongside others
You Do <i>Independent Practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provides feedback ● Evaluates ● Determines level of understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Works alone ● Relies on notes, activities, classroom learning to complete task ● Takes full responsibility for outcome

Lesson Resourcing vs Lesson Planning

At SILS, we draw a clear distinction between the processes of **lesson resourcing** and **lesson planning**.

Lesson resourcing is the production of the materials and resources required to deliver the curriculum content. This process involves the specification of key knowledge for that lesson; the selection, design and sequencing of activities that support the acquisition of this knowledge; and the development of assessment tasks required to check that pupils have understood the ideas and are able to apply their learning.

Lesson planning is a process of intellectual preparation. It ensures one is ready to deliver a lesson to a particular set of pupils. All teachers are expected to plan and prepare adaptations to centralised resources, taking into account their knowledge and understanding of an individual class. Alongside teacher knowledge, information about pupils' SEN needs, reading ages and prior attainment may be useful here.

We recognise that highly effective lesson planning will differ between individual subjects, however some of the activities that teachers may undertake are as follows:

- Identify the prerequisite knowledge that will need to be reviewed prior to the main learning
- Identify any key vocabulary that will need to be explicitly highlighted, reviewed or taught
- Complete the activities or tasks oneself to define clearly what constitutes a high-quality response
- Identify the misconceptions or difficulties that pupils may have, and plan how to address these
- Script, practise and rescript the teacher exposition or modelling phase of the lesson
- Prepare additional examples or non-examples to use if pupils struggle to grasp a key concept

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- Script both closed and open questions that can be targeted at higher or lower attaining pupils
- Script additional questions that 'Break it Down' for pupils who might struggle
- Adapt tasks to include additional scaffolding or challenge according to pupils' needs
- Clarify the 'thread of learning' for oneself, and how the planned activities support the key learning
- Set clear timings for each stage of the lesson

High expectations of learning behaviour:

1. Students enter room calmly and immediately start the "DO NOW"
2. Students write TAKE PRIDE in their work adhering to shared expectations
3. Positive praise and recognition
4. Positive behaviour management used – think WARM/STRICT
5. ONE VOICE expected at all times.
6. When questioning, NO HANDS and NO OPT OUT expected at all times
7. Language of GROWTH MINDSET used consistently (e.g. "you're not there 'yet'")
8. Learning language expected – Standard English with tier 2/3 words used in full sentences.

Checking for Understanding

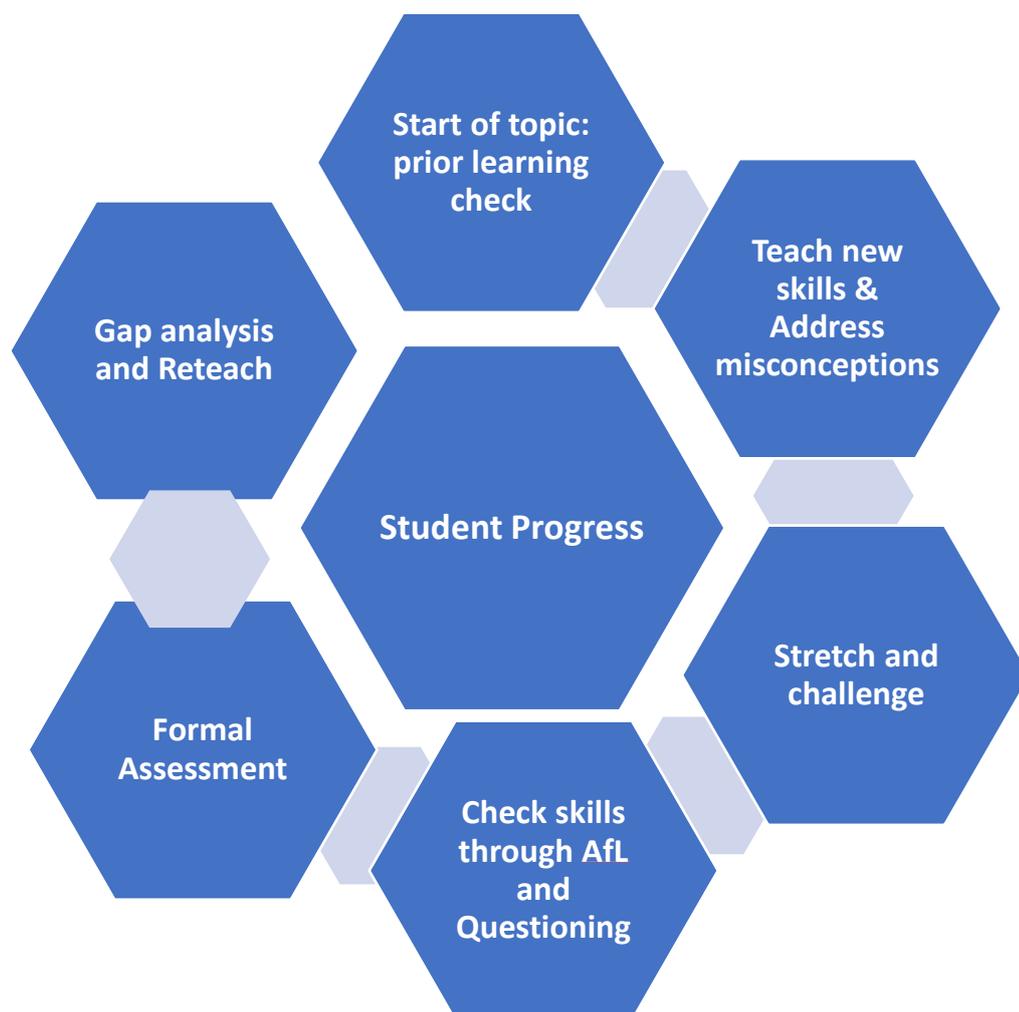
- **Culture of Error:** Create an environment in which pupils feel safe making and discussing mistakes, so you can spend less time hunting for errors and more time fixing them.
- **Reject Self-Report:** Replace functionally rhetorical questions such as "Does everyone understand?" or "Does anyone have any questions?" with more objective forms of impromptu assessment, e.g. through targeted questioning or by asking "What do I need to repeat?" to prompt pupil response.
- **Show Me:** Flip the classroom dynamic in which the teacher gleans data from a passive group of pupils.

Have pupils actively show evidence of their understanding, e.g. using mini-whiteboards.

- **Wait Time:** Allow pupils time to think before answering a question. If they are not productive with that time, narrate them toward being more productive.
- **Cold Call:** Call on pupils regardless of whether they have raised their hand.
- **Break it Down:** When a pupil struggles to answer a question, provide just enough scaffolding to allow them to 'solve' as much of the original problem as they can.
- **Tracking, Not Watching:** Be intentional about how you scan your classroom. Decide specifically what you are looking for and remain disciplined about it in the face of distractions.

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Delivery Cycle



Planning for Long Term Learning

Learning is the retention of new knowledge and skills and involves the development and creation of schemas. There is a significant difference between performance and learning so our teaching needs to aim to effect changes in long term memory (LTM) and overcome natural forgetting. Being able to remember something depends on both retrieval strength and storage strength so our teaching aims to instruct learners in such a way as to create rich learning experiences that allows, new information to anchor with pre-existing knowledge creating an ever expanding and deepening complexity of schemata in the minds of our learners. By doing this, our students should develop the rich knowledge to enable them to evaluate, synthesis and create new ideas, and of course succeed in their exams.

What is it?

- **Sequencing of learning across the curriculum carefully considered**
- Learning builds across a spiral curriculum so knowledge develops in complexity over time
- Threshold or key concepts are taught at strategic times to enable further learning
- Knowledge is built incrementally and anchored to prior learning through retrieval practice (see below)

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- New concepts are encountered with three discreet explanations or ways of being understood (including dual coding) or in three contexts to embed in LTM (*Nuthall*) e.g.
 - ✦ Students make sense of new concept in working memory
 - ✦ Associations made with existing knowledge
 - ✦ Concept encountered from a different perspective (at a different time)
- **Teachers introduce desirable difficulties: initial performance might reduce but better for LTM**
- **Testing effect shows testing to be more effective than re-learning to build LTM despite being perceived as more challenging by students.**
- **S: Spacing** – Spacing out testing (rather than cramming) allows time for forgetting to occur, making it harder to remember – this improves long term retention.
- **I: Interleaving** – mixing up topics being tested (rather than blocking them together) leads to better long-term retention and better transfer of skills.
- **R: Retrieval** – having to generate answers or retrieve information – even without feedback – leads to better long-term retention
 - ✦ *Spaced, interleaved, starters or DO NOW Activity at start of every lesson followed by immediate feedback.*
 - ✦ **Explicit teaching of revision techniques (e.g. flash cards, brain dumps, context varying etc.)**
- **Varying context** – e.g. mixing up the types of tasks or questions used so they are less predictable
- **Teachers plan for independent, deliberate practice to embed knowledge in long term memory**
- When content securely understood, deliberate practice takes place
- New knowledge is applied to different contexts
- Deliberate practice increases in complexity / difficulty
- **Lessons are planned to ensure students have to do the “heavy thinking”**
- Memory is the residue of thought. The harder students think, the more they’ll remember
- **Use of home learning e.g. knowledge retrievers to develop long term memory through retrieval practice, consolidation and pre-building information.**

What is it not?

At the start of lessons:

- **Asking questions that ask students to guess**
- **Not having knowledge based, spaced and interleaved questions in the Do Now.**
- **Opening a lesson with random questions**

Following instruction:

- **A lack of deliberate practice**
- **Asking 1-2 questions that check understanding, rather than strengthen memory.**
- **Easy deliberate practice that doesn’t increase in difficulty**
- **Other points to consider: Learning Environment**
- All classes must have a seating plan which should be followed in the lesson. This should avoid social groupings.
- Ensure that there is a positive learning environment characterised by high teacher and learner expectations.
- Ensure that there are high quality displays in the classroom that reinforce expectations.
- Display exemplar work together with levels and success criteria.
- Make sure the classroom is well organised and tidy.

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- SILS rewards and classroom code of conduct will be on display.
- The strands of SILS Ethos will be on display and should be referred to positively during lessons.

Developing World-Class Teachers

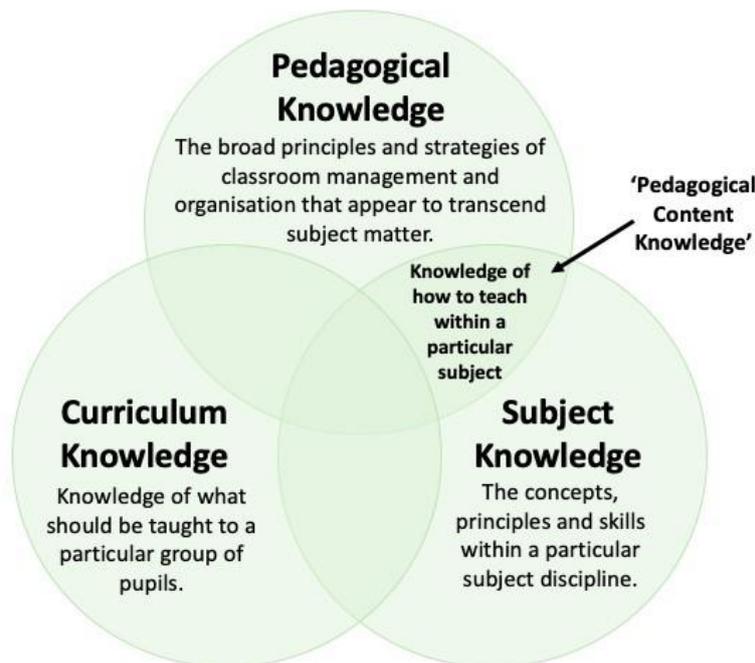
“If we create a culture where every teacher believes they need to improve, not because they are not good enough but because they can be even better, there is no limit to what we can achieve.”

Dylan

William Professional Development Outline

The aim of all professional development at SILS is to support staff on their journey to becoming expert practitioners. We recognise that expert teachers possess powerful mental models, enabling them to have maximum impact on their pupils’ learning. Mental models refer to both what teachers know and how this knowledge is organised to guide decision and action in the classroom (Schempp, 2002).

There are several categories of knowledge that expert teachers possess, namely: Curricular Knowledge, Pedagogical Knowledge, Subject Knowledge and Pedagogical Content Knowledge.



Subject knowledge is not usually taught in its original form, as stored in the teacher’s memory. Rather, it must be transformed into ‘pedagogical content knowledge’. During this transformation, the teacher may elaborate on the subject content knowledge by identifying different representations and reshaping the knowledge into a teachable form to make it more comprehensible to students.

Pedagogical content knowledge therefore consists of the distinctive bodies of knowledge *for teaching*. It is the blending of subject content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics within a subject are

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most effectively organised, represented and adapted to the diverse abilities of learners, and presented for instruction (Shulman, 1987).

Weekly Professional Development

All staff at SILS attend weekly professional development every Tuesday after-school from 3pm - 4:30pm. The exception is when there is a whole school meeting. The SILS sessions usually fall into one of the following three areas:

- **Whole-Staff CPD** - Led by the Teaching and Learning team
- **Cluster Leads CPD** - Led by Cluster Leads
- **SLT led CPD** - Led by Senior Leaders

Whole-Staff CPD sessions consist of training on whole-school teaching and learning priorities. The aim of these sessions is to support teachers to develop their practice in these areas by providing a grounding in theory, research and best-practice which is built upon in CPD sessions and coaching.

Weekly Co-Planning Sessions

All **subject teams** are expected to meet with all Teaching Assistants (TAs) on a weekly basis for co-planning sessions. The aim of these sessions is for teachers and TAs to develop both their subject and pedagogical content knowledge through focused and collaborative discussion, often focused on a particular area of content that is due to be taught in the following weeks.

Some of the reflective questions that subject teachers might consider as part of these sessions are as follows:

- What is the prerequisite knowledge that will enable pupils to access this content?
- How do we most effectively explain this content to pupils? Which analogies, models, illustrations, representations, examples or non-examples will best help them to understand the concepts or ideas?
- Is there any new vocabulary or terminology that will need to be explicitly taught to pupils?
- What are the key misconceptions or difficulties that pupils will have in relation to this content?

How do we aim to raise and resolve these?

Lesson Drop-Ins and Feedback

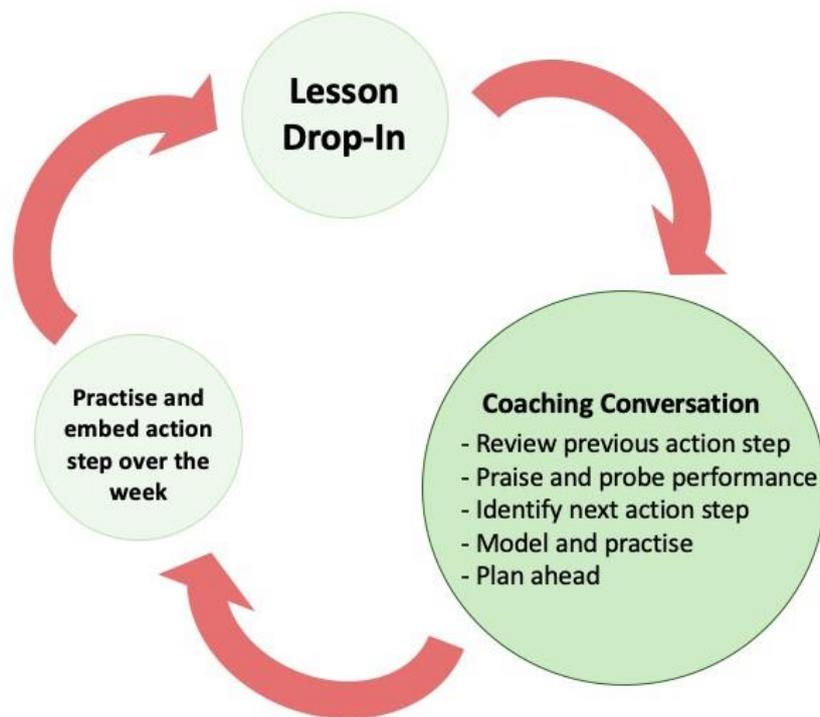
At SILS, we have an open-door policy in all classrooms and welcome observers in every lesson. We believe that the process of observing our colleagues, providing feedback and reflecting on our own practice leads to the on-going development of both ourselves and others.

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We encourage all SILS teachers to carry out learning walks as best practice. Following the drop-in, the observing teacher should send a short email providing some feedback to the teacher who was observed. This feedback email might include all or some of the following: the observing teacher's key takeaways from the lesson, a 'quick fix', an area for development or some specific praise.

Coaching at SILS

Instructional coaching is a form of teacher development advocated in Leverage Leadership (Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, 2016). A regular, frequent and ongoing cycle of short observations and action-based follow-up conversations help teachers to develop specific aspects of their practice. One-to-one coaching is tailored to each teacher's needs. Coaching at SILS follows the 'See It, Name It, Do It' model, and is most often used to develop teachers' pedagogical knowledge, where this includes knowledge pertaining to classroom management.



Rationale and Approach

According to Ambition Institute, in terms of impact on student outcomes, instructional coaching has a better evidence base than any other form of CPD. No other form of professional development can be as tailored and as effective at rapidly improving classroom practice. Coaches are chosen based on their experience and expertise in the classroom. All coaches receive coaching training at the beginning of the academic year and a refresher session at the mid-point of the year. Coaches are required to complete a coaching tracker that records their observations and actions steps each week (see Appendix). These are monitored by a member of the core coaching team for quality assurance.

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Who receives Coaching?

The following members of staff receive weekly coaching at SILS:

- All staff new to SILS in their first 6-12 weeks
- All ECTs and trainees for the duration of their training or induction year
- Any other teachers who would benefit from additional support to improve their practice

Coaching Observations

Coaching observations take place once per week for a minimum of 15 minutes. Whilst the class being observed can change over time, it is expected that the same class be observed for a minimum of one half-term in order to embed practices and to ensure observable impact and progress.

Before the first coaching observation, the coach and teacher should decide which class is going to be observed. This might be based on:

- The availability of the coach to observe according to their timetable.
- The coachee's report of the class which they are having the most difficulty with.

The feedback meeting will also be timetabled, ideally no more than 48 hours after the observation. Both the coach and the trainee should continually familiarise themselves with the Teach Like a Champion technique in order to build a common language for the coaching dialogue. The SILS Coaching Reference Document will also be of use for the coach when selecting the action step (see appendix).

Practice-Led Feedback

After the coaching observation, coaches deliver a follow-up feedback session that will last approximately 30-45 minutes. In this meeting, coachees will be given a **weekly action step** that has been identified by the coach as the highest leverage means of improving that teacher's practice.

An important feature of the feedback sessions is that of **deliberate practice**: coachees will be expected to repeatedly practise and refine their action step to ensure that it is automated and embedded in their teaching practice *before* they re-enter the classroom. Coaches support this process by providing iterative feedback, with coachees re-practising the action step each time based on this feedback.

Preparing Action Steps – Further Guidance

In advance of the feedback meeting, the coach should review their notes made during the observation and decide what the highest leverage action step will be to move the teachers practice forward.

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- Action Steps are written as **‘What and Why’** with bullet points explaining **‘How’** a teacher might achieve the action step. Coaches do not have to use all of the bullet points when writing action steps and can mix and match as needed to describe how the specific teacher will achieve the action step.

If crafting an action step outside of the Scope and Sequence document, the coach should ensure that it meets the criteria of a successful action step:

- **Observable and Practice-able:** Action steps must be observable in action so that when the coach enters the classroom, they would know almost immediately whether the teacher had implemented the action step. The coach would be able to tell right away whether more coaching around the action was needed or whether the teacher is ready to learn another habit of great teaching. Being observable also makes the action step practice-able: the teacher could easily practice prior to teaching again.
- **Highest Leverage:** There could be a number of action steps that would improve the teacher’s practice, but the one action step identified needs to address the most urgent challenge in the classroom.
- **Bite-sized:** Action steps should enable teachers to go back to their classroom and do it right away. To determine whether a granular action step is granular enough, ask yourself, “Could this action step be accomplished in one week?” If not, the action step isn’t small enough.

Support and Challenge

- **Individual PPA sessions** – *timetabled time will be given to plan lessons*
- **Weekly Co –Planning Sessions**– *Weekly co-planning time will be used to share lesson content and delivery sequence with TAs*
- **SLT led CPD Sessions** – *to reinforce, high quality delivery, seating plans, routines for learning, quality of planning and record keeping. Reviewed on a regular basis.*
- **Formal Lesson Observations/Learning Walk/Book Scrutiny**