

Teaching

	Daily Review		Monthly Review
	Asking Questions		Checking pupil understanding
	Small Steps		Guided Practice
	Models		Success
	Scaffolding		Independence

Environment

	Noise		Clutter
	Design, don't decorate		Learning Behaviour Promotion

Ethos & Culture

	Positive & Restorative		Stakeholder Engagement
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Planning and Assessment

	Adapted for all children		Prepared
	Timely assessment		Purposeful & Targeted



The Flourish Federation

Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
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Rationale

At The Flourish Federation, we want to lay the foundations to promote lifelong learning. We expect that our pupils will learn self-respect and respect for others; resilience in dealing with life's challenges and accept responsibilities for their own actions. Our pupils will be encouraged to actively participate in their own learning and collectively celebrate and recognise their achievements as well as successes of their peers.

We are committed to constantly seeking new ways – supported by research and evidence – by which we can improve the quality of learning for our pupils; meeting their individual needs and allowing them to be successful learners. Much of this is based on Rosenshine's Principals In Actions as well as other research and evidence-led studies.

Our policy provides guidance and support to all teaching staff, support staff and volunteers, so that they can reflect upon their own practice and ensure every pupil is able to access the best learning opportunities in order to achieve their full potential and contribute positively to our school community.

The Policy is structured into 4 over-arching sections: Teaching, Environment, Ethos & Culture, and Planning & Assessment. These are then broken down into smaller focus areas. Our expectation is that these are used as the backbone of teaching across the Flourish Federation, facilitating teachers and staff in better understanding the role of cognition in learning, and setting a high, achievable set of standards in their classroom practice.



The Flourish Federation

Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

1. Teaching

1.1 Daily Review

The daily review builds on prior learning; recapping on the previous session. We do this by returning to prior learning and building steps to the next part of the sequence. This ensures that basic skills are over-learned and become automatic – moving from working memory to long-term and freeing memory capacity. When skills are over-learned, this supports the development of fluency.

Staff should anticipate that pupils will forget previously taught knowledge/skills and make prior learning active/reactivated. Prior learning needs to be active in our working memory if we are adding more layers/complexity to it.

1.2 Weekly & Monthly Review

“It’s a strongly evidenced phenomenon that student’s secure stronger long-term recall if they engage in retrieval practice with a set of ideas after some time has passed. Rosenshine suggests that more effective teachers include periodic reviews of material learnt in the last week or the last month to attenuate the rate of forgetting, supporting students to retain accurate schema in the long term. It also helps to make connections between ideas if a review samples a range of knowledge in an integrated manner. The challenge is to embed review processes into your routine whilst also keeping track of the path through the curriculum.”

Tom Sherrington, Rosenshine’s Principals in Action

The goal of weekly and monthly review is to support the development of creative, reflective and adaptive learners. The process of weekly and monthly is to ensure that previously learnt material and skills are not forgotten and reduce the natural process of forgetting. Frequent revisiting allows children to create expanded networks of ideas. This makes it easier to problem-solve as less space is needed in the short-term memory. This needs to be supported by a variety of forms of retrieval practices such as quizzes, multiple choice questions, making your own questions and answering them, or having someone ask you three questions about a topic. Throughout the teaching process, practitioners should revisit and model with appropriate subject-specific/relevant vocabulary.



The Flourish Federation

Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

1.3 Asking Questions

Questioning has a dual purpose, allowing pupils to practice and practitioners to formatively assess. This allows teachers to know how successful the learning has been.

“Teaching without formative assessment is like painting with your eyes closed.”

Craig Barton

Questions allow pupils to explain processes and narrate their thinking but this needs effective modelling and planning. Questions should be clear, direct and with purpose, with thinking opportunities and an appropriate time to answer. Teachers should give opportunities for pupils to explore answers in more depth – probing, scaffolding and subtle directing.

Examples of questioning are:

- Cold calling
- No-opt-out
- Show-me boards
- Say it again better
- Whole class response
- Think, pair, share
- Probing

More information for each of these, please see Tom Sherrington’s *Rosenshine’s Principals In Action*, pages 28 to 31 and pages 98 to 109 in Tom Sherrington’s *Teaching Walkthrus Bk 1*

Using the Question Matrix (and similar models)

The Question Matrix is a practical tool for developing high-quality teacher and pupil questioning. It supports staff in planning and modelling a wide range of question types—from simple recall to deeper analytical and evaluative prompts—ensuring that pupils are encouraged to think hard, articulate reasoning and build metacognitive awareness. The matrix can also be used to help pupils generate their own increasingly sophisticated questions, supporting our aims around oracy, reasoning and formative assessment.



The Flourish Federation Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

1.4 Checking for Understanding

Great teaching entails regularly checking for understanding. The best approaches allow practitioners to be confident in the course-correcting decisions they make, and take as little time as possible so they can maximise the time students spend learning.

It is imperative that teachers gain feedback about what part of the learning may need revisiting/reteaching/more practice. By checking understanding and effectively acting upon this, students are more likely to elaborate – strengthening connections and improving the long term retention of knowledge and skills. This also enforces the idea of presenting material in small steps, breaking down understanding and learning into smaller chunks to help avoid misconceptions. This is especially true when new learning doesn't build on prior knowledge or with children who have weak foundations. Checking understanding can work as a general overview of support teaching instruction but also a forensic focus to maximise success and directly links to the area of planning and assessment within this document.

1.5 Small Steps

“Rosenshine suggests that more effective teachers recognise the need to deal with the limitations of working memory and succeed in breaking down concepts and procedures into small steps.”

Tom Sherrington, Rosenshines Principals in Action

Our Curriculum documents at The Flourish Federation, are carefully designed to directly support the points below, in-line with the aims of the National Curriculum. They build on prior learning and are broken down into small, sequential steps. Built within these documents are also inclusion baselines, ensuring that practitioners know the pre-requisite knowledge needed for each child to move forward in their learning.

- Identify pre-requisite knowledge
- Identify the most basic steps first
- Identify the series of next steps
- Design instructional inputs
- Design practise tasks



The Flourish Federation Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

1.6 Models

Models provide a concrete explanation for pupils and can be in the following forms:

- Physical representation of the task
- Conceptual models
- Explicit narration of the thought process

Models are highly effective in providing visual stimulus for learning but they need to be carefully considered and purposeful in order to be effective, and an effective teacher will use many models within their teaching.

At the start of a step in learning, a fully-modelled representation should be provided and partial models should only be used in the process of the teaching sequence. Successful teaching will mean that the use of models can be gradually reduced until the child can apply their knowledge and skills independently.

1.7 Scaffolding

“Crucially the metaphor for ‘scaffolding’ embeds the idea that, when ready, the supports are withdrawn. Scaffolding always comes down; it is only temporary and must not become relied upon in the long run. Designing scaffolds is a key element of curriculum planning”

Tom Sherrington, Teaching Walkthrus Bk 1

Whilst scaffolding is an important part of the learning journey, it should always be noted that this is a temporary process and will look different throughout the room, dependent on the needs of the pupils. It is a form of guided practice that, through effective teaching, supports children to be more independent. Some common and useful tools might include:

- Model texts/writing frames/Word banks/Toolkits
- Pictorial and abstract exemplars
- Prompts
- Checklists
- Partially completed examples
- Adaptive recording, including the use of technology



The Flourish Federation Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified

8th December 2025

Review

October 2026

“One misconception around concreteness fading is that it’s about using real-life contexts—but teaching fractions through the lens of a basketball game is just as likely to increase distraction and cognitive load. Concrete scaffolds should be as lightweight as possible to perform their role.

Finally, concrete scaffolds (including analogies) are incomplete by definition, and so as soon as they have served their purpose, we should gradually dismantle them and help students to appreciate their limitations.”

Peps Mccrea

1.8 Guided Practice

Guided practice allows teachers to use scaffolding and modelling to be close to the pupil(s), facilitating their understanding and creating a path by which the practitioner can systematically retreat as pupils build confidence. This should be one of the primary methods of introducing information to a whole group and, if successful, will allow the pupils to develop a sense of motivational success. Guided practice needs to take into account prior knowledge and level of ability, pitched at a suitable level to engage and challenge pupils yet maintaining a high level of personal or group achievement.

This system should take into account cognitive load, ensuring that the guiding tasks are specific to the desired outcome and focussing on the small steps. This repeated practice of smaller steps needs to be achieved before they are assimilated into more complex tasks.

A core component of the process of guided practice, moving onto independence, would be the model of ‘*I do it, We do it, You do it*’.

1.9 Success

“Securing success is not about making things easier for pupils. It is about helping them do something they couldn’t do before.”

Peps Mccrea

Research suggests that the optimal level of success is around 80%. Below this, the students are getting too much wrong; they are effectively practising errors and losing motivation. This can lead to areas having to be retaught and misconceptions having to be addressed.

By moving purposefully around the classroom, practitioners can spot successful learning in real time and recognise it meaningfully with pupils. Reliance on observation



The Flourish Federation Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

from a static point within the learn environment or questioning alone does not give a clear insight into personal successes and can devalue the pupils.

- **Get there first** – A clear learning outcome doesn't leave success open to interpretation; Children know what they need to do to succeed.
- **Use the right metric** – Make the celebration of success bespoke to the pupil - talk about *what* they know or are *able to do* rather than task completion.
- **Self-reference** – All pupils are individual and measure their success from their own starting point.

Formative assessment is an integral part of success – do not be afraid to go back and recover the learning where is not successful, strengthening the foundations of their knowledge. You should try to identify where the barrier to success has been and the lesson should be adapted to remove this. This may require simply more practice or using a varied approach to reteach.

1.10 Independence

This happens more rapidly for confident students but is necessary for everyone.

Critically, knowing your pupils will directly support you in making good judgements for when students should transition from guided to independent practice. In addition, to move from independent working to independent fluency, pupils should be given ample opportunities to perform tasks by themselves.

At this point, pupils should be able to access the work by drawing on their own knowledge to determine whether they need the support of resources/manipulatives in order to be successful in a task. They can rely on recall from memory and increase fluency by repeatedly engaging in processes that reinforce connections and retrieval pathways.

Where this is successful, pupils should then be able to generate their own feedback and set challenging goals. As practitioners, we should support children in learning the strategies for this.



The Flourish Federation Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

2. Environment

“During periods of sensory overload our brains are not working as efficiently because precious resources are being overstimulated by clutter, technology, or multitasking. This can lead to an increase level of confusion. Feeling tired is also a sign of sensory overload. When there is a lot of stimuli coming at us at one time, our brains exhaust faster reducing stamina.”

Jennifer Guttman Psy.D.

2.1 Noise

“The findings show that noisy conditions have direct negative effects on learning, particularly language and reading development, as well as causing indirect problems to learners through distracting or annoying them”

Pamela Woolner and Elaine Hall, Noise in Schools: A Holistic Approach to the Issue

Noise in the classroom should be carefully considered and planned, and the level of appropriateness will always vary. It should take into account the specific needs of children as well as the activity type.

There will be times when collaborative approaches should be encouraged and this will naturally increase the volume within a learning environment. However, the level of noise should not be detrimental to success, nor a distraction from the learning that should be taking place.

Music can be an effective tool to aid concentration and control noise levels in the learning environment. This should be carefully selected and ideally without recognisable vocals, unless the lyrics are a contextual part of the learning. Ideal music is generally recognised as ambient, lo-fi study music, etc. Choices of music should enhance the learning environment, not be a complicating factor

Always be aware of those children for whom noise can be a sensory trigger and provide noise reduction strategies for them if required.

Where independent working is happening, all discussion should be at a low level (inclusive of adults) and relevant to the task.



The Flourish Federation Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

2.2 Clutter

“The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak.”

Hans Hofmann

- Learning environments should be clutter free. Resources should be readily available in clearly identifiable locations
- Personal belongings should be kept to a minimum
- When bringing things in, think about how it will impact on the environment. Does it contribute to the child’s learning?
- Less is more
- All areas should be easily accessible with clear pathways – this includes in cloakroom areas and corridors
- It is everyone’s responsibility to help keep both classrooms and communal areas and walkways tidy and clutter-free

2.3 Design, don’t decorate

- Displays should inspire and be purposeful/relevant to the current learning
- They do not need to be all-singing and all-dancing but something that the children should access to enhance their learning
- Cognitive overload should be considered – avoid overcrowding and consider the arrangement of materials
- We all have personalities and interests and there is no harm in displaying this discretely, however it should not overtake the function of the learning environment. Themes should be carefully considered for their calming impact on the environment
- Displays should be maintained and not rag-tailed; they need to be well-presented at all times
- Displays are there to support children – make sure that they can read the fonts and that they are sized appropriately for all to see
- There should be models of handwriting within the classrooms and this should be reflective of age expectations across the federation (Lead-ins for EYFS/Yr 1, joining/cursive from Yr2)
- Visual timetables (Using Widgit) and behaviour charts should be visible to all pupils at the front of the classroom

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

- Consideration should be in place where displays use areas other than designated boards to avoid overstimulation and ensure that they are still an accessible resource

2.4 Learning Behaviour Promotion



The learning behaviours are central to our federation's ethos and vision. They help children to understand how they learn and the skills that they need to do so successfully.

For effective learning to take place, children must be curious, engaged and develop the skills that they need to take ownership of their learning. These begin with the Early Years effective characteristics of learning and are built upon as children progress through the federation – this means that the language of the learning behaviours is embedded from the moment children start with us in Reception and is consistently used all the way to the end of Year 6.

“To learn well, children must approach opportunities with curiosity, energy and enthusiasm. Effective learning must be meaningful to a child, so that they are able to use what they have learned and apply it in new situations. These abilities and attitudes of strong learners will support them to learn well and make good progress in all the Areas of Learning and Development.”

Birth to 5 Matters

With this in mind, we have agreed classroom displays that should celebrate the values and the children who achieve them. Values assemblies are held across both schools, and the children are encouraged to explain to adults why they have earned their stickers – please stop and ask them!

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

The language of the values should be an integral part of the learning across the federation and within school life, fully immersing the children in this aspect of our culture and ethos.

3. Ethos and Culture

In order for children to have the greatest chances of success we recognise, as per Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, that varying factors need to be met. We have an increasingly diverse community and recognise that all children have varying life experiences and deficits in certain areas of the pyramid.



3.1 Positive and Restorative

The Flourish Federation promotes a calm and purposeful climate for learning where pupils feel they belong and that their contributions are valued. We promote personal resilience and emotional wellbeing of the whole school community, recognising that in order to do so there needs to be a positive culture. Restorative approaches are used to build, maintain and repair relationships (Mainstream Core Standards).

Negative behaviour is rarely the result of pure choice and that there is often a deeper context behind things – whether it be based on SEND, SEMH or external factors – and that is a key way that children will choose to communicate a need with you.



The Flourish Federation

Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

We have high expectations of behaviour and this should be modelled by all – with an emphasis on mutual respect. Behaviour is the responsibility of all members of staff and approaches should be consistent and in-line with school policy.

Key aspects to consider:

- **We speak to children with warmth, patience and respect.** A calm, gentle tone helps pupils feel safe, valued and ready to engage.
- **We avoid sarcasm and choose language that supports understanding.** Children respond best when communication is sincere and clear, and avoiding sarcasm helps ensure they feel secure and confident in what is being asked of them.
- **We meet each child as they are in that moment.** Staff approach situations without judgement, setting aside past incidents or personal feelings so every child feels understood and treated fairly.
- **Every day is a genuine fresh start.** We show children that we believe in them, helping them move forward positively and strengthening their sense of belonging.

3.2 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is key to the success and reputation of the school, and directly links in with pupil outcomes – engaged parents will often lead to increased parental support and engagement; engaged governors are able to knowledgeably steer the school forward alongside the leadership team; engaged pupils behave, are happy and are eager to learn.

There are more stakeholders than we have listed here, but these are the key ones that we have to consider on a day-to-day basis.

Children

The foundation of our school. We are very lucky to have incredible children across the federation and they deserve the absolute best education – as do all children, of course.

Communication with children should always be in-line with the prior section of this policy – positive, restorative, and should always be considered with compassion.

Families

As a federation, we have an outstanding reputation for how closely we work with families and our overall accessibility. We admit families, not just children, and building a positive relationship with all is vital to success, recognising the important role that parents and carers play in the development of a child. Unfortunately, there is national evidence that parent engagement is struggling at present in schools, and we need to



The Flourish Federation

Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

work against this trend and bring them positivity into our fold – supporting both the child and the school.

We always encourage that communications – particularly when of trickier content – are face to face in order to resolve matters quickly and negate impact on the pupil's learning. Communication of such nature should never be communicated over a messaging service unless with explicit permission from Senior Leadership.

As schools, we make different use of ClassDojo and the School Website to communicate learning and there is an expectation that this content is updated, as agreed, by the class teachers. In the instance of the website, we would encourage that this is signposted via ClassDojo to ensure that parents are aware of the class pages.

SENCo

The SENCo role is to co-ordinate SEND provision across the federation, providing advice and guidance as appropriate – this also includes for behavior strategies where SEN is a decisive factor.

There are set times to discuss SEND progress and attainment through pupil progress meetings. However, where there is a concern around potential SEND need, then there are referral forms available which require completing, and also SEN drop-ins. We encourage pro-active discussions between the class teacher and the SENCo, and in most instances it will be the role of the class teacher to open communications with them.

It is the responsibility of the SENCo to pursue referrals and engage with outside agencies, however tasks may be delegated to the class teacher or support staff where they are better placed to know the child's individual needs.

It is not the role of any member of staff to diagnose children and caution should be had with regards to how concerns are relayed to parents. In the instance of assessments and screenings, these should always use up-to-date information and be communicated with parents first. This could be the class teacher or the SENCo but should always be agreed prior to the conversation.

FLO

The FLO role is to help support our families and be that bridge between home and school. They can signpost advice and support, and have access to a range of services within the community. The FLO directly supports pupil wellbeing and works closely with the SENCo and SLT to co-ordinate approaches. They play a vital role in supporting the fulfilment of the Hierarchy of Needs and are an integral part to our success with families.



The Flourish Federation Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

There are wellbeing referral forms available for more significant need, but much of the liaison with the FLO will be verbal.

Please remember that the role of the FLO should be directed to supporting our families and that staff have their own support network which includes Mental Health First Aiders, free counselling services and SLT with an open-door policy.

Governors

The governor role is a purely strategic one. They monitor how we are carrying out our roles on a strategic level to ensure that the children are given the very best opportunities to succeed in their educational journey. This is done through link governors, monitoring days and Headteacher Reports. Whilst they are not there to make judgements on the quality of teachers, they may draw upon resources to inform judgements of overall effectiveness of the school and that it fits in the strategic vision set between SLT and the Governing Body.

4. Planning & Assessment

4.1 Adapted for all children

One of the key duties is for the school to use their 'best endeavours' to support children and young people with SEN. (This applies to mainstream and alternative provision settings.) This means doing everything that could reasonably be expected of them.

Special Educational Needs Mainstream Core Standards

It is essential that children are looked at as individuals when planning/adapting learning; small steps should be identified which are relevant to where the children are in their learning journey and the delivery should be tailored so that it is accessible to all children.

Within the Federation curriculum documents, it is acknowledged that children may not be able to access all areas of the curriculum at an age-appropriate level. This may or may not be linked to an SEN need (For instance a child may excel in Maths or English and yet may struggle with the creativity in Art). In this instance, the curriculum document – which is directly linked to the aims of the National Curriculum and the teaching of skills – highlights the baseline for inclusion with an expectation that this is built upon. It is not a ceiling for progression.



The Flourish Federation

Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

Whilst there will always be occasions when it is appropriate to differentiate the ability or type of task to compliment the teaching, it should always be after the consideration of whether scaffolding (of varied types) would be a more effective approach in supporting all children to access the same learning outcomes.

Teaching should aspire to mastery through teacher-led, whole-class teaching; common lesson content for all pupils; and use of manipulatives and representations.

Practitioners should consider what needs to be in place for children to be able to access the learning and resources should be carefully chosen to add understanding (rather than subtract or confuse).

There will be cases where teaching needs to be bespoke and outside of the classroom, but this needs to be carefully considered and only in agreement with leadership, the SENCo and the child's parents/carers.

Circulation of adults is important in the classroom and it is expected within the federation that support staff are used effectively to move the learning forward. The adults should be *present* during the learning and should enable learning rather than learning alongside the children or completing tasks unrelated to learning support.

4.2 Prepared

“By failing to prepare you are preparing to fail.”

Benjamin Franklin

We do not expect everyone to be perfect 100% of the time but we do expect clear organisation and preparation. This allows a very busy job to run smoothly. Being prepared allows for the following:

- **Quality First Teaching** – If lessons are not effectively prepared and organised then there is the high probability of missed learning opportunities. Resources for adults and children (planning, apparatus, worksheets, models, etc) should be organised in advance of the lesson and should remove the need for admin tasks to be completed during the lesson.
- **Communication** – Being prepared allows for communication between the staff team so that all staff understand their role in how to move the pupils forward in the day's learning. Also, in the instance of absence, it allows for plans to be shared with colleagues or supply who need to cover. We expect staff to be actively and appropriately communicating with the roles across the school.



The Flourish Federation

Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified

8th December 2025

Review

October 2026

- **Deadlines & Accountability** - As a federation, we expect for plans to be prepared the week before they are to be taught and available on the shared drive. These can (and should) still be adapted to address formative assessment as the week progresses. All deadlines set by leadership are there to ensure that our monitoring systems are running effectively and that we are meeting the needs of the children; When they are missed, this has a negative impact. If deadlines are unable to be met, leadership must have been alerted in good time so that effective support mechanisms can be put in place.
- **Work/life Balance** – When there are routines in place, it allows you to fulfil your role effectively and feel in control of your workload. We understand that school roles can be overwhelming – organisation and preparation are good self-help skills in managing this.

4.3 Timely Assessment

Formative Assessment

Across KS1 & KS2, we use Feedback and Assessment books to record day-to-day assessment. This form of formative assessment is crucial to planning next steps and addressing misconceptions. In most instances, this is completed within the classroom, however where this has not been possible, it needs to be completed within a timely manner so that it can then inform the next part in the sequence of learning.

Feedback and Assessment books are designed to be a supporting tool for formative assessment and should alleviate workload from excessive marking. In instances of changes in staff and monitoring, they can also support the snap-shots of learning within specific subjects. They are the tool of the practitioner and will vary in their uses. Each Key Stage has specific advice for how these can be used most effectively.

Summative Assessment

Methods of summative assessment vary across the federation, dependent on the ages of children and, in some situations, the subject. There are specified deadlines that are shared with staff and it is an expectation that these are met.

Summative assessment helps the school to track progress and attainment across a pupil's learning journey, ensuring that they get the correct provision. It will also help practitioners to identify areas that may not have been taught or may need revisiting later on in the year.



The Flourish Federation Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified

8th December 2025

Review

October 2026

4.4 Purposeful and targeted

“Helping students to learn the stuff we teach at school is one of the most challenging tasks ever. When we add complexity to the learning experience, we reduce our ability to control for success. This is partly due to cognitive constraints: attention is a zero-sum game—if part of a task isn't adding to student learning, it's subtracting from it.”

Peps Mccrea

Whole Class Teaching

When considering hooks and models that support teaching, they should always be purposeful to the learning outcomes – be it knowledge or skills. For example, teaching fractions with a chocolate bar may have its place, but when it becomes more about the chocolate than the teaching of fractions, it loses its purpose. Equally with writing, books and texts should be appropriately considered, ensuring that it meets the purpose of the learning.

Learning sequences should be driven by purpose and, upon reflection and, from both formative and summative assessment, be adapted to meet the specific needs of children – a lesson used last year is unlikely to be directly appropriate to a new cohort and will need either adapting or a new approach.

Interventions

Most learning should be promoted and supported through responsive and adapted teaching within the classroom. However, interventions do have their place. The timing of these needs careful consideration so that children do not miss whole class learning as this then facilitates them falling further behind. Where interventions are in place, they should be tracked carefully and where limited or no progress is made, they should be adapted or stopped. It is the class teacher's responsibility to track the progress of interventions (and where appropriate, plan) and liaise with the SENCo as appropriate for guidance and support.

Use of Teaching Assistants

Whilst very expensive, teaching assistants can also be our most valuable resource within the classroom. Their role should be to enhance the learning and not become a passive learner alongside the children. We should consider the following when considering the deployment of our support staff.

- Teaching assistants must be aware of the learning outcome for the lesson



The Flourish Federation

Teaching & Learning Policy

Ratified	8 th December 2025	Review	October 2026
----------	-------------------------------	--------	--------------

- They should be aware of the specific needs within the classroom (academic as well as SEND/SEMH)
- Targeted support within the classroom (i.e. 1-1, small group work), should focus on promoting independence as well as the specific learning outcomes
- TAs should be placed within the classroom in such a way as to have maximum impact (e.g. Mirroring the child for Little Wandle; alongside the children or gathering ideas on a whiteboard during Talk4Writing)
- Teaching assistants should be present within the classroom for the entirety of the lesson, and not completing administrative tasks
- Teachers are the line managers of their teaching assistants and are accountable for their deployment