



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Recommended by: Executive Principal (CEO)

Ratified by: Education & Committee



Signed:

Position on the Board: Chair of Education & Standards Committee

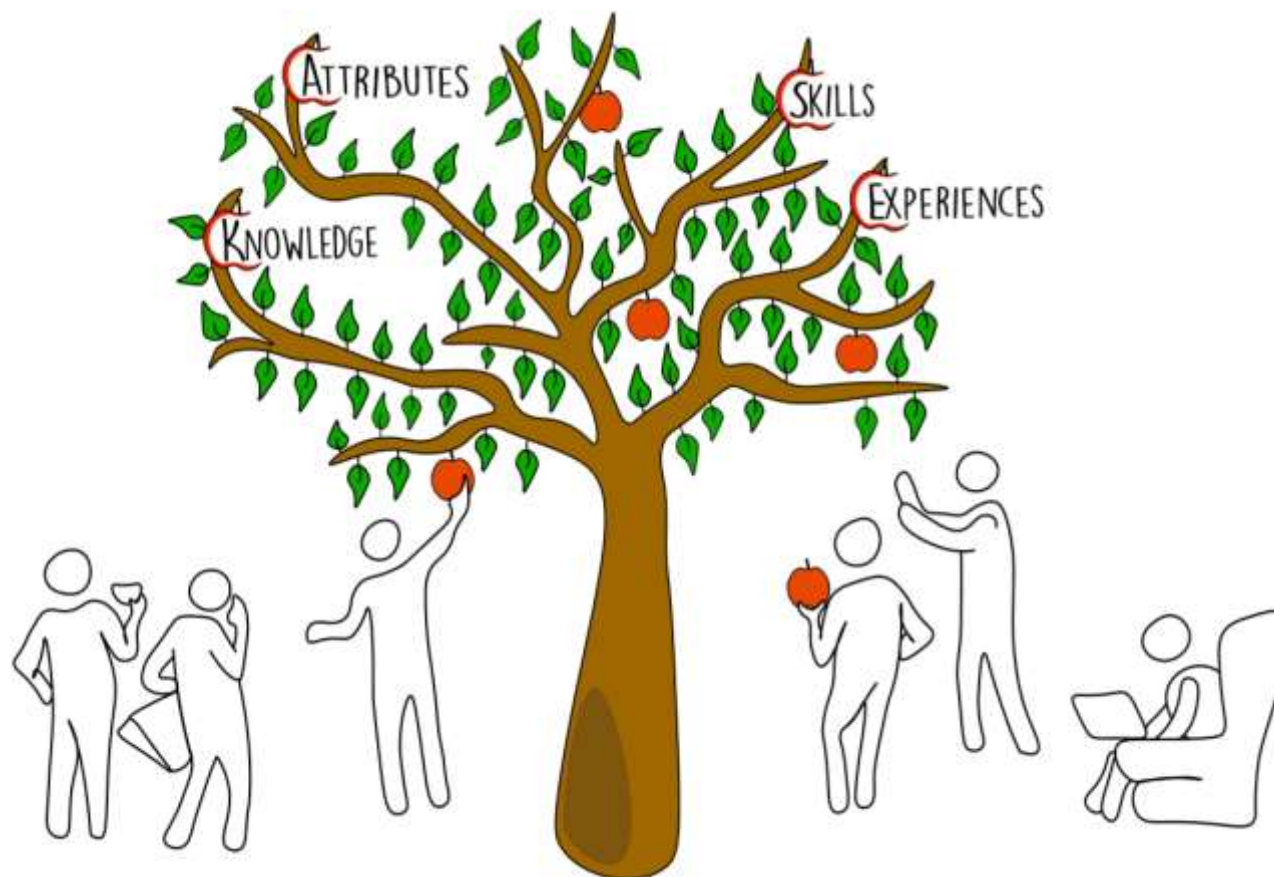
Ratification Date 3rd July 2024

Next Review: Summer Term 2027

Policy Tier (Central/Hub/School): Central

Teaching and Learning Policy

Central Region Schools Trust



Introduction:

As a Trust, originally founded by the Royal Society for the encouragement of arts, manufactures and commerce, Central Region Schools Trust continue to be committed to “The RSA education mandate” and how we promote its vision and ethos; the RSA has a strong tradition dating back to its inception in 1754 of innovative thinking and bringing creative, local solutions rooted within local communities to real world problems. All CRST schools are ‘mission-led’ and place value on individuals flourishing and social progress; in this context, we have worked together to agree a viable, evidence-informed definition of learning which works for our trust, our schools, and our pupils.

Our definition of learning shapes our mission and values, our approach to teaching and is embedded in our underpinning KASE principles and approach to the Curriculum.

‘As we formed the policy, we talked about learning for our pupils as more than knowing and rehearsing gobblets of information. For us it’s about the capacity for pupils to think hard and how they acquire and transfer knowledge and understanding to the unpredictable world beyond formal schooling.’

Alistair Smith, Learning consultant to the CRST

The Underpinning Principles of CRST Curriculum: KASE (Knowledge, Attributes, Skills & Experiences)

Our underpinning principles outline the **Knowledge**, **Skills** and **Experiences** that pupils are entitled to at CRST schools and the conditions in which our core **Attributes** of character will be nurtured, as we seek to develop exceptional learners who can thrive in an ever-changing world. We see each component of KASE as an entitlement for pupils. Our Curriculum is driven by developing expert subject knowledge alongside skills to support thoughtful critical thinkers who can communicate ideas and thoughts with clarity. Key to our curriculum vision is that pupils experience a wide range of cultural enrichment opportunities. In short, our entire curriculum (academic and wider curriculum) is underpinned by KASE Principles. **K** is for **Knowledge** – a knowledge-based curriculum developing subject confidence and expertise; **A** is for the **Attributes** we endeavour to nurture and develop – resilience, confidence, reflection and empathy; **S** is for **Skills** – developing subject skills and vital communication/literacy skills including a focus on oracy as well as skills of problem-solving and collaboration; and finally, **E** is for **Experiences** – ensuring pupils can access engaging enrichment experiences within and beyond the classroom.

Knowledge

The Knowledge entitlement comprises developing subject knowledge and expertise. Pupils should know, understand and have mastered the key concepts and questions related to, and arising from, each subject discipline. They should be able to Locate their experiences within a broader sense of society and understand the purpose and relevance of subject disciplines. Our schools should provide opportunities for dialogue within subjects to build and use subject specific vocabulary so pupils become fluent in subjects.

The Knowledge component of KASE is about teachers' subject and classroom craft. It's about teachers and their teams designing learning experiences which build essential knowledge. However, knowing stuff is not enough! To go beyond a memorisation curriculum, we also need to develop the personal qualities and attributes of character which will allow pupils to fully engage with their learning. We do so with deliberation.

Attributes

An attribute is a desirable personal quality. They are essential for our CRST context. We wish teachers to construct learning experiences which allow for desirable difficulties and spaces where pupils can demonstrate the willingness to persist and overcome difficulties in order to build their resilience. We wish to support pupils feeling confident about their learning and within wider curriculum contexts. We wish them to reflect upon, and learn from, their own and others' behaviours and learning. Many of our pupils accrue real benefit from engaging with, and developing appreciation of, other communities' cultures and values and to have opportunities to empathise and have compassion for other peoples' experiences and positions.

Skills

The RSA was conceived as a group to generate solutions to problems posed by commerce and industry; 'Powerful Thinking into Practical Action'. We wish our pupils to have the knowledge and related skills to generate solutions and problem-solve. A core generic skill is that of communicating effectively, in our case frequently and purposefully through different channels including discussion, presentation, debate and questioning. We will insist on pupils being able to access a variety of texts and write effectively for different purposes. Our subject leaders also focus on what the subject skills are which need to be deliberately taught and developed with our pupils across all phases.

Experiences

A key aspect of this is to support pupils to experience authentic agency and have leadership opportunities. We wish to extend opportunities for all pupils to take an active part in visits and trips which are beyond their own life experience or those of their school. We will ensure pupils can access meaningful and extended enrichment opportunities and can appreciate what Higher Education and employment can offer. We also will focus on ensuring pupils experience diversity and inclusivity at their time in CRST schools.

Through whole school initiatives we can help pupils become fully involved in ambitious projects which impacts on a wider audience than their peers, whilst in classes we can stretch through a range of experiences which challenge their view of themselves and their future, which engage and enthuse.

In summary, our curriculum **will enable pupils to develop their:**

Knowledge <i>to become...</i>	Attributes <i>which makes learners...</i>	Skills <i>which allow learners to be...</i>	Experiences <i>which are rich, enthusing, and engaging to support...</i>
• Expert • Fluent	• Confident • Resilient • Reflective • Empathetic	• Communicative (oracy/reading/writing) • Problem-solving • Collaborative	• Opportunity • Agency • Inclusivity & Diversity

10 Components to support Great Teaching within sequences of Learning: The Pedagogy

Component	Rationale	Delivery Implication for classroom teachers
1. <i>Access Prior Knowledge</i>	Access what the pupils already know and believe they need to know about a topic.	Use the beginning of learning episodes to establish what is already known – and by implication not known or possibly misunderstood – and what would be good to know.
2. <i>Make Connections and Identify Gaps</i>	Make the patterns and connections between episodes of learning explicit. Identify gaps in knowledge as part of the lesson.	Productivity should not be confused with learning. Doing lots of ‘stuff’ doesn’t equate to learning lots of stuff. Use transitions within and between lesson to revisit core ideas and essential understanding. Don’t move on without checking for understanding. Oracy is a great tool for supporting transitions: connecting and identifying gaps. Starts and ends of lessons/sequences are also important moments for connect (preview-review).
3. <i>Utilise Expert Modelling</i>	Demonstrate complex concepts, routines and responses and allow opportunities for pupils to do likewise.	Demonstrations can be teacher led or pupil led. Often the teacher – the Expert - will demonstrate or model a correct or best method before allowing pupils to ‘have a go.’ Slowing the Expert Modelling down and adding verbal commentary as you do so aids recall and understanding.
4. <i>Rehearsal and Revisits</i>	Connect new learning with old and build recall by going over material and revisiting core concepts in more depth.	Learning should never be a ‘one stop shop’ and yet perceived pressures of time mean that it often is. Plan to go over core material on a number of occasions both informally within the lesson and formally by devoting additional time to the topic. Beginnings and ends of lessons provide opportunities for preview and review and support ‘connections’.
5. <i>Integrate Powerful Questioning</i>	<i>Powerful</i> questions come from the teacher and the pupil. Such questions engage curiosity, challenge and extend thinking.	Think hard about the purpose of your questions and the circumstances in which they are asked. Do they stretch pupils’ thinking? Too often classroom questions in schools are

Component	Rationale	Delivery Implication for classroom teachers
		repetitive, low-level and addressed to a narrow group of pupils. Being really good with questions is a higher- level teacher skill.
6. Check understanding <i>Frequent Informal Checking</i>	Informal challenges and tests aid recall. They take a variety of forms and allow teachers and pupils to identify gaps in knowledge.	Challenges and tests can take a variety of forms from covering the page and trying to remember, quizzes, and recall games through to sitting mock tests with past papers. The key teacher strategy is to make such checking low stress, relevant and useful to learning sequences. This enables gaps to be identified and understanding to be checked.
7. Develop Metacognitive Awareness	Knowing about the process of learning and their own role in that process strengthens learner autonomy.	A pupil will never become more independent of the teacher if he or she doesn't understand the processes of learning. This is why simple classroom activities such as de-briefing, thinking aloud, and giving feedback on choice of methodology or helping explicitly with how to work out problems to get the answer. Think of it as developing learner self-awareness including supporting learner questioning.
8. Develop Enriched Vocabulary	Having the language is key to success; being able to articulate thoughts and communicate effectively is hugely empowering	Think about the language pupils will need for each topic in terms of tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary. How will this language be introduced, supported and reinforced within the sequence? Strategies such as talking through concept maps, introducing vocabulary into designed activities where relevant and practising use of relevant tier 3 vocabulary from that point, modelling high level talk and focussing on speaking like 'experts' in each subject ('How would a Geographer explain....?') all support developing vocabulary
9. Provide Purposeful Feedback and Guidance	Feedback needs to be easily understood and acted upon, relevant, and lead to improvement in understanding, behaviour or skill.	Feedback and marking are not one and the same. Feedback can and ought to be given in lessons orally, it can be recorded, it needn't be written. Whatever is said or written by the teacher should lead to a easily recognised action by the pupil. Guidance is about improvements in learning and, or, in attitudes to learning over time.
10. Allow for Practice and Preparation: support preparation & understanding of Key assessment points	Knowing more about the nature of assessment and how pupils can demonstrate their understanding in test and exams builds confidence and increases the likelihood of success.	Gaining qualifications can be a passport to an improved future. Practising for, and knowing about, the assessment system including tests and exams, is not our core purpose but it is something we owe it to pupils to help them with. This includes how to read questions and construct useful responses, how to manage revision and study and how to manage emotional states under stress.

The 10 Components of Great Learning and Teaching

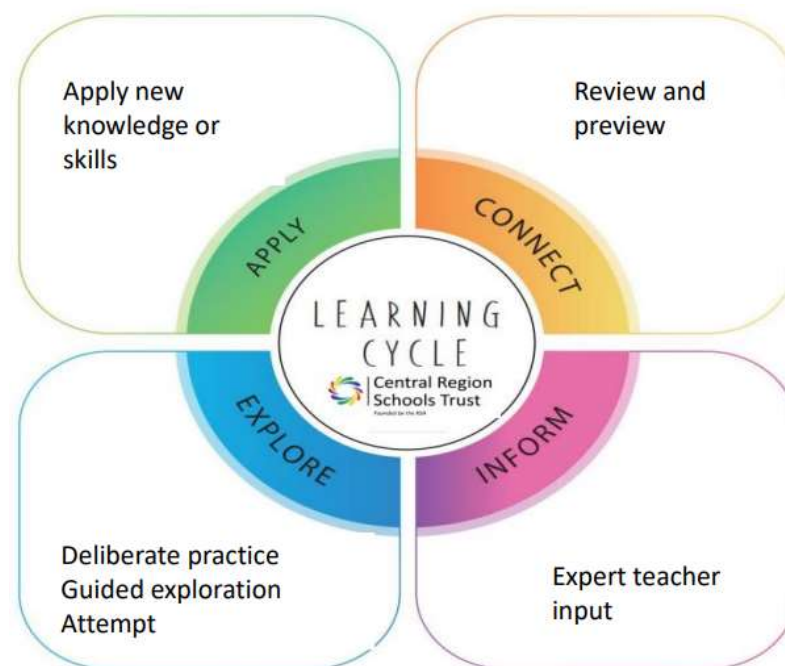
These 10 components support turning the KASE principles into practice within the classroom and CPD centres around these 10 components. Teacher subject expertise is vital. Dialogue is part of every CRST learning experience and built into sequences. Teachers strive to create and maintain a positive purposeful learning environment where both teacher expectations and pupil behaviours are high. High challenge low stress environments entail teachers scaffolding challenge by chunking and rehearsing learning until success becomes evident. **Competence develops pupil confidence.** These agreed components are delivered over a sequence.

“Our components were debated and agreed by a team of lead professionals who knew and understood learning and our schools and referred to the EEF toolkit.”

Executive Principal at CRST

Designing Great Learning - The cycle

Our recommended “Teaching Model” can be described as **a flexible cycle**; these components are within all sequences.



Stage of cycle	Intent	Implementation	Responsive Feedback	Considerations
1. Connect	- Review and Preview	- Purposeful beginning - Connect to previous learning and/or - Anticipate learning to come - And/Or can check for gaps	- Adjust inputs based on understanding and possible misunderstandings - Test the security of previous learning	- Do pupils know what they are learning and why? - Can they describe their previous learning on this topic? - Does the teacher know the key concepts to be taught? - Does the teacher know the likely pupil misconceptions and errors? Can the teacher adjust accordingly?
2. Inform Expert teacher input	- Provide new information (Input)	- Well-considered input from teacher/clear explanations - Teacher or pupil modelling	Adjust input based on pupil response, revisiting where necessary	- What is the best format for inputting new information? - How can teacher talk be made impactful? - How can modelling be utilised to make it accessible for all?
3. Explore	- Guided exploration Attempts Deliberate practice	- Pupils examine ideas guided by the activity or the teacher - Scaffolded cognitive load - Opportunities for pupils to make and correct errors - Opportunities for collaborative work - Opportunities for attempts and deliberate practice	- Design challenges within learning task based on challenge, load, memorability, rehearsal. - Introduce and embed appropriate vocabulary - Iterations of feedback based on observed progress - Design opportunities for collaboration	- How will the teacher support exploratory thinking without it become loose and unhelpful? - What needs to be included in the design of tasks which encourage exploratory and deep thinking? - How will Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary be embedded into the learning experience? How will pupils talk about their learning? - What is the guided attempts and deliberate practice that the pupils need to do in order to deepen learning before applying?
4. Apply	- Apply new knowledge or skills	- Demonstrate understanding or skill - Showcase progress	- Iterations of feedback based on observed progress - Stretch and challenge	What might be the best format for pupils to demonstrate an insight, understanding or skill?

				- How will pupils' learning be extended beyond task completion? Which are the best questions to ask? - Can the teacher encourage useful self and peer evaluation?
5. Re-Connect	- Preview and Review	- Purposeful ending - Anticipate learning to come - Consolidate today's learning	- Review what has been learned, how and why. - Revisit key points	- Can pupils describe their learning, particularly the key concepts or skills? - Are they able to use the essential vocabulary? - Can they explain how it links to previous and forthcoming learning?

"Our learning cycle allows teachers across all of our schools to think about and plan lessons which are structured, and which draw on what we know works best."

Principal of a Middle School

Curriculum Sequencing

We sequence our Curriculum based on the ordering of 'core concepts' within each subject discipline. The order of the 'what' within a curriculum is extremely important and discussed regularly at subject co-design team meetings. For each core concept we identify common misconceptions out of which fall likely errors. We ensure that within lessons foreseeable misconceptions and errors are discussed so they can be addressed. Where unforeseen misconceptions and errors arise, we anticipate, and our responsive learning delivery model allows teachers to use the moment as a whole class learning opportunity. For each taught topic there is a related vocabulary which we endeavour to enrich through oral responses.

Curriculum design is driven through our CRST Subject Co-Design Groups. CRST Teachers strive to become subject experts within the classroom. Subject knowledge and expertise is a vital part of subject co-design work: sharing expertise. All our schools in the Central Region Schools Trust have the development of Oracy as a priority within our underpinning principles is to ensure we have articulate and confident learners.

"Curriculum sequencing is important to our Co-Design Teams because it allows us to have in-depth professional conversations about the what, the how and the why of our teaching."

Sam McMonagle,
CRST Executive School Improvement Leader