



ALT BRIDGE SCHOOL

Curriculum, Assessment, Teaching and Learning (CATL) Policy

Reviewed By Natalie Menagh	17.10.22	Website & teacher shared drive
Approved by Governors	18.10.22	✓✓

Introduction

Alt Bridge School is specialist learning environment for students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). We cater for students with a broad ability range and some of our students achieve GCSE level qualifications by the end of Key Stage 4.

This policy draws together our whole school approaches to curriculum, assessment, teaching and learning. Through these approaches, we aim to provide a high quality of education to our students and to ensure that they achieve their best possible outcomes.

Aims of Policy

- To ensure a broad, balanced, enriched and ambitious curriculum which is accessible for all students
- To hold high expectations for our learners and carefully plan their learning journeys to ensure that they are well prepared for their next stages of education, employment or training
- To ensure students are successfully prepared for adulthood
- To enable those students, for whom it is relevant, to access qualifications which support their aspirations and planned outcomes
- To assess student progress and take action to improve learning outcomes for individual students where difficulties have been identified
- To capture evidence of learning and enable regular access to progress information for parents/carers
- To ensure students understand and remember key concepts through the application of effective teaching and learning strategies
- To monitor the progress students make towards their individual EHCP outcomes throughout the full range of our provision and work closely with parents and carers to plan and personalise support
- To monitor whether the outcomes for students are improving as a result of the additional provision being made for them
- To maintain regular continued professional development opportunities for all staff and ensure that teachers maintain strong subject knowledge for the subjects they teach

Curriculum

Curriculum Intent

Students at Alt Bridge School access a broad, balanced and engaging curriculum. Our curriculum intent is to ensure that our students are well prepared for adulthood

and are set up to achieve personal success in their chosen pathways. We aim to equip them with the knowledge they need to achieve their best possible outcomes. We recognise the importance of supporting the retention of information from one lesson to the next and building progressively and cumulatively on key knowledge and skills. We hold high expectations of, and for our students and work to instil in them, a commitment to continued learning.

Our students can expect equal opportunities through our educational provision, high quality teaching and learning, a broad range of subjects and support to develop positive mental health and well-being. At Alt Bridge School, students are able to access a range of additional provision which is tailored to meet individual needs in a timely way. We continually prepare students to contribute positively to society and we also teach them how to keep themselves safe and build resilience. It is important they know how to seek support and how to maintain positive connections with others.

The curriculum prepares students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences which they will encounter in adult life and promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum is enriched with a range of extra-curricular activities to promote health and well-being, provide challenge, engagement and social interaction. There is an opportunity for students to access GCSE courses, if relevant and appropriate to the students' individual aspirations. There are also a range of enrichment options during Key Stage 4 and Post-16 which enables students to gain recognised qualifications.

We use formative and summative assessments and internal monitoring cycles to regularly inform us about the impact of our curriculum and what the learning experience is like for our students.

Curriculum Structure

Our whole school curriculum is divided into clusters of subjects and provisions which hold a complimentary theme. Subjects within clusters work collaboratively to ensure coverage of the national curriculum. There is a curriculum leader for each of the clusters. The structure of the curriculum and the leadership is outlined in the table below.

Cluster name	Subjects	Leader
Innovation and Discovery	Maths, science, design technology	Mr J Austin
Language and Literature	English language and literature, MFL	Mrs S Angland
Thriving	PSHCE and SRE	Mr J Reynolds
Global	Geography, history and RE	Mr J Cook
Virtual	Computing	Mr G Reddin
Physical Development	PE, forest school and Duke of Edinburgh award	Mr J Lamb
Arts	Art & design, performing arts and music	Mrs L Beddows

Curriculum planning

The curriculum leaders are responsible for producing long and medium term planning for their subjects. These plans are shared with teachers across their clusters. When planning the curriculum over time, leaders consider the following;

- The engagement of learners with the topics
- The relevance of curriculum
- The key concepts that must be covered for learners within year groups and within subjects
- How subjects within the cluster can reinforce universally identified key concepts
- How all subjects can reinforce the school's reading strategy to ensure students are supported to become fluent readers
- The strength of progression available through the curriculum
- How to capitalise on opportunities to build on the extent of cultural experiences for students
- How to embed themes of equality and diversity through the curriculum
- How to provide themes relative to key safeguarding priorities
- To have consistency with a whole school class support resources
- How to have clear lesson Learning Intentions

KS4 options planning and implementation

In year 9, during the spring term, students select their options subjects for key stage 4 during a school options event. Staff gather pupil voice in the lead up to this event by identifying the options available and designing the offer. Staff offer tailored advice to students and their parents/carers in order to support decision-making.

Year 9 students benefit from careers advice from our careers leader in preparation for and during EHCP reviews in order to support their options for KS4 subjects.

Enrichment

Enrichment throughout the curriculum is an approach to ensure that we provide a range of engaging activities. The opportunities provided aim to continually build on the resilience of students, their cultural knowledge, develop behaviour for learning and increase engagement overall.

Our available activities continue to be developed and up-dated regularly. Some of the opportunities which have been available to students include;

- Duke of Edinburgh
- Forest School
- Military school STEM activities
- Outdoors learning
- Catering
- Enterprise activities
- Horticulture
- Hair and beauty

- Karate
- Alternative sports

Our unique approach

At Alt Bridge School we consider the whole child and will continually evaluate provision and respond to needs which arise at a given time. We adopt a person-centred approach, carefully selecting and planning provision to meet need and to enhance a student's access to the full curriculum.

We believe that our students will be well-prepared for adulthood by developing their knowledge of self-regulation tools and where possible, learning to apply them in different contexts. We therefore use a whole school approach to teach self-regulation skills.

We believe that a focus on communication skills will support our students to develop their confidence and independence and we look for frequent opportunities to highlight achievements, promote positive mental health and wellbeing, support social connections and enhance thinking skills. We weave a range of approaches into our curriculum and enhance the offer through our specialist packages of support.

The full offer of specialist services and support is outlined within our annual SEND Information Report and on our website.

Assessment

Curriculum and assessment

Our assessment practices focus on gaining information about how successfully our students are progressing through the curriculum. Our assessments enable us to reflect on the quality of our curriculum, our teaching and learning practices and also respond to needs within individual students, as they arise.

Curriculum assessment approaches

Formative assessment approaches are used continuously throughout lessons to ensure that students understand the learning intention, are acquiring knowledge and skills and are able to demonstrate their learning successfully. Class teachers use this information to inform the next steps for learners within their classes and according to the curriculum planning.

Curriculum summative assessments have the purpose of ensuring that the teacher and learner are aware of the knowledge and skills acquired, what has been learned, developed and retained through the curriculum unit of work and to inform any plans for additional/targeted support.

Baseline assessments

When pupils begin with us at Alt Bridge on their learning journey, we carry out a range of assessments in order to provide a baseline and identify starting points for our students. We also gather assessment information from other settings prior to entry to contribute to our knowledge of student's abilities and needs.

Planned assessments within the academic year

Alt Bridge School assess the attainment of students against Entry Levels, level 1 and level 2 assessments for the large majority of students. Students are also assessed within a school designed 'pre-entry level' assessment stage to identify the progress being made by learners towards key assessment points beyond this stage. Other groups of students may be assessed according to the Engagement Model which replaces P-Scales in 2021. The Engagement model assesses students whose achievements can be tracked at a functional stage of learning whereby key basic skills are embedded. Diagram 3 within our appendices section, outlines the various stages of this assessment model.

Students are assessed against the above standards within each subject termly at these key points throughout the year. The designated months for assessment are as follows;

- September
- February
- June

The stage of learning is assessed using specifically designed test papers or assessments within each subject. Students are assessed as either accessing, developing or achieving within each stage.

The purpose of planned assessment points is to;

- identify gaps in knowledge and skills
- contribute information which informs curriculum design and adaptations
- support students working towards key qualifications linked to their individual aspirations
- support the allocation of students to appropriate KS4 options in year 9
- enable clear reporting to parents/carers in terms of progress and attainment

Education, Health and Care Plans and reviews

Our students are entitled to an annual review of their EHCPs which provides an opportunity to assess their progress towards the specific outcomes outlined in their plans. The outcomes for our students cover the four broad categories of SEND. The four categories of SEND according to the SEND code of practice include;

- Cognition and learning
- Communication and interaction
- Sensory and/or physical
- Social, emotional and mental health

Depending on a student's individual needs, they may have outcomes concentrated in particular areas from the above list. The annual review is held in school and is chaired by the student's form teacher. Parents/carers, the student themselves and any outside agencies involved are also invited to attend the reviews along with representatives from health and social care where appropriate. The designated SEND officer from Knowsley SEND team is also invited.

We track student progress according to their individually set outcomes through a continuous process of plan, do, review which involves planning individual support, implementing the support and then reviewing the impact before planning for the next steps. The individual student profiles provide an update of the support in place and the strengths and difficulties of each student.

Student Holistic Progress Reviews

Holistic progress reviews take place regularly throughout the year to consider the needs of students, agree expectations and plan provision. Reviews are attended by the progress leader, inclusion and engagement leader, allocated learning mentor, form teacher and form teaching assistant. These reviews consider the holistic needs of students and may involve the allocation of support processes and interventions to meet pastoral needs.

Social, emotional and engagement factors

The monitoring of social, emotional and engagement factors for our students is essential. As young people with SEND, our learners are often significantly affected by a variety of factors. To counter this, as a school community, we promote and focus on building resilience as a key life skill. If students are able to develop resilience and the ability to overcome challenges, then they will be more able to lead successful adult lives.

We provide opportunities for learners to build their resilience through the curriculum, various enrichment opportunities, our Zones of Regulation and restorative practices approaches and through the many therapeutic interventions available.

We seek to assess social and emotional needs and engagement through a variety of strategies such as;

- Thrive assessments
- Pupil attitude surveys
- Our school social communication checklist
- Pastoral support packages for individuals

Reading assessment

In order to access the full curriculum, it is essential that our students are able to read fluently and accurately. We therefore rigorously track their progress in reading and provide reading development sessions in order to target our teaching to ensure the best possible outcomes.

The phonological knowledge of students is assessed using key tests from our selected phonics programme. Students are then allocated to specific reading development groups in order to access the appropriate level of support.

Online learning journals

We use the SeeSaw learning platform to upload examples of work, provide feedback and communicate directly with parents/carers.

At Alt Bridge School, we recognise that learning is not only demonstrated by the written tasks students may complete within their books. The acquisition of new knowledge and skills can be seen in how our students talk about their experiences, physical activities they undertake, what they make and in various other expressions of their thoughts. We aim to capture as much of this learning as possible so that students will continue to make links across lessons and through topics within the curriculum.

Class teachers use technology in class to capture demonstrations of learning via video or image recording. We provide students with opportunities to add to their own online portfolio also in order to update this evidence of their learning journey. This portfolio then enables students to continually reflect on their learning and make links with new knowledge and experiences.

Class teachers and support staff will make links between the learning demonstrated and the four categories of SEND within which progress is being made. This will enable progress towards each student's EHCP targets to also be visible to the student, staff and parents/carers. The four categories of SEND according to the SEND code of practice include;

- Cognition and learning
- Communication and interaction
- Sensory and/or physical
- Social, emotional and mental health

Teaching and learning

Classroom practice and pedagogy

The main consideration for Alt Bridge School is to firstly ensure that our students achieve access to the curriculum. Access requires that their individual needs are met so that each student can flourish within our setting. This requires a complex combination of approaches, strategies, interventions, specialist input and support mechanisms which must work together to enable each child to achieve their best outcomes.

Furthermore, our approaches to teaching and learning are rooted in cognitive science. This means that we consider the best ways in which students learn and retain information and implement research-based approaches to achieve the best outcomes for learners.

We continually strive to develop classroom practice through ongoing;

- Continued Professional Development (training)
- Collaborative coaching
- Utilising pupil voice
- Implementing specialist approaches
- Assessing the impact of the curriculum and reviewing regularly

Planning

Long and medium term plans are completed by our curriculum cluster leaders who also keep these plans under continuous review. Subject teachers are expected to use the plans provided to plan for their individual lessons and to ensure clear progression across a series of lessons.

Some resources are provided and recommended through the medium term plans. If individual teachers are selecting additional resources to support the curriculum, they must consider both the academic and social/emotional needs of the students they teach to ensure that they select appropriate materials.

Teachers' Standards

"Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils"

Teachers Standards, Department for Education (2011)

All teachers are required to meet the criteria outlined in the Teacher's Standards document from the point of being awarded Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

All teachers are responsible for the safety, welfare and progress of the students they teach and implementing whole school resource approaches.

Monitoring

At Alt Bridge School, we regularly monitor how effective our teaching and learning approaches are in achieving the learning outcomes we have planned for our students. Senior Leaders and curriculum leaders do this through the following approaches;

- Visiting classes and seeing the curriculum in action
- Speaking to teachers about the curriculum, how it is implemented, the purpose within lessons and the responses of the learners
- Speaking to students about their learning experience
- Meeting regularly with curriculum cluster leaders to review the intent, implementation and impact of the curriculum within their clusters

- Looking at work produced by students in books
- Looking through student learning portfolios on SeeSaw
- Analysing the achievement and progress profile of students across year groups, subjects, key stages and the school

Collaborative coaching

Collaborative coaching is in place to provide teaching staff with the opportunity to explore specific teaching and learning strategies alongside a coaching partner.

Collaborative coaching involves the provision of personalised support for teachers through discussions about their practice. Teachers are given the time to reflect on their practice, identify new research-based approaches which may achieve positive outcomes and then develop this practice with the support and involvement of their identified 'coach'. This approach enables teaching and learning at Alt Bridge to be continually reviewed and developed.

Moderation

Moderation sessions will take place regularly throughout the year within subjects and will be coordinated and led by the curriculum cluster leaders. Moderation is an organised activity between teachers and curriculum leaders whereby they make judgements and check the accuracy of what pupils understand, know and can do and how well other teachers have assessed these pupils.

Moderation is a positive part of a teacher's professional development as it offers the opportunity to compare student performance with the requirements of the national curriculum. It also ensures that accurate and fair marks are awarded to students by comparing them to others in the same class and are consistent with those made in other classes.

Moderation will also take place externally with similar special educational settings to further strengthen the accuracy of assessments.

Feedback and marking approaches

The feedback and marking used with students in lessons should ensure that students are aware of what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. Our aim is for our students to develop their ability to receive feedback well and make adjustments according to the guidance of teachers. It is important that time is given to the exchange of feedback within lessons between students, peers, teachers and support staff. The ability of our students to discuss and reflect on their learning and articulate how they will apply the knowledge and skills acquired is an essential part of their development as a learner.

The kind of marking taking place in one subject may be quite different from the expectation on marking for another. Different subjects (as specified by curriculum leaders) will therefore, employ variations on the method of marking, as long as the whole school principles are adhered to which are outlined in this policy. The individual approaches will be included in the curriculum cluster policy.

Feedback

Ongoing verbal feedback during lessons, in 1:1 discussions with students and at the end of units of work are key to providing essential guidance to students in relation to their learning.

Alt Bridge teachers employ the characteristics of effective feedback:



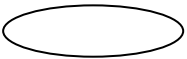



Specific, accurate and clear	"It was good because you...."
Meaningful	The feedback makes sense to the learner and is relevant i.e. given sparingly and with clear thought on the part of the adult
Comparable	Highlights improvement from what a student did before compared with what they can do now e.g; "I can see you are improving with....." "This is better than it has been before because...."
Motivational	Encourages further efforts e.g; "You are doing well with this, let's see if you can...." "Keep going with this and you will achieve....."
Growth Mindset	Praise for the process, determination and for attempting something new or challenging e.g; "You are learning to..." "Great job at taking a risk and trying something new..." "Your improvement and progress is amazing" "Great curiosity and creativity"
Cognitive load	Feedback should be designed to avoid cognitive overload and be as minimally complex as necessary to convey the information to learners
Next steps	Feedback should provide learners with clear next steps for how they can improve performance and address errors
Encourage self-evaluation	Feedback from peer grading, reflection activities and self-evaluations move learners to become more self-regulating and mindful as learners
Avoid comparative measures	Avoid associating feedback with grades, praise of comparative measures that undermine its effectiveness.

Marking

Effective marking celebrates pupils' knowledge and effort and maps a clear route towards improvement. Marking is best understood to be a process of creating a supportive and challenging learning dialogue in which feedback can be exchanged and questions asked and answered.

Marking should take various forms at Alt Bridge, including the options outlined in the table below. Different clusters of subjects are responsible for setting out their approaches to marking as they will inevitably require different approaches given the nature of work produced. General principles of effective marking should be applied and the approach to marking written work is outlined below;

Written work marking code

	Strengths in writing highlighted in green
	Areas for improvement in writing highlighted in yellow
	Used to identify a spelling error
	Missing or incorrect punctuation
	Underline for grammatical error
	New paragraph needed

Effective marking

Effective marking;

- Is matched to the subject and individual student within the class
- Addresses misconceptions in learning
- Supports the student in reflecting on their work and becoming aware of strengths and areas for improvement
- Is fully accessible to the student
- Aims to motivate and engage students in the learning process
- Includes peer and self-assessment methods

Learner support within class

The ongoing goal of effective teaching and learning within the classroom is to ensure students make progress and acquire the knowledge and skills to develop independent learning skills. Students attend Alt Bridge School because they do require ongoing and additional support to develop independence in their learning and to acquire new knowledge and skills.

Teachers are responsible for selecting appropriate resources for use during lessons and implementing our cross curriculum PowerPoint. The curriculum cluster leaders provide long and medium term planning with references to appropriate materials. If teachers select other resources, the resources must be appropriate to the age and developmental level that students within the class are working at.

Teachers are responsible for completing their Learning Intention for the lesson and 'Now, Next, Then' Boards. These class resources are consistent across the school and are visual task boards which allow pupils to see at a glance what is coming next. This helps pupils to cope with transitions and to make the lesson's activities easier to process. They are also used to schedule movement / sensory / choosing time breaks for pupils who need them.

It is essential that students access the curriculum without significant frustration but also at an appropriate level to achieve suitable challenge. When challenged at the appropriate level, students will engage in active learning which will enable them to

make progress. We achieve this through providing consistency with cross curricular resources and the appropriate scaffolding that individual students need in order to successfully learn what is intended for them to learn within each lesson.

A guidance sheet which outlines scaffolding techniques to use when questioning students in class, is available within the appendices to this policy.

Reporting to parents/carers

We report to our parents and carers with regards to progress and attainment three times annually in the following ways;

1. Autumn term parents evening for all students
2. Spring term parents evening for all students plus a brief pupil progress report detailing progress and attainment across core subjects and form tutor comments
3. End of year report detailing progress and attainment across all subjects and form tutor comments

Our reports include a comment for their attainment, progress, whether the progress is good for their child and also engagement within lessons, for each subject across the curriculum.

We report regularly to our parents and carers regarding the progress students make towards their EHCP outcomes in the following ways;

- EHCP annual reviews
- Updates to student profiles termly with details of planned interventions
- SeeSaw evidence of learning linked to SEND categories of need
- Details of intervention programmes in place to offer targeted support and the progress made by students

We provide access for parents and carers to the work produced by students, their views and our feedback all via SeeSaw which parents/carers are able to log on to daily.

Deployment of Teaching Assistants

Alt Bridge School employ a large number of teaching assistants who provide essential support to our students in all aspects of school life. It is important to our students that they are provided with the right amount of support to succeed, whilst also ensuring that they are motivated and enabled to become as independent as possible.

Our teaching assistants access regular training to refresh their knowledge and skills in relation to teaching and learning, supporting mental health and wellbeing, first aid, specific medical needs, Team Teach physical intervention approaches and intimate/personal care.

We value our support staff team highly at Alt Bridge and have fully outlined the ways in which we deploy our TAs within our TA policy.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the teaching and learning committee. The monitoring of this policy will take place regularly throughout the year.

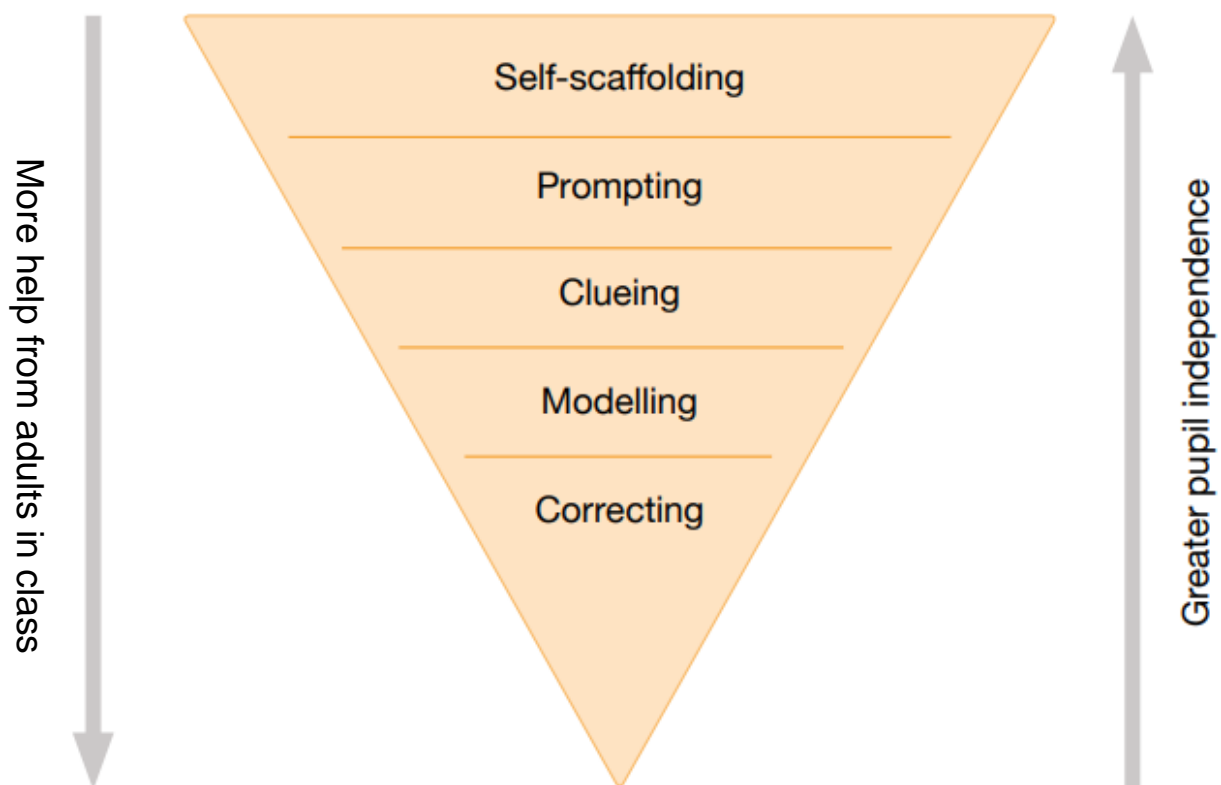
APPENDICES

Diagram 1: Assessment stages at Alt Bridge School

Engagement Learning	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure
Pre Curriculum Learning	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure
Pre Entry Level 1	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure
Entry Level 1	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure
Entry Level 2	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure
Entry Level 3	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure
Level 1	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure
Level 2	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure
GCSE – grade 4	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure
GCSE - grade 5	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure
GCSE - grade 6	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure
GCSE – grade 7	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure
	Accessing

GCSE – grade 8	Developing
	Secure
GCSE – grade 9	Accessing
	Developing
	Secure

Guidance sheet: Scaffolding techniques when questioning students in class



Self-scaffolding: The highest level of learner independence. Adults observe, giving students processing and thinking time. Self-scaffolders can plan how to approach a task, problem solve and review their approach.

Prompting: When adults give prompts and encourage students to draw on their own knowledge but refrain from specifying a particular strategy. The aim here is to encourage students to self-scaffold by prompting their thinking i.e. 'What is your plan now?'

Clueing: Often pupils know strategies but struggle to recall them. Clues worded as questions provide hints in the right direction. Adults start with a small clue to give the greatest opportunities for individual thought.

Modelling: Prompts and clues will not be effective if a student encounters a task which needs a new skill or strategy. Adults can then model the strategy whilst students listen and then try the strategy for themselves immediately afterwards.

Correcting: Correcting involves providing answers and this requires no independent thinking on the part of the student. Occasionally it is appropriate to do this, however, our adults will aim to attempt other strategies and encourage students to apply the skills or knowledge they have learned.