

Teaching and Learning Policy

The Denby Free Way

2025 - 2026

Denby Free CE VA Primary School

Imagine. Believe. Achieve. Shine.

"Let your light shine"
Matthew ch 5 v16



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Vision and Values

Our vision of Teaching and Learning (T&L) is to improve the life chances and life choices of all our children by bringing out 'the best in everyone.' Through the delivery of outstanding, knowledge-rich lessons, delivered in inclusive classrooms, our values underpin everything we do.

Research demonstrates that the quality of T&L is the largest determining factor in pupil achievement[1]. Academic attainment and social enhancement are the keys our children need to lead fulfilling and enriching lives[2]. At the heart of The Denby Free Way are our children's futures.

Our approach is informed by the best available evidence, using research outcomes to select strategies which are most likely to improve pupil attainment[3]. Our teachers adapt their lessons to be inclusive by design, rather than as an afterthought so that all children can make excellent progress[4]. Pupil needs, listed on pupil support plans, drive inclusivity.

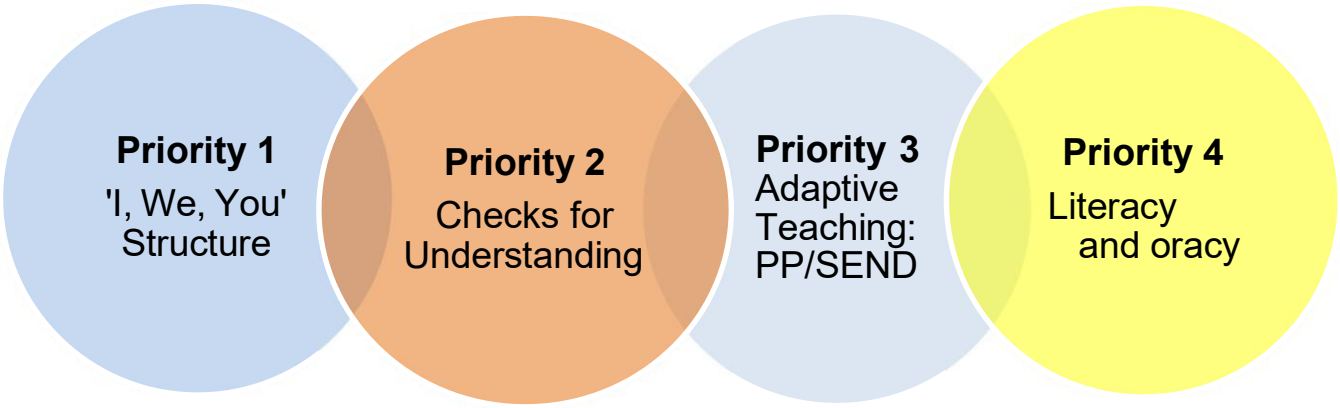


Our children are entitled to excellent, memorable learning experiences through well-planned, well-taught lessons. We treat teachers and Teaching Assistants as professionals, and we support them to strive to achieve this through continuous professional development[5].

We acknowledge that Teaching and Learning is incredibly complex. We have endeavoured to provide a clear and coherent structure to all areas of teaching and learning - from providing guidance and expectations around the broad, but vital areas of: Expectations & Value, Relationships & Behaviour, Learning Environment and Curriculum Structure, to providing clear and sequential steps to improve classroom practice.

Priorities 2025 – 2026

High-quality Teaching and Learning supports our school in achieving its strategic priorities.

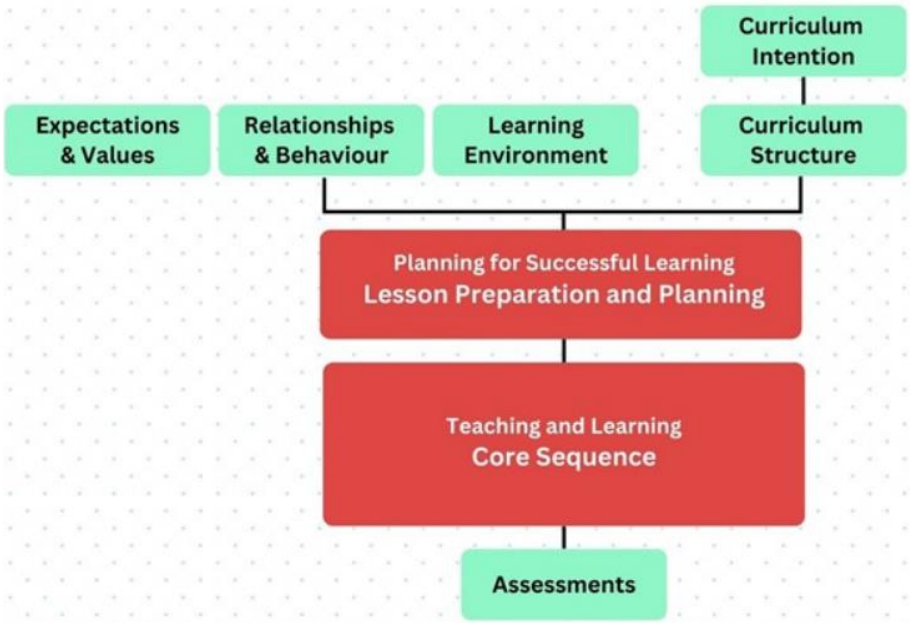


Priority 1

Children thrive in lessons with consistent routines, where information is delivered through explicit instruction and where tasks are modelled and independently practiced.

Priority 2

Regular checks for understanding allow children to deepen the knowledge stored in their long-term memory and improve their knowledge about how to improve and feel successful.



Priority 3

Children with SEND, Disadvantaged children and those with wider learning needs are in most need of excellent teaching, which is inclusive by design and not as an afterthought.

Priority 4

Children experience a rich diet of reading, writing and oracy across all curriculum areas to develop competency in, and love of, reading for life.

Relationships and Behaviour

At Denby Free we believe in the importance of relationships ensuring learners feel valued safe and secure. We do our very best to provide every child with a sense of connection with a member of staff and belonging to the whole school community. We live by strong Christian values (Flourish and Shine) and reflect the values of the Derbyshire approach to understanding behaviour and supporting emotional well-being known as, Attachment and Relationship Aware schools (ARAS).

Ready | Respect | Safe

Strong relationships between staff, children and our families are vital. Our staff are fair and consistent with children (considering individual needs) enabling pupils to feel safe. Equally our staff are approachable and there to help and we help our children to understand this. It is also recognised that for some children variants on these processes will be made in order to meet specific social, emotional or learning needs which require a personalised approach and can be based on external recommendations and support. At Denby Free, we have adopted and used the relational behaviour model approach the following table explains how it is applied.

Behaviour is something to	interpret
Children and young people	are prone to make mistakes and highly responsive to the environment and the context
Behaviour management is predominantly through	relationships
Children who don't manage should be	understood and included
Boundaries and limits are	keep everyone safe and to meet everyone's needs
Rules should be	developed together and adapted where needed
Consequences are	only used within a process of restore and repair
Inappropriate behaviour is	a sign of unmet need, stress, lack of understanding and skills
The causes of the difficulties are	mostly in the environment and within the context of relationships
The solutions lie in	understanding what the behaviour tells us about the child and their need
Practice and policy effectiveness is measured by	wellbeing and the capacity to adapt and make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs

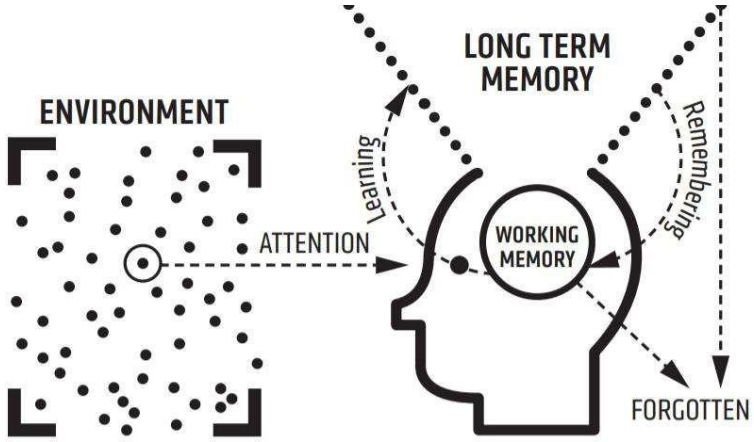
See our Relationships and Behaviour Policy for further guidance and detail.

How Learning Happens

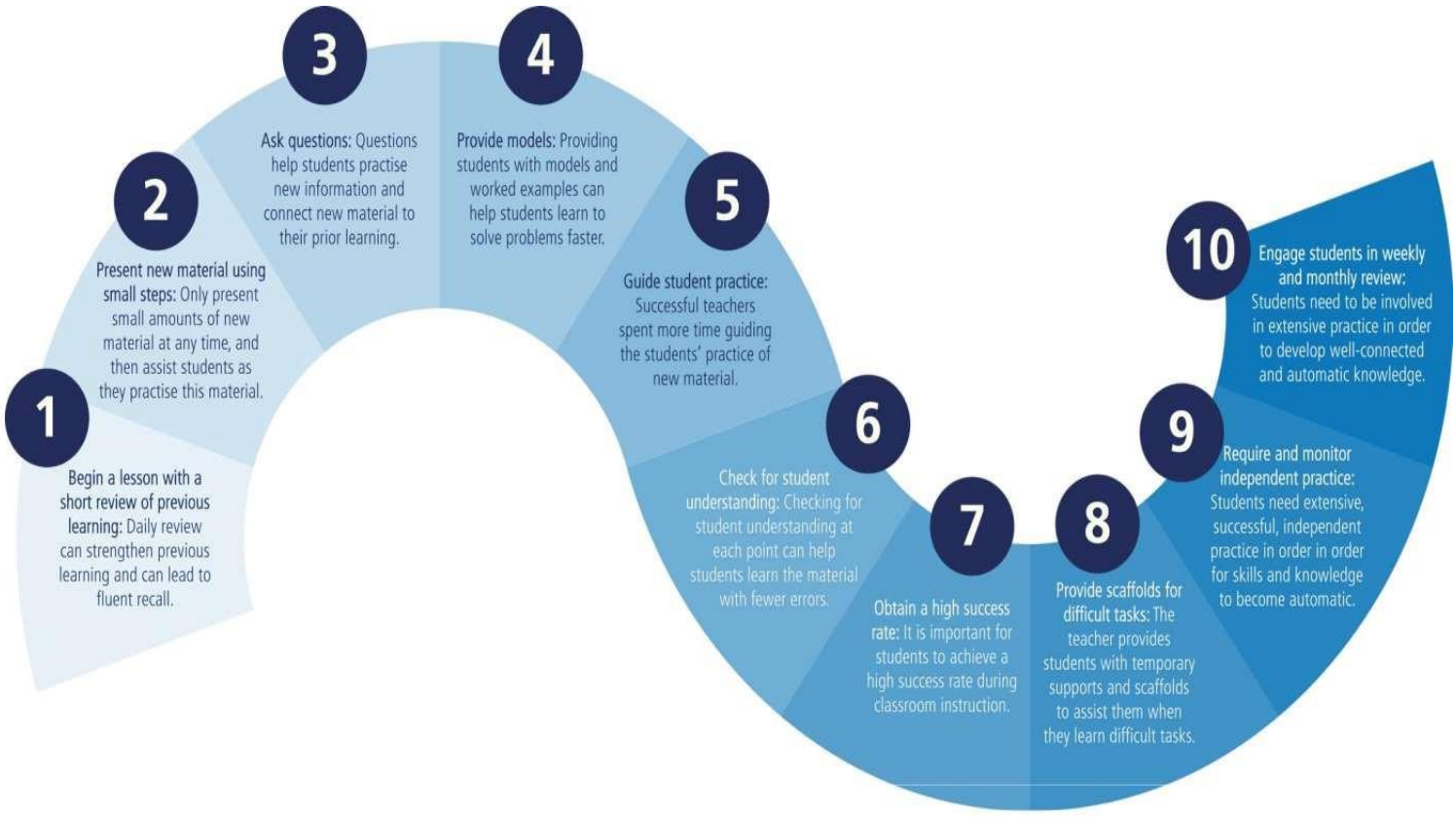
At its heart, successful teaching is intentional, inclusive and prioritises strategies that secure the most successful outcomes for all children[6].

Successful learning is incremental, desirably difficult and evidenced by changes in the long-term memory of every pupil[7].

Information from the classroom environment enters the working memory. Working memory has limited capacity and so some information is forgotten. The information which is learnt enters the long-term memory.



The information which is explicitly taught in a well-sequenced curriculum and then revisited often is more likely to enter the long-term memory[8]. This principle underpins The Denby Free Way and sits at the heart of Rosenshine's Principles[9].



The Denby Free Learning Cycle

Classroom Essentials

At Denby Free CofE VA primary school, we educate children aged 4 to 11 years old and maintaining universal expectations across all classrooms means that consistency is essential. Our classroom essentials create a cohesive approach allowing both children and adults in the school to understand what to expect and how to manage each classroom effectively.

Respectful relationships

- Learners are safe, ready to learn and show respect.
- Relationships are rooted in respect
- Everyone feels valued and included.
- Parents feel welcome and informed.
- Conversations are positive and professional
- Embrace and celebrate diversity.
- Staff have high aspirations for all learners
- Share ideas and work as a team.
- All in the school community promote our Core Values.
- Relationships are rooted in high expectations and nurture.
- Actions promote mental wellbeing of all.

High expectations

- Staff are on time and well prepared for the day.
- Practice and embed school/classroom routines.
- Expect the best from every learner.
- Expect excellent behaviour.
- Adapt teaching to meet the needs of all learners.
- Model expectations clearly and with expert explanation.
- Use evidence to inform practice.
- Follow the timetable so curriculum remains broad.
- Model and expect excellent handwriting and presentation.

Positive classrooms

- Set consistent, clear classroom routines.
- Model respect, courtesy, manners and honesty.
- Desks are positioned so learners can clearly see the board.
- Learning spaces are clearly defined.
- Classrooms are clear, free of clutter and purposeful.
- Our core values and school rules are displayed.
- Achievement are celebrated through recognition boards.
- Model enthusiasm and resilience
- All displays are meaningful - Learner work is displayed - it's current and presentation is valued.
- Cognitive load theory is considered and reflected in environments.

Promoting independence

- In response to learner mistakes, staff support them by promoting, self-scaffolding, prompting, providing clues, modelling outcomes, and then correcting.
- Staff use scaffolds to support learning and are removed to encourage challenge.
- Staff model independence - narrating their thinking when modelling
- Promote thinking and participation through questioning.
- Whole class feedback is succinct and allows for guided practice.
- Provide thinking time - that is where learning happens.

Early years classroom essentials

In acknowledgement of the importance of early years and its distinct teaching pedagogy and application, we have also considered the classroom essentials specifically through the lens of early years.

Respectful Relationships

- Assessment is accurate and adults know their children well.
- Understanding is built through meaningful talk and play.
- Staff get down to the child's level and play with them, engaging their imagination and ideas.
- Embrace diversity.
- Children are encouraged to reflect on their learning through talk, displays and books.

High Expectations

- ShREC model is used by staff to ensure children have a good model for communication and to extend learning.
- Staff model effective communication.
- Adapt teaching to meet the needs of all learners.
- Practice and embed school/classroom routines.
- Children are positively encouraged to improve their work, understanding that the first attempt isn't always the best a child can do.
- Use evidence to inform practice.
- Adults model talking in full sentences.

Positive Classrooms

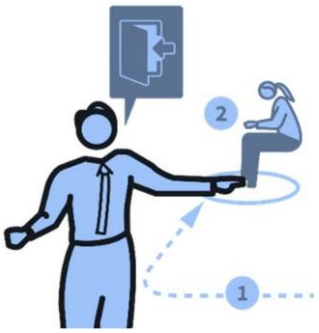
- Staff maintain the resourcing of allocated areas.
- Set consistent, clear classroom routines.
- The outdoor areas will be kept tidy by all staff, on duty outside.
- The children are proactively taught how to tidy and look after the classroom spaces (indoors and outdoors).
- Staff regularly add to, and adapt resources in allocated areas of continuous provision.
- Our core values and school rules are displayed.
- The environment is calm and engaging, with resources clearly labelled and easily accessible, to promote independence.
- Achievements are celebrated on the WOW wall.

Promoting independence

- Children's understanding and learning is assessed though daily interactions, so scaffolding can adjusted or removed.
- Independence is expected and positively encouraged in first instance.
- Staff model independence - narrating their thinking when modelling
- Promote thinking and participation through questioning.
- Provide thinking time - that is where learning happens.

The Strong Start

All children benefit from classroom environments with clear and consistent routines[10]



At Denby Free, each lesson within a subject starts in a similar way. This means our children know what is expected of them and they can focus on learning.

In the mornings and after break and lunch, adults welcome children straight into the classroom and are 'Seen Looking'[11], monitoring conduct and behaviour, looking for anyone who needs any extra help or support to be ready for learning.

All lessons begin with a short 'flashback'[12] starter / recap task, which is accessible to all children and lasts no longer than eight minutes in total. Tasks enable children to retrieve prior knowledge relevant to the new content to be delivered. Children edit and develop their responses either verbally or written.

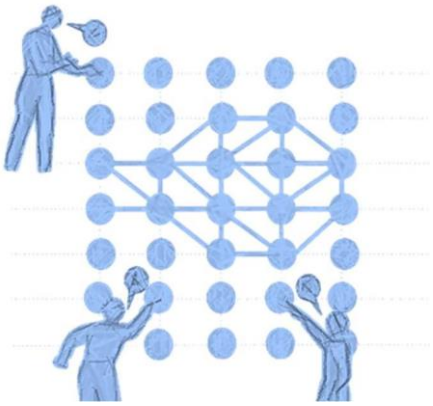


***Flashback* Tasks in Practice**

A 'Flashback' is a short activity either written on the board or handed to children in printed form. Either way, children start and complete the Flashback task automatically and in KS2 with minimal teacher instruction. For children older than EYFS starting a lesson should not have to ask themselves "What am I supposed to be doing?" The answer, every day, should be obvious: "You should be doing the Flashback because we always start with the Flashback."

Curriculum and Vocabulary

All children benefit from understanding how one lesson fits within the sequence of the curriculum, building knowledge over time[14]



At Denby Free, teachers link prior learning to the new lesson content through recapping knowledge, applying skills, working walls and scaffolds[15]. This means that children understand how the lesson links to what they have previously been taught and what they will learn in the future. This unlocks our Denby Free Curriculum for all children.

Teachers may choose to use resources that are from our agreed schemes of work or their own, but always ensure their lessons accurately deliver the powerful knowledge of our curriculum. 'Powerful Knowledge' is specialised knowledge that gives "children the ability to think about, and do things, beyond their everyday experience"[16].

At Denby Free, teachers highlight and explain selected and mapped important tier 2 and 3 vocabulary every lesson. Teachers teach vocabulary[17]. This explicit teaching of carefully sequenced vocabulary unlocks the curriculum[18].
Children learn best when every teacher and teaching assistant seeks to unlock the curriculum by teaching vocabulary, whichever subject they are teaching[19].



During lessons, teachers pre-teach two words. One word is a new word, and one is a previously learnt word. For example, this lesson and last lesson. Teachers provide pupil-friendly definitions and examples. They say the word and children repeat it and out it into a sentence.

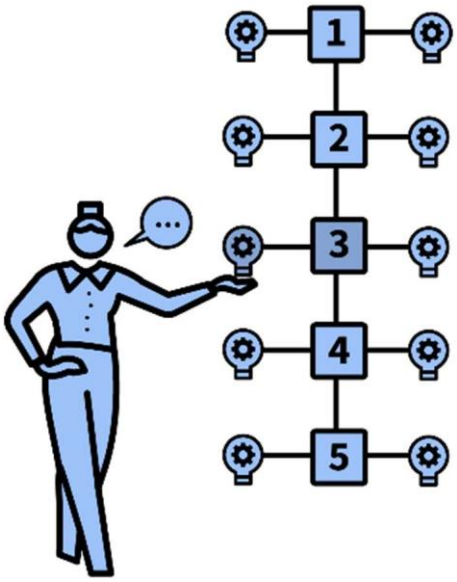
I Do

All children benefit from *powerful knowledge*[20] which is built through clear and concise teacher exposition[21]

At Denby Free, teachers introduce new curriculum content to their classes through clear explanation. They present knowledge in small chunks, dependent upon children' prior knowledge.

Teachers consider how they use oracy skills to ensure that they speak in a way that understandable to all children.

Teachers deliver content with the accuracy and in a way they would expect from their children. Teachers and Teaching Assistants 'Check for Understanding'[23] by questioning children about what they have understood. They analyse pupil responses and adapt their teaching accordingly. For example, the teacher may stop the class and address a misconception or highlight things that might need to be retaught in a future lesson.



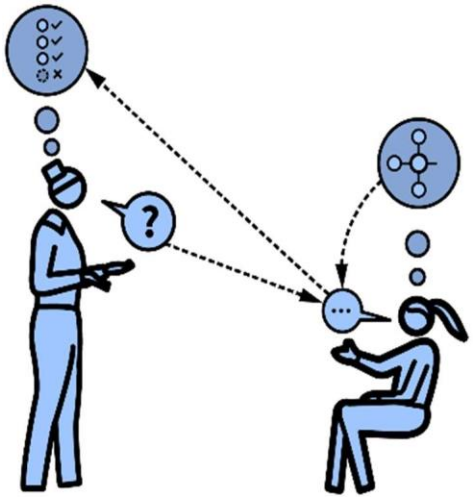
There might be instances where some children can go ahead and start the next part of the lesson whilst an adult holds on to a group for further modelling or discussion. This ensures that children who are ready are not held back from making progress.

Key ingredients for success[24]:

- Information is chunked
- Good use of vocabulary is modelled
- Teachers 'Name the Steps' by breaking down tasks through modelling and explanation.
- Adapt groupings and adult talk as necessary.

We Do

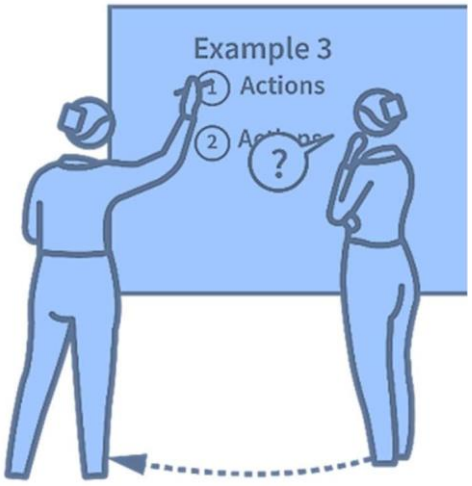
All children are supported to build schema when teachers model, scaffold and think aloud to narrate their decisions and choices[25]



Children engage in practice aligned to the 'I Do' task closely observed by the teacher. During 'We Do,' questioning about what the teacher has done is standard. Teachers ask a question first, pause and then call on a pupil to answer. At Denby Free, teachers use a range of questioning and modelling techniques to ensure the responsibility of tasks is released to children gradually[26].

Addressing 'I don't know'[2G]

At Denby Free, children may not feel that they can provide a response. If children respond with 'I don't know' there are ways to support the child.



- **Intervention 1:** Call on another pupil, accept their response. Return to pupil who did not know and ask them to repeat response.
- **Intervention 2:** Ask pupil to read out question - this can prompt pupil to reframe thinking and answer.
- **Intervention 3:** Break down question e.g. *'Which diagram do we need to look at to find the answer?'*
- **Intervention 4:** Give binary option e.g. *"Do you think it would be answer A or answer B?* Prompt for explanation - *'You think it would be answer B because…"*

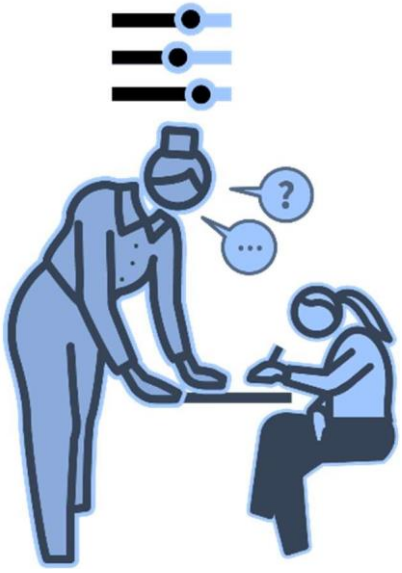
You Do Together

Between the 'We Do' and 'You Do' phase, teachers may direct children to work together. Children use this phase to engage in critical discussion, questioning and co-constructed thinking. For example, children may work together on the steps of a complex mathematical question on whiteboards or using manipulatives to solve a problem before a further 'We Do' check for understanding or to prep for 'You Do' independent practice.

Method: Turn and Talk[30]

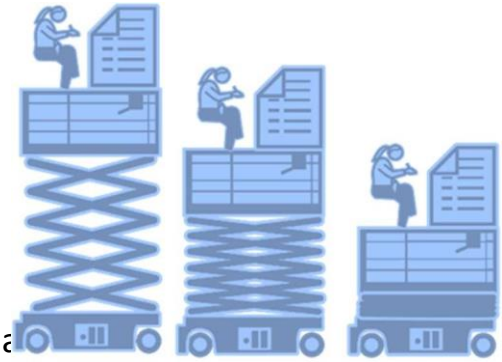
Teacher directs children to write a response to a posed question on their whiteboard. Teacher says, "Now when I say 'Go,' you will turn to your partner. Beginning with children on THIS side of the room, explain your answer and ask your partner one question. When I say 'Switch,' children on THIS side of the room will share their answers and ask any questions they have. Be ready to share your partner's ideas in three minutes…Go."

During 'Turn and Talk,' adults circulates to listen to discussion and monitor pupil understanding with task.



You Do

All children benefit from independent practice which builds the fluency and recall they require to attain well[31]

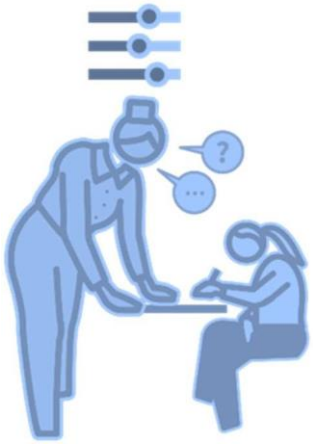


At Denby Free, children complete independent practice in every lesson, where children produce work which is a product of their own thinking[32].

Teachers set activities and questions similar to those previously modelled in the 'We Do' phase a Teachers check for understanding and address misconceptions, questioning and live marking amongst other strategies. Teacher marking is completed with a green pen.

Method: 3:30:30[33]

The teacher instructs children to begin the task and allows them to work independently for three minutes. During this time, they are 'Seen Looking' to ensure children are on task and no one is struggling to get started. After three minutes, the teacher moves to a target pupil for 30 seconds - checks their work, prompts, or supports and moves on to a second target pupil for 30 seconds. The teacher then returns to to scan the class.



First circulate: Are children on task? If several are not, bring the class back to clarify instructions – "Pens down; eyes on me."
Second circulate: Literacy check. Live mark in green pen. Bring class back for feedback to address misconceptions.
Third circulate: Identify common errors. Live mark in green pen. Bring class back for feedback – "Pens down; eyes on me." Children purple pen responses as needed.

Review

All children benefit from regularly reviewing learning to attenuate forgetting, make connections and secure long-term recall[34]



At Denby Free, teachers review the extent to which the powerful knowledge of the lesson has been understood. Regular checks for understanding and formative feedback throughout the lesson help to inform the delivery of this final phase of learning.

Teachers assess children using a range of techniques including mini tasks and questions.

Ordinarily available

the ordinarily available is a collection of recommendations that help all pupils flourish and learn. It brings together the best practise and is underpinned by research and teacher experience. This is what good practice looks like and is the starting point for any teacher. Putting these strategies in place in the classroom will promote positive conditions for learning and encourage curriculum equality for all pupils. These strategies will also help to prevent common barriers or difficulties that pupils may encounter during the: I do, We do, You do phases of learning,



Literacy

All children benefit from explicit literacy instruction, both within lessons and through bespoke interventions[35]

At Denby Free, teachers and Teaching Assistants highlight and explain important vocabulary in every lesson.



Select: Curriculum leaders select key tier 2 and 3 vocabulary which will unlock the curriculum[37.] Vocabulary is mapped across lessons to ensure it is being taught within the context of wider knowledge.

Explain: Teachers display pupil-friendly definitions of the vocabulary and examples of each word in context. Teachers model the correct pronunciation of words. Children echo the pronunciation.

Explore: Teachers, Teaching Assistants and children look more deeply at the word by saying it, writing it, providing a definition, use images or diagrams, provide multiple examples and clarify misconceptions.

Consolidate: The Teacher prompts children to use the word during independent practice. They revisit the word and repeatedly test it.



Teachers always consider the reading age scores of their children, which are collected and disseminated several times per year. Teachers write the reading ages of their children on seating plans and use this data within lessons. For example, teachers may simplify the text used in their PowerPoint presentations.

Live Marking for Literacy (and other subjects)

At least once per lesson, teachers circulate to check and correct literacy errors.

- The class are told that the teacher is circulating to check spelling and punctuation.
- Teachers place a green circle around errors, which the pupil corrects.
- Teachers support struggling children by writing out the correct spellings and briefly explaining errors.
- Common literacy errors are addressed with the whole class. For example, *"Pens down. Eyes on me. I have noticed that..."*

Reciprocal Reading and Reading Aloud

Teachers deliver reading tasks by to support children' comprehension.

- **Before Reading** = Prediction/Hypothesis/Vocabulary
- **During Reading** = Question/Clarify
- **After Reading** = Summarise

Teachers ensure children are given regular opportunities to **read aloud** to practice their fluency either one to one with an adult or as a whole-class or in pairs.

SEND, PP, and Adaptive Teaching

Children with SEND and those in receipt of pupil premium funding are in most need of excellent teaching and benefit most when their learning needs are fully understood[3G]



Teachers at Denby Free adapt their lessons to be inclusive by design, rather than as an afterthought. This means that teachers plan lessons with ambitious content and then scaffold them for the needs of children, rather than plan a one-size-fits-all lesson with 'bolt-on' activities. This is the most effective way of supporting children to achieve their potential[40].



Adaptive teaching is harmful to no one, helpful to everyone and vital for children who are disadvantaged and for those with SEND. Teachers use additional adults, pupil support plans and seating plans to adapt their lessons to maximise impact.

Pupil Support Plans

At Denby Free, adults read, understand, and apply the guidance provided on pupil support plans. Teachers make reasonable adjustments through quality first teaching, ensuring that all children have fair access to the full curriculum. The SENDCo is instrumental in this as they are responsible for supporting with the updating, disseminating and quality assurance of pupil support plans. Teachers always consider the needs of their children and provide feedback to the SENDCo or Headteacher.

Teaching Assistants

The Headteacher and the SENDCo are responsible for the CPD and deployment of Teaching Assistants. For lessons in which TAs support, they will have access to plans and lesson content in advance to prepare for their role in the classroom. The Headteacher and

SENDCo will consider the specialisms that TAs possess. They may focus on a particular pupil or subject and will develop that skill and the TA's CPD in order to equip them with what they need to complete their role.

Seating Plans

Teachers create seating plans with the needs of all children in mind. This includes time on the carpet as well as at tables and in the case of EY children, this could include when children complete guided activities. Adults review them regularly.

Decisions around seating may include pupil data relating to assessment, reading age, ability to concentrate or reasonable adjustments. Teachers always consider including a well-worn path, which is a physical route through the classroom that passes the children in need of the most support.

Scaffolding

Teachers scaffold work so that it is desirably difficult for all children[41]. They provide scaffolds for the remaining children to reach the same standard, albeit with more help, guidance, and time.



Setting the most ambitious goals for all children and providing scaffolds raises the attainment and expectations of the whole class[42].

***Scaffolding* in Practice**

Below	On Track	Exceeding
• Adult support • Focused differentiation • Adaptive modelling • Scaffolding • Small step modelling • Manipulatives • Sentence stems	• Flexible scaffolding • Flexible support • Promote independent access to resources e.g. word banks, workings walls, number frames	• Additional challenge resource • Application in varied contexts • Higher level content • Focused differentiation

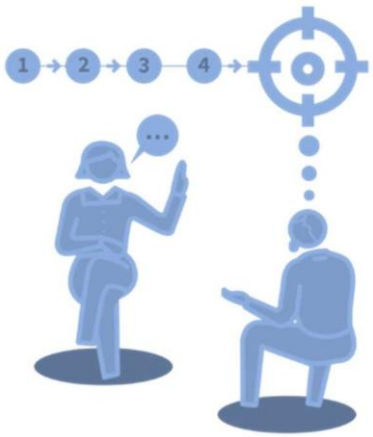
Classroom Management

At Denby Free, Teachers and Teaching Assistants create and maintain inclusive and ambitious working environments that require a highly intentional approach to classroom management. Adults in the room are the experts in the room and create a culture of routineness, consistent responses, and positive relationships.

Teachers clearly communicate their expectations to children and front load 'means of participation'[43] to ensure children know how to join in. For example:

- How to talk and listen when others are talking.
- How to ask and answer questions.
- How to complete their work and present it neatly.
- How exercise books and resources should be collected in and out.

Adults explain and model their expectations of children respectfully and in a way that children can achieve.

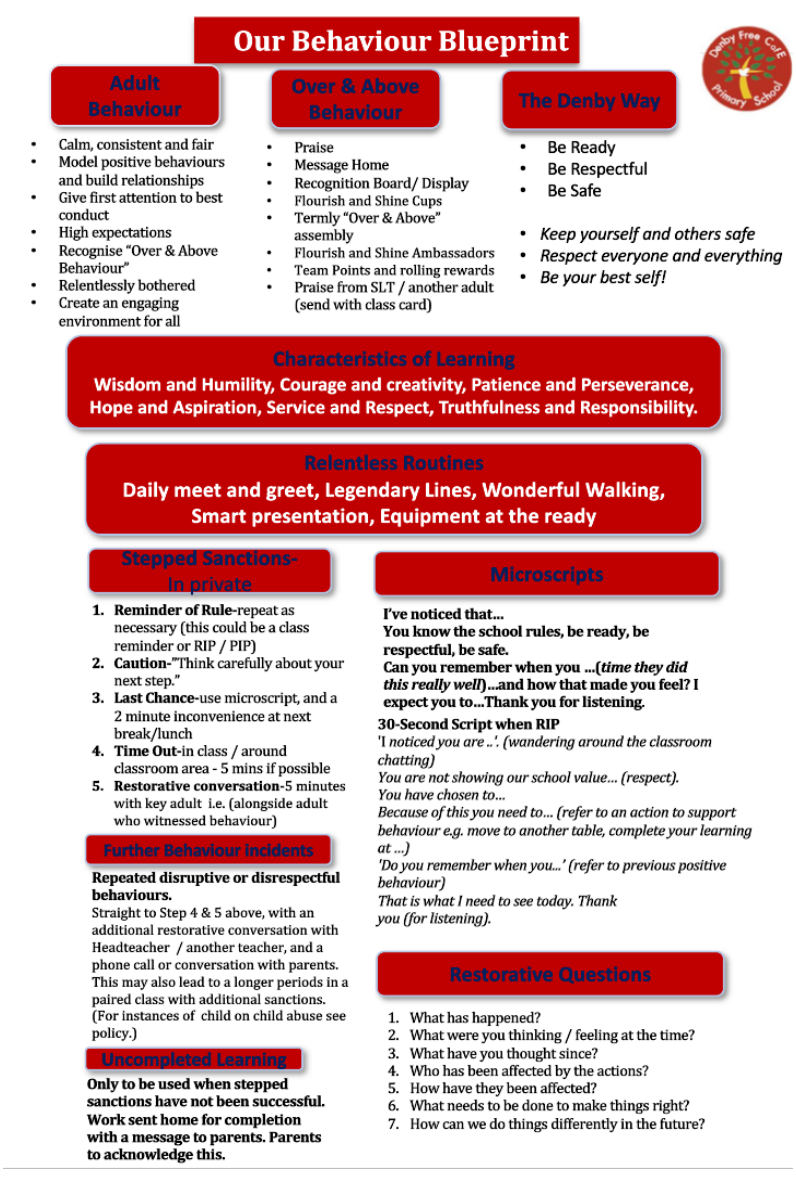


Rewards and Warnings

At Denby Free, rewards are given to recognise children who model our values of Ready, Respect, Safe.

- Team Tokens recognise positive contributions to learning. During the lesson, they are recorded on the board. They are added to team pots at the end of the lesson.
- Values awards are certificates and the class cup, given for acts of kindness, confidence or ambition. Each certificate is written and signed by the teacher and handed to the pupil in Friday Collective Worship. A Flourish and Shine attribute is chosen each week to develop the children's growth in every one of our values.

Warnings are given for any behaviour that disrupts and slows down learning. For example, for talking during teacher instruction. Children receive two warnings. If a pupil continues to exhibit behaviour that slows learning, adults in class will follow the behaviour blueprint found in our Relationship and Behaviour Policy.



Our Behaviour Blueprint

Adult Behaviour

- Calm, consistent and fair
- Model positive behaviours and build relationships
- Give first attention to best conduct
- High expectations
- Recognise "Over & Above Behaviour"
- Relentlessly bothered
- Create an engaging environment for all

Over & Above Behaviour

- Praise
- Message Home
- Recognition Board/ Display
- Flourish and Shine Cups
- Termly "Over & Above" assembly
- Flourish and Shine Ambassadors
- Team Points and rolling rewards
- Praise from SLT / another adult (send with class card)

The Denby Way

- Be Ready
- Be Respectful
- Be Safe

- *Keep yourself and others safe*
- *Respect everyone and everything*
- *Be your best self!*

Characteristics of Learning

Wisdom and Humility, Courage and creativity, Patience and Perseverance, Hope and Aspiration, Service and Respect, Truthfulness and Responsibility.

Relentless Routines

Daily meet and greet, Legendary Lines, Wonderful Walking, Smart presentation, Equipment at the ready

Stepped Sanctions- In private

1. **Reminder of Rule**-repeat as necessary (this could be a class reminder or RIP / PIP)
2. **Caution-**"Think carefully about your next step."
3. **Last Chance**-use microscript, and a 2 minute inconvenience at next break/lunch
4. **Time Out**-in class / around classroom area - 5 mins if possible
5. **Restorative conversation**-5 minutes with key adult i.e. (alongside adult who witnessed behaviour)

Further Behaviour incidents

Repeated disruptive or disrespectful behaviours.
Straight to Step 4 & 5 above, with an additional restorative conversation with Headteacher / another teacher, and a phone call or conversation with parents. This may also lead to a longer periods in a paired class with additional sanctions. (For instances of child on child abuse see policy.)

Uncompleted Learning

Only to be used when stepped sanctions have not been successful. Work sent home for completion with a message to parents. Parents to acknowledge this.

Microscripts

I've noticed that...
You know the school rules, be ready, be respectful, be safe.
Can you remember when you ...(*time they did this really well*)...and how that made you feel? I expect you to...Thank you for listening.

30-Second Script when RIP
'I noticed you are ..'. (wandering around the classroom chatting)
You are not showing our school value... (respect).
You have chosen to...
Because of this you need to... (refer to an action to support behaviour e.g. move to another table, complete your learning at ...)
'Do you remember when you...' (refer to previous positive behaviour)
That is what I need to see today. Thank you (for listening).

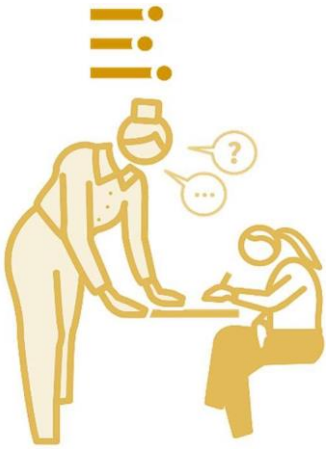
Restorative Questions

1. What has happened?
2. What were you thinking / feeling at the time?
3. What have you thought since?
4. Who has been affected by the actions?
5. How have they been affected?
6. What needs to be done to make things right?
7. How can we do things differently in the future?

Presentation Expectations

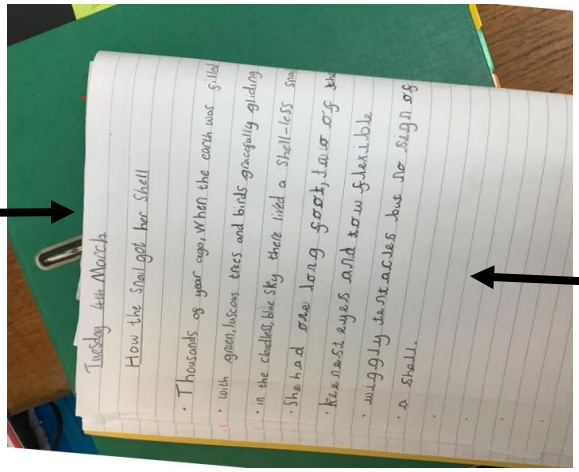
All children benefit from teachers' high expectations of the pride and care children are expected to take in the quality of their books.

At Denby Free, teachers reinforce high presentation standards in children' books. Children are expected to take pride and care in the presentation of their work and teachers must pick up any issues as they arise.



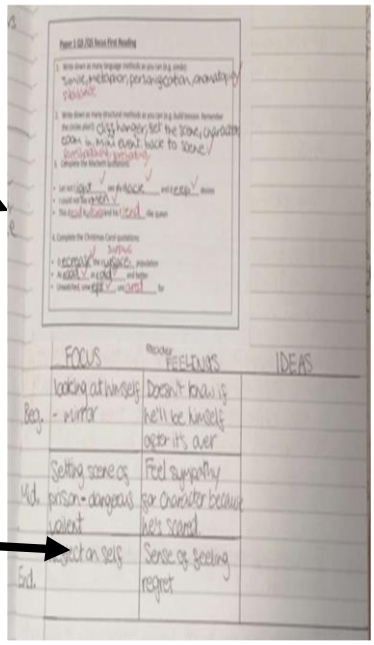
Children always write in their neatest handwriting using a pencil or blue pen. Self or peer assessment is in purple, whilst teacher feedback is in green. Drawings are completed in pencil. Mistakes are crossed out using a single line. Work is free from graffiti, doodles and scribbles.

Title and date underlined.

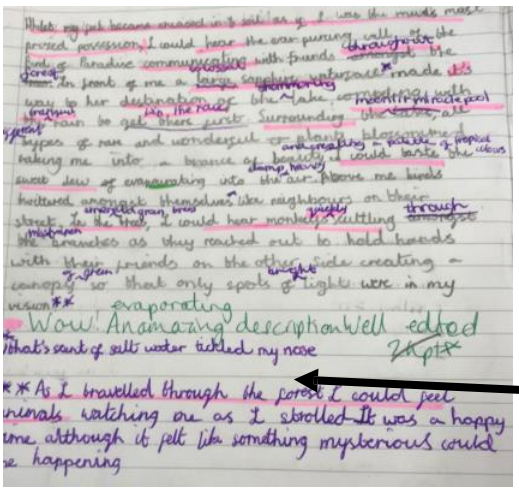


KS1 children may benefit from missing a line to support handwriting patterns.

Extra sheets neatly stuck into book.



Tables drawn with ruler where children are able in KS2.



Self/peer marking and editing completed in purple pen.

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