Primary *and* **Secondary**
National Strategies

Pedagogy and Personalisation

**department for
education and skills**

**Creating Opportunity
Releasing Potential
Achieving Excellence**
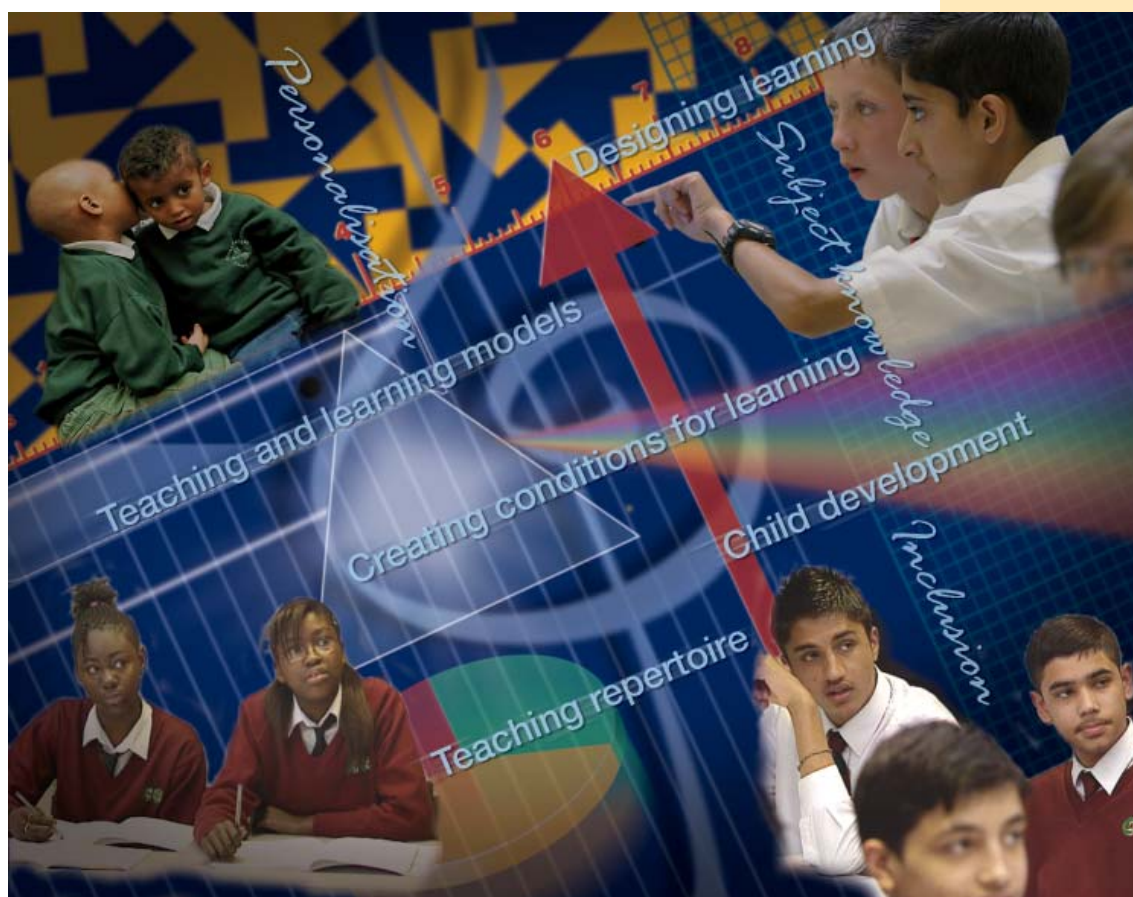
This booklet is for leaders and teachers and other practitioners in schools and settings who wish to develop further the knowledge, skills and expertise of those who support children's and young people's learning.

How to make best use of this booklet

In recent years, many have commented that the profession of teaching has lacked a consistent and shared view of what constitutes pedagogical knowledge and expertise. This booklet, based on the wide-ranging work of the *National Strategies* over recent years in the field of teaching and learning, is intended to make a contribution to a more developed view of pedagogy and thus an increased sense of informed professionalism. It provides a theoretical yet practical view of the pedagogical principles embedded in the National Strategies.

The time to address these fundamental issues of teaching and learning is right. Those who work in schools and settings are faced with increased accountability, which has brought about an increased openness in terms of what goes on in learning environments. The new teaching standards make specific reference to the need to develop pedagogical knowledge and skill as part of developing a career as a teacher. The most effective continuing professional development (CPD) often involves a specialist input along with an element of sharing practice, for instance through co-coaching, with opportunities to reflect on and learn from the practice of others. Achieving this means having a shared language and understanding in order to describe and evaluate the act of teaching. Achieving this means increasing the range and quality of dialogue within and across schools and settings about what is effective, to reduce the variation in the quality of teaching and learning that still exists in many situations and to enable transfer of the best practice across the birth to 19 age range.

You can use this booklet as a starting point to:

- generate a discussion in school, setting or department about effective pedagogy;

- explore further the four domains of pedagogy by accessing the supporting online resources (see below);

- identify key aspects of pedagogy that will benefit from further CPD;

- review key National Strategy materials and resources that will take you further into the approach to pedagogy summarised in this document.

Supporting online resources

The ideas in this booklet are further explored online where different aspects of pegagogy are linked to key National Strategies resources and materials. You can access these through 'supporting pedagogy' at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk.

Pedagogy and the National Strategies

Teaching is complex. Teachers and other practitioners draw on a range of working theories and their own experiences in arriving at their views on how children learn and how teaching can support this learning. There is an increasingly strong body of research evidence and practice that will help refine these views and inform pedagogical decisions. There are also many different definitions of pedagogy. Drawing from the work of Professor Robin Alexander (2004), the National Strategies have developed the following working definition:

Pedagogy is the act of teaching, and the rationale that supports the actions that teachers take. It is what a teacher needs to know and the range of skills that a teacher needs to use in order to make effective teaching decisions.

Developing a shared understanding and developing a common language to talk about pedagogy are crucial steps towards transforming teaching and learning to ensure that there is continuity and progression at all stages of the learning journey. This will lead to children and young people meeting their full potential.

This document and the links it makes to other Strategy resources are designed to contribute to an informed professionalism that will enable practitioners and teachers to make the decisions needed to personalise learning in ways appropriate to the ages and abilities of the learners they teach, the context of the learners and the needs of the subject.

The description of pedagogy draws upon the guidance provided by the Strategies through the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, *Excellence and enjoyment: a strategy for primary schools* (DfES 0377/2003), *The Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics* (DfES 02011-2006BOK-EN), and the continuing emphasis on both subjects and whole-school approaches in the Secondary National Strategy.

1. Pedagogy – Core principles

The core principles listed below were developed by the DfES and widely consulted upon, with schools, local authorities and others concerned with education. There was for example extensive dialogue with primary headteachers at the time of the publication of *Excellence and enjoyment: a strategy for primary schools* (DfES 0377/2003). The principles were developed to be relevant for all learners regardless of age or stage, and are strongly aligned to the expectations of Every Child Matters. Teachers and practitioners should consider these when designing effective learning opportunities:

- Ensure that every learner succeeds: set high expectations.

- Build on what learners already know: structure and pace teaching so that they can understand what is to be learned, how and why.

- Make learning of subjects and the curriculum real and vivid.

- Make learning enjoyable and challenging: stimulate learning through matching teaching techniques and strategies to a range of learning needs.

- Develop learning skills, thinking skills and personal qualities across the curriculum, inside and outside the classroom.

- Use assessment for learning to make individuals partners in their learning[1].

These principles recognise that learning has both cognitive and affective dimensions. Factors such as motivation or self-esteem have an important impact on behaviour and consequently on learning.
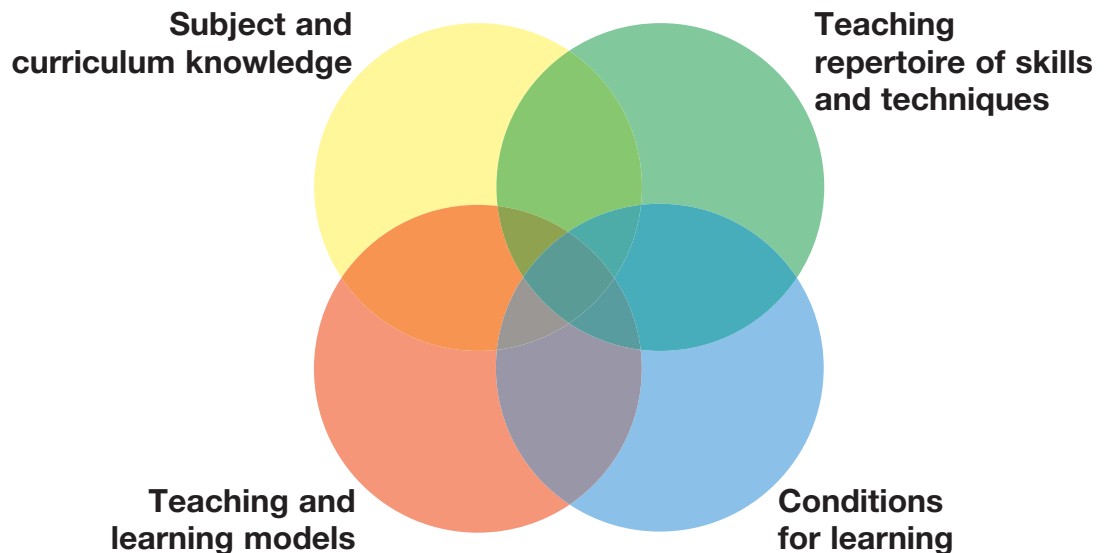
Effective teaching pays attention to motivation and self-esteem. This includes developing positive and supportive relationships by creating conditions for learning, which form the overall context within which a teacher's knowledge, understanding and skills are applied and the learners' progress can be maximised.

Parents and carers need to know about school learning, and schools need to know about and value home learning and the richness and diversity of backgrounds and cultures represented in the wider community.

[1] *DfES (2006) The core principles: teaching and learning, school improvement, system wide reform, consultation text, April 28*

2. Pedagogy – Four domains

It is helpful to consider pedagogy as four interrelated categories or domains.

Subject and curriculum knowledge

Teaching repertoire of skills and techniques

Teaching and learning models

Conditions for learning

Subject and curriculum knowledge

Well-founded and secure subject and curriculum knowledge means developing an understanding of:

- the key concepts, the networks of concepts, the methods of enquiry and language that define the subject;

- progression within the subject and any associated curriculum frameworks;

- how assessment of learning, assessment for learning and a knowledge of the common misconceptions can be used effectively to support subject learning;

- which teaching and learning models best meet the needs of different subject objectives;

- how to develop the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT to support learning in the subject

So that:

- *decisions can be made about achievement and the next steps in learning;*

- *learning can be made vivid and real;*

- *individuals become partners in their own learning, understanding what they are learning and why.*

Teaching and learning models

Research and practice suggests that learners' attainment can be enhanced by the consistent use of specific teaching and learning models. A number of teaching and learning models have been developed as a direct consequence of theories about learning. Each can be expressed as a tightly structured sequence designed to elicit and develop a specific type of thinking or response.

Well-founded understanding in this area means developing knowledge of a range of models and how the choice of the appropriate teaching and learning model (or combination of models) is determined by the nature of the learning objective.

- *Direct teaching models* are effective in helping children and young people learn new skills and procedures and acquire academic knowledge. These models include modelling and sequences for teaching reading and writing.

- *Cognitive teaching and learning models* help learners to process information, build concepts, generate and test hypotheses and to think creatively. These models include enquiry, inductive learning and teaching though analogy.

- *Social models* require learners to collaborate and learn together, and help them to construct new knowledge and understand concepts. These models include constructivism and group problem-solving.

As a result of consistent use of specific teaching and learning models:

- appropriate decisions can be made about how to match the range of learning and subject needs;

- learning is made an enjoyable and challenging experience;

- learners develop the learning and thinking skills they need.

Inductive teaching enables learners to create their own hypotheses and ask their own questions through classifying. It requires learners to think inductively.

Teaching repertoire of skills and techniques

The teaching repertoire can be characterised as a set of skills and techniques that demand learners' active engagement in learning.

These skills and techniques include developing knowledge of, competency and expertise in:

- planning and structuring learning;

- the generic teaching skills of questioning, explaining, guiding and organising group work;

- a range of active engagement techniques designed to draw the learner in and demand participation

So that:

- *learning is well-paced and an enjoyable and challenging experience;*

- *teaching can be well matched to the needs of individuals and groups;*

- *learners make good progress.*

Conditions for learning

In creating the right conditions for learning, teachers draw on their understanding of child development, learners' characteristics and the influence of the learning environment.

Teachers and other practitioners will understand, for different groups of learners, how to:

- manage a class, a group, an individual, and establish routines;

- interact effectively with learners to include them and use language to build mutual respect;

- ensure that learning builds on prior learning and attainment, varying approaches to ensure that children and young people learn in a variety of ways;

- plan effective use of time, space and resources, and make use of the wider environment to meet the needs of different groups

So that:

- *every learner succeeds;*

- *teaching can be well matched to need.*

The National Strategies have produced resources to support professional development in each of these domains. Each is outlined in more detail on www.standards.dfes.gov.uk where you will find routes through to the relevant resources.

3. Theories of learning and teaching

Several teaching methodologies have been developed as a direct consequence of theories about learning. They are often referred to as 'teaching and learning models'. Each one can be expressed as a structured sequence that is designed to elicit and develop a specific type of thinking or response. A strong body of research and practice suggests that learners' attainment can be enhanced by the consistent use of specific and appropriate models.

The choice of the appropriate model (or combination of models) will be determined by the learning objectives as well as by the needs of the learners.

Types of learning objective are listed below and the teaching and learning models that are effective in meeting them are outlined.

Acquiring and learning skills, procedures and academic knowledge

The teaching and learning models that are effective in meeting these types of learning objective belong to the *behaviourist family*. This family contains models that require children and young people to behave or learn in a particular way through a stimulus–response approach together with associated feedback on progress.

These teaching and learning models include: direct interactive teaching, modelling, demonstration, mastery learning and simulation.

The impact of these models is increased when teaching sequences include opportunities for reflection and review that require learners to consider how well they have acquired their new learning and what more they need to do to improve.

There are many theorists and researchers in this area, including Skinner, Good, Brophy, Bloom and Smith.

Modelling a new procedure or skill requires teachers to demonstrate, think out loud, explain steps and decisions and point out the pitfalls.

Developing and acquiring concepts, reasoning, processing information and thinking creatively

The teaching and learning models that are effective in meeting these types of learning objective belong to the *cognitive family*, also referred to as the *information processing family*.

This family includes models that require learners to think and reason in a number of different ways. Examples of these models are inductive teaching, enquiry, concept attainment, visualisation, dialogic teaching and using metaphor.

Their impact is increased when teaching sequences include opportunities for reflection and review that require learners to consider their reasoning, how it has helped them solve problems and in which other situations they might use these types of reasoning.

Theorists and researchers in this area include Taba, Joyce, Bruner, Schwabb and Ausubel.

Teaching through enquiry enables learners to suggest, test hypotheses and draw conclusions.

Constructing knowledge, addressing misconceptions, solving problems and reasoning empathetically

The teaching and learning models that are effective in meeting these types of learning objective belong to the *social and constructivist family*.

This family includes models that require learners to work collaboratively, sometimes learning from each other, and where the teacher provides scaffolded support to address misconceptions, acting in both teaching and facilitation roles.

These models include: constructivism, group problem-solving and role-play.

Theorists and researchers in this area include Piaget, Vygotsky, Dewey and Shaftel.

4. Pedagogy and personalised learning in settings and schools

Developing a shared understanding and developing a common language to talk about pedagogy are crucial steps towards transforming teaching and learning to ensure that there is continuity and progression at all stages of the learning journey. This will lead to children and young people meeting their full potential.

There is a strong connection between developing this shared view of pedagogy, and the concept of 'personalised learning'.

Personalisation in education should enable structures and organisations to be developed that result in personalised learning for all children. Personalised learning means that all children and young people, whatever their starting point, are able to fulfil their potential as learners.

Personalisation involves creating a coherent learning environment where children and young people will experience the range of approaches and opportunities that will enable them to increase their competence as self-motivated learners.

To achieve personalised learning, settings and schools need to ensure that pupil level data are used alongside systematic observation and assessment to identify specific underperforming groups or individuals.

There are three essential and interrelated elements that need to be in place in a small group, classroom, whole school or whole setting for personalised learning to be both effective and successful. Each element has equal importance.

- How children and young people learn:

  an understanding of theories of learning, the teaching models they give rise to and how these relate to individuals or groups of learners.

- What children and young people learn:

  knowledge about key skills subject concepts, progression within and between subjects and areas of learning.

- Assessing learners' achievement and their learning needs:

  using formative and summative assessment, diagnostic marking, questioning and response to plan next steps in learning and provision.

These elements are complementary to each of the components of personalised learning listed in the White Paper: *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All*:

- giving intensive support to help them catch up; and those who have a particular gift or talent extra challenge;

- using extended schools to give all children and young people access to extra support or tuition in particular subject areas and other activities where they have a particular interest or aptitude and are motivated by study that stretches and interests them;

- providing every school with support and guidance on tailoring their teaching, including using trained, leading teachers;

- ensuring that schools have expert advice on how to support learners facing particular challenges – including those from Black and other minority groups, disabled children, looked-after children, and children with special educational needs (SEN).

These elements also reflect the commitment to personalised care and learning outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inclusion and diversity

Inclusion is about the presence, participation and achievement of children and young people with diverse needs. One of the four main statutory purposes of the national curriculum is to establish learners' entitlement irrespective of social background, culture, race, gender, differences in ability and disabilities.

To ensure that their curriculum is inclusive, schools and settings and teachers and other practitioners should:

- set suitable challenges;

- respond to learners' diverse needs;

- overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups.

Inclusive pedagogy

Planning learning experiences and matching teaching approaches to learning needs is at the heart of personalised learning and is inclusive of all learners. However, there are further factors that will influence the pedagogic approaches adopted by teachers and other practitioners when planning. For example, there are some distinctive aspects of pedagogy for children and young people who are learning English as an additional language (EAL). EAL learners will be affected by attitudes towards them, their culture, language, religion and ethnicity. Bilingual learners face two main tasks in the school or setting: they need to learn English and they need to learn the content of the curriculum. Learning a language is more than just learning vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation; it involves using all these elements appropriately for a variety of real purposes or functions.

Research has also identified specific approaches supportive to learners with SEN such as:

- using access strategies to ensure that difficulty in one area of the curriculum does not hold the learner back in another;

- ensuring the provision of special means of access such as communication systems like Braille, British Sign Language or Makaton;

- providing more examples for children and young people with difficulties with cognition and learning, to enable them to apply a concept, more practice in applying the concept, and more opportunities to generalise the concept from one context to another.

Effective inclusive provision has been summarised in the National Strategies' 'waves' model which describes a strategic approach to teaching and additional intervention designed to minimise underachievement for all learners. The waves model can be extended to incorporate additional challenge for all learners, including gifted and talented learners, and can be used as a strategic approach to developing the broader idea of personalisation.

Wave 1 – Quality first teaching

High quality inclusive teaching is supported by effective whole-school policies and frameworks, clearly targeted on all learners' needs and prior learning. This teaching needs to be based in planning and schemes of work that are designed to move all learners from where they are to where they need to be. Where there are large numbers of learners who share the same learning needs, the best solution is to adjust the planning to cater for them. It means setting a new trajectory for the learning programme to take learners to where they need to be in terms of age-related expectations. Effective Wave 1 teaching anticipates the needs of learners based on good use of yearly transition data and information.

Wave 2 – Wave 1 plus additional, time-limited, tailored intervention support programmes

Wave 2 provision is designed to increase rates of progress and secure learning for groups of learners that puts them back on course to meet or exceed national expectations. This usually takes the form of a tight, structured programme of small-group support that has an evidence base of impact on progress. This support is carefully targeted according to analysis of need and is delivered by teachers or teaching assistants who have the skills to help learners achieve their learning objectives. The progress of learners is closely tracked for impact. This support can occur outside (but in addition to) whole-class lessons, or be built into mainstream lessons as part of guided work. Critically, intervention support needs to help children and young people apply their learning in mainstream lessons and to ensure that motivation and progress in learning is sustained. The outcome of Wave 2 intervention is for learners to be back on track to meet or exceed national expectations at the end of the key stage.

Wave 3 – Wave 1 plus increasingly individualised programmes, based on independent evidence of what works

Expectations are to accelerate and maximise progress and to minimise performance gaps. This may involve support from a specialist teacher, highly trained teaching assistant, or academic mentor delivered one to one or to small groups to support learners towards the achievement of very specific targets.

At all key stages there are some features of learning design – whether for a whole class, small group or individual – that are critical to success.

- The teaching is focused and structured so that children and young people know what is to be learned and how, and how it fits with what they know and can do already.

- Teaching concentrates on the misconceptions, gaps or weaknesses that learners have had with earlier work, and builds in some extra consolidation.

- Lessons or sessions are designed around a structure that emphasises the stages of learning from which children and young people will most benefit.

- Learners are motivated with pace, dialogue and stimulating activities.

- Learners' progress is assessed regularly, using practitioner-led, self- and peer-assessment approaches that enable subsequent sessions to be tailored to their needs.

- Teachers have high expectations of the effort learners will need to make.

- Teachers create a settled and purposeful atmosphere for learning.

Peer-assessment enables children and young people to understand the standards they are aiming for.

This booklet has summarised some of the key aspects of pedagogy embedded in the work of the National Strategies. It is designed to contribute to an informed professionalism that will enable teachers and other practitioners to make the decisions needed to personalise learning in ways appropriate to the ages and abilities of the learners they teach, the context of the learners and the needs of the subject.

References:

Alexander, R. (2004) Still no pedagogy? Principle, pragmatism and compliance in primary education, Cambridge Journal of Education, 34 (1), p11

department for
education and skills

Creating Opportunity
Releasing Potential
Achieving Excellence