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EASTERN MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

**EMPOWERING EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING
A PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR
EASTERN MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST**



EMPOWERING EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING A PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR EASTERN MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

This document includes the complete guidance on pedagogical principles, including:

- ▶ Classroom Culture
- ▶ Lesson Structuring
- ▶ Retrieval Practice
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INTRODUCTION

“Raising the quality of teaching within schools is probably the single most effective thing we can do to promote both overall attainment and equity.”

Dylan Wiliam

At Eastern Multi-Academy Trust (EMAT), we recognise that the single most influential factor on pupil outcomes is the quality of teaching. Our aim is to align our pedagogy across all academies in the Trust so that all children - regardless of setting - benefit from consistently high-quality teaching that reflects current evidence and research.

We understand that excellent teaching is not simply intuitive or born of experience alone. Instead, we draw upon a wide body of educational research, with Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction providing the foundational framework. This is supported by strategies from Lemov (Teach Like a Champion), Sherrington (Walkthrus), and Wiliam (Embedding Formative Assessment), among others.

WHY PEDAGOGY MATTERS

Great teaching transforms lives. Research consistently shows that the single most important school-related factor in pupil achievement is the quality of teaching. At EMAT, we believe that investing in the development of our teachers is the surest route to pupil success.

By embracing evidence-led strategies, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, and holding ourselves to high standards, we create classrooms where every learner can thrive.



EMAT TEACHING COMMITMENTS

- ▶ Teach to age related expectations; scaffold & stretch as needed.
- ▶ Use evidence-led strategies.
- ▶ Always model excellence.
- ▶ Deliver explicit instruction.
- ▶ Anticipate and address misconceptions.
- ▶ Provide immediate corrective feedback.
- ▶ Challenge all pupils.
- ▶ Accept nothing less than excellence.

These commitments are non-negotiable and reflect our belief that all pupils can succeed.



CLASSROOM CULTURE

A positive, purposeful classroom culture lays the foundation for all effective teaching and learning. At EMAT, we believe that creating the right climate in our classrooms - one built on high expectations, consistency, and strong relationships - is critical to enabling success for every pupil. Each individual academy has its own behaviour policy which underlays the foundation of a positive classroom culture.

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES

- ▶ **Clarity for All:** Expectations should be clear, consistent, and inclusive, so that all pupils feel confident in what is being asked of them.
- ▶ **Signal, Pause, Check-In:** A supportive method to gain attention and ensure readiness before moving on.
- ▶ **Consistent Routines:** Embedding routines helps pupils feel secure in knowing what comes next.
- ▶ **Precision with Compassion:** We value accuracy but encourage all attempts, focusing on developing understanding.
- ▶ **Championing Challenge:** High expectations coupled with appropriate support.
- ▶ **Visible Awareness:** Teachers respond promptly and supportively to pupil needs.





LESSON STRUCTURING

We structure lessons using a flexible I-We-You model:

- ▶ **Retrieve prior knowledge** (via low-stakes quizzes or retrieval grids)
- ▶ **Explain the big picture**
- ▶ **Model and explain** (including live modelling, dual coding, and metacognitive talk)
- ▶ **Guided practice** (whiteboards, partner talk, and peer support)
- ▶ **Cold calling and questioning** (using hinge questions and elaborative interrogation)
- ▶ **Independent practice**
- ▶ **Assess for learning** (live marking, show-me boards, hinge-point MCQs)



EVIDENCE-LED PRACTICES

A cornerstone of our teaching approach at EMAT is a commitment to evidence-led practice. Central to this is the influence of **Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction**, which underpin many of the strategies and approaches outlined throughout this guide. These principles provide a practical and research-based framework for effective teaching, and they are consistently embedded across EMAT classrooms.

WHAT EVIDENCE-LED MEANS IN PRACTICE...

- ▶ **Purposeful Planning:** Lessons are planned with a clear learning objective and structured using methods such as I-We-You and retrieval starters.
- ▶ **Guided by Cognitive Science:** Teachers understand how memory works and apply techniques like spaced practice, links between subject areas, and low-stakes quizzing.
- ▶ **Responsive to Feedback:** We use ongoing assessment to adapt instruction, identify misconceptions, and provide targeted support.



RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

Retrieval practice is the process of recalling previously learned information to strengthen memory and learning. At EMAT, we use retrieval not only to check understanding but to support the transfer of knowledge into long-term memory. Frequent, low-stakes opportunities to retrieve learning help ensure that pupils remember and apply what they've been taught.

WHY RETRIEVAL MATTERS

Cognitive science shows that retrieving information is one of the most powerful ways to embed knowledge. Each time a pupil brings a fact, concept, or procedure to mind, they strengthen the neural pathway associated with that learning. This means it becomes easier to recall and use in the future.

- ▶ **Do Now Tasks:** Short starter tasks revisiting past learning.
- ▶ **Brain Dumps:** Pupils independently recall everything on a topic.
- ▶ **Retrieval Grids:** Curriculum-spanning questions encouraging links between subject areas.
- ▶ **Mind Mapping:** Visual representation of understanding and connections.
- ▶ **Self-Quizzing:** Pupils test and self-assess knowledge.
- ▶ **Closed Procedural Tasks:** Completing partially solved problems.
- ▶ **Demonstrate or Narrate:** Pupils explain processes or stories orally or visually.

Retrieval is embedded daily, varied across lessons, and kept low stakes to maximise impact.

EMBEDDING RETRIEVAL IN DAILY PRACTICE

Teachers plan for retrieval as a regular part of lessons, not an occasional add-on. It may appear at the start of the lesson as part of a review, as a mid-lesson checkpoint, or as part of plenary and reflection. Using partner talk, whiteboards, or quizzes keeps the process low stakes but high impact.

Retrieval is not just about facts. Pupils might be asked to recall methods, vocabulary, historical perspectives, or grammatical structures - anything they need to hold in long-term memory to succeed.





MODELLING AND EXPLAINING

Clear and explicit modelling is at the heart of effective teaching. At EMAT, we recognise that how we explain and demonstrate new learning directly impacts pupils' understanding and ability to apply knowledge independently. Modelling helps pupils understand what success looks like and how to get there.

WHY IT MATTERS

When teachers model, they make their thinking visible. This supports pupils in understanding not just the what, but the how and the why behind a process or concept. It helps reduce cognitive load by breaking down complex tasks into smaller, manageable steps.

STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE MODELLING

- ▶ **Live Modelling:** The teacher completes a task in real time, verbalising their thought process. This might include solving a problem on the board while narrating each step.
- ▶ **Worked Examples:** Showing pupils a completed, high-quality example and explaining why it meets the success criteria.
- ▶ **Success Criteria and WAGOLLs (What A Good One Looks Like):** These help clarify expectations and provide a reference point for pupils' own work.
- ▶ **Concrete Examples and Analogies:** Making abstract concepts more accessible by linking them to familiar ideas or experiences.
- ▶ **Visual Aids and Dual Coding:** Using diagrams alongside verbal explanations to support memory and understanding.

"Modelling is not just showing - it's teaching through demonstration, dialogue, and repetition."

SUPPORTING PUPILS THROUGH EXPLANATION

Good explanations go beyond instructions. They involve:

- ▶ Using subject-specific vocabulary precisely and consistently
- ▶ Pausing to check for understanding
- ▶ Asking pupils to summarise or rephrase key points
- ▶ Linking new learning to prior knowledge

Pupils should be given time to process and rehearse what they've seen. This is where partner talk, questioning, and guided practice come into play.

As part of our pedagogy, we model not only tasks but behaviours, attitudes, and academic language, helping children to internalise what great learning looks and sounds like.



GUIDED PRACTICE

Guided practice serves as the bridge between teacher-led modelling and pupil independence. It provides a structured space where pupils can practise new skills or apply new knowledge with support, before moving on to work on their own. At EMAT, guided practice is a crucial part of lesson delivery and a key step in securing learning.

WHY IT MATTERS

This stage enables pupils to rehearse and consolidate their understanding while the teacher monitors, scaffolds, and intervenes where necessary. It also provides opportunities to check for misconceptions and to adjust instruction accordingly.

“Guided practice is where the baton begins to pass from teacher to pupil - but the relay isn’t over yet.”

PRACTICAL APPROACHES TO GUIDED PRACTICE

- ▶ **Shared Examples:** Teacher and pupils work through a new task or question together, with the teacher prompting and inviting input.
- ▶ **Backwards Fading:** Pupils complete an example where the first step(s) are already completed, and they take on more of the process as they move through.
- ▶ **Mini Whiteboards:** All pupils respond to questions simultaneously, enabling real-time assessment and immediate feedback.
- ▶ **Talk Partners:** Pupils discuss and solve problems collaboratively before attempting them alone.
- ▶ **Teacher Circulation:** The teacher moves around the classroom, checking understanding, giving verbal feedback, and providing prompts or further examples where needed.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ Scaffold carefully, and reduce support as confidence increases.
- ▶ Embed formative assessment through questioning, whiteboards, or observation.
- ▶ Use errors as learning opportunities by modelling how to respond constructively.
- ▶ Link directly back to the success criteria or modelled examples.

Effective guided practice helps ensure that pupils are well-prepared to work independently and apply their learning with success and confidence.



QUESTIONING

Effective questioning lies at the heart of formative assessment and great teaching. At EMAT, we use questioning to check understanding, challenge thinking, and guide learning forward. Every question posed is an opportunity to engage all learners, clarify misconceptions, and extend pupils' ideas.

THE PURPOSE OF QUESTIONING

Questioning is not simply about eliciting the right answer. It is about:

- ▶ Encouraging pupils to think deeply and critically
- ▶ Identifying gaps in understanding
- ▶ Clarifying and reinforcing new learning
- ▶ Encouraging dialogue and active participation

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Good explanations go beyond instructions. They involve:

- ▶ **Open Questions:** Promote discussion and reasoning (e.g. "What might happen if...?" or "Why do you think...?")
- ▶ **Closed Questions:** Useful for checking recall or quick understanding (e.g. "What is 3 x 4?")
- ▶ **Probing Questions:** Encourage deeper thinking (e.g. "Can you explain that another way?" or "What's your evidence?")
- ▶ **Hinge Questions:** Used mid-lesson to determine whether pupils are ready to move on and to identify misconceptions that need addressing before continuing

EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING TECHNIQUES

- ▶ **Cold Calling:** Teachers ask a question and then choose who answers. This ensures all pupils stay engaged and are prepared to respond.
- ▶ **No Opt Out:** All pupils are expected to contribute. If a pupil cannot answer initially, the teacher revisits them after support has been given.
- ▶ **Think, Pair, Share:** Pupils are given time to think individually, then discuss with a partner, and finally share with the class. This builds confidence and depth.
- ▶ **Say It Again, Better:** Pupils are encouraged to improve and refine their first response using academic language.
- ▶ **Elaborative Interrogation:** Asking pupils to justify their answers using reasoning (e.g. "Why does that happen?")

"Well-crafted questions invite all pupils into the learning - creating space for dialogue, exploration, and curiosity." - Eleanor Duckworth

PLANNING FOR QUALITY QUESTIONS

Effective questioning doesn't happen by chance. Teachers at EMAT:

- ▶ Plan key questions in advance
- ▶ Link questions to lesson objectives
- ▶ Anticipate common misconceptions
- ▶ Use questioning to differentiate and include all learners

Questioning is a skill that grows with reflection and practice. At EMAT, we support teachers to hone this skill through collaboration, coaching, and continuous professional development.



ASSESSMENT

Assessment is integral to effective teaching and learning. At EMAT, we use assessment to understand what pupils know, identify gaps in understanding, and plan for next steps. It informs our teaching and supports every child in making progress from their individual starting points.

THE PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment at EMAT is:

- ▶ **Formative:** Ongoing, in-the-moment checks for understanding that inform daily instruction.
- ▶ **Diagnostic:** Identifying misconceptions or gaps in prior knowledge.
- ▶ **Summative:** Measuring pupil attainment at key points in time.

Teachers at EMAT:

- ▶ Plan assessment opportunities in every lesson.
- ▶ Use success criteria to support and guide pupil self-reflection.
- ▶ Ensure feedback is actionable and encourages progress.
- ▶ Use assessment to adapt teaching and revisit key content where needed.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING STRATEGIES

Formative assessment is central to our teaching. Strategies include:

- ▶ **Cold Calling:** Popularised by Lemov, this ensures that all pupils remain engaged and accountable. Teachers pose a question and then choose who responds, encouraging all students to prepare to answer, fostering deeper thinking and equity of participation.
- ▶ **Partner Talk:** Promotes oracy and peer collaboration, enabling pupils to articulate their understanding, clarify misconceptions, and build confidence through structured dialogue. This strategy ensures that all learners engage in the cognitive process, not just those who raise their hands. Used effectively, it creates a culture of collaboration and oracy.
- ▶ **No Opt Out:** Emphasised notably in 'Teach Like a Champion' by Doug Lemov, it insists that every pupil participates in answering questions or engaging in classroom discussions. If a pupil initially provides an incorrect or incomplete answer, the teacher will circle back to that pupil after correct answers or explanations have been provided by others. This reinforces learning and helps build confidence by ensuring that pupils conclude interactions successfully.
- ▶ **Hinge Questions:** Specific, diagnostic questions posed at critical points in the lesson, particularly between teaching phases. Popularised by Dylan Wiliam, hinge questions help teachers quickly identify if pupils have grasped key concepts before moving onto independent work or more complex content. Answers to these hinge questions inform immediate teaching adjustments, allowing teachers to address misconceptions swiftly and effectively.
- ▶ **Show Me Boards:** Individual whiteboards held up simultaneously by pupils to display their responses to teacher-posed questions. This technique, advocated by formative assessment specialists like Dylan Wiliam and Tom Sherrington, enables teachers to quickly assess the whole class's understanding. It offers immediate, visual feedback to inform whether the lesson can progress or if concepts require further clarification.
- ▶ **Live Marking:** Teachers providing immediate, in-the-moment feedback during independent pupil tasks by circulating, reviewing work and intervening with specific, timely corrections, guidance, or praise, ensuring immediate improvement. This method significantly increases the effectiveness of feedback avoiding waiting until after the task or lesson ends.
- ▶ **Low-Stakes Testing:** Helps to identify gaps without inducing anxiety, using regular, informal assessments (such as short quizzes or retrieval tasks) designed to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. They are effective for reinforcing knowledge retention, identifying knowledge gaps, and informing future teaching, in line with evidence-based retrieval practice strategies.

Assessment is most powerful when it is embedded into the learning process, rather than added on as an afterthought. Through regular, responsive assessment, we support all pupils to thrive.



ALIGNMENT IN ACTION

At EMAT, we believe that the consistent use of effective pedagogical practices across our Trust leads to stronger outcomes for all. Alignment doesn't mean exact uniformity - it means consistency in approach enhanced by strong networking. It ensures that every child receives high-quality teaching grounded in shared principles, no matter which classroom they are in.

WHY ALIGNMENT MATTERS

- ▶ **Shared Language:** Common terminology around teaching practice supports collaboration and understanding among staff.
- ▶ **Professional Growth:** Aligned expectations allow for meaningful coaching, CPD, and reflection.
- ▶ **Pupil Equity:** A shared approach ensures that all children experience the same high-quality instruction, regardless of setting.
- ▶ **Efficient Implementation:** When strategies and structures are consistent, we reduce teacher workload and increase impact.

HOW WE SUSTAIN ALIGNMENT

- ▶ **Ongoing CPD:** Training sessions across schools focus on developing the shared approaches outlined in this guide - particularly through the PKC curriculum.
- ▶ **Networking:** Subjects specialists meet regularly to share good practice approaches.
- ▶ **Use of Expertise Within the Trust:** We have a number of specialist practitioners who are able to support colleagues in a wide range of areas.
- ▶ **Instructional Coaching:** Leaders and peers provide supportive feedback using a common language of teaching.
- ▶ **Monitoring and Adaptation:** We review how our pedagogical approach is working and adapt based on pupil need and new research.



CONCLUSION

This guide will grow and evolve as our teachers continue to reflect, innovate, and share what works. Through alignment, we empower one another - and most importantly, we empower our pupils.



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