

## DEMAT Education Principles (exemplifications)

The principles ensure that we are “rowing together” as a trust family of schools who are driving forward our practice as we work and think together. They support us in making strong, intentional choices about all aspects of school life which impact teaching and learning. They help us guard against “drift” away from our best bets and challenge us to continue to test these. However, if they are just words on paper, they will have no impact. We need to actively use them and to be clear about what they mean for us in our schools. We have tried to add some detail through the “What does this mean?” section because we want to avoid the ambiguity that can come with rather concise statements, and we have added some questions to support individual schools with working out what this looks like for them. We strongly advise capturing this in writing in order to have a touchpoint to check against.

In several places we use the word “all”, rather than always highlighting this through formatting, it is worth reiterating that “all means all” which is crucial for holding the highest expectations and is not just a matter of equity but of justice.

### Curriculum

**All DEMAT children are entitled to a rich, highly specified curriculum where knowledge is valued, well-sequenced and taught to be remembered. It is not left to chance.**

What does this mean?	What does this look like in our school?
<p>Our curriculum entitlement is for <b>ALL</b> our children.</p> <p>We know that knowledge begets knowledge and that the ability to make links, think critically and to be creative all stem from knowledge of a given area.</p> <p>We must be very clear about what it is that we want to ensure children know and can do. We design our delivery of this to ensure that all our children not only experience or cover this knowledge, but that they remember it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If we have to move around an area of the curriculum (e.g. to accommodate a different year group mix), how does this impact on future learning in this and other subjects?</li> <li>• What does progression look like in each subject? Who has ownership? What do staff need to know? How does this work for/connect with EYFS?</li> <li>• How do we ensure that all children receive their entitlement? How are children with SEND being served? (Adaptations, consistency of formats and routines, task and instruction design – thinking about learning rather than activity, removal for interventions etc.)</li> <li>• What do our timetables need to look like to provide adequate time for each subject?</li> </ul>

	Are there pragmatic decisions we need to make here? Can/should we be flexible around timetabling/time allocation (not bound by weeks/term-time etc). Are there areas where we could use time better?
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## Assessment

**The curriculum is the progression model which underpins our approach to assessment and prioritises the formative aspect of this at the point of learning for ALL children.**

What does this mean?	What does this look like in our school?
Assessment of our curriculum must inform us clearly about what it is that children have or haven't learnt and, furthermore, it must both demand of us and support us to do something about what we know. Formative assessment must be central to lesson design and summative assessment must be as valid as possible (i.e. it tells us what we think it does). Judging whether children have learnt the curriculum or not (and where any gaps may be) tells us what we might need to do and places the burden of 'proof' back where it should be: on the curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do we teach so that we know what our children have/haven't understood/remembered/learnt? How do we check for this regularly and consistently? How does our teaching facilitate retention?</li> <li>What is manageable/useful to record and what is not? (workload: return on learning ratio must be high)</li> <li>Who holds this information?</li> <li>What do we do with any assessment information we collect?</li> <li>How does the subject leader know if their progression model is effective?</li> </ul>

## Entitlement for all

**Where necessary, through robust and rigorous assessment processes, we make intentional decisions to adapt and make reasonable adjustments ensuring that ALL DEMAT pupils receive their entitlement because their identified needs are addressed.**

What does this mean?	What does this look like in our school?
It's important to ask: is an adaptation necessary? We should never default to particular adaptations or interventions without first considering how they specifically support a particular child with a particular area of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do we have the same expectations of progress for all of our pupils or could we be unintentionally lowering these for some?</li> </ul>

or task. These must be intentional and not generic. E.g.: ADHD ≠ wobble cushion  
 We do not diagnose or label children – this is not our job. Ours is to think first about what they can do and then to actively remove barriers so that all pupils can receive their entitlement. It is also to ensure that all identified needs are addressed.  
 Crucially, we do not design a richer curriculum for some children than others.

- Have you embedded the graduated approach (assess, plan, do, review) as part of your teaching practice?
- How are individual support plans used to reflect and influence provision?
- How are adults adapting teaching to meet needs?
- How are gaps in knowledge and skills determined and subsequently targeted?
- How do you know which of your interventions are boosting pupil outcomes?
- How is the impact of additional provision measured and fed back into monitoring and evaluation cycles?
- Are all staff deployed in line with established good practice?
- When a pupil with SEND cannot access the ‘main offer’ is the deficit/problem placed with them and an alternative provided? Or is a deficit within routines, procedures, building or provision considered alongside how to remove any systemic barrier in order to facilitate inclusion?

## Powerful knowledge

**The curriculum provides the platform for opportunities to ensure that powerful knowledge develops understanding and takes children beyond their otherwise lived experiences, allowing them to think better, and opening up life choices.**

What does this mean?	What does this look like in our school?
When we think about adapting curriculum for the children we teach, we can get bogged down in “relevance” or our unique context. Michael Young describes powerful knowledge however, as context - independent. It is knowledge that has been built up over centuries and which has been passed on and developed from generation to generation. It is our duty to share this knowledge with our children and not to allow their individual contexts to determine what they are entitled to. This means that children are not limited to the confines of their personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What knowledge might take our children outside of their everyday lived experiences and open up their world?</li> <li>• How does our curriculum provide for this? (Here we might consider things like our trips, our reading canon, our composers studied in music, the types of scientists we learn about etc.)</li> <li>• How does this start in EYFS – do we understand their starting points so we can adapt from there?</li> </ul>

experience but that aspects of the world that might otherwise be unknown are opened up to them. Of course, this also means we must consider prior experience and context if we are also to specify what we want to emphasise. This does not just mean 'trips' (although it certainly can include trips) but it means the literature, art, science, music etc. that we choose to expose our children to. We must never apologise for what we teach them as we are exposing them to the beauty of what we know about the world around them and allowing them to stand on the shoulders of the giants who have gone before them in story of mankind.

## Pedagogy

**Our research-informed pedagogy ensures that what is taught is designed to help pupils to remember the long term, the content they have been taught and to integrate new knowledge into larger concepts.**

What does this mean?	What does this look like in our school?
<p>Our research-informed pedagogy is built on the principle that teaching should secure long-term learning by helping pupils remember and connect knowledge into larger concepts. This requires careful planning from clear end points, breaking content into manageable steps, sequencing it thoughtfully, and ensuring prior knowledge is revisited and built upon. Direct instruction, supported by scaffolds and fading to independence, allows novices to progress towards expertise, with discovery following secure understanding. Retrieval practice, formative assessment, and fidelity to lesson design ensure knowledge is embedded, misconceptions addressed, and learning applied fluently.</p> <p>We must be clear that performance and learning are not the same thing and therefore we must be wary about how we come to judgements about learning recognising our biases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is content carefully broken down and planned backwards from a clearly defined end-point?</li> <li>• Do we ensure knowledge is revisited regularly and built upon thoughtfully?</li> <li>• How do we plan for (and check) pupils to remember what they've been taught in the long term and to integrate new knowledge into larger concepts?</li> <li>• What techniques do we use?</li> <li>• Do we test regularly to ensure that pupils embed and use knowledge fluently and/or to check understanding and inform teaching?</li> <li>• Are we all clear on the purpose of our assessments and what they can/cannot tell us?</li> <li>• Do we prioritise our professional learning, both as a collective and as individuals? Is this part of our culture?</li> </ul>

A clear understanding of children's starting points is essential to meet them where they are and build upon that effectively.	
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## Justice

**In DEMAT schools, everyone is responsible for the culture of ambitious aspirations and high expectations for all pupils recognising that each child is unique, complex and valued.**

What does this mean?	What does this look like in our school?
<p>We recognise that all children are unique, but we all learn in essentially the same way.</p> <p>All teachers are teachers of SEND and all children deserve to learn the curriculum. Therefore, we meet children at their starting points, but we do not leave them there. We pay attention to what children <i>can</i> do instead of what they <i>can't</i> do.</p> <p>Equality, equity, justice – what do these mean to us in this context?</p> <p>Class teachers are responsible for holding the highest expectations for the children in their class.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do we ensure that pupils with SEND access an ambitious curriculum alongside their peers?</li> <li>Are all pupils with SEND having the same timetabled access to qualified teachers as those without a SEND label?</li> <li>How are staff supported to ensure they understand and implement their responsibility under the SEND Code of Practice?</li> <li>What is our system that links data to effective actions to increase attendance for pupils with SEND?</li> <li>Do we know and understand children's individual strengths, interests, motivations and barriers to learning?</li> <li>What are we modelling for pupils with no identified SEN? What are they learning about diversity, community, social responsibility and social justice?</li> <li>Is there continuity across every class?</li> </ul>

## Communication

**We intentionally foster strong relationships and proactive communication with families and professionals so there is a shared understanding of the evidence-informed inclusive practice.**

What does this mean?	What does this look like in our school?
Ensuring a clear and shared understanding of evidence-informed practices helps create a supportive environment that benefits everyone, especially those who require additional support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What systems and processes are in place to ensure real collaboration with our parents and families? How are these communicated to parents?</li> </ul>

<p>Strong relationships and effective communication also facilitate collaboration, leading to better outcomes for children.</p> <p>We develop systems to ensure that we are regularly updating and listening to families and professionals.</p> <p>We equip ourselves to respectfully challenge unevidenced or potentially counterproductive approaches.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What feedback mechanisms are in place? How do we ensure parents views are heard and acted on?</li> <li>• How do we communicate with parents to support their understanding of evidence-informed practice to meet the needs of their child(ren)?</li> <li>• Are we providing appropriate workshops and training for our families to enable them to participate in collaboration?</li> <li>• How can the child's family better help you understand the learner?</li> <li>• How do we work with other partners in our local area(s) to develop effective provision?</li> </ul>
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## Reading is paramount

**Rigorous, systematic teaching of reading is paramount and includes mastery of the phonic code, fluency (automaticity, accuracy and prosody) and comprehension. This means that anyone involved in reading instruction must be inducted with the required subject and pedagogical knowledge.**

What does this mean?	What does this look like in our school?
<p>Reading instruction is the most well-researched area of teaching, with an extensive evidence base. We must ensure that anyone involved in the teaching of reading has the knowledge, skills and resources to teach in the ways that are our 'best bets' to ensure that all children leave us as fluent, able readers with positive attitudes towards reading.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have we made teaching children to read our highest priority? Is this reflected in the operational running of our days? Timetables, general classroom practice, what we communicate to families etc?</li> <li>• Have we ensured that we are all clear on what is meant by the terms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Synthetic phonics? Do they understand why we use linguistic phonics and that it sits under the umbrella of a synthetic phonics approach? If not – what could go wrong? Are all staff clear that, without sufficient mastery of the phonic code, children will not be able to read fluently?</li> <li>▪ Fluency (and the role automaticity, accuracy, speed, and prosody play)?</li> <li>▪ Comprehension (specifically the role of background knowledge and how comprehension 'skills' are largely not transferable and so time teaching these</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>should be limited and not the main method of instruction)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any systems in our schools that could undermine the work we are doing with the rigorous approach to reading we are taking?</li> <li>• Do all of our staff understand the meaning of these key terms and concepts (see Teaching Handbook)?</li> </ul>
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## Subject knowledge

**In all subjects, strong teacher subject knowledge is crucial; we must ensure that teachers are equipped with, and effectively use, the knowledge required to ensure coherence and avoid misconceptions.**

What does this mean?	What does this look like in our school?
<p>We need to take responsibility for developing our own subject knowledge. This is based on the premise that we can all improve our practice, not because we are not good enough, but because we can all be better.</p> <p>All teaching staff should understand the prerequisite knowledge, core knowledge and where the learning leads to next.</p> <p>As primary colleagues we teach such a broad curriculum that it is almost impossible to have expertise in all subjects, so we must ensure that we access the resources and CPD available to be as informed and knowledgeable as possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we ensure that everyone has all the knowledge and tools they need?</li> <li>• What does good subject knowledge look like in core and foundation subjects? Is it different? How?</li> <li>• Do we have a culture that embraces the idea that we can <u>all</u> improve, not just some?</li> <li>• How do we get better as a collective, rather than some individuals improving and leaving others behind?</li> <li>• Are our expectations around CPD clear? What systems exist?</li> <li>• Is our CPD available/accessible to all? If not, what issues do we need to try to mitigate?</li> <li>• How do we know our CPD is having an impact? Are there things we need to less of in order to prioritise what we need to do more of?</li> </ul>

## Outcomes

**Maximising pupil outcomes in all year groups is imperative to ensure that children have the foundations to build successful futures and to be inducted into the educated community.**

What does this mean?	What does this look like in our school?
<p>We cannot say we either value the whole child or their academic achievement or that one is more</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are we sure about what children need to be able to do for the next stages to ensure they are</li> </ul>

<p>important than the other. They are inextricably linked. Our mandate is to educate the whole child. We know that if our children are unable to access the curriculum confidently at secondary school, they are set up for significant future struggle. It is not just Y6 where outcomes become important, if, as we say, we have a clear progression model for the curriculum, we need to ensure that each stage acts as preparation for the next. This is all of our responsibility.</p>	<p>prepared? Do EYFS staff know what Y1 expectations look like (e.g. for sitting on carpet etc.)? Do KS1 staff know what KS2 expectations look like (e.g. can they get used to extended independent work by the end of Y2 etc.)? Have we specified the 'learning behaviours we need children to be able to master/demonstrate for each stage?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do all staff, in all year groups understand the role they play in achieving high academic outcomes for <u>all</u> pupils? How do we know?</li> <li>• Is this message clear for all pupils? How do we know?</li> <li>• How do we ensure that no child is 'left behind' at any stage of their education, regardless of external factors?</li> </ul>
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## Behaviour

**The behaviour curriculum is codified and taught explicitly, with consistent expectations, to ensure that all children receive their entitlement to the education they deserve.**

What does this mean?	What does this look like in our school?
<p>All good teaching and learning is underpinned by strong behaviour routines. We spend most of our time and effort teaching positive, pro-social behaviours.</p> <p>Pupils need to practise the routines and habits of good behaviour – regularly and until it is impossible for pupils to be confused about what the right thing to do is.</p> <p>Teaching positive behaviour is an act of constant maintenance. It is never finished and should be continuously reviewed against benchmarks.</p> <p>Systems for dealing with poor behaviour are clear and understood by all.</p> <p>Supporting behaviour is everybody's job in a school, but the Headteacher has special</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is our behaviour curriculum written down? When is it taught explicitly?</li> <li>• Do all staff know and implement our behaviour curriculum consistently?</li> <li>• Is every classroom an environment conducive to learning?</li> <li>• Are all children doing what the adult asks of them all the time? If not, what are the barriers?</li> <li>• How do the children interact with the environment and with each other?</li> <li>• Are incidents of poor behaviour logged and analysed? What do they show?</li> <li>• Are all children socially included?</li> <li>• Sit in a child's seat: how accessible is the classroom from their perspective?</li> </ul>

<p>responsibility for ensuring behaviour is excellent.</p>	
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## Highest expectations

**We hold the highest expectations for all our pupils in their academic outcomes, their personal conduct, and their contribution as members of the communities to which they belong in order that they may flourish now and in the future.**

What does this mean?	What does this look like in our school?
<p>We accept that everyone believes they have high expectations but that individuals describe these expectations differently. If 'high expectations' means different things to different people, then really it means nothing at all. Therefore, we need to codify and set out, in detail, what these are and what they look like in our schools. For example, if we say we want children to walk around the school in a sensible manner, what does 'sensible' look like? If it looks different for different members of staff, then neither staff nor children will be clear about what is expected – this leads to uncertainty and, often, upset (especially for our most vulnerable children who need clear boundaries most). It can be tempting to lower expectations to what might be easiest for children to meet but, by having the highest expectations (not just "good enough for them"), we demonstrate to children that we believe in them and what they can achieve. We believe that it is the combination of the elements described in this final principle that will enable our children to flourish.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do we ALL uphold the HIGHEST expectations?</li> <li>• Do we all agree on what these look like in all areas of school life (academic outcomes, personal conduct etc?). Have we codified these; would a new staff member know where to find them?</li> <li>• Do we model the highest expectations as staff – are there any areas where we lower these? Are they for ALL children (bearing in mind we sometimes need to make reasonable adjustments, but this should be exceptional)?</li> <li>• Do we overcommunicate them, to all members of our community so there is no doubt as to what we are aiming for?</li> <li>• Are there any standards/expectations we would like to raise?</li> </ul>