

TEACHING & LEARNING



HALF TERM 5



AHS: Craft of the Classroom: *we all will...*

1. **Meet & greet** at the door with a QFF retrieval activity to build on prior learning, completed in silence to avoid cognitive overload.
2. **Big question/killer question** carefully planned and used to frame the lesson- to create a sense of aspiration & enquiry for all for academic rigour.
3. **Chunk**: present new material in small chunks/steps with clear modelling/scaffolding, with an opportunity to make notes: **'Book is King'**- a crucial revision tool to capture **knowledge for progression**.
4. **Apply**: pupil practice (guided & independent) to increase pupil confidence/sense of accomplishment.
5. **Feedback**: regular AFL *'pit-stops'* (effective cold-call questioning/whole class response systems) to check understanding with clear, meaningful feedback which moves learning forward; including **DIRT** in books.

In the spotlight!

Mrs Au in English has been experimenting with various strategies for retrieval such as 'Blurting' and Concept Maps. Mrs Au has since challenged the English department to also experiment with retrieval strategies to feedback in CPD time.

Sadie in Maths was spotted using a Whiteboard Pitstop to it's full potential with her year 9 class. Her instructions were so explicitly clear that the whole class could not only share the correct answer but could also explain their methods for how they got there.



Feedback and Adaptive Teaching

Formative feedback is at the heart of everything that we do at Atherton High. Feedback plays a central role in securing students' learning, supporting them to know how to deepen their knowledge and understanding or improve their performance in our subjects.

For feedback to be effective, it firstly needs to be accepted and understood. It also needs to be positive and specific so that students are motivated to action the feedback and understand just exactly what it is that they need to do. Live feedback throughout lessons is just as (if not more) important as written feedback in books, but the added benefit of live feedback is that students are able to action their response whilst the task is still meaningful and relevant to them. Shane then proceeded to explain how DIRT should be an ongoing process in the Feedback Loop so that students are constantly revisiting their work and improving all the time.

SEND Update

Quality First Teaching is the best approach for all pupils, including those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. At AHS we use the Craft of the Classroom to ensure that all students are able to access the ambitious curriculums in our subjects.

Here are some of the ways that we can support our students with SEND needs:

- Make instructions clear and specific.
- Be calm when speaking to students, don't raise your voice.
- Create a calm atmosphere in the classroom with strong routines.
- Allow processing time.
- Instruct students what to do rather than what not to do.
- Praise and reinforce good behaviours.

Mr McNamara's session also focussed on the new format of student passport information that all staff need to use and familiarise ourselves with in order to support students who require particular strategies. Especially as we are moving towards the next academic year.

Further Reading:

Walkthru pages P90-102 for Questioning
104 for Feedback the moves learning forwards

Effective Questioning

Why do we ask questions? Teachers must ask hundreds, upon hundreds of questions every single day. By refining our questioning techniques within our daily practice we can actively ensure that the students in front of us are accessing those levels of deeper knowledge.

Mrs Waters session this time focussed more on Cold Calling and how we can really reflect on our own questioning practice in lessons.

Cold Calling should:

- Make all students think. By allowing thinking time after posing a question, students should form a response ready for being called upon.
- Be a process that is safe to explore mistakes and misconceptions. Staff should use follow up process questions to allow students to verbalise their thinking process.
- Be responsive. Depending on the feedback that is given to us by students, we should be prepared to adapt and adjust our planning if a concept is not yet fully understood.

Effective questioning will help us to gain a good sense of how well students are learning.



Coaching update

If you have a particular CPD focus that you would like to work collaboratively on, or you have a particular class in mind that you would like further coaching support with, then send an email Mrs McNamara and one of the TLC team will be more than happy to help

A massive thank you to all staff at Atherton High for an amazing half term of pedagogy and implementation. Thank you to everyone who has taken part or contributed to Bitesize and TLC sessions.

Book is King!

Miss Dennis books have so many amazing examples of different ways to chunk and scaffold work to support all students, especially those with SEND needs.



Behaviour and relationships

It is important that every teacher creates an environment in their classrooms where all students feel that they belong and that they are safe. Mr Mitchell session explored three key concepts that all staff need to apply so that every student benefits from a safe environment where everybody is ready to learn. These three concepts are:

1. **Consistency** – we need to control what we can control. Whether that is our strong Meet and Greet at the door, our insistence upon a silent QF5 or the quality of our resources. If it is in our control then we need to be consistent in our approach. Students depend on us keeping a strong routine.
2. **De-escalation** – by adopting a choice focus approach students should be encouraged to make the right choice in the full knowledge of the consequences of the choices that they make.
3. **Positive relationships** – Blending warmth with kindness and assertiveness, when students feel connected to teachers and peers they are far more motivated to learn.

'No meaningful change can happen with a major separation between 'Teaching & Learning' and 'Behaviour'

