

# THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

## Learning & Teaching Policy



### Cawdor Primary School

Cawdor's approach to learning, teaching and assessment is aligned to the expectations outlined by Highland Council within this Learning and Teaching policy. 'A Team Cawdor Lesson' (included as an appendix), in addition to specific curriculum planning guidance, principles of Effective Feedback our Outdoor Learning overview, and Inquiry approach, have been developed by staff and are stored on our shared Google Drive to support our planning of learning, teaching, and assessment.

| Policy created | Review date                                               |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| October 2026   | August 2029 – following revised curriculum implementation |

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## Vision and Purpose

High-quality learning, teaching and assessment are fundamental to improving outcomes for all children and young people. Every child and young person is entitled to the highest standard of learning and teaching. This Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy sets out clear expectations to ensure a consistently high standard of provision across our school and supports a shared understanding of highly effective practice.

Through a strong partnership between learners, staff and families, we aim to create a positive learning environment where high expectations support engagement, progress and achievement. In doing so, we contribute to delivering Highland's vision for all young people.



This policy is underpinned by [The Highland Council Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework](#), which outlines the key features of highly effective learning and teaching. Highland schools are expected to use these features to support professional dialogue, moderation activities, self-evaluation and the ongoing development of practice. However, schools retain flexibility over how these are embedded in their own settings reflecting their context, values, linguistic, geography and community context.

## Rationale

This policy provides a shared framework for learning, teaching and assessment within our school. It supports a common understanding of high-quality practice while recognising the importance of professional judgement, curricular context and the needs of individual learners.

It provides a basis for professional dialogue, self-evaluation and continuous improvement, and supports our ongoing work to improve learner experiences, progress and achievement.

The policy should be used alongside the Highland Quality Improvement Framework and links directly to Quality Indicator 2.3 (Learning, Teaching and Assessment) within *How Good Is Our School? (4th Edition)*.

## Learning and Engagement

The foundation of effective learning, teaching and assessment lies in the creation of an inclusive, positive learning environment and a strong ethos of achievement within every classroom.

High-quality learning, teaching and assessment are further strengthened by the positive relationships developed through meaningful interactions between staff and learners, as well as among learners themselves in both group and whole-class contexts.

We recognise that children and young people thrive when they feel safe, valued and supported. Quality learning flourishes within a nurturing environment built on trust, respect, responsibility and high expectations, where every individual is encouraged to achieve their full potential.



The fundamental building blocks to establishing a positive climate for learning and engagement are:

- Creating conditions and opportunities to ensure learners are active participants who are fully engaged, resilient, highly motivated and interact well during lessons.
- Ensuring learners understand the purpose of their learning and lead the learning where appropriate (relevance and context of learning are present and clear).
- Learning is built on previous learning experience.
- Learning is challenging and well matched to learners' needs and interests.
- Learners have choice, where appropriate, and increasing responsibility for their learning.
- Digital technology is appropriately used to enhance and challenge learning, accessibility and inclusion, rather than drive practice.
- The language of learning provides and supports opportunities for learner dialogue.
- Learning from mistakes is recognised as vital for maximum development.
- Learners can apply their new learning in a range of unfamiliar contexts.
- A range of resources are used which are engaging and relevant for the learning experience.
- There is a positive, rich learning environment (classroom organisation, displays, accessibility to resources).
- Learners have meaningful opportunities to express their views and influence their learning, in keeping with children's rights and the principles of the UNCRC.

## Quality of Teaching

In consultation with staff we have developed an overview of the key features of high-quality teaching.



These include:

- A clear lesson structure is apparent, whilst providing opportunities for flexibility based on ongoing assessment of learning throughout the lesson.
- Learners understand the purpose of their learning and what success looks like. This builds on prior learning and is revisited as appropriate, with learners involved in shaping learning and success criteria where appropriate.
- Explanations and instructions are clear to all learners.
- A range of effective questioning techniques are used by the teacher with appropriate response or thinking time given and opportunities to develop higher order thinking skills.
- Selecting approaches appropriate to the learning, learners and curriculum context. This may include a balance of whole class, group and independent learning to meet the needs of all learners.
- Pace, challenge and support are effectively planned in every lesson (effective differentiation).
- Plenaries are used consistently to 'round off' learning and to provide learners with opportunities to reflect on, consolidate and/or apply their learning.
- Resources are appropriately used – including digital technologies.
- Teachers are actively engaged with learners throughout the learning process - teaching, assessing and intervening.

## **Assessment**

High-quality assessment should be an integral part of everyday learning and teaching. Through ongoing observations, discussions and learning activities, teachers gather evidence of learners' progress and understanding.

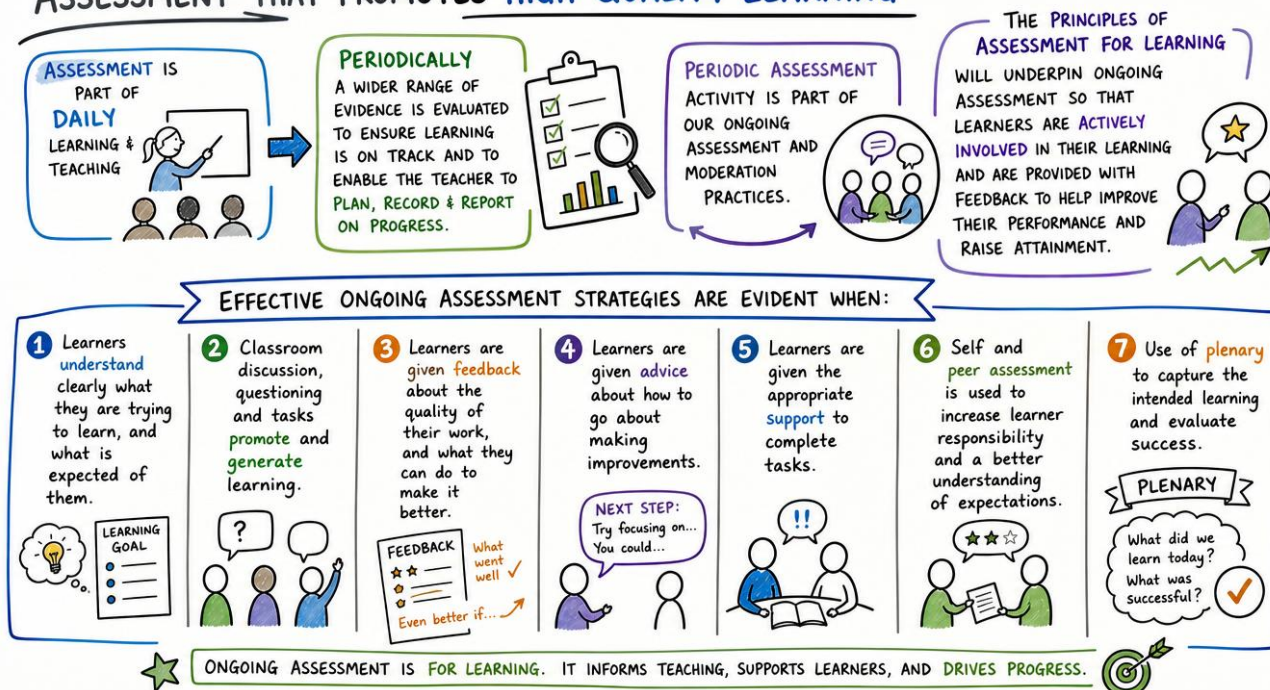
At key points throughout the year, a broader range of evidence is reviewed to confirm that learning is on track and to support teachers in planning next steps, recording progress and reporting achievement. These periodic assessment activities form part of our continuous assessment and moderation processes.

The principles of *Assessment for Learning* underpin all assessment practice. This ensures that learners are actively involved in understanding their progress, identifying their next steps and receiving meaningful feedback that supports improvement, raises attainment and promotes greater learner confidence and independence.

Effective ongoing assessment strategies are evident when:

- Learners understand clearly what they are trying to learn, and what is expected of them.
- Classroom discussion, questioning (particularly open and high order questioning) and tasks promote and generate learning.
- Learners are given feedback about the quality of their work, and what they can do to make it better.
- Learners are given advice about how to go about making improvements.
- Learners are given the appropriate support to complete tasks.
- Self and peer assessment is used to increase learner responsibility and a better understanding of expectations.
- Use of plenary to capture the intended learning and evaluate success.

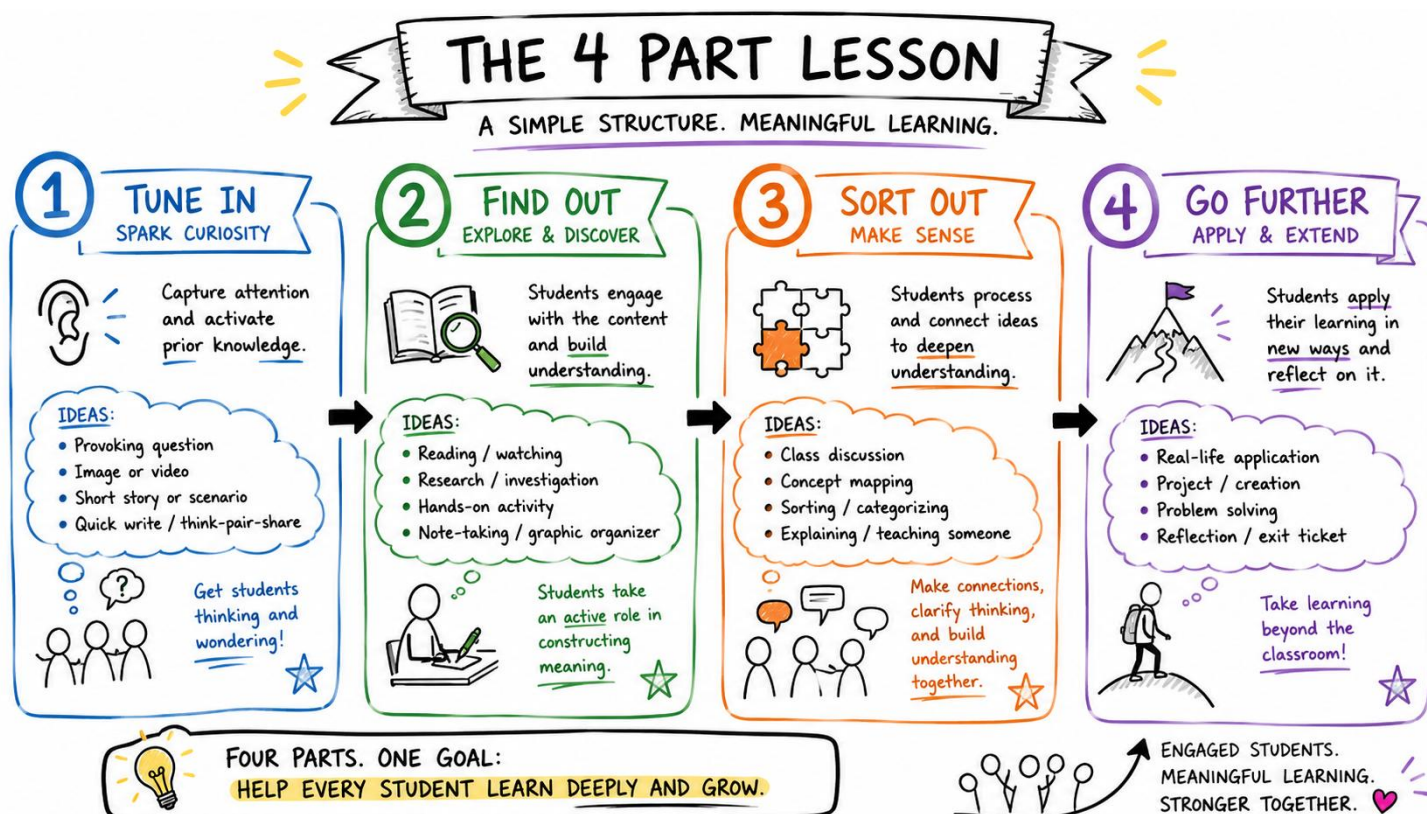
# ASSESSMENT THAT PROMOTES HIGH QUALITY LEARNING



## Lesson structure

In Cawdor Primary School we recognise that highly effective learning experiences should be consistent across every class. We have worked together to agree a structure which maximises learning opportunities.

Learning in our school typically follows this structure: See 'A Team Cawdor Lesson' in appendix.



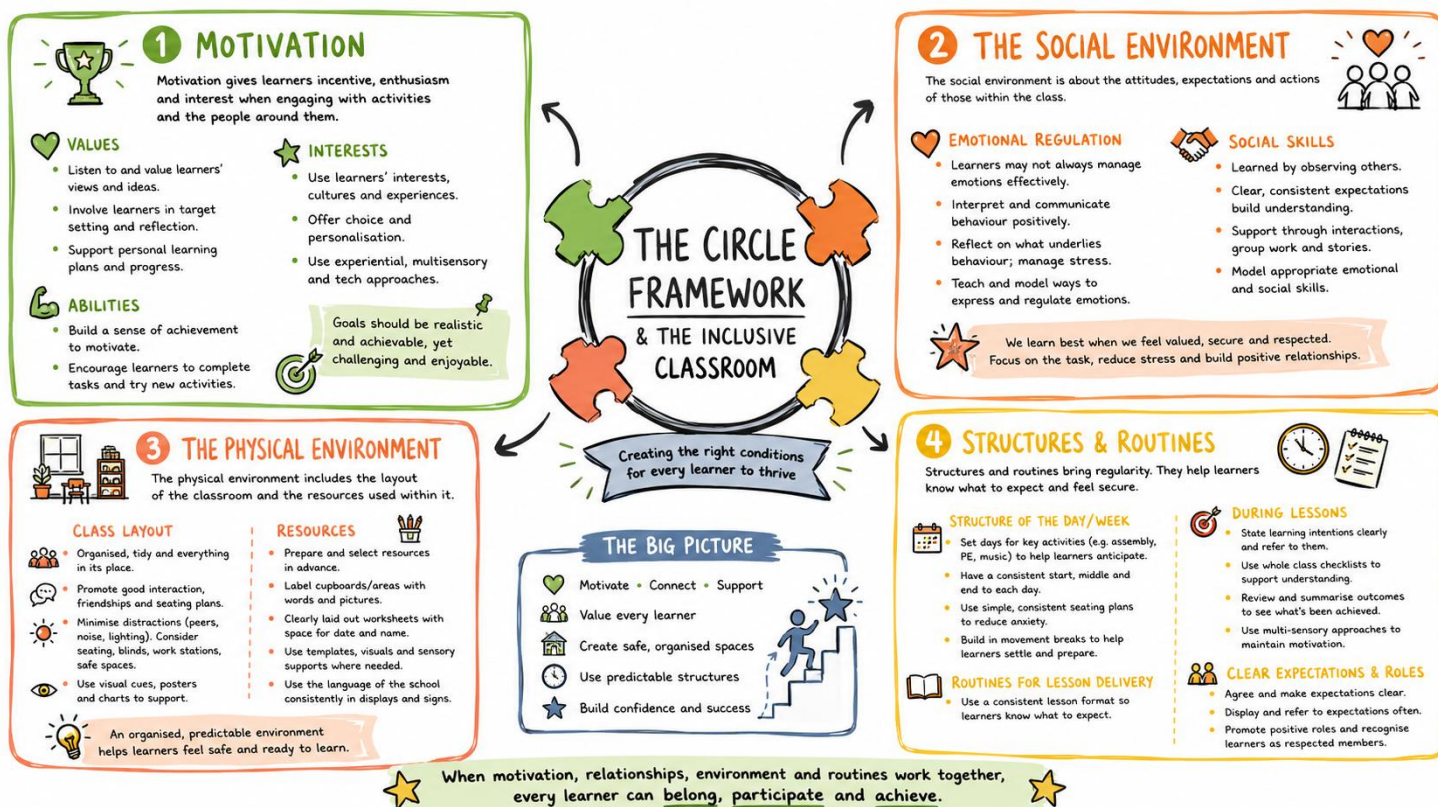
# Inclusive Practice

Inclusive practice should reflect children's rights and ensure all learners can participate meaningfully in their learning and school experience.

The CIRCLE framework informs our approach to inclusion. This is recognised as the extent to which a child or young person participates in school life, is accepted by their peers and progresses with their learning.

Teachers and schools are expected to identify and remove barriers to learning, make learning accessible, provide appropriate support and maintain high expectations for all.

We understand that inclusion is influenced by a combination of factors including the physical environment, attitudes, expectations and opportunities, in addition to the child or young person's skills and abilities. We consider inclusion in terms of four main areas:



## **Roles and responsibilities**

Every child and young person in Highland is entitled to high-quality learning, teaching and assessment. The Highland Council Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework supports practitioners and leaders, working in partnership with learners, support staff and families to create positive learning environments where high expectations lead to improved outcomes. This partnership approach reflects the principles of the UNCRC, including children and young people's right to have their views heard and taken seriously in matters affecting their learning.

All schools and ELC settings are expected to implement the Framework and use its key features of highly effective practice:

- in professional dialogue to develop consistency and shared expectations
- to support moderation and the development of practice
- in self-evaluation to identify strengths and areas for improvement
- to inform professional learning and development

### **All Practitioners**

Practitioners are expected to:

- promote the shared vision for highly effective learning, teaching and assessment outlined in the Framework
- evaluate and adapt their practice using evidence from self-evaluation, feedback and moderation activities
- engage in ongoing professional learning to improve learning, teaching and assessment
- contribute to a positive learning environment that supports engagement, progress and achievement for all learners
- promote children's rights and the principles of the UNCRC, and support schools to embed meaningful learner voice and participation in the development and improvement of learning and teaching

### **Senior Leaders**

Senior leaders are expected to:

- promote and model the shared vision for highly effective learning, teaching and assessment
- lead rigorous self-evaluation and continuous improvement using the Framework and national quality indicators
- monitor the quality and impact of learning, teaching, assessment and moderation across the school or setting
- ensure a consistent, high-quality approach to learning, teaching and assessment through local policies and practice
- provide opportunities for professional learning and collaborative moderation within and beyond the school or setting
- engage with Highland-wide guidance and improvement priorities

- ensure learning, teaching and assessment remains a key focus within school and setting improvement planning
- ensure children's rights and meaningful learner voice are embedded in the development, evaluation and improvement of learning and teaching
- model and promote high-quality professional practice in line with relevant GTCS Professional Standards.

## **The Local Authority**

The Local Authority will:

- promote the shared vision for highly effective learning, teaching and assessment
- provide guidance to support implementation of the Framework
- provide tools and resources to support self-evaluation and improvement
- offer professional learning opportunities at all levels
- support and evaluate the quality and impact of learning, teaching and assessment through a planned programme of Quality Improvement Visits
- promote children's rights and learner participation, and support schools to embed meaningful learner voice in the development and improvement of learning and teaching

## **Learners**

Learners are expected to:

- engage positively and take increasing responsibility for their learning
- contribute to a positive, respectful and inclusive learning environment
- reflect on their progress and act on feedback
- share their views and contribute to improving learning and teaching

## **Parents, Carers and Families**

Parents and families are encouraged to:

- support and encourage their child's learning and progress
- maintain positive communication with the school
- share relevant information that may help the school support their child's learning
- contribute views and feedback to support the ongoing development of learning and teaching

The expectations outlined in this section relate specifically to the implementation of the Highland Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework. They should be considered alongside the professional standards and codes of practice of the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) and the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

## **Self-evaluation tools and professional learning**

Together with HGIOS, schools are encouraged to use the Northern Alliance Learning, Teaching and Assessment Toolkit to support ongoing self-evaluation and professional learning. This should form part of a wider, triangulated approach to evaluating the quality and impact of learning, teaching and assessment, drawing on a range of evidence including learner voice, professional dialogue, observation of learning and relevant data. Self-evaluation should support schools to identify strengths, areas for improvement and priorities for professional learning and development.

[NA LTA Toolkit - Toolkit CLPL](#)

[NA LTA Toolkit - Leadership of LTA](#)

[NA LTA Toolkit - Building a Shared Understanding](#)

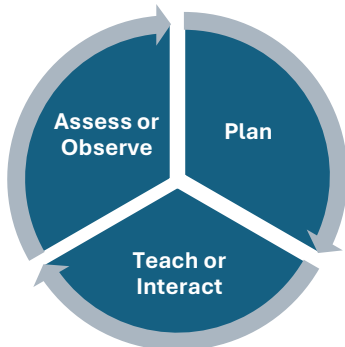
[NA LTA Toolkit - Environment, Experiences and Interactions](#)

[NA LTA Toolkit - Pace, Challenge and Differentiation](#)

[NA LTA Toolkit - Learner Participation and Ownership](#)

[NA LTA Toolkit - Effective Use of Data](#)

## Appendix: 'A Team Cawdor Lesson'

| <h1>A Team Cawdor Lesson</h1> <div></div> <h2>Our Ingredients</h2>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <h3>Assess – Plan – Teach</h3> <p>Planning for learning through teaching in Cawdor uses the <b>Assess-Plan-Teach</b> model.</p> <p>We use what we know about children’s strengths and areas of development using our <b>assessment</b> of and <b>observation</b> of learning.</p> <p>We <b>plan</b> individual lessons as part of a series of lessons using our curriculum overview and progression frameworks.</p> <p>We <b>teach</b> concepts through approaches relevant to the content, assessing children’s learning both throughout and at the end of a lesson/ series of lessons to inform next steps and make judgements on progress.</p> <div></div> |         |         |                                              |                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <h3>Reviewing Prior Learning</h3> <p>We review children’s prior learning at the beginning of a lesson to support children to make connections to what they have learned previously, and give context for their learning.</p> <p>When planning for the review of learning, we identify the most appropriate timescale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Daily review – learning from the previous day</li><li>▪ Weekly review – learning from the previous week</li><li>▪ Monthly/ termly review – learning from the previous month/ term</li></ul>                    | <h3>Learning Intentions</h3> <p>We plan learning intentions using the Es and Os and the progression frameworks. When planning learning intentions we identify what we want the children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ know</li><li>▪ understand</li><li>▪ be able to do.</li></ul> <p>We share our learning intention(s) with children verbally. We may also choose to display these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ on the board</li><li>▪ digitally</li><li>▪ on a table-top where children are learning.</li></ul> | <h3>Success Criteria</h3> <p>When planning for success criteria, we identify the criteria that children will need to have to be successful. <b>SUCCESS CRITERIA:</b> The audience is the children.</p> <table><tr><th>PRODUCT</th><th>PROCESS</th></tr><tr><td><b>Remember to:</b><br/>&lt;list of ingredients&gt;</td><td><b>Remember to:</b><br/>&lt;steps to follow&gt;</td></tr></table> <p>With children, we co-construct success criteria using a <b>co-construction of success criteria strategy</b> that is most relevant to what is being learned.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                  | PRODUCT | PROCESS | <b>Remember to:</b><br><list of ingredients> | <b>Remember to:</b><br><steps to follow> |
| PRODUCT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | PROCESS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |         |         |                                              |                                          |
| <b>Remember to:</b><br><list of ingredients>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Remember to:</b><br><steps to follow>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |         |         |                                              |                                          |
| <h3>Plenary and Feedback</h3> <p>Throughout the lesson we use the success criteria to support children’s understanding of what they need to include or the steps to follow to be successful. We use a plenary in our lessons to revisit the learning intentions, success criteria and main points.</p> <p>We identify the most appropriate opportunities to provide feedback. This will be throughout the lesson as well as when we are assessing children’s application. When giving feedback, we use the success criteria to identify children’s strengths and next steps.</p> | <h3>Thinking and Inquiry</h3> <p>Children’s thinking is supported and extended through our use of questioning in our lessons. We select <b>effective questioning techniques</b> that are appropriate to the content and the level of understanding to support and challenge children.</p> <p>When planning for application of the learning intention, we identify opportunities for children to inquire both independently and in collaboration with their peers. This may be through a playful provocation or through an area of research.</p>      | <h3>Modelling and Practice</h3> <p>When teaching a concept, we support children’s learning through modelling, e.g. modelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ a grammatical feature an author uses in a text</li><li>▪ a travelling movement in hockey</li><li>▪ strategies to solve an equation.</li></ul> <p>Children are supported through guided opportunities to practise before independent practice. Between guided and independent practice, supported practice for individuals/ groups will be identified. The success criteria are referred to throughout modelling/ practice.</p>                                                                                                                                          |         |         |                                              |                                          |