





Document Control	
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# Teaching & Learning Policy

## Avonwood ethos & core values



At Avonwood we see it as our moral imperative for all children, regardless of background, to achieve their very best. We expect teachers to deliver lessons with that fulfil this expectation whilst living up to our ambition of **inspiring wonder and intellectual curiosity.**



We believe it is vital that all children have an understanding of their responsibility as global citizens and our eight Earth Charter principals are referenced throughout our curriculum and daily life. **We are honoured to be the only United Nations Earth Charter Primary School in Europe.**



Avonwood is an exceptionally positive, happy and inspiring place to learn. Children are excited to come to school to discover the rich learning experiences teachers have planned each and every day. **It is this carefully nurtured thirst for learning that we feel makes Avonwood such a unique, academically rich and special place to grow and learn.**

## United Learning Framework for Excellence

This framework sets out the 5 principles which all United Learning schools work to. These represent our agreed view of the distinctive approach to education of our group of schools and the characteristics which lead to excellence when exemplified in the right way.

- 1. The best from everyone:** Our aim is to bring out the best in everyone. So we must expect the best from everyone, all the time. Every person is a special individual, capable of extraordinary things. Who can know the limits of any child's potential? So, we expect unreasonably – we constantly challenge children to do what they think they can't, to persist, to work hard and to be at their best.
- 2. Powerful knowledge:** Our most important purpose is to teach young people things they would not learn outside school, which free them to think and act more powerfully in their lives. Words and numbers are our most powerful ways of representing the world. Mastery of language and fluent mathematical skills are therefore our top priority. Worthwhile learning is often hard. Inspiring teaching is what gives access to difficult concepts and the thrill of intellectual discovery.
- 3. Education with character:** Beyond academic success, we also aim to develop character, compassion and service. Young people are expected to contribute to their school and to society; to try things which they think they cannot do; to persist in the face of difficulty; to become resilient in overcoming obstacles; to manage themselves; to work independently on things which challenge them; to work with others and in teams; to be courageous and caring; to lead.
- 4. Leadership in every role:** Our children are leaders of the future. We expect them to start today – taking advantage of structured opportunities to lead and taking responsibility for themselves and others. Every adult in the school is a leader. In every word, tone and gesture, they set direction and expectation. We expect every adult to take responsibility and the initiative to do what is right for the children.
- 5. Continuous improvement:** However good we are, we can be better. We always look at the evidence, and are rigorous in evaluating impact. We stop or change things which aren't working; we improve things which are. We aim for high leverage: high impact for low effort and low cost. We look for ideas for improvement inside the organisation and out; we observe one another; we steal good ideas with pride and look to make them better; we work together to improve.



## The 4 Pillars of Teaching and Learning at Avonwood:

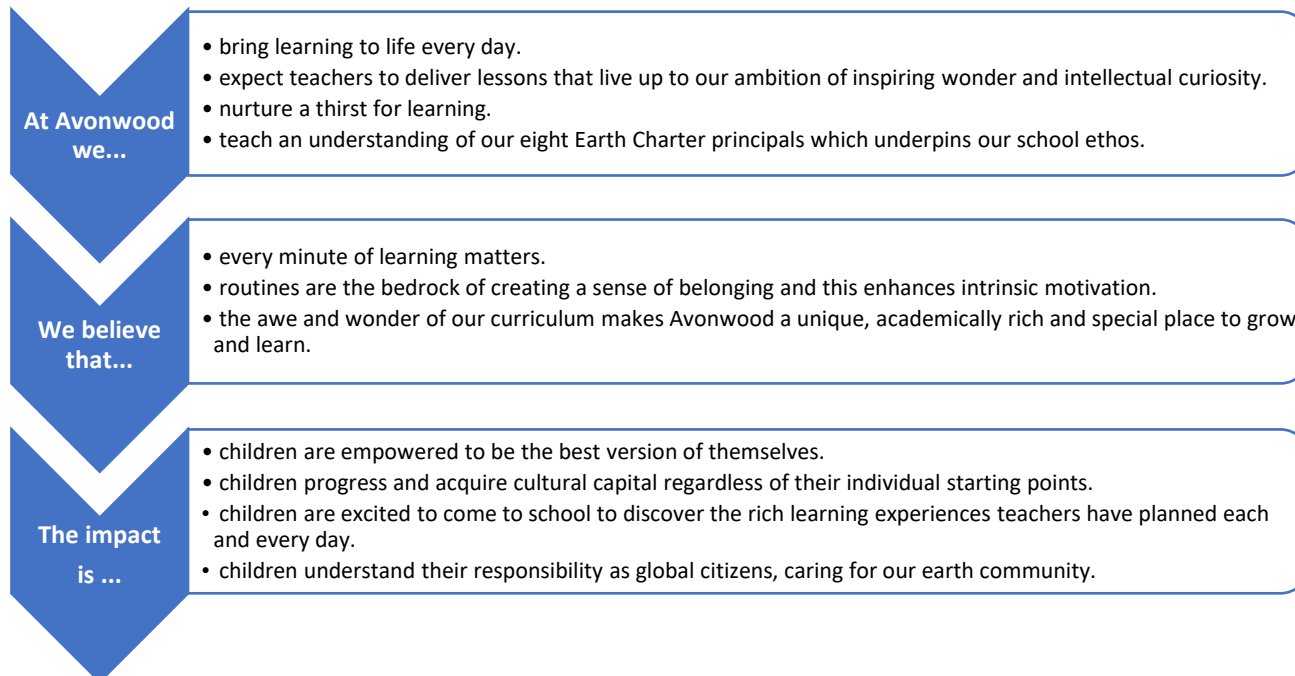
Pillar	Strand	Page
<b>1. Behaviour for learning</b> .....	<a href="#">1.1 Every Moment Matters</a>	p3
	<a href="#">1.2 Positive Relationships</a>	p3
	<a href="#">1.3 Self-regulation, Metacognition &amp; Growth Mindset</a>	p4
<b>2. Understanding the content</b> .....	<a href="#">2.1 Knowing the Curriculum</a>	p5
	<a href="#">2.2 Explaining Clearly</a>	p5
	<a href="#">2.3 Anticipating Misconceptions</a>	p6
	<a href="#">2.4 Scaffolding Difficult Points</a>	p6
<b>3. Activating hard thinking</b> .....	<a href="#">3.1 Connecting Knowledge</a>	p7
	<a href="#">3.2 Questioning</a>	p7
	<a href="#">3.3 Checking for Understanding</a>	p8
	<a href="#">3.4 Promoting Purposeful Discussions</a>	p8
<b>4. Optimising progress</b> .....	<a href="#">4.1 Activating Prior Knowledge</a>	p9
	<a href="#">4.2 Practise Makes Progress</a>	p9
	<a href="#">4.3 Actionable Feedback</a>	p10



## Pillar 1: Behaviour for learning



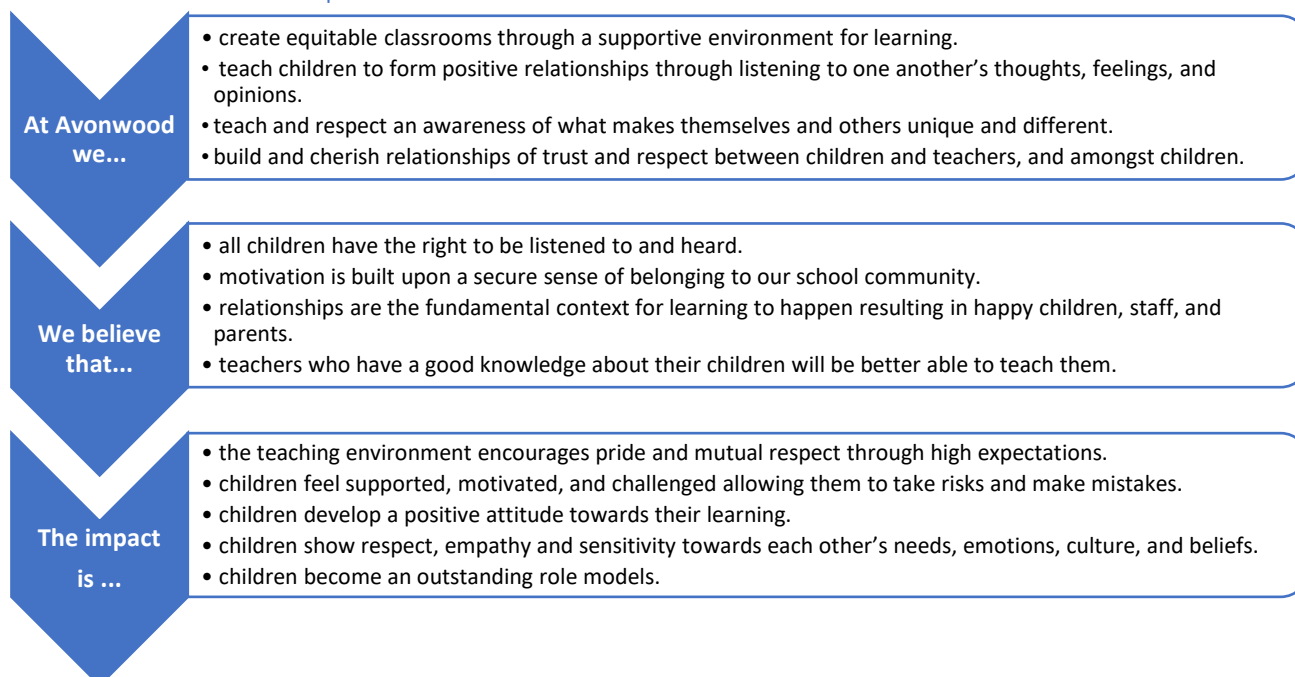
### 1.1 Every Moment Matters



References: Peps Mccrea, APS website.



### 1.2 Positive Relationships



References Great Teaching Toolkit p 22-26, APS website.



## 1.3 Self-regulation, Metacognition & Growth Mindset

### At Avonwood we...

- nurture self-regulation so that children are ready to learn.
- develop pupils' metacognition skills by promoting thinking about learning through 'plan-do-review'.
- narrate our thinking and decision-making journey to develop our children's awareness of this process.
- celebrate 'marvellous mistakes' as a valuable part of the learning process.

### We believe that...

- just like any 'muscle', the brain can be trained and that ability is not 'fixed' or 'set'.
- all children should be taught how to self-regulate.
- 'plan-do-review' are essential facets in the learning process.
- everyone should make informed judgements and challenge their own thinking about their learning.
- achievements should be recognised, celebrated and shared.

### The impact is ...

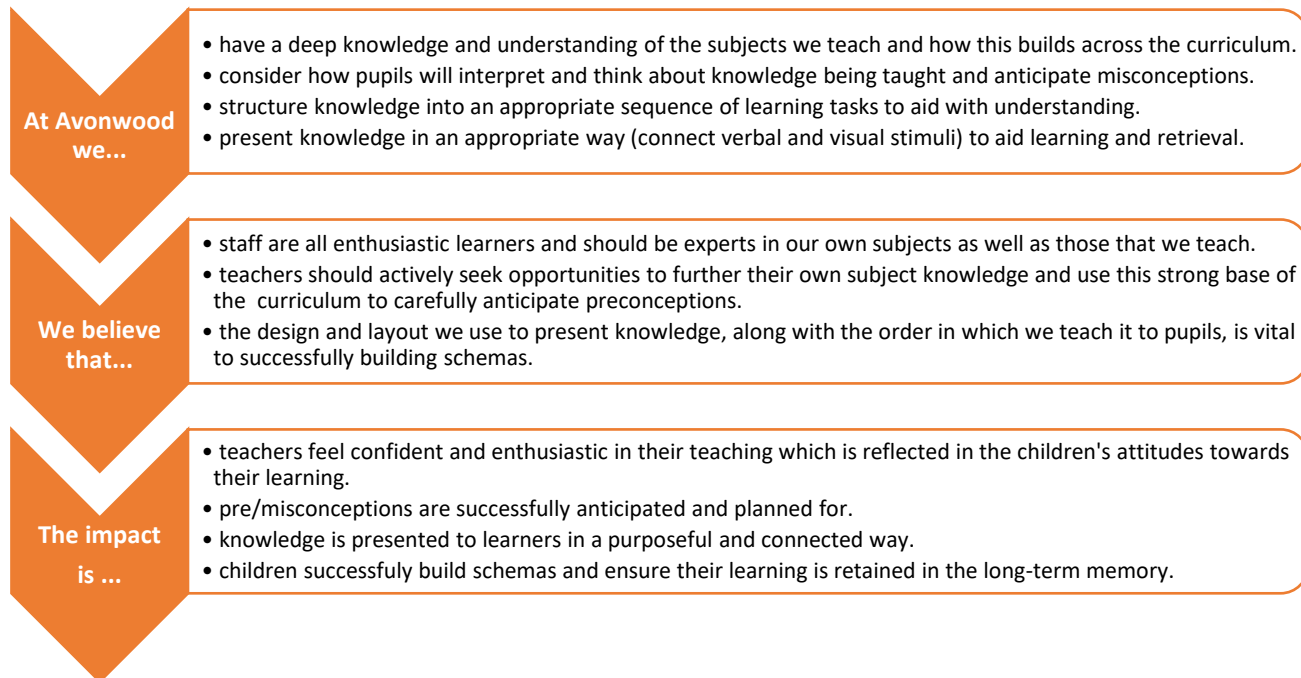
- children are able to talk about their thinking and learning processes.
- children approach each new sessions with an emotional 'clean slate'.
- children recognise that effort is required to improve and progress.
- children enjoy being challenged through tasks that offer 'desirable difficulty'.
- children experience success as a learner, embracing growth mindset and a thirst for knowledge.

References: EEF guide on Metacognition, WalkThrus p82, Dual Coding With Teachers p224



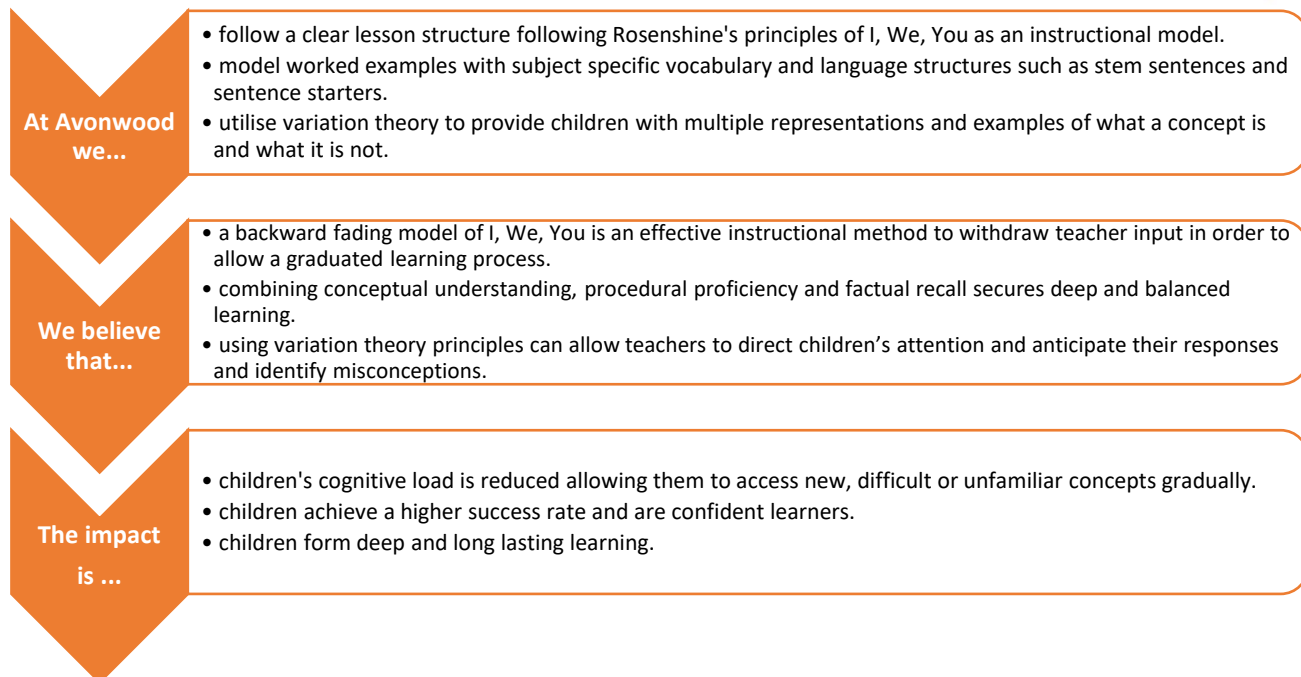
## Pillar 2: Understanding the content

### 2.1 Knowing the Curriculum



References: Great Teaching Toolkit - p31, p37; What makes great teaching? (Sutton trust) - p2; Dual coding - p24; Why don't students like school? (Daniel Willingham) - p42

### 2.2 Explaining Clearly



References: Rosenshine, Cambridge Espresso



## 2.3 Anticipating Misconceptions

### At Avonwood we...

- have a fluent knowledge and a flexible understanding of the curriculum which allows us to plan for and anticipate misconceptions.
- deliver small amounts of new material at any time and guide student practice of new material.
- regularly question and check for student understanding and facilitate discussion.
- provide varied explanations and multiple representations, analogies and examples.

### We believe that...

- considering children's possible misconceptions at the planning stage equips teachers with pre-formed, clear explanations and a range of examples.
- providing guided practice after teaching small amounts of new material whilst checking for student understanding throughout can help limit the development of misconceptions.
- regular verbal feedback ensures that children do not inadvertently store partial information or a misconception in their long-term memory.

### The impact is ...

- children make fewer errors and have a higher success rate.
- children have fewer long term misconceptions.
- where misconceptions arise they are swiftly attended to and dispelled with examples, supplementary examples and counter non-examples in line with conceptual variation.

References: Great Teaching Toolkit



## 2.4 Scaffolding Difficult Points

### At Avonwood we...

- teach to the top by scaffolding access to appropriate and challenging learning objectives.
- identify areas of new learning that will need to be unpicked and explored thoroughly in a variety of ways.
- provide resources to scaffold support for all learners, using them as tools to success.
- build learning in small coherent steps, using appropriate scaffolds which can then be systematically removed.
- explicitly link difficult points and new learning to prior knowledge.

### We believe that...

- careful scaffolding fosters confident, independent life-long learners.
- attending to difficult points will enable the children to acquire new knowledge and skills effectively.
- using concrete materials and visual images alongside verbal instruction supports deeper understanding.
- resources and manipulatives provide tangible experiences of abstract concepts and help all learners construct connected knowledge.

### The impact is ...

- children's cognitive load is reduced allowing them to access new, difficult or unfamiliar concepts.
- children experience success as a learner, promoting growth mindset and fostering a thirst for knowledge.
- children acquire transferable understanding having used concrete resources and are able to solve problems and apply their knowledge & skills when questions are presented in an abstract form.
- children build connected schemata and have the opportunity to master a subject.

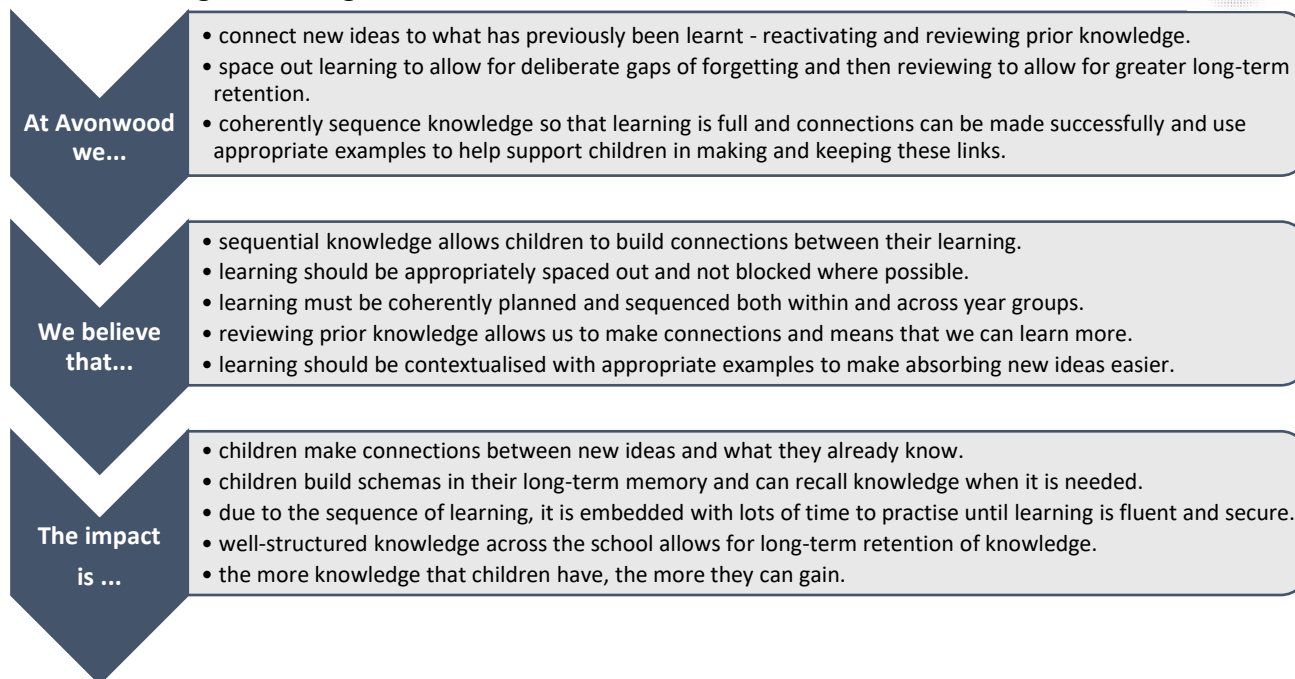
References: Great Teaching Toolkit, WalkThrus, Dual Coding with teachers





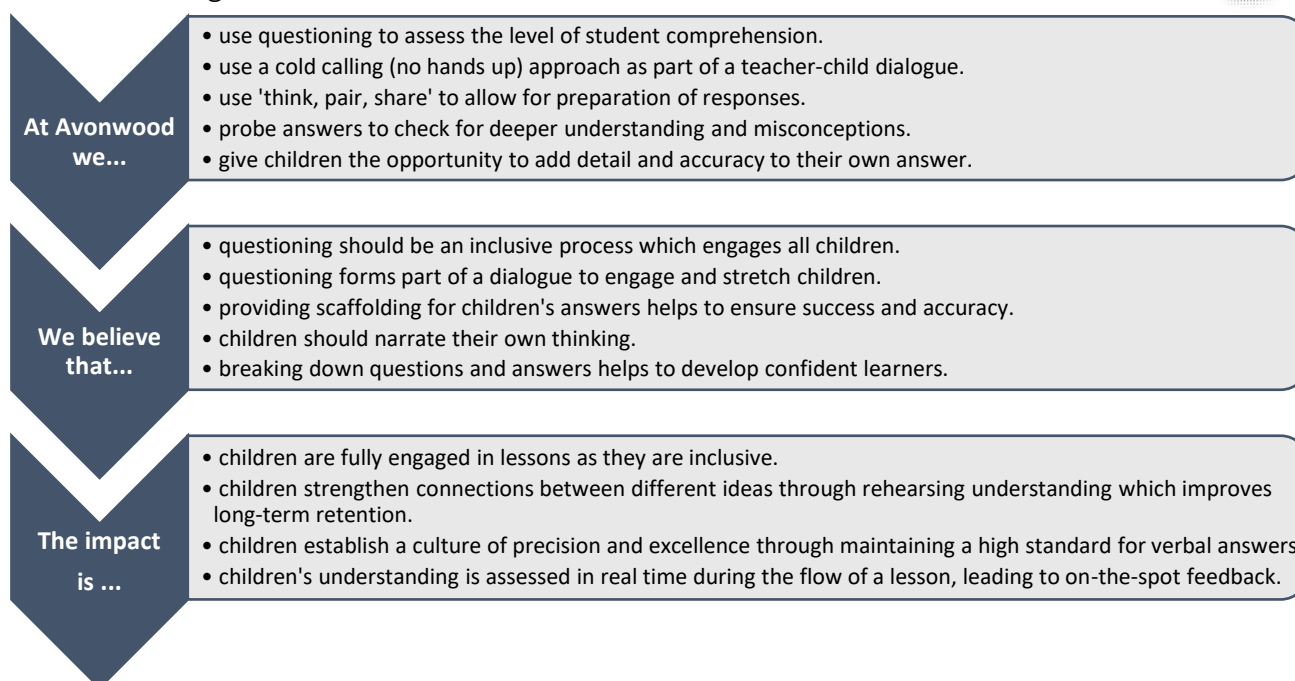
## Pillar 3: Activating hard thinking

### 3.1 Connecting Knowledge



References: Great Teaching Toolkit p31, p33; Desirable Difficulties Perspective on Learning (Bjork and Bjork) p59; Curriculum to Classroom (Lekha Sharma) p18; Why don't students like school? (Daniel Willingham) p42

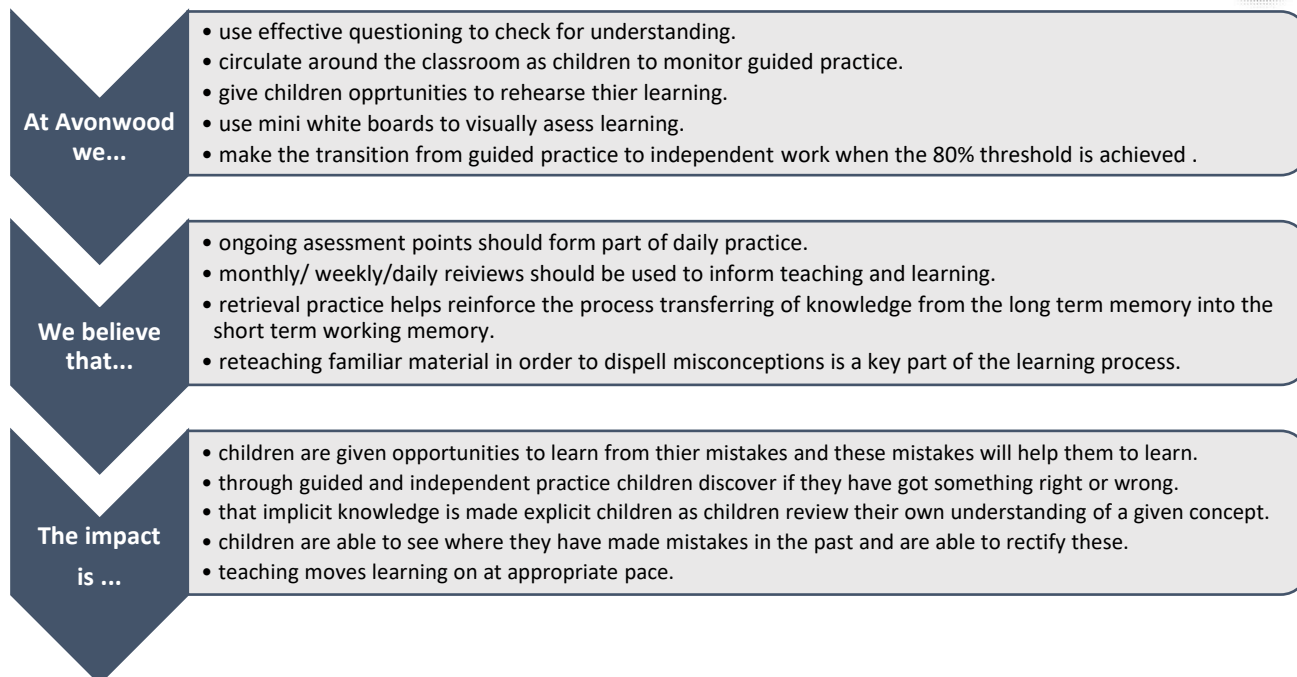
### 3.2 Questioning



References: Rosenshine p28, 29, 30, 33 and 34; Doug Lemov - TLAC Field Guide p155 and 369; Great Teaching Toolkit p35.



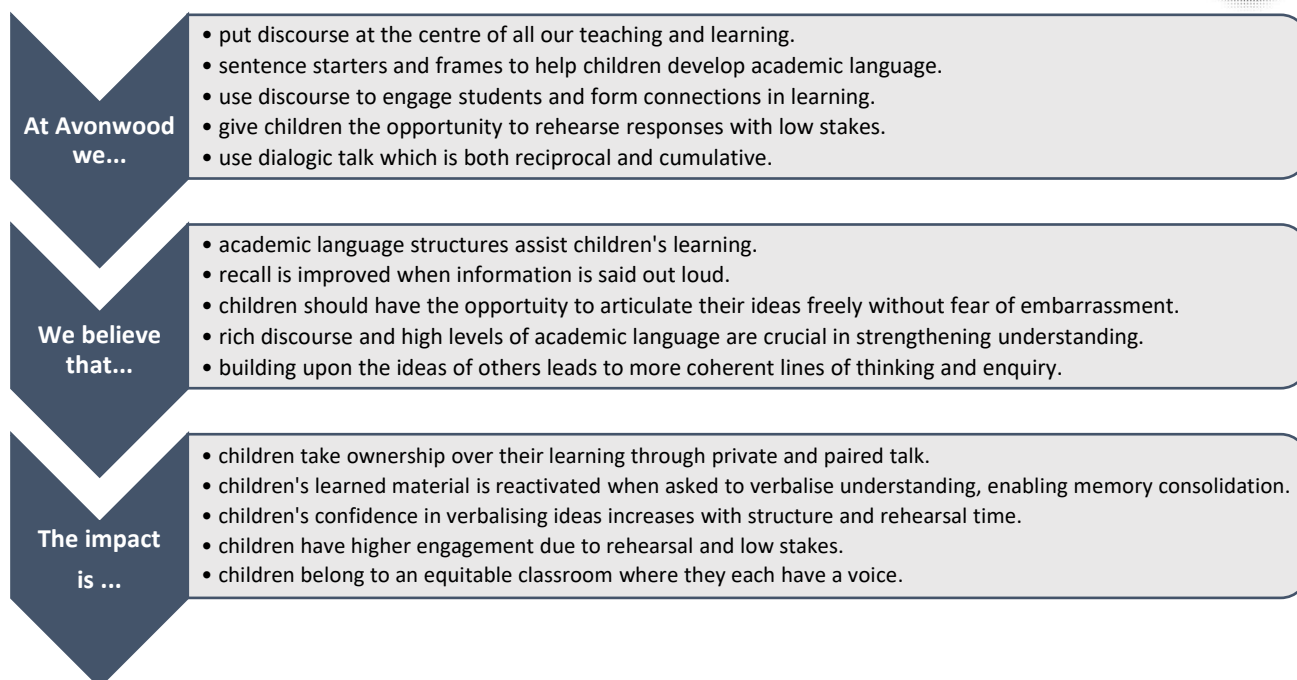
### 3.3 Checking for Understanding



References: Roshenshine, Doug Lemov – TLAC, WalkThrus p 88-130



### 3.4 Promoting Purposeful Discussions



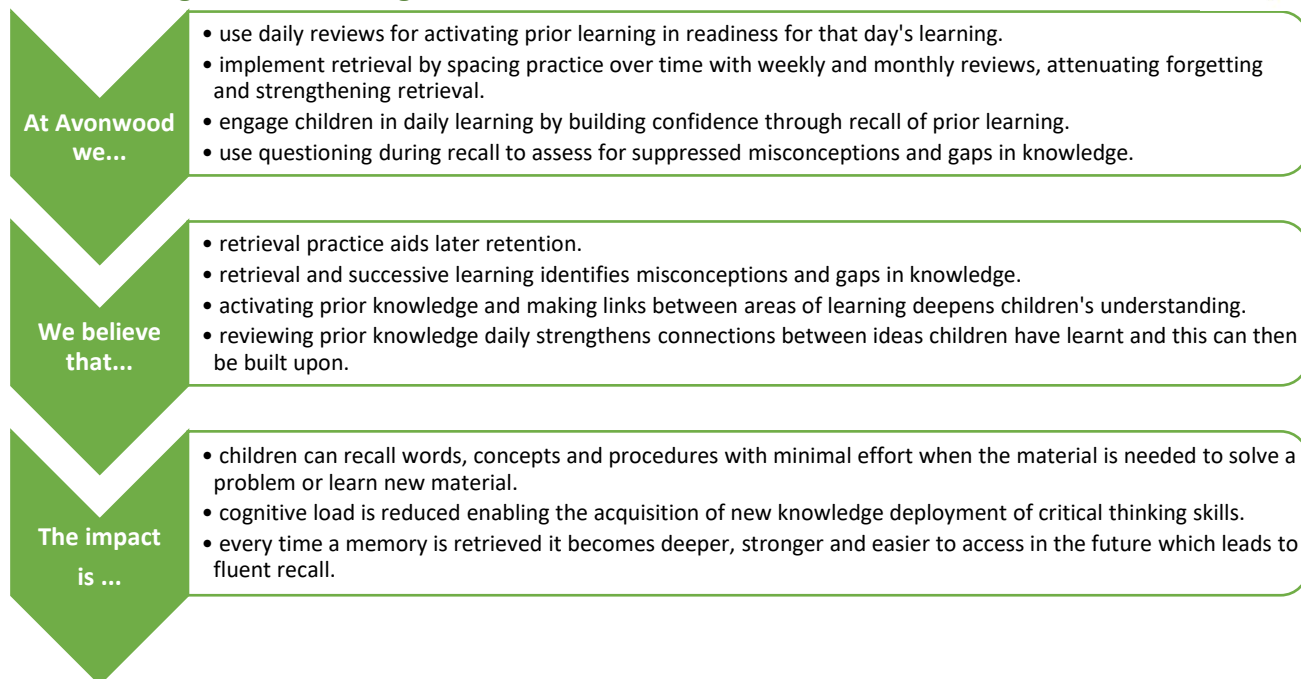
References: MARGE p30; STEM: Supporting Mathematics Discourse with Sentence Starters & Sentence Frames by Pam Buffington, Tara Knight, Peter Tierney-Fife; Private talk, public conversation by Mike Askew; Recognising helpful and unhelpful talk handout; WalkThrus p118.



## Pillar 4: Optimising progress



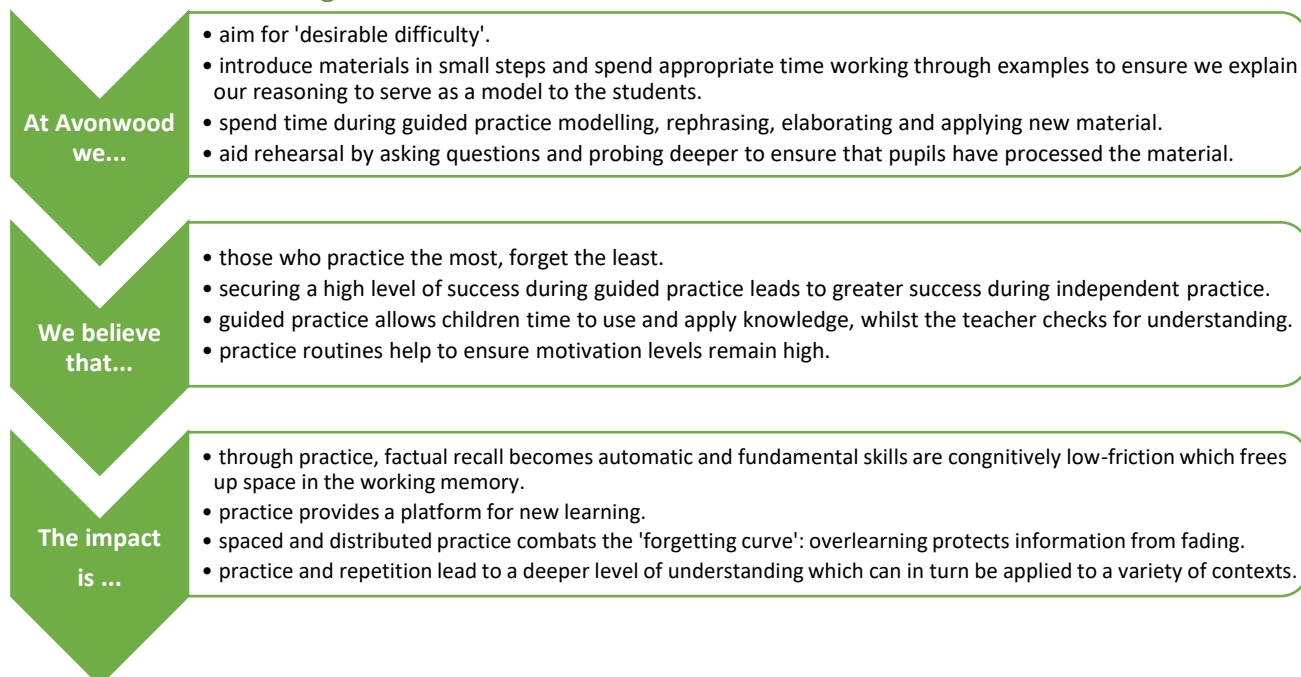
### 4.1 Activating Prior Knowledge



References: Rosenshine, Bjork & Bjork, John Dunlosky, Kate Jones.



### 4.2 Practise Makes Progress



References: Rosenshine, Bjork & Bjork, Peps McCrea.



## 4.3 Actionable Feedback

### At Avonwood we...

- give daily whole class verbal feedback and live mark during lessons.
- ask questions to elicit and check children's understanding.
- assess children's work against success criteria, recognising effort and indicating next steps.
- use marking to give focused feedback in order to inform children of their next steps.

### We believe that...

- feedback as an integral part of teaching practice.
- misconceptions and gaps in knowledge can be addressed as a collective.
- asking meaningful questions that target essential learning provides an insight into children's thinking.
- identifying and overcoming misconceptions during the lesson enables high learning outcomes every time.

### The impact is ...

- teachers know what the children know already, what they need to know and what is required to bridge that gap.
- curriculum content being taught is adjusted and relevant to the children in each classroom.
- misconceptions can be addressed during each lesson whilst learning content is current: what we learn first we learn most deeply.
- children become reflective learners, being aware of their next steps.

References: John Hattie, *Great Teaching Toolkit* p30-36.