Alexandra Primary School
Aspire, Perform, Succeed

Using the APS Pedagogy Cards Effectively in the Classroom

The Aspire, Perform, Succeed Pedagogy Cards provide a shared understanding of what effective teaching and learning looks like at Alexandra. Their purpose is not to prescribe how every lesson should be taught, but to give teachers a common pedagogical language and a repertoire of evidence-informed approaches that can be selected and adapted according to the curriculum, the intended learning and, importantly, the pupils in front of them.

Why do we use the Pedagogy Cards?

High-quality teaching is central to ensuring that every pupil can access and succeed within an ambitious curriculum. The cards support this by bringing together agreed principles of effective classroom practice and translating them into approaches that teachers can use purposefully.

They help to create consistency without uniformity. Pupils should experience consistently high expectations and strong teaching as they move through the school, but this does not mean that every classroom or lesson should look the same. Different subjects, concepts, age groups and pupils require different approaches. Teachers use their professional judgement to decide which pedagogical approaches are most appropriate, when they are needed and when they should be adapted or withdrawn.

The cards therefore provide a framework for professional decision-making rather than a checklist for compliance.

Supporting Every Learner to Succeed

A central purpose of the cards is to help teachers respond effectively to the different starting points, strengths and barriers to learning within every classroom. All pupils, including those with SEND, pupils who are disadvantaged and those who require greater challenge, should experience an ambitious curriculum and be supported to participate successfully within it.

Adaptation does not mean creating a different curriculum or routinely lowering expectations. Instead, teachers consider what might prevent a pupil from successfully accessing the intended learning and what reasonable adaptation will help to remove that barrier. This may involve adjusting modelling, explanations, questioning, resources, scaffolding, vocabulary, opportunities for practice, use of adults or the size and sequencing of learning steps. The cards emphasise high expectations alongside inclusive practice, rapid identification of gaps and appropriate adaptations.

Adaptation should be precise rather than automatic. A scaffold is valuable when it enables a pupil to think and learn more successfully; it is less valuable if it unnecessarily limits thinking or creates dependency. Support should therefore be reviewed and reduced where appropriate so that pupils develop confidence and independence.

Equally, pupils who are secure should not simply receive “more”. Teachers can use the principles within the cards to increase depth, complexity, reasoning, independence and application, moving pupils on when assessment shows that they are ready.

Enabling Responsive Teaching

The cards reinforce that effective teaching is responsive rather than fixed. Planning is important, but teachers continually gather information about learning through pupils’ answers, work, discussion, questioning and interactions. This information is used to decide whether to continue, revisit, explain differently, provide further practice, remove a scaffold or increase challenge.

For example, the cards promote questioning that is planned within a sequence of learning but adapted to provide both support and extension. In this way, assessment is not something separate from teaching; it enables teachers to understand whether teaching is having the intended impact and what pupils need next.

Supporting Professional Development

The Pedagogy Cards are also intended to support professional dialogue, reflection and development. They provide teachers, leaders and support staff with a shared vocabulary through which to discuss teaching and learning, while recognising that effective implementation will vary according to context.

They can be used when planning, coaching, discussing lessons, reviewing pupil learning or identifying an area for professional development. Rather than asking *"Was this strategy used?"*, professional dialogue should consider:

- What were pupils expected to learn?
- Why was this approach chosen?
- Who benefited from it?
- Were any pupils experiencing barriers?
- How was teaching adapted?
- How is it known that pupils learned what was intended?
- What should happen next?

This keeps the focus on the quality and impact of teaching rather than compliance with a particular teaching style.

The Principle Behind the Cards

Ultimately, the cards help to maintain a coherent approach to teaching while recognising the complexity of the primary classroom. They support teachers to make informed choices that are ambitious, inclusive, adaptive and responsive, ensuring that barriers are identified and addressed while expectations remain high.

The Pedagogy Cards provide every teacher with a shared foundation from which to make strong professional decisions, helping to give every pupil the best possible opportunity to Aspire, Perform and Succeed.