



Teaching a Broad and Balanced Education Recovery

Sep 2021

Assessment

The purposes of assessment should be clear:

- formative: identifying what pupils do and do not know, or can and cannot do, to inform feedback to them and any adjustments to teaching
 - summative: measuring pupils' (and/or school) performance at the end of a course or programme of study
- Focused assessments which target specific components of knowledge or skills precisely are likely to be more effective. For example, the marks pupils achieve on a past paper that covers a wide range of content will not allow you easily to infer what the precise knowledge gaps are. A low-stakes test or quiz, on the other hand, focused on the salient aspects of a specific topic, will very quickly tell you who has learnt it, and how well. In some subjects (such as mathematics, languages and for phonics), gaps in knowledge are likely to present serious difficulties for pupils in mastering the next stage of what they need to know. Identifying these gaps and teaching the content pupils have missed are essential. In other subjects (such as geography, history, citizenship or religious education), knowledge gaps in one topic may not be as critical for progression in another topic. In these subjects, remedying what has been missed is likely to be most effective by adjusting the curriculum later.

Extra support

In some subjects and phases, well-targeted interventions, based on a range of high-quality assessments, can complement decisions about curriculum prioritisation and teaching. For example, some pupils may be struggling with fluency in reading or the legibility of their handwriting, and so need targeted support. While interventions might suggest an increased workload, time spent on them, making sure that pupils catch up, can be a good investment of effort. This is because it enables more effective whole-class work to take place later and ultimately eases workload. It is important that any additional interventions are explicitly linked to the content of daily lessons and that systems for feedback are effective, so that pupils experience the curriculum as a coherent whole. You are encouraged to consider how the Recovery Premium can be used to supplement high-quality teaching in your context. The National Tutoring Programme provides additional, targeted tuition support for disadvantaged children and young people who have been hardest hit by disrupted education.

Reception and key stage 1

Making sure pupils catch up with their reading is the priority, since it is vital for their access to the rest of the curriculum. Their progress will depend on high-quality teaching. A vital element of this is the successful teaching of phonics and this should continue to be a priority. Children coming back to school feel secure and confident when they recognise the safety of previously established routines. Teachers should use the assessments in the school's phonic programme to:

- identify gaps in children's phonic knowledge and revise lessons that address these gaps
- identify children who might need immediate extra support and provide additional daily phonics practice for them with a well-trained adult.

Leaders should make sure that:

- the direct teaching of phonics continues to take place every day for all children from the start of the reception year, including teaching correct letter formation
- teaching time is used to maximise the number of words children read and spell, and that children practise knowledge from previous lessons until they can use it automatically
- children practise reading books that are decodable for them at that stage of their learning, every day, both at home and in school. Teachers can help children to thrive by choosing books to read aloud to them that will engage them emotionally. By listening to and talking about stories, children also meet vocabulary that they might not be able to read for themselves. In this way, they add to the store of words they know and thus build a strong foundation for comprehension and their own writing. Daily story times should therefore be a priority. Teachers should also help children to learn and enjoy rhymes, poetry and songs.

Art & Design

Curriculum planning should identify and emphasise core knowledge at each phase. This includes, for example, ways of making art as well as its historical and cultural development. Schools should make strategic decisions about what practical knowledge is core to their curriculum. At key stage 1:

- pupils' skills in manipulating tools and equipment to create work and use their imagination are essential for exploring materials and techniques later in the curriculum. It is therefore a priority to develop and embed fine and gross motor skills by teaching pupils how to use a range of tools competently. This may include cutting with scissors or using the correct grip for specific art tools.

Citizenship

To make good progress in citizenship, pupils should develop a secure knowledge of key concepts which are important to future learning. At key stage 1 this is likely to include: • a focus on securing key knowledge of a small number of ideas, including belonging, fairness, and simple rules and laws that help us live together in a community. At key stage 2: • the focus is on securing pupils' knowledge of a broader range of concepts, such as rights and responsibilities, democracy, and community, since these will be the most important for future study

Computing

Adjusting the curriculum should focus on any missed knowledge that is crucial for pupils' next steps. This will be particularly important in hierarchical aspects such as programming, algorithms, understanding computers, and data. Priority should also be given to using computing devices safely and responsibly, although this will depend on pupils' previous exposure to and experience of technology. At key stages 1 and 2: • teachers should give priority to developing pupils' knowledge of algorithms, notably sequencing in key stage 1. At key stage 2: • teachers should focus on sequencing, selection and repetition. • Pupils should be given enough time to practise programming to secure knowledge of key programming constructs. • Gaps in knowledge of how to use digital devices should be identified and addressed. It is important that pupils use devices confidently and competently, so that they can focus on complex tasks without also having to learn how to use a device, which may otherwise get in the way of processing information.

Design & Technology

To engage in the design process, pupils need to know the different factors that contribute to complex design decisions. Securing knowledge of the relevant materials, equipment, tools and manufacturing methods is therefore important before pupils are expected to design their own products. At key stages 1 and 2, teachers should prioritise: • developing pupils' ability to design by, first, providing them with knowledge of materials, equipment and tools to support their application of concepts such as 'functionality' and 'aesthetics'. Activities to consolidate and embed this knowledge can be low cost, for example, asking pupils to evaluate a range of similar products (such as toothbrushes, toys, cutlery, t-shirts, or school bags). • encouraging pupils to work with a range of simple materials, including textiles and ingredients, emphasising the design process rather than simply the end product. Where practicable, pupils should be

introduced to simple tools and their safe use to meet an identified need.

English

At key stage 2, leaders should prioritise:

- assessment of pupils' decoding skill to identify those who are at risk of failing to learn to read
- systematic synthetic phonics teaching for all pupils who still need it, with plenty of practice
- sufficient time for reading and writing, including phonics for spelling. Frequent reading should be a priority. It should happen not simply in English lessons but also in other subjects, such as history, so that pupils learn from what they read. They should also have time to read for pleasure. Since fluency is important for comprehension, practising reading should be a priority. Reading across the curriculum, not simply in English lessons, also uses teaching time efficiently.

As at key stage 1, teachers should continue to read to all pupils so that they experience what it is like to enjoy and become immersed in a book. Shorter writing tasks rather than extended pieces allow pupils to focus on sentence structure and spelling. Dictation of sentences that includes the words pupils have been taught to spell can be effective in helping them to consolidate spelling, handwriting and punctuation. Dictation also provides a simple way of assessing what needs to be taught or re-learned, especially for spelling. Time should be given for pupils to practise their handwriting regularly to increase its fluency, legibility and quality.

Geography

In all key stages, to make sure pupils have gained adequate knowledge of different places, teaching can explore a few well-chosen locations in some depth. Prioritising the regular use of atlases and maps can reinforce pupils' locational knowledge and their sense of place. Geographical fieldwork remains important throughout key stages 1 to 3. Please see the Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) for the Department for Education's latest advice regarding educational visits. At key stage 1:

- key knowledge and skills, including basic locational knowledge such as the names and locations of the world's continents and oceans, should be the focus to address missed education and provide the basis for knowledge that will be needed later.

At key stage 2:

- curriculum adjustments should prioritise critical underpinning knowledge, such as weather and climate, geology, topography, trade links, and natural resources and their distribution. Schools might choose to teach these concepts using an example of a region (for example, the Amazon rainforest). These aspects of geography, as well as locational knowledge, are fundamental to pupils' understanding of the interconnectedness of geography, as seen for

example through biomes, or the location and development of settlements. A secure grasp of this underpinning knowledge will ensure that they are ready to learn subsequent knowledge about human and physical processes.

History

In history, priority curriculum content should focus on the specific knowledge that will be critical for progression. Teachers may choose to return to previous or missed topics with a clear focus on the knowledge that is most important for future study. At key stage 1: • Priority curriculum content should include a range of sufficiently detailed period-specific knowledge. • Pupils should have the opportunity to situate this knowledge in relation to other significant historical events studied. • Teachers will also need to give pupils opportunities to learn about particular people and places through records and artefacts. At key stage 2 and key stage 3: • Teachers should continue to select content that illustrates the prioritised knowledge. This will establish strong foundations for studying a wider range of periods, with greater complexity, in the future. • Teachers should regularly locate this knowledge in wider timelines so pupils gradually gain a sense of the chronological relationship between different historical events and periods. • Teachers will also need to develop pupils' knowledge of how historians study the past and construct historical arguments (for example, considering what makes claims valid or invalid). Historical knowledge and knowledge of how historians work support each other, so pupils will not develop one without the other. It is likely to be less effective to focus on 'source skills', for example, in isolation, than to study, in diverse contexts, how historians approach sources and evidence.

Languages

Knowledge of phonics, vocabulary and grammar is essential for the 'skills', or modalities, of listening, speaking, reading and writing. To make progress in understanding and producing language requires learning and being able to combine and apply such knowledge with increasing fluency in different contexts through a planned and sequenced curriculum, with input and targeted practice firmly built in. Teachers in key stage 2 and 3 should: • identify and teach essential vocabulary for progression. • make sure pupils have a strong mastery of the sound and spelling system • prioritise grammar. The best way to identify essential vocabulary is on the basis of its frequency. Pupils need to encounter and use core vocabulary multiple times, in different contexts, to remember it well. Teachers should revisit and practise spelling and pronunciation principles systematically. They are likely to be difficult for pupils because they are

different from those in English. Pupils learning French, in particular, will need more time to become confident in pronunciation and spelling than those learning Spanish or German. Most grammar is likely to be important for future progression. It is critical that it is learnt sequentially, practised adequately and revisited frequently. For example, if pupils are not confident in manipulating common verbs such as 'have', 'be', 'do' and 'go', progress will be more difficult. Teachers need to identify and re-teach such verbs, giving pupils ample time for practising them. Ideally, grammar should be taught frequently, in relatively small chunks, so that pupils' working memory is not overloaded and to help them to remember it. For example, introducing whole verb tables in one go is likely to be less effective than asking pupils to practise two or three regular or irregular forms.

Mathematics

When deciding what to teach to support education recovery most effectively, leaders can help all pupils by focusing on making sure they are fluent and confident in the facts and methods that they most frequently need in order to be successful with further study. In the context of missed education, it remains crucial to take the time to practise, rather than moving through curriculum content too quickly. What pupils already know is key. Progressing to teaching new content when pupils are not secure with earlier content limits their chances of making good progress later. The sequence of teaching mathematical content is also very important: gaps need to be filled before new content is taught. At key stages 1 and 2: The Department for Education (DfE) has published 'Ready-to-progress criteria: year 1 to year 6' that shows how the curriculum can be sequenced and prioritised effectively. The guidance:

- identifies the core concepts and procedures that pupils need in order to progress in their study of mathematics and shows how they can build their proficiency from year 1 to year 6
- defines core content and concepts as ready-to-progress criteria, which provide a coherent, linked framework to support pupils' mastery of the primary mathematics curriculum.

Music

While planning their curriculum, schools may wish to refer to the recently published Model Music Curriculum, which is non-statutory guidance to help teach music at key stages 1, 2 and 3. A key priority in all key stages is a curriculum which allows a return to practical musicmaking through singing and playing instruments (including music technology). To ensure the safety of pupils and staff, this should be done in line with the DfE's current Schools coronavirus

(COVID-19) operational guidance and with the guidance issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Local Music Education Hubs should also be able to provide guidance and support as performance activities are reintroduced. At key stage 1: • the music curriculum should maintain its focus on increasing pupils' accuracy, fluency and expression through singing and playing a range of instruments. • Singing familiar songs together, concentrating on intonation, phrasing and clear diction, and adding simple rhythmic accompaniments can help to build pupils' confidence and quickly develop their listening skills. At key stages 2 and 3: The focus should be on the technical knowledge and skills that pupils have not been able to practise or develop sufficiently through performance or composition work when they have not been in school. • More attention should be given to the extent to which pupils have missed the opportunity to develop their instrumental and singing skills, or their knowledge of constructive elements such as scales, chords and musical forms. • Close consideration should be given to the order in which key components are taught or re-taught, so that these important skills can be rebuilt deliberately and incrementally. As schools reintroduce pupils to practical music-making, they should also focus on their aural development, which is important in rebuilding their expressive knowledge and understanding of music. This includes: • providing effective feedback on pupils' musical responses or choices, showing them how to resolve their musical difficulties and correcting inaccuracies 28 • training pupils' musical hearing to appraise, shape and improve their performances and compositions. When work during remote education focused on theoretical knowledge about music, schools should ensure that pupils are given every opportunity to secure that knowledge through practical musical activity. Equally, while many teachers have made creative use of technologies to create ensemble 'performances' during the restrictions, schools should plan how they can reintroduce in-person ensemble activities. Well-organised ensemble activities can: • help pupils to develop mature aural skills • build their confidence and support their wellbeing • play an important part in re-building school communities, particularly when performances to an audience are permitted. Finally, schools should take every opportunity - both through and outside the school curriculum - to foster pupils' re-engagement with a wide range of music. Further support can be found through the Music Education Hubs which bring together local authorities, schools and art, community or voluntary organisations to make sure all pupils have access to music education.

Physical education

When making decisions about curriculum prioritisation, schools may need to adjust the curriculum to give priority to supporting pupils to be physically active and confident in fundamental movement skills, as well as developing the

complexity and accuracy of movement patterns. Schools should use time to revisit knowledge of the conventions of specific sports and activities, through which pupils' enjoyment and confidence will be rebuilt. At key stage 1 and 2: • it is a priority to develop and refine pupils' fundamental movement skills in a variety of contexts, including dance and game-based activities. Moving into key stage 2: • each context will require different knowledge to develop competency.

For example, developing attacking and defending strategies in netball and football will require pupils, in each case, to remember and understand different knowledge. • Swimming and water safety should remain a priority at key stage 2, if not secured at key stage 1.

Relationships, sex and health education

The law requires schools to provide some relationships, sex and health education to all secondary-age pupils in the academic year 2020/21, and to provide some relationships and health education to all primary-age pupils.

Schools are also required to publish a Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy and to consult parents on it. The content in the statutory RSHE guidance is broken down into topic areas, differentiated by primary and secondary level rather than by key stage. As set out in the schools coronavirus operational guidance, teaching in the 2021/22 academic year should seek to address any gaps in pupils' RSHE education in 2020/21. Schools will want to consider adjusting the curriculum to prioritise topics that will best support pupils to re-engage with their peers in school. These include: • mental wellbeing, physical health and fitness, respectful relationships and being safe. Prioritising content about safety should reflect risks that may have increased over the pandemic, such as online exploitation, abuse and grooming. All content should remain age-appropriate and be taught clearly but sensitively. A focus on the changing adolescent body for pupils in year 6, and intimate and sexual relationships for pupils in year 11 will support them as they move on from these phases of their education

Religious education

Religious education remains compulsory for pupils in all year groups, in all local authority maintained schools and in academies. If pupils develop thorough knowledge of a particular religion, its origins, settings, cultures, stories, sights and sounds, they will gain not only a secure sense of what a religion is but will also have a strong foundation for studying other religions. Teachers should therefore retain breadth of study within a religion. Otherwise, pupils may develop misconceptions about what it means to be religious and non-religious. It

may therefore be appropriate to concentrate teaching on two religions, in depth. Schools will find it useful to choose two contrasting religions, such as one Abrahamic and one Dharmic faith, to ensure pupils have a sense of the diversity of religions, as well as non-religious worldviews such as Humanism. Pupils should be secure in basic ideas, teachings, stories and practices critical to religious and non-religious content. Specific examples might be ideas such as 'dharma', 'sacred' or 'interpretation'. It is more useful to prioritise subject-specific content than generic skills, since pupils require that content for more complex tasks, activities and discussions. Focusing on curriculum content that emphasises connections between concepts supports pupils to make links. At key stage 1, concepts may be relatively few, with a greater range at key stages 2, 3 and 4. Rich stories, texts and accounts from within different traditions can support pupils' understanding of such concepts. For example: • at key stage 1, stories such as the parable of the Good Shepherd can help pupils to make links between ideas of 'Christ', 'community', 'disciple' and 'rescue' in Christian traditions.

Science

The first step in adjusting the science curriculum is to identify the content in biology, chemistry and physics that is most important for enabling pupils to build up their knowledge of key scientific concepts. At key stage 1: • an example of content which will support future study is knowledge about herbivores because it allows pupils to learn about food chains in key stage 2. This, in turn, enables them to understand ecosystems in key stages 3 and 4. At key stage 2: • concepts that are beneficial to future study include, but are not limited to, forces, electricity, magnetism, materials and substance, reactions, nutrition, evolution and inheritance, ecosystems, properties and changes of materials.