



**South
Pennine
Academies**

An excellent education for everyone

SPA TEACHING AND LEARNING HOW-TO GUIDE

Driving the strategic implementation
of our Trust's T&L approach



Integrity | Ambition | Inclusion

CONTENTS

3. Vision and Principals

4. The 'WHY'

6. The 5-Phase Framework

10. Adaptive Practice

12. SPA T&L Habits

15. Lesson Preparation

18. School Improvement Toolkit

11. T&L QA: Driving Continuous Improvement

12. Professional Learning

4. Appendices

WHAT IS A T&L HOW-TO GUIDE?

Our SPA T&L How-To Guide provides a clear framework for implementing high-quality, evidence-informed Teaching & Learning across our Trust academies.

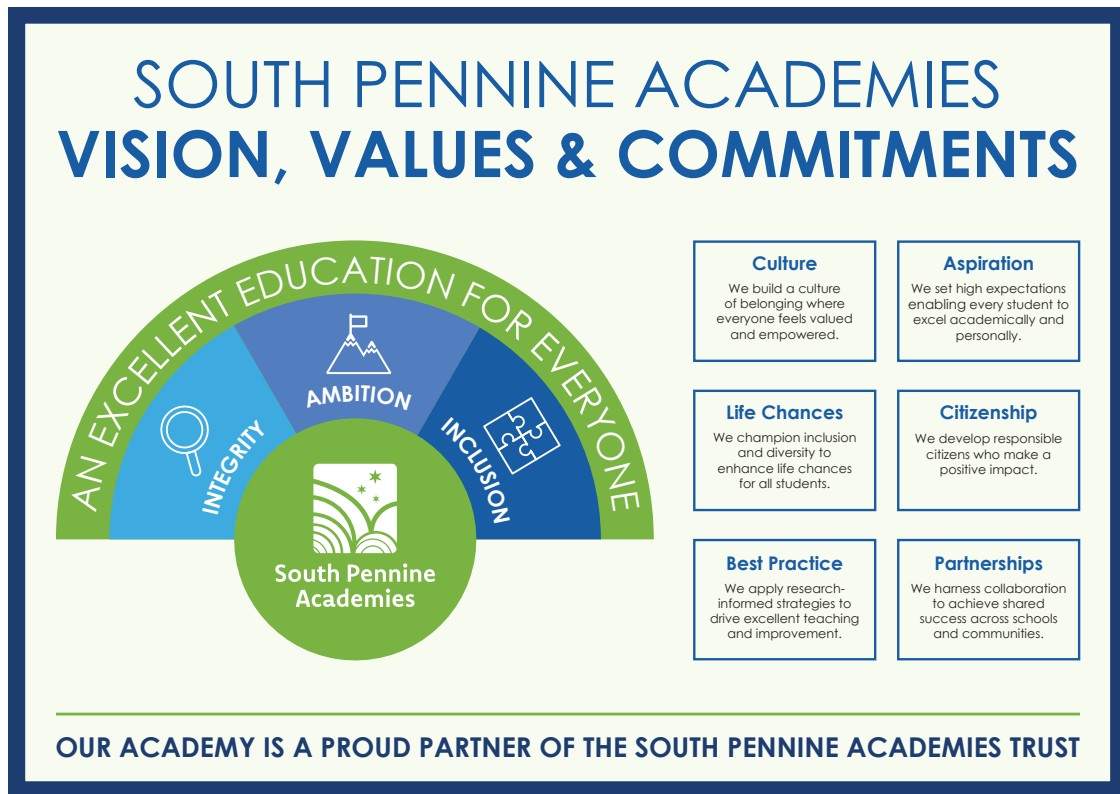
It is designed to:

- Translate Trust strategy into practical action.
- Support leaders and teachers to implement the SPA 5-Phase Teaching & Learning Framework.
- Balance consistency across the Trust with the needs of individual academy contexts.
- Future-proof our Teaching & Learning approach through shared systems, processes and expectations.
- Provide clear milestones and Quality Assurance processes to monitor implementation and impact.

In summary, we want to develop excellent teaching while maintaining teacher agency; creating a toolkit that feels like a menu, not a recipe.

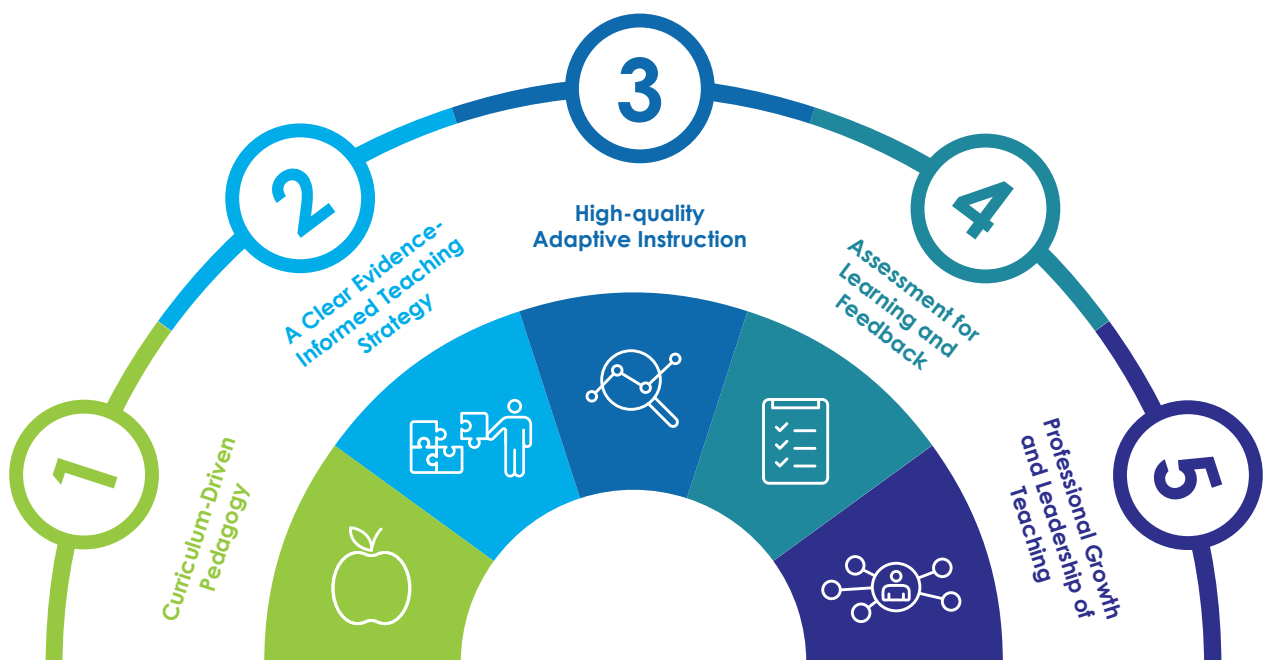
OUR SPA VISION

At South Pennine Academies, integrity, ambition, and inclusion drive everything we do. We empower our young people and colleagues to be change makers - transforming life chances and delivering excellence for everyone, every day.



OUR SPA T&L PRINCIPLES

Our SPA T&L Principles underpin everything we do across the Trust, ensuring teaching is inclusive, evidence-informed and driven by high expectations. They provide the foundation for our shared approach to Teaching & Learning and the implementation guidance set out in this How-To Guide.



WHY?

Why are we doing this and why is it right for our pupils and communities?

INTEGRITY

We use a shared, evidence-informed approach to Teaching & Learning, ensuring consistency, professional trust and the best outcomes for pupils.

AMBITION

We set high expectations for every learner, delivering high-quality teaching that enables pupils to achieve and pursue ambitious futures.

INCLUSION

We remove barriers to learning through adaptive and responsive teaching so that every pupil can belong, participate and succeed.

**WHAT DOES EXCELLENT
T&L LOOK LIKE IN OUR
SPA CLASSROOMS?**

OUR SPA T&L APPROACH: THE 5-PHASE FRAMEWORK

WHY the 5-Phase Framework?

The SPA 5 Phase Framework provides a simple, evidence-informed approach to teaching and learning, promoting consistency, teacher agency and a shared language for planning and preparation, professional learning and coaching.

WHY is the 5-Phase beneficial for our PUPILS?

- **COGNITION:** Builds thinking before doing, developing deeper understanding.
- **SEQUENCING:** Reduces cognitive load through clear sequencing of learning.
- **METACOGNITION:** Develops habits that support independent learning.
- **CONSISTENCY:** Creates clarity and predictability through consistent routines.
- **SUCCESS:** Provides structured opportunities to address misconceptions and secure success.

WHY is the 5-Phase beneficial for our STAFF?

- **COMMON LANGUAGE:** Creates a shared language for planning, QA and professional dialogue.
- **EFFICIENCY:** Reduces planning workload through a coherent lesson structure.
- **COLLABORATION:** Strengthens consistency and teamwork across academies and departments.
- **SUPPORT:** Provides clear expectations and guidance for ECTs and new colleagues.
- **DEVELOPMENT:** Aligns with Steplab to enable focused professional learning, coaching and feedback.



PRIMARY 5-PHASE

SECONDARY 5-PHASE

PHASE 1

- Activate prior knowledge.
- Link previous and new learning.
- Address misconceptions through feedback.

- Activates prior knowledge.
- Links prior and new learning.
- Addresses misconceptions through feedback.

PHASE 2

- Share the learning objective and success criteria.
- Teach new knowledge, vocabulary and skills explicitly.
- Model learning using worked examples.

- Introduces key knowledge, vocabulary and skills.
- Uses explicit instruction and modelling.
- Connects learning to the wider sequence.

PHASE 3

- Work through examples together.
- Scaffold practice and provide feedback.
- Promote discussion to deepen understanding.

- Models thinking and learning processes.
- Provides guided practice and feedback.
- Checks understanding and identifies next steps.

PHASE 4

- Complete independent practice.
- Apply learning with increasing confidence.
- Respond to feedback and refine understanding.

- Applies learning independently.
- Develops resilience and self-regulation.
- Responds to feedback and addresses misconceptions.

PHASE 5

- Review learning against success criteria.
- Evaluate progress and identify next steps.
- Consolidate understanding and retention.

- Reviews learning and progress.
- Uses metacognitive strategies to improve.
- Deepens understanding through discussion and reflection.



HOW DO THE 5 PHASES CONNECT TO CREATE A COHERENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE?



The 5 Phase Framework is designed as a **connected, fluid model**, not a conveyor belt. Although the phases sit in a logical order for **planning**, the reality in the classroom is **dynamic**. Both the primary and secondary 5-Phase models use circular and star shaped visuals to show that learning is interconnected, not linear, **creating a coherent learning experience**.

Responsiveness is essential. Teachers move **back and forth** between phases as needed - **guided by assessment, not habit**. The model helps pupils experience learning that is coherent and connected, where concepts are revisited, strengthened and deepened rather than treated as one off events.



WE TEACH AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, BUT AS SLOWLY AS NECESSARY.

- We do need pace; we cannot endlessly repeat or dwell.
- But we go as slowly as needed to **secure learning**, not just to complete a time slot.
- This means teaching at **the pace of the learning**, not the pace of the fastest or slowest pupil.

Linked to **Assessment for Learning**, this means:

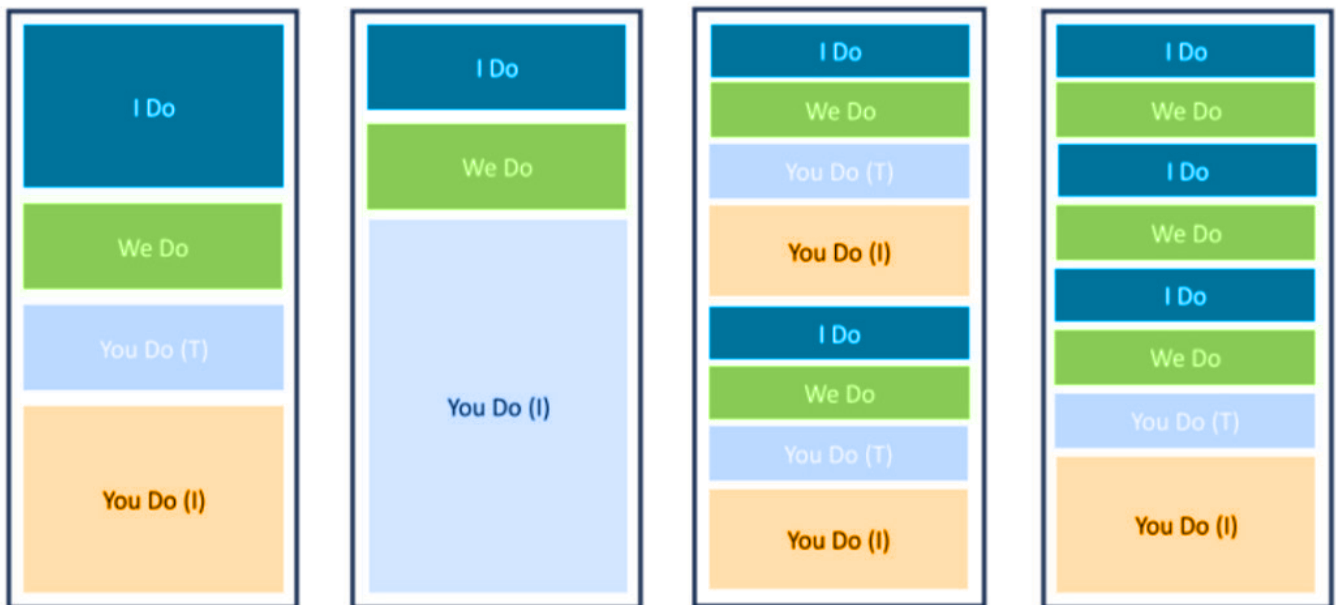
- If pupils aren't secure, we respond by re modelling, **re-guiding or clarifying**.
- If pupils are secure, we move on.
- This prevents extremes:
 - ❌ **Racing through phases**
 - ❌ **Dragging out phases**

INSTEAD, WE FIND THE 'GOLDILOCKS ZONE':
WHAT'S JUST RIGHT FOR THIS CONTENT, FOR THESE PUPILS, TODAY.

Our '**Responsiveness Model**' makes the variability clear. For example, sometimes:

- A class needs more Teacher input in Phase 2 before they are ready to move on.
- We dip back into modelling after guided practice in Phase 3.
- Different groups within one class may be operating in different parts of the Phases.

RESPONSIVENESS IS ESSENTIAL



At the heart of this is a highly responsive teacher...

- ❌ Not formulaic.
- ❌ Not tick box.

...just teaching that **adapts** and **responds intelligently** to what **pupils show us** in real time.

ADAPTIVE PRACTICE: SAME AMBITION, DIFFERENT ROUTES TO SUCCESS.

WE MAINTAIN HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR EVERY PUPIL

At SPA, adaptive practice is rooted in this simple principle. Adaptive practice is not about lowering expectations, reducing curriculum entitlement or creating different lessons for different groups. It is about identifying and removing barriers so that every pupil can access, participate in and succeed within an ambitious curriculum.

The destination stays the same. The support may change.

ADAPTIVE PRACTICE AND THE 5-PHASE FRAMEWORK

Adaptive practice is not a separate phase of learning. It is woven throughout both our Primary and Secondary 5-Phase Frameworks, helping teachers secure success for all learners whilst building independence over time.



FOR LEADERS:

this means ensuring systems, professional learning and quality assurance support high-quality adaptive practice whilst maintaining high expectations.



FOR TEACHERS:

it means using assessment, knowledge of pupils and professional judgement to make deliberate adaptations that enable all pupils to achieve ambitious outcomes.

ADAPTIVE PRACTICE IN ACTION

Consistent with the EEF's SEND 5-a-Day and Guide to Inclusive Teaching, adaptive practice begins with high-quality teaching for all and includes purposeful adaptations where needed.

EXAMPLES INCLUDE:



Explicit Instruction: clear explanations, modelling, guided practice and checking for understanding.



Scaffolding: worked examples, sentence stems, vocabulary support and the gradual removal of support over time.



Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies: supporting pupils to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning.



Flexible Grouping: purposeful collaboration and targeted support that responds to need.



Technology: tools such as Microsoft Immersive Reader, Dictate and Copilot to remove barriers whilst maintaining challenge and curriculum entitlement.

These approaches are not exclusively for pupils with SEND; they are examples of inclusive, high-quality teaching that can improve learning for all pupils.



IN SUMMARY

Adaptive practice is not about making learning easier. It is about making learning accessible.

KEEP THE CHALLENGE HIGH AND THE BARRIERS LOW

Adaptive practice is the deliberate use of strategies, resources and professional judgement to ensure every pupil can access the same ambitious curriculum, participate fully in learning and experience success. It is an essential part of creating inclusive classrooms where every pupil belongs, participates and achieves.

SPA T&L HABITS: IMPLEMENTING EVIDENCE-INFORMED PEDAGOGY THROUGH THE 5-PHASE FRAMEWORK

The SPA T&L Habits help us develop excellent teaching while maintaining teacher agency. They are not a checklist or recipe, but a shared menu of evidence-informed pedagogical approaches that teachers use responsively to meet the needs of their pupils. School leaders will use the process below to decide the habits they will focus on through Steplab Group PD in their academies, balancing strategic and responsive T&L leadership.

1

DIAGNOSE NEED

- **QA:** Use quality assurance to identify barriers to teaching and learning.
- **PRIORITIES:** Shape academy T&L obsessions from the evidence gathered.
- **NEED:** Focus improvement priorities on pupils' learning needs, not initiatives.

2

SELECT THE RIGHT HABITS

- **STEPLAB:** Use Steplab goals and steps to build responsive professional learning.
- **PEDAGOGY:** Identify high-leverage T&L Habits to address identified needs.
- **INTENTIONALITY:** Prioritise a focused and consistent use of pedagogy over trying to do everything at once.

3

DEVELOP THROUGH INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING

- **STEPLAB:** Develop teacher/TA impactful teaching habits through rehearsal and feedback as part of Group PD and individual instructional coaching.
- **FOCUS:** Concentrate on the habits with the greatest potential impact.
- **PRACTICE:** Build sustained improvement through deliberate practice over time.

4

EMBED AS HABITS

- **EMBED:** Integrate effective approaches into everyday classroom practice.
- **REFINE:** Be responsive based on drop-in data. Revist and strengthen habits over time.
- **SUSTAIN:** Focus on long-term improvement rather than short-term initiatives.

5

DEEPENING THE 5-PHASE MODEL

- **IMPLEMENTATION:** Make explicit connections to the 5-Phase to strengthen delivery.
- **THREADS:** Clearly link to Learning Behaviours, Assessment and Adaptive Practice.
- **CONTEXT:** Select habits responsively and adapt Steplab steps to academy context and need.

6

CREATE A SHARED LANGUAGE FOR EXCELLENT TEACHING

- **LANGUAGE:** Be intentional in creating a common language for QA, professional learning and coaching.
- **ALIGNMENT:** Clearly connect Trust strategy, academy priorities and classroom practice.
- **CONSISTENCY:** Be intentional in supporting consistency whilst preserving teacher agency.

IN SUMMARY

The SPA T&L Habits:

- Codify evidence-informed teaching.
- Align QA, Professional Learning and instructional coaching through Steplab.
- Support improvement through habit formation.
- Provide a shared menu of pedagogical excellence, not a one-size-fits-all approach whilst still empowering leaders to be responsive to their academy's context.

SPA T&L HABITS: IMPACTFUL PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE IN THE 5-PHASE

“We want to develop excellent teaching while maintaining teacher agency; creating a toolkit that feels like a menu, not a recipe.”

Select Curriculum Has the teacher selected the right ideas to teach?	Create Culture Has the teacher built the necessary routines, environment and behaviour for learning?	Secure Attention Has the teacher got students' attention?	Optimise Communication Is the teacher presenting ideas in a way that is manageable for students?	Drive Thought Is the teacher pushing students to think hard about ideas?	Gather and Give Feedback Is the teacher assessing student learning and responding appropriately?	Ensure Consolidation Is the teacher supporting the students to consolidate their learning?
 BEGIN WITH THE END: Progress from unit planning to lesson planning. Define the objective, decide how you'll assess it and then choose appropriate lesson activities.	THRESHOLD: Meet your students at the door, setting expectations before they enter the room. STRONG START: Design and establish an efficient routine for students to enter the classroom and begin the lesson.	SIGNAL FOR SILENCE: Use a consistent, clear routine to quickly secure whole-class attention. 	BRIGHTEN LINES: Ensure that changes in activities and other milestones are perceived clearly by making beginnings and endings of activities visible and crisp. EXAMPLES AND NON-EXAMPLES: Deepen understanding and build vocabulary by contrasting accurate examples with common misconceptions.	 SILENT SOLO: Give students robust opportunities to work and think independently. Develop a routine that allows students the time for silent solo reflection in order to improve both their thinking and their writing.	PLAN FOR ERROR: Anticipate and plan responses to gaps or errors that may appear in student responses to tasks and questions. HINGE QUESTIONS: Design MCQs to check for understanding, using plausible distractors that could reveal common student misconceptions. Use core AFL techniques, e.g. 'show me' boards, voting cards and 1-4 fingers.	 RETRIEVAL THAT INCLUDES PRIOR CONTENT: review content from different time periods to connect knowledge from previous lessons to current learning.
ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: The objective should focus on the knowledge or skill that truly matters for student learning and long-term success.	HABITS OF ATTENTION: Teach students key baseline behaviours for learning, e.g. sitting up in class, tracking the speaker, by using memorable phrases (e.g. STAR/SLANT) and/or actions.	WHAT TO DO: Use specific, concrete, sequential and observable directions to tell students what to do, as opposed to what not to do.	DUAL CODING: Combine visuals and text to clarify concepts and strengthen memory.	TURN AND TALK: Encourage students to better formulate their thoughts by including short, contained pair discussions.	ACTIVE CIRCULATION (NOT WATCHING): Look for mastery rather than completion and identify the specific errors that you have planned for.	LOW STAKES QUIZZES: Ensure tests are seen as low stakes by students and are a learning opportunity.
MANAGEABLE OBJECTIVES: Create objectives that contain knowledge or skills that students can learn or master by the end of a lesson.	BE SEEN LOOKING: Prevent non-productive behaviour by purposefully and exaggeratedly scanning the room to ensure expectations are followed.	 WORK THE CLOCK: Measure time – a teacher's greatest resource – intentionally, strategically and often visibly to shape both the teacher's and students' experience in the classroom.	LIVE MODEL: Model aloud worked examples as a scaffold to deepen understanding and make processes explicit.	COLD CALL: Call on students regardless of whether they've raised their hands.	NORMALISE ERROR: Show that getting it wrong and then getting it right is a normal, positive part of the learning process.	 SELECT QUESTIONS FOR DEEP FEEDBACK: Avoid the trap of spending lots of time going through each question in detail. Use active circulation to identify one or two key areas.
MEASUREABLE OBJECTIVES: Design objectives that enable you to easily check if the specified learning has been achieved by the end of the lesson.	PRECISE PRAISE: Make your positive reinforcement strategic. Differentiate between acknowledgement and praise.	CHORAL RESPONSE: Students respond together to secure accuracy, pace and embed new vocabulary.	SCAFFOLD (GUIDED PRACTICE): Tailor tasks and layer scaffolds, then backwards fade support for independent mastery.	 TAILOR TASKS AND SCAFFOLDS (INDEPENDENT PRACTICE): Add or remove memory aides, such as vocabulary banks, sentence starters or models, to match prior knowledge or ability.	EXCAVATE ERROR: Dig into errors, studying them efficiently and effectively, to better understand where students struggle and how you can best address those points.	RECORD AND RETEACH: Record which quiz questions students particularly struggle with and plan to reteach them in an upcoming lesson.
DOUBLE PLAN: As you plan a lesson, plan what your students will be doing at each point in the lesson.	INSIST ON 100%: Ensure every student meets expectations consistently to maximise learning time.		THINK-PAIR-SHARE: Structure peer discussion to deepen understanding through guided collaborative thinking.	SHOW CALL: Create a strong incentive to complete writing with quality and thoughtfulness by publicly showcasing and revising student writing – regardless of who volunteers to share.		

SPA T&L HABITS: LESSON PREPARATION

Preparing to be responsive: building strong teaching habits

"Preparation adapts a carefully crafted plan to ensure success with this group of students, today... We prepare so we can be fully responsive."

- Doug Lemov, Teach Like a Champion (p.42)

WHY LESSON PREPARATION MATTERS

Lesson preparation bridges the gap between planning and practice. It helps teachers translate curriculum intent and lesson design into effective classroom action for **this class, today**.

Effective preparation:

- Increases the likelihood that teachers implement what they intend.
- Supports the development of strong teaching habits.
- Enables teachers to be responsive rather than reactive during lessons.
- Strengthens implementation of the SPA 5 Phase Framework.

Preparation is not about scripting every moment of a lesson. By reducing cognitive load during delivery, it allows teachers to notice learning, respond to misconceptions and adapt teaching more effectively.

PREPARATION AND HABIT FORMATION

Preparation is a powerful tool for building consistent teaching habits.

"More specific preparation makes it more likely that we'll do the things we hope in teaching."

- Doug Lemov, Teach Like a Champion (p.42)

When preparation is specific and intentional, teachers are more likely to:

- Follow through on key pedagogical decisions.
- Anticipate and respond to misconceptions.
- Implement the 5 Phase Framework consistently.
- Develop routines that improve pupil learning over time.

WHAT EFFECTIVE PREPARATION FOCUSES ON

Preparation should be **selective, not exhaustive**.

Focus on the highest leverage moments in the lesson:

- Where pupils are likely to struggle.
- Where misconceptions may arise.
- Where teacher decisions have the greatest impact.
- Where adaptation may be needed for specific pupils or groups.

WHY LESSON PREPARATION MATTERS

Lesson preparation is about **preparing to notice, decide and adapt**. By focusing on the highest leverage moments within the 5 Phase Framework, teachers increase the likelihood that effective practice is implemented, embedded as habit and responsive to pupil need.

LESSON PREPARATION GUIDE



1. IDENTIFY THE HIGHEST-LEVERAGE TASK(S)

Which task(s) give the clearest evidence of learning?

- Examine standard, objective(s) and Phase 5 task for ultimate destination
- Identify task(s) showing mastery during independent practice
- Identify high-leverage tasks and what success looks like in each phase of the lesson



5-Phase link:

Primarily Phases 3-5 (and Phase 2 Secondary)



2. PREPARE THE EXEMPLAR

What are the components of a high-quality response?

- Write or select an ideal student response for all task components
- Include key vocabulary, steps, annotations and structure
- Use the exemplar to clarify expectations for both pupils and teacher



5-Phase link:

Phases 2 and 3



3. PLAN FOR ERROR

What are pupils most likely to struggle with?
How will you respond?

- Identify 1–3 likely misconceptions aligned to the lesson objective
- Decide what you will look for while circulating
- Plan specific responses (questions, prompts, re-teaching, scaffolds)



5-Phase link:

All Phases



4. PLAN FOR ACTIVE OBSERVATIONS

How will you know who is learning and who needs support?

- Decide how you will circulate and what you are looking for
- Plan how you will track understanding in real time
- Be intentional about when to intervene and when to allow productive struggle



5-Phase link:

All Phases



5. PLAN MEANS OF PARTICIPATION

How will all pupils actively think, articulate and process learning?

- Plan means of participation in high-leverage tasks so all pupils are engaged, not just volunteers
- Ensure processing time matches the cognitive demand of the task
- Build in opportunities for retrieval, discussion or structured reflection



5-Phase link:

All Phases, especially Phases 2 and 3

**HOW DO LEADERS DRIVE
SUCCESSFUL, SUSTAINED
IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR
SPA T&L STRATEGY?**

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TOOLKIT:

SPA Teaching & Learning Implementation Roadmap

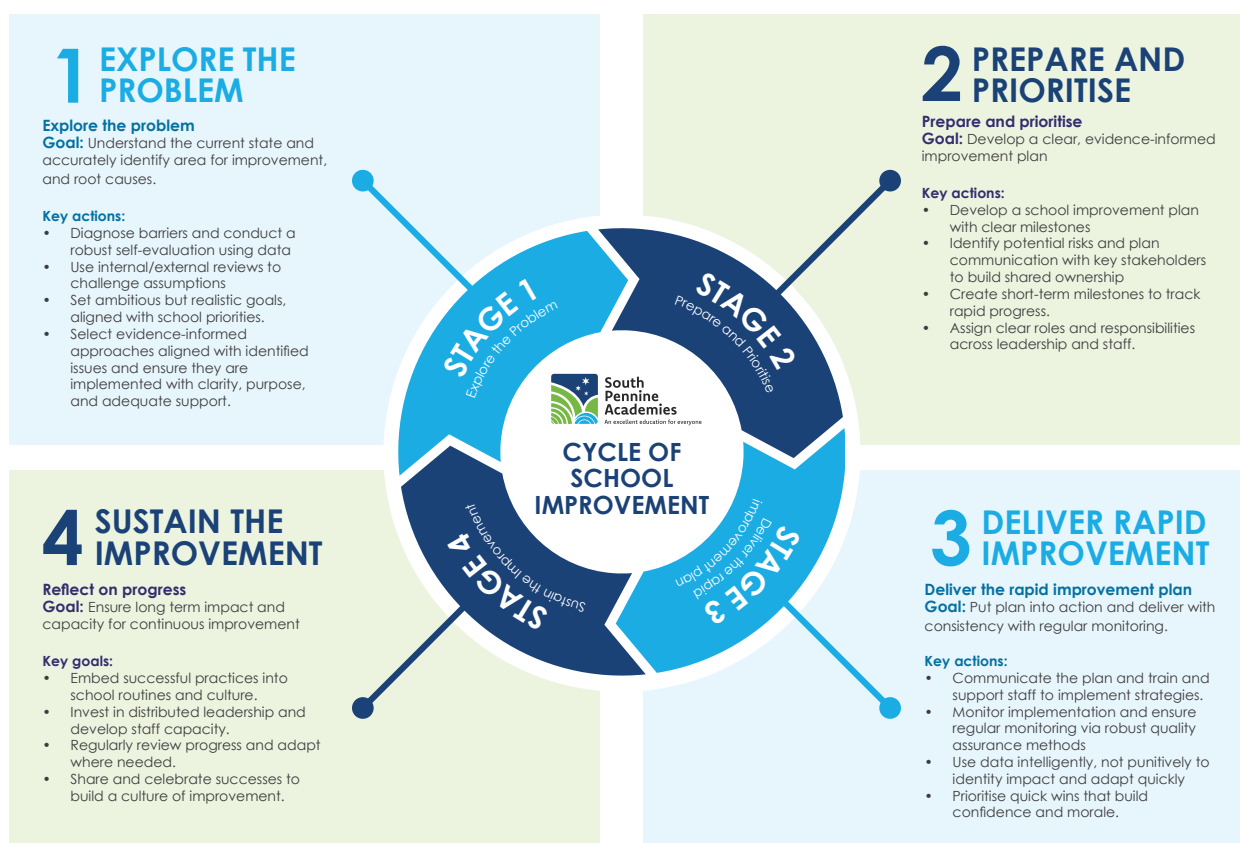
At SPA we follow a cycle of Continuous Improvement.

Teaching & Learning improvement is not a one-off event or initiative. Across SPA academies, improvement is achieved through a continuous cycle of evaluation, planning, implementation and review.

This cycle underpins a three-year Teaching & Learning improvement journey. While all academies follow the same improvement process, they may enter the journey at different points depending on their context, strengths and priorities. This enables leaders to build on existing practice, focus on the areas of greatest need and implement improvement at a pace that is both ambitious and sustainable.

This cycle ensures that improvement is:

- Responsive to the needs of pupils and staff
- Driven by evidence rather than assumptions
- Focused on sustained improvement over time
- Aligned to academy priorities and the Trust's Teaching & Learning strategy



A Flexible Journey

The cycle is not intended to be completed once. Schools revisit the stages continuously as they move through their three-year Teaching & Learning improvement journey. Leaders should use the cycle responsively, focusing on the stage most relevant to their current context. Some academies may begin by strengthening implementation, while others may focus on evaluation, planning or sustainability. The journey is therefore shared across the Trust, but tailored to each academy's starting point and needs.

PURPOSE:

This roadmap sets out a sequenced, sustainable approach to implementing SPA's Teaching & Learning strategy over three years. Each wave builds deliberately on the previous one, moving from consistency, to depth, to aspirational excellence.

The aim is to:

- Secure high-quality teaching for all pupils
- Develop leadership capacity at all levels
- Build a strong and sustainable professional culture
- Future-proof Teaching & Learning across the Trust

THE 3 WAVES AT A GLANCE:

Wave	Focus	Core Aim
Wave 1	Coherence, Compliancy and Consistency	Establish shared expectations and non negotiables
Wave 2	Depth and Professional Culture	Embed adaptive, inclusive and subject specific practice
Wave 3	Aspirational and Sustainable Excellence	Sustain excellence through collaboration and innovation

What progression looks like for leaders:

Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3
Establish expectations	Refine and deepen practice	Sustain and innovate
Reduce variability	Build professional judgement	Lead within and beyond the Trust
Use Group PD for all and monitor compliance	Coach for improvement	Model excellence and system leadership
Align systems	Use evidence precisely	Future proof practice and leadership

HOW LEADERS SHOULD USE THIS ROADMAP:

- To diagnose where their academy currently sits
- To prioritise actions without initiative overload
- To align Professional Learning, QA, coaching and leadership development
- To support induction, succession planning and consistency over time

Leaders should expect activities from earlier waves to remain live; later waves add depth and ambition rather than replacing foundations.

IN SUMMARY:

The SPA Teaching & Learning Roadmap combines a **three-wave improvement journey** with a **continuous improvement cycle**.

**The waves tell us what we are trying to achieve.
The continuous improvement cycle tells us how we achieve it.**

Together, they ensure that Teaching & Learning improvement is sustainable, evidence-informed and responsive to the needs of pupils, staff and academies.

WAVE 1

Coherence, compliance and consistency

PURPOSE:

Wave 1 establishes the non negotiable foundations of excellent teaching across all academies. The focus is on clarity, consistency and shared expectations, creating the conditions for depth and innovation in later waves.

KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Priority	What that means
Consistent practice	All classrooms reflect shared SPA expectations for Teaching and Learning
Clear expectations	Staff understand what excellent teaching looks like and why it matters
Strong foundations	Systems (PD, QA, coaching) are aligned to SPA's T&L strategy
Leadership capacity	Leaders and middle leaders build confidence in leading teaching quality
Inclusive classrooms	Teaching responds to pupil need using SEND, PP and Reading Age information and meaningful data

LEADER ACTIONS – CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CYCLE:

EXPLORE:

- Unite and engage leaders to ensure collective understanding of the SPA Teaching & Learning Principles, non negotiables and the 5 Phase Framework
- Identify academy Teaching & Learning 'obsessions' aligned to Trust priorities
- Develop understanding of the SPA QA Framework and QA proformas
- Use early QA to identify strengths and barriers to consistent practice

PREPARE:

- Define and agree 3-4 academy Teaching & Learning Obsessions (underpinned by the SPA T&L Principles)
- Prepare and/or refine systems for:
 - 5 Phase launch (see 5-Phase pre-launch checklists in Appendix 2)
 - Classroom non negotiables (Learning Walk compliancy check)
 - SEND and Reading Age information sharing
 - Effective data use, e.g. strategic seating plans
- Establish a Teaching & Learning Team with clearly defined roles
- Ensure a professional learning calendar is in place, with dedicated time to support 5 Phase implementation and development (responsive to classroom barriers to teaching) and with clear development pathways (e.g. ECTs, teachers, middle leaders)
- Plan and connect professional learning (including Steplab) and QA, and how this will be strategically evaluated e.g. at SLT and through line management

DELIVER:

- Launch academy Teaching & Learning obsessions and embed them through professional learning and QA
- Monitor non negotiables consistently
- Launch and embed the 5 Phase model in planning and classroom practice. Ensure that:
 - Teachers guide pupils between phases
 - Pupils can articulate their learning phase (age appropriate)
- Deliver responsive professional learning (e.g. through Steplab), informed by QA evidence, to develop teacher habits around the effective evidence-based pedagogy that underpins the 5-Phase framework
- Celebrate and share effective practice, including through Steplab Shoutouts and Drop-ins, including teacher-to-teacher Drop-ins

SUSTAIN:

- Address inconsistencies and any reduction in expectations promptly and supportively
- Embed T&L approaches and expectations within induction for new staff
- Develop middle leaders' confidence and capability in leading disciplinary pedagogy
- Maintain processes for SEND, reading and 'knowing pupils' as routine practice
- Triangulate QA evidence to inform next steps and prepare for Wave 2

INTENDED IMPACT:

Area	Indicators	✓
Teaching	The 5 Phase framework is consistently visible in lessons and planning	
Pupils	Pupils show metacognitive awareness and can explain learning phases	
Consistency	Classroom non negotiables are routinely met across subjects and phases	
Culture	Staff engage positively with PL and respond to feedback	
Leadership	Middle leaders confidently support and challenge teaching quality	
Inclusion	Teaching adapts effectively using SEND, PP and reading information	
Sustainability	Practice remains strong despite staff or leadership changes	
Readiness	Leaders can clearly identify priorities for Wave 2 (depth and adaptation)	

IN SUMMARY:

Wave 1 is about doing fewer things well. By securing consistency, clarity and shared practice, academies create the platform for deep, inclusive and aspirational teaching in future waves.

WAVE 2

Depth and Professional Culture

PURPOSE:

Wave 2 builds on the consistency secured in Wave 1 by deepening teaching practice and strengthening professional culture. The focus shifts from consistency to precision, adaptability and inclusion, with increasing emphasis on disciplinary pedagogy, coaching and collaboration.

KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Priority	What that means
Raising the bar	Teaching expectations are developed based on evidence from Wave 1
Adaptive teaching	Teaching responds intelligently to pupils' learning within the 5-Phase
Disciplinary pedagogy	Subject specific practice deepen learning and curriculum impact
Coaching culture	Professional growth is driven through PD, coaching, feedback and reflection
Collaboration	Expertise is shared within academies and across the Trust

LEADER ACTIONS – CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CYCLE:

EXPLORE:

- Evaluate impact through half termly teaching reviews and professional learning impact analysis.
- Embed a coaching led professional culture in which reflection, refinement and continuous improvement are routine.
- Ensure adaptive and inclusive practice is consistently evident in teaching, pupils' work and intervention impact.
- Strengthen collaboration across academies and the Trust through shared practice, networks and professional dialogue.
- Develop and maintain an academy Teaching & Learning Handbook aligned to the Trust strategy to secure consistency over time.
- Maintain a responsive professional learning calendar that continues to evolve with staff, leadership and school needs.

PREPARE:

- Update and refine academy Teaching & Learning obsessions using QA evidence, ensuring continued alignment with the Trust Teaching & Learning strategy and priorities.
- Plan a coherent programme of targeted QA and Steplab Group PD that directly drive improvement in identified priority areas, as well as being responsive to the barriers for teaching in the academy.
- Identify and prepare coaches to deliver Steplab instructional coaching aligned to Group PD goals, academy obsessions and current barriers to teaching.
- Review and adapt the professional learning calendar so it remains responsive to need and bespoke to career stage (ECTs, teachers, middle leaders).
- Plan structured opportunities for high performing staff to engage in Trust networks, professional learning, and collaborative research or innovation projects.
- Ensure the Inclusion strategy and intervention planning are fully aligned with SEND and wider pupil information to support adaptive classroom practice.

DELIVER:

- Embed updated Teaching & Learning obsessions consistently through professional learning, instructional coaching and quality assurance.
- Deliver coaching that enables staff to deepen pedagogical knowledge, refine practice aligned to academy priorities, and share and model strong practice that is recognised and celebrated.
- Strengthen formative assessment across classrooms through effective questioning, micro assessments and timely, actionable feedback.
- Deepen implementation of the 5 Phase model so lessons are increasingly varied, engaging and responsive, reflecting subject specific and practical requirements where appropriate.
- Develop and embed high quality subject level teaching resources that support curriculum intent and consistent, engaging delivery.
- Use QA strategically to monitor staff progress and consistency, identifying and addressing underperformance through bespoke support and development.

SUSTAIN:

- Evaluate impact through half termly teaching reviews and professional learning impact analysis.
- Embed a coaching led professional culture in which reflection, refinement and continuous improvement are routine.
- Ensure adaptive and inclusive practice is consistently evident in teaching, pupils' work and intervention impact.
- Strengthen collaboration across academies and the Trust through shared practice, networks and professional dialogue.
- Develop and maintain an academy Teaching & Learning Handbook aligned to the Trust strategy to secure consistency over time.
- Maintain a responsive professional learning calendar that continues to evolve with staff, leadership and school needs.

INTENDED IMPACT:

Area	Indicators	✓
Teaching quality	Teaching in the 5 Phase demonstrates greater depth, precision and responsiveness	
Pupil learning	Pupils benefit from adaptive teaching and effective formative assessment	
Subject pedagogy	Lessons reflect strong disciplinary thinking and subject specific approaches	
Professional culture	Coaching, reflection and collaboration are embedded	
Inclusion	SEND and other pupil needs are consistently met and visible in practice	
Leadership	Leaders confidently use QA to refine, not reset, strategy	
Collaboration	Strong practice is shared within the academy and across the Trust	
Sustainability	Improvements are embedded, not dependent on individuals	

IN SUMMARY:

Wave 2 is about raising the bar. With consistency secured, leaders focus on depth, inclusion and professional expertise. Teaching becomes more adaptive, subject specific and collaborative, strengthening both pupil outcomes and professional culture in preparation for **Wave 3**.

WAVE 3

Aspirational and Sustainable Excellence

PURPOSE:

Wave 3 represents a mature Teaching & Learning culture in which high quality practice is consistently strong, professionally owned and continuously refined. Teaching excellence is sustained through collaboration, innovation and system leadership, ensuring impact endures beyond individual roles, schools or phases.

KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Priority	What that means
Aspirational culture	High expectations drive continuous improvement for staff and pupils
Collaboration	Expertise is shared within and beyond the Trust
Innovation	Research informed practice is trialled, refined and evaluated
Leadership capacity	Strong practitioners lead improvement across teams and systems
Sustainability	Excellence is embedded, resilient and future proofed

LEADER ACTIONS – CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CYCLE:

EXPLORE:

- Analyse QA evidence, pupil outcomes and curriculum impact to identify persistent or emerging priorities.
- Review the long term impact of Teaching & Learning obsessions and the 5 Phase model.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of independent practice, metacognition and subject specific literacy.
- Identify strong practitioners and leaders with the capacity to lead development and system improvement.
- Use internal and external QA to inform strategic priorities and Ofsted readiness.

PREPARE:

- Refine Teaching & Learning obsessions so they address identified priorities.
- Plan high-quality professional learning opportunities, including INSET, that meet the needs of staff at all levels.
- Use QA evidence and Steplab analytics to shape targeted professional learning and subject specific professional learning.
- Plan collaborative working at subject, academy and Trust level to stretch and develop staff.
- Review and adapt the professional learning calendar to ensure it remains aspirational and responsive.
- Plan outreach and partnership work beyond the Trust to extend leadership and coaching opportunities.

DELIVER:

- Share and showcase exemplar practice across academies and the Trust.
- Deliver high quality coaching and leadership development, particularly for middle leaders.
- Embed high quality independent practice supported by strong metacognitive strategies.
- Strengthen literacy across the curriculum through explicit teaching of subject specific reading.
- Encourage research informed practice and professional autonomy, with strong practice disseminated widely.
- Use QA and Steplab analytics to monitor impact, refine practice and validate excellence, including through external QA.

SUSTAIN:

- Embed a culture of continuous refinement driven by evidence and professional dialogue.
- Celebrate excellence in teaching, leadership and innovation across the academy and Trust.
- Secure collaborative practice so it is resilient to staff and leadership change.
- Maintain and extend partnerships beyond the Trust to support system leadership and outreach.
- Ensure Teaching & Learning excellence is future proofed through robust induction, professional learning and succession planning.

INTENDED IMPACT:

Area	Indicators	✓
Teaching quality	Teaching is consistently high quality, refined and research informed	
Pupil outcomes	Pupils demonstrate independence, metacognition and strong literacy	
Professional culture	Innovation, reflection and collaboration are routine	
Leadership	Middle and senior leaders confidently lead pedagogy and develop others	
Collaboration	Practice influences improvement within and beyond the Trust	
External validation	External QA confirms strength and sustainability of practice	
Sustainability	Excellence endures despite staff or leadership change	

IN SUMMARY:

Wave 3 is about sustaining excellence through ambition, collaboration and innovation. Teaching & Learning is fully embedded, professionally owned and continuously refined, enabling academies to contribute confidently to Trust wide and system level improvement while securing the very best outcomes for pupils.



FURTHER GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES:

- Appendix 1 – Research that underpins our approach
- Appendix 2 – The 5-Phase pre-launch checklists
- Appendix 3 – SPA T&L Habits with Steplab suggested steps mapped

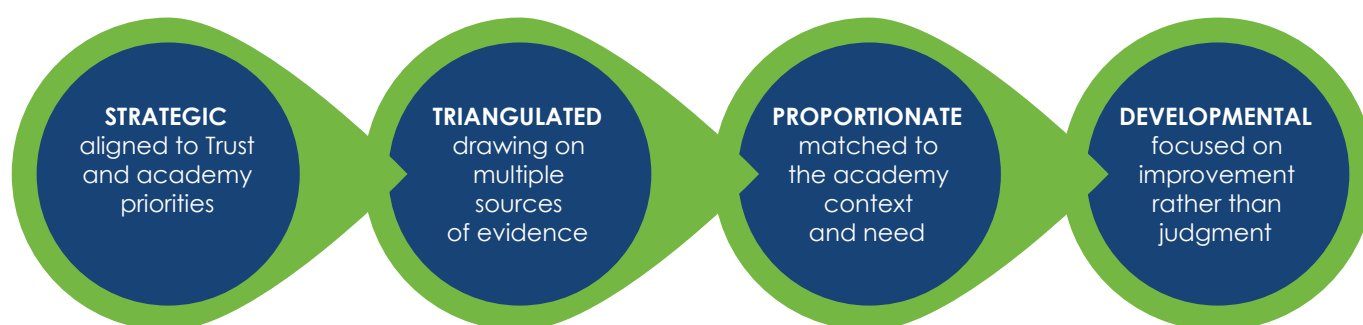
**WHAT DOES RIGOROUS
AND IMPACTFUL QA
LOOK LIKE IN SPA
ACADEMIES?**

T&L QA: DRIVING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

QA WITH INTENTION

At SPA, QA is a developmental process that helps leaders understand pupils' lived experience and identify priorities for improvement. Through triangulation of classroom practice, pupil work and pupil voice, leaders generate evidence that informs professional learning, instructional coaching and support.

EFFECTIVE QA IS:



QA is not an end in itself. It is used to identify strengths, diagnose barriers and inform the next steps that will have the greatest impact on Teaching & Learning.

HOW QA WORKS ACROSS THE THREE WAVES

QA expectations are deliberately sequenced to align with the Trust's Teaching & Learning strategy. As academies move through Waves 1–3, QA shifts from securing consistency to deepening practice and sustaining excellence.

Wave	Primary purpose of QA	What leaders are looking for	What success looks like
Wave 1: Coherence, compliance and consistency	Secure shared expectations	Non negotiables, routines, 5 Phase visibility, typicality of practice	Reduced variability and clear, consistent expectations
Wave 2: Depth and Professional Culture	Refine and deepen practice	Precision, adaptation, formative assessment, subject pedagogy	Confident, adaptive and inclusive teaching
Wave 3: Aspirational and Sustainable Excellence	Validate and sustain excellence	Refinement, innovation, leadership impact and outcomes	High quality teaching sustained over time

Earlier wave expectations remain live in later waves; QA becomes deeper and more evaluative without losing clarity.

HOW QA DRIVES SUPPORT, DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

QA evidence is always translated into action. In SPA academies, QA informs **support and development at three connected levels**.

FROM QA TO ACTION:

Level	QA identifies	Leaders respond by
Individual	Specific strengths or barriers in practice	Coaching, mentoring, feedback, targeted Steplab steps
Team/Phase/Department	Shared patterns or inconsistencies	SSPD, joint planning, modelling, collaborative review
Whole Academy	Strategic priorities and typical issues	Group PD for all, refined T&L obsessions, Trust support

QA never ends with a judgement; it always leads to support, professional learning and improvement.

The QA → Professional Learning improvement cycle:

QA sits at the centre of Teaching & Learning improvement across the Trust.



THROUGH THIS CYCLE:

- QA identifies what needs to improve
- Professional learning and coaching determine how improvement happens
- Improved classroom practice strengthens pupil learning and outcomes
- Further QA evaluates impact and informs next steps
- This cycle operates continuously at individual, team and academy level.

IN SUMMARY:

Rigorous and impactful QA in SPA academies is:

- Evidence informed and triangulated
- Developmental and proportionate
- Closely aligned to Teaching & Learning strategy
- Directly connected to professional learning and coaching

Used well, QA secures consistency in **Wave 1** deepens practice in **Wave 2** and sustains excellence in **Wave 3**, ensuring Trust strategy translates into meaningful improvement in classrooms and outcomes for every pupil.



FURTHER GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES:

- Appendix 4 - SPA QA prompts by Wave: A bank of Senior and Middle Leader prompts aligned to Waves 1–3 to support professional dialogue, diagnosis and lines of enquiry.
- Appendix 5 and 6 - Exemplar Primary and Secondary QA proformas aligned to the SPA QA Framework
- See also our SPA QA Framework for further guidance and support



**HOW DO WE MAXIMISE
SPA ACADEMY
PROFESSIONAL
LEARNING TO DRIVE T&L
IMPROVEMENT?**

PL: DRIVING T&L IMPROVEMENT

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING WITH PURPOSE

At SPA, professional learning and development is the primary vehicle for improving Teaching & Learning and securing sustained academy improvement.

Professional learning is responsive to the barriers teachers face in their classrooms and is informed by Quality Assurance, academy Teaching & Learning obsessions and the Trust strategy. This ensures development is purposeful, evidence-informed and focused on the aspects of practice that will make the greatest difference to pupils.

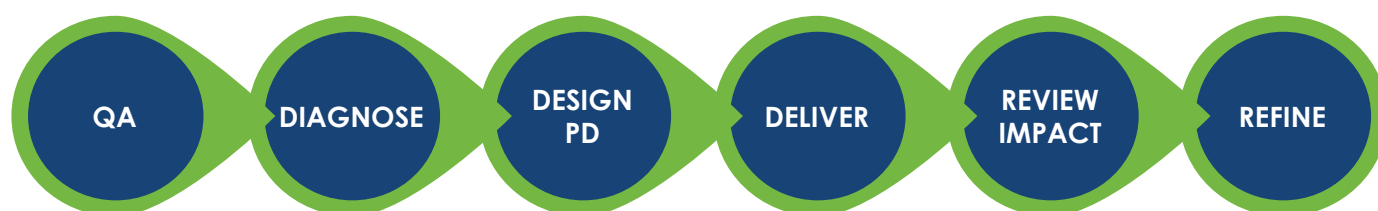
Effective professional learning:

- Is informed by QA and pupils' lived experience
- Aligns to academy priorities and the SPA 5-Phase Framework
- Develops teacher habits over time
- Builds subject, pedagogical and leadership expertise
- Supports improvement at individual, team and academy level

The 5-Phase Framework defines what great teaching looks like. Steplab is how we improve it.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AS AN IMPROVEMENT CYCLE

Professional learning follows a continuous cycle of improvement:



THROUGH THIS CYCLE:

- QA identifies barriers and priorities.
- Professional learning responds to those priorities.
- Coaching, rehearsal and feedback support implementation.
- Impact is reviewed and development refined.

This cycle enables academies to respond intelligently to need whilst maintaining strategic direction.

THE ROLE OF STEPLAB

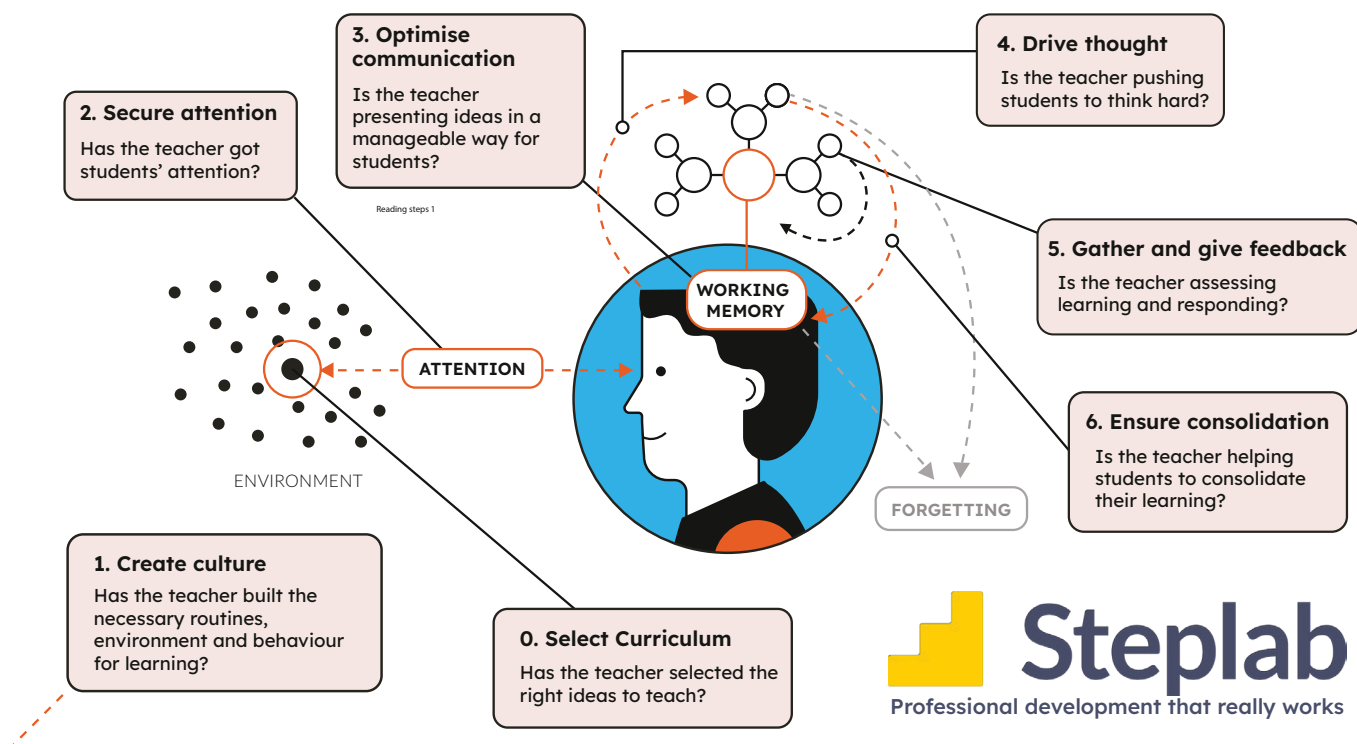
Steplab is the Trust's professional learning platform and implementation engine.

It supports leaders to:

- Diagnose barriers to teaching using QA and the Simple Model of Teaching.
- Design and sequence responsive Group PD
- Develop teacher practice through rehearsal, drop-ins and coaching
- Review impact through analytics and feedback

Steplab supports the delivery of professional learning, whilst curriculum expertise, subject knowledge, SEND provision and leadership development remain central elements of the wider Teaching & Learning strategy.

Simple Model of Teaching



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING WITH PURPOSE

Professional learning evolves across Waves 1–3. Earlier priorities remain live while depth, leadership and aspiration increase over time.

WAVE 1: COHERENCE, COMPLIANCE AND CONSISTENCY

PD purpose: To secure shared expectations and consistent classroom practice by addressing barriers related to clarity, routines and implementation.

Steplab focus: Group PD for all staff, establishing common language, habits and expectations.

Professional Learning Strategic Priorities:

In Wave 1, PD responds to barriers around clarity, consistency and implementation by focusing on:

Priority	What that means
Planning for progress	Teachers use the 5-Phase Framework consistently to plan effective learning
Responsive intervention	Teaching responds to assessment information and emerging pupil need
Meeting additional needs	Staff understand and respond effectively to SEND needs
Middle leadership capacity	MLTs lead curriculum, QA and subject-specific development confidently

Leader Actions – Continuous Improvement Cycle:

Explore:

- Establish Steplab and align SLT and MLT
- Connect Steplab to academy T&L obsessions and SPA Principles
- Build understanding of the implementation roadmap

Prepare:

- Develop leaders through SPA Steplab Leadership PL.
- Use QA and the Simple Model of Teaching to identify PL priorities.
- Build Group PL plans using the Steplab PL Builder.
- Identify facilitators and clarify leadership roles.

Deliver:

- Deliver Steplab Group PL every 2–3 weeks.
- Use shoutouts and shared language to reinforce learning.
- Introduce developmental drop-ins.
- Maintain a distinction between QA and drop-ins.

Sustain & Improve:

- Review analytics and impact regularly.
- Celebrate strong practice.
- Refine PD priorities based on emerging need.

INTENDED IMPACT:

Priority	What this means
Consistency	Reduced variability in classroom practice
Clarity	Shared understanding of expectations and routines
Confidence	Staff feel secure implementing the 5-Phase Framework
Leadership	Leaders use Professional Learning to drive improvement

Overall, Wave 1 is about securing consistency and clarity. Professional learning focuses on establishing shared expectations, routines and habits through the 5-Phase Framework, with Steplab providing responsive Group PD that addresses barriers identified through QA.

WAVE 2: DEPTH AND PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

PD purpose: To deepen practice by developing adaptive, inclusive and subject specific teaching that responds precisely to pupil need.

Steplab focus: Instructional coaching alongside refined Group PD and developmental Drop-ins.

Professional Learning Strategic Priorities:

Priority	What that means
Questioning and diagnosis	Teachers use questioning to identify and address gaps in understanding
Collaborative learning	Pupils learn through structured discussion and collaboration
Adaptive teaching	Teaching responds effectively to formative assessment
Bespoke development	Coaching is tailored to teacher need
Assessment leadership	Leaders use assessment to inform teaching and improvement

Leader Actions – Continuous Improvement Cycle:

Explore:

- Review Wave 1 PD impact using QA evidence and Steplab analytics.
- Identify patterns in teaching quality and remaining barriers to learning.

Prepare:

- Recruit and establish a coaching team.
- Agree a coaching model and protected time.
- Train coaches through:
 - SPA's Steplab Coaching Intensive
 - Steplab Intro to Coaching course

Deliver:

- Launch coaching with clarity around rationale, research and alignment to the 5 Phase model.

- Implement fortnightly coaching cycles, supported by regular coach collaboration.
- Continue Group PD where shared barriers remain.
- Introduce QA of coaching through Steplab, led by the academy Steplab Lead.
- Use Steplab analytics to monitor engagement, consistency and impact.

Sustain & Improve

- Review coaching impact regularly and refine focus.
- Celebrate strong coaching practice and improved classroom habits.
- Adjust PD priorities as barriers reduce or new needs emerge.

INTENDED IMPACT:

Priority	What this means
Precision	Teaching is more responsive and closely matched to pupil need
Inclusion	Adaptive practice supports all learners, including those with SEND
Expertise	Stronger subject specific pedagogy across teams
Culture	Coaching and professional dialogue are embedded

Overall, Wave 2 is about deepening practice and professional judgement. Professional learning focuses on adaptive teaching, disciplinary expertise and coaching, enabling staff to refine practice while maintaining coherence across the academy.

WAVE 3: DEPTH AND PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

PD purpose: To sustain excellence, support innovation and develop leadership capacity within and beyond the academy.

Steplab focus: Advanced coaching, system leadership and outward-facing professional learning.

Professional Learning Strategic Priorities:

Priority	What that means
Metacognition	Pupils develop independence and reflect meaningfully on their learning
Assessment sophistication	Peer and self assessment improve learning, not workload
Literacy	Disciplinary literacy and reading are explicitly taught and embedded
Innovation	Teachers engage confidently with research informed practice
Leadership	Leaders and teachers contribute to improvement beyond their own academy

Leader Actions – Continuous Improvement Cycle:

Explore:

- Use QA, Steplab analytics and outcomes data to evaluate long term impact.
- Identify strengths that can be shared or scaled.

Prepare:

- Widen the coaching team to build capacity and succession.
- Plan Trust wide and external collaboration opportunities.
- Review PL structures to ensure they remain aspirational and proportionate.

Deliver:

- Embed consistently high quality Steplab Group PL and coaching as routine practice.
- Visit Steplab Hub Schools to refine and extend coaching models.
- Develop the academy as a SPA Steplab School, modelling excellent PL practice.
- Use external QA and Ofsted readiness activity to validate standards.

Sustain & Improve

- Continue to refine PL using evidence and professional dialogue.
- Secure leadership succession so excellence is not person dependent.
- Maintain outward facing collaboration and system leadership.

INTENDED IMPACT:

Priority	What this means
Excellence	High quality teaching sustained over time
Independence	Pupils demonstrate metacognition and ownership of learning
Influence	Practice positively impacts other academies and partners
Sustainability	PL and leadership capacity are resilient to change

Overall, Wave 3 is about sustaining excellence and extending influence. Professional learning supports innovation, leadership and system collaboration, ensuring high-quality teaching continues to improve and remains sustainable over time.

APPENDICES

1. RESEARCH THAT UNDERPINS OUR APPROACH
2. THE 5-PHASE PRE-LAUNCH CHECKLISTS
3. SPA T&L HABITS WITH STEPLAB STEPS MAPPED
4. SPA QA PROMPTS BY WAVES
5. SPA PRIMARY QA PROFORMAS
6. SPA SECONDARY QA PROFORMAS

APPENDIX 1: Reading that underpins our approach

The SPA Teaching & Learning Strategy is informed by a range of high-quality research and evidence. The sources below have shaped our thinking around implementation, curriculum, pedagogy, professional learning and development, adaptive teaching, assessment and instructional coaching.

Implementation and Sustainable Improvement	
EEF – A School's Guide to Implementation	David Weston & Bridget Clay – Unleashing Great Teaching
Evidence Based Education – A Model for Great Teaching	Peps McCrea – The Implementation Playbook

Professional Learning and Development	
Ambition Institute research on instructional coaching	Josh Goodrich – Responsive Coaching
Doug Lemov – Practice Perfect	Sims et al. – What are the Characteristics of Effective Teacher Professional Development
EEF – Effective Professional Development Guidance Report	Steplab – The Simple Model of Teaching

Evidence Informed Pedagogy	
Barak Rosenshine – Principles of Instruction	Doug Lemov – Teach Like a Champion
Carl Hendrick & Paul Kirschner – How Learning Happens	Tom Sherrington – The Learning Rainforest
Deans for Impact – The Science of Learning	Tom Sherrington & Oliver Caviglioli – Teaching WalkThrus

Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning	
Agarwal & Bain – Powerful Teaching	Guy Claxton – The Learning Power Approach
Brown, Roediger & McDaniel – Make It Stick	
EEF – Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning Guidance Report	Peps McCrea – Memorable Teaching

Adaptive and Inclusive Teaching	
EEF – Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools Guidance Report	EEF – Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants
EEF – Teaching and Learning Toolkit	Harry Fletcher-Wood – Responsive Teaching

Assessment, Feedback and Responsive Teaching	
Black & Wiliam – Inside the Black Box	EEF – Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning
Doug Lemov – Teach Like a Champion	Evidence Based Education – Great Teaching Toolkit
Dylan Wiliam – Embedded Formative Assessment	Harry Fletcher-Wood – Responsive Teaching

Literacy and Disciplinary Literacy	
Alex Quigley – Closing the Vocabulary Gap	EEF – Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2
Alex Quigley – The Confident Teacher	EEF – Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools
David Didau – The Secret of Literacy	

Curriculum and Subject Expertise	
Christine Counsell – Curriculum and subject specificity	Evidence Based Education – Great Teaching Toolkit
Daniel Willingham – Why Don't Students Like School?	Mary Myatt – Curriculum and school improvement

APPENDIX 2: The 5-Phase Pre-launch Checklists

Purpose: The purpose of pre-launch is to establish the clarity, consistency and professional learning required for successful implementation of the SPA 5-Phase Framework. The focus is on ensuring that leaders, staff and systems are ready before implementation begins.

EXPLORE

Understand the Need:

- ☐ Review existing QA evidence, stakeholder feedback and pupil outcomes.
- ☐ Identify strengths and barriers within current classroom practice.
- ☐ Establish academy T&L priorities and obsessions.
- ☐ Define the intended impact of implementation.
- ☐ Ensure the rationale for change can be clearly articulated.

Success Indicators:

- ✓ Leaders have a clear understanding of current strengths and areas for development.
- ✓ Academy T&L priorities have been identified.
- ✓ The rationale for implementation is clear and evidence-informed.

PREPARE

Leadership Alignment:

- ☐ Ensure leaders have a shared understanding of the SPA T&L Principles.
- ☐ Ensure leaders can articulate the purpose of the 5-Phase Framework.
- ☐ Agree academy T&L obsessions.
- ☐ Clarify leadership roles and responsibilities.
- ☐ Align QA, Professional Learning and Development and Steplab processes.

Staff Readiness:

- ☐ Share the research-informed rationale for the framework.
- ☐ Introduce the SPA 5-Phase Framework and T&L Habits.
- ☐ Provide high-quality exemplification.
- ☐ Share academy non-negotiables and expectations.
- ☐ Create opportunities for collaborative planning and discussion.
- ☐ Ensure staff understand how coaching, QA and Professional Learning will support implementation.

Systems and Structures:

- ☐ QA processes reviewed and aligned.
- ☐ Professional Learning calendar established.
- ☐ Resources and supporting materials prepared.
- ☐ SEND and pupil-information systems reviewed.
- ☐ Implementation support mechanisms agreed.

Stakeholder Communication:

Staff	☐ Clear communication of vision, rationale and expectations. ☐ Opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback.
Pupils	☐ Expectations for learning and classroom routines are clear. ☐ Pupils understand how the framework will support their learning.
Parents and Carers	☐ Rationale and key messages shared. ☐ Opportunities for communication and engagement identified.

Success Indicators:

- ✓ Staff understand the purpose of the framework.
- ✓ Leaders are aligned and implementation-ready.
- ✓ Systems and structures are in place.
- ✓ Stakeholders understand the intended changes.
- ✓ Professional learning and implementation support are ready to launch.

Next Stage: Following completion of the pre-launch checklist, implementation moves into 'Deliver → Sustain → Refine' through the academy's existing Quality Assurance, Professional Learning and Development, and Continuous Improvement processes.

APPENDIX 3:

SPA T&L HABITS: Impactful Pedagogy and Practice in the 5-Phase

“We want to develop excellent teaching while maintaining teacher agency; creating a toolkit that feels like a menu, not a recipe.”

Select Curriculum	Create Culture	Secure Attention	Optimise Communication	Drive Thought	Gather and Give Feedback	Ensure Consolidation
Has the teacher selected the right ideas to teach?	Has the teacher built the necessary routines, environment and behaviour for learning?	Has the teacher got students' attention?	Is the teacher presenting ideas in a way that is manageable for students?	Is the teacher pushing students to think hard about ideas?	Is the teacher assessing student learning and responding appropriately?	Is the teacher supporting the students to consolidate their learning?
BEGIN WITH THE END: Progress from unit planning to lesson planning. Define the objective, decide how you'll assess it and then choose appropriate lesson activities. ✔ Plan objectives before activities ✔ Plan key questions to test understanding	THRESHOLD: Meet your students at the door, setting expectations before they enter the room. ✔ Manage classroom entry	SIGNAL FOR SILENCE: Use a consistent, clear routine to quickly secure whole-class attention. ✔ Use a clear routine for gaining student attention	BRIGHTEN LINES: Ensure that change in activities and other milestones are perceived clearly by making beginnings and endings of activities visible and crisp. ✔ Script transitions	SILENT SOLO: Give students robust opportunities to work and think independently. Dev elop a routine that allows students the time for silent solo reflection in order to improve both their thinking and their writing. ✔ Facilitate self-scaffolding ✔ Give sufficient thinking time ✔ Ensure that practice is quiet	PLAN FOR ERROR: Anticipate and plan responses to gaps or errors that may appear in student responses to tasks and questions. ✔ Plan feedback for the most important content ✔ Pre-plan exemplar answers ✔ Plan for likely errors ✔ Identify moments to check for understanding HINGE QUESTIONS: Design MCQs to check for understanding, using plausible distractors that could reveal common student misconceptions. Use core AFL techniques, e.g. 'Show me' boards, voting cards and 1-4 fingers. ✔ Create "hinge questions" ✔ Use hinge question routines	RETRIEVAL THAT INCLUDES PRIOR CONTENT: review content from different time periods to connect knowledge from previous lessons to current learning. ✔ Include prior content ✔ Plan coverage systematically
	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: The objective should focus on the knowledge or skill that truly matters for student learning and long-term success. ✔ Plan units around key knowledge ✔ Plan lessons around key knowledge points ✔ Plan key questions to test understanding	HABITS OF ATTENTION: Teach students key baseline behaviours for learning, e.g. sitting up in class, tracking the speaker, by using memorable phrases (e.g. STAR/SLANT) and/or actions. ✔ Give observable directions	WHAT TO DO: Use specific, concrete, sequential and observable directions to tell students what to do, as opposed to what not to do. ✔ Chunk and clarify procedural instructions ✔ Frontload instructions ✔ Checking understanding of instructions	DUAL CODING: Combine visuals and text to clarify concepts and strengthen memory. ✔ Dual coding ✔ Provide concrete examples to explain new concepts	TURN AND TALK: Encourage students to better formulate their thoughts by including short, contained pair discussions. ✔ Select appropriate questions for paired talk ✔ Establish and rehearse paired talk routines ✔ Make paired talk visible ✔ Tighten paired talk timings	ACTIVE CIRCULATION (NOT WATCHING): Look for mastery rather than completion and identify the specific errors that you have planned for. ✔ Design a tracking sheet ✔ List likely errors ✔ Plan circulation route ✔ Prime before circulating ✔ List and tally student errors ✔ Identify and analyse exemplary work ✔ Position for accountability

MANAGEABLE OBJECTIVES: Create objectives that contain knowledge or skills that students can learn or master by the end of a lesson. 🚩 Make objectives manageable	BE SEEN LOOKING: Prevent non-productive behaviour by purposefully and exaggeratedly scanning the room to ensure expectations are followed. 🚩 Scan effectively	WORK THE CLOCK: Measure time – a teacher's greatest resource – intentionally, strategically and often visibly to shape both the teacher's and students' experience in the classroom. 🚩 Vary activities for pace 🚩 Display countdown timer 🚩 Narrate timing reminders 🚩 Make every minute count	LIVE MODEL: Model aloud worked examples as a scaffold to deepen understanding and make processes explicit. 🚩 Form a collaborative model 🚩 Explain the purpose of the model 🚩 Live model improvement 🚩 Live model the process 🚩 Use checks for understanding while modelling	COLD CALL: Call on students regardless of whether they've raised their hands. 🚩 Introduce accountable questioning 🚩 Insist on hands down when listening 🚩 Insist on participation	NORMALISE ERROR: Show that getting it wrong and then getting it right is a normal, positive part of the learning process. 🚩 Normalise error 🚩 Lead with praise 🚩 Welcome errors	SELECT QUESTIONS FOR DEEP FEEDBACK: Avoid the trap of spending lots of time going through each question in detail. Use active circulation to identify one or two key areas. 🚩 Select questions for deep feedback 🚩 Repeat tricky concepts
MEASUREABLE OBJECTIVES: Design objectives that enable you to easily check if the specified learning has been achieved by the end of the lesson. 🚩 Make objectives manageable	PRECISE PRAISE: Make your positive reinforcement strategic. Differentiate between acknowledgement and praise. 🚩 Narrate hard work and effort 🚩 Circulate for praise 🚩 Shout out to celebrate		SCAFFOLD (GUIDED PRACTICE): Tailor tasks and layer scaffolds, then backwards fade support for independent mastery. 🚩 Tailor tasks and scaffolds 🚩 Fade modelling scaffolds	TAILOR TASKS AND SCAFFOLDS (INDEPENDENT PRACTICE): Add or remove memory aides, such as vocabulary banks, sentence starters or models, to match prior knowledge or ability. 🚩 Tailor tasks and scaffolds 🚩 Increase the challenge 🚩 Set achievable sub goals	EXCAVATE ERROR: Dig into errors, studying them efficiently and effectively, to better understand where students struggle and how you can best address those points. 🚩 Check understanding, not perception 🚩 Ask, "Are you sure?" 🚩 Raise error awareness 🚩 Ask prompting questions 🚩 Have students explain an incorrect answer 🚩 Teach an error-avoiding process	
DOUBLE PLAN: As you plan a lesson, plan what your students will be doing at each point in the lesson. 🚩 Choose the most efficient path	INSIST ON 100%: Ensure every student meets expectations consistently to maximise learning time. 🚩 Insist on 100% 🚩 Do it again	CHORAL RESPONSE: Students respond together to secure accuracy, pace and embed new vocabulary. 🚩 I say, you say 🚩 Use choral response to check for understanding 🚩 Flip the form	THINK-PAIR-SHARE: Structured peer discussion to deepen understanding through guided collaborative thinking. 🚩 Use think, pair, share		SHOW CALL: Create a strong incentive to complete writing with quality and thoughtfulness by publicly showcasing and revising student writing – regardless of who volunteers to share. 🚩 Identify and analyse exemplary work 🚩 Normalise sharing work 🚩 Praise bravery 🚩 Welcome errors 🚩 Set a culture of consideration	RECORD AND RETEACH: Record which quiz questions students particularly struggle with and plan to reteach them in an upcoming lesson. 🚩 Record and re-teach

APPENDIX 4:

SPA QA prompts by waves: *Guidance for Senior and Middle leaders*

QA prompts support leaders to observe, question and reflect in ways that generate meaningful professional dialogue and sharp lines of enquiry.

Wave 1: Coherence, compliance and consistency	
QA purpose:	Establish shared expectations and consistent implementation
Senior Leader prompts:	• Are the Trust Teaching & Learning Principles, non-negotiables and 5-Phase model clearly visible and implemented consistently? • How typical is the practice we are seeing across classrooms, subjects and staff? • What common barriers to teaching and learning are emerging? • What evidence shows pupils understand the structure of their learning?
Middle Leader prompts:	• Where is practice secure and where is it inconsistent within my team? • Are agreed routines and expectations enabling learning effectively? • What clarification, modelling or support do staff need? • Which shared issues should inform Group PD for all?
QA outcome in Wave 1:	Clear, Trust-aligned lines of enquiry that shape Group PD for all staff , subject/phase SSPD and immediate support for individuals .

Wave 2: Depth and Professional Culture	
QA purpose:	Strengthen pedagogical precision and adaptive practice
Senior Leader prompts:	• Where is teaching responsive to learning through effective assessment and feedback? • How secure is subject-specific pedagogy within the 5-Phase model? • What evidence demonstrates the impact of PD and coaching on classroom practice? • Which Teaching & Learning obsessions now need refining or deepening?
Middle Leader prompts:	• How effectively are teachers adapting teaching in response to pupil understanding? • What patterns are visible in books and pupil voice over time? • Who is ready to deepen or specialise practice, and who needs bespoke support? • How well is coaching influencing teacher habits?
QA outcome in Wave 2:	Sharper Steplab goals and steps , refined Teaching & Learning obsessions , and coaching that builds professional judgement and confidence.

Wave 3: Aspirational and Sustainable Excellence	
QA purpose:	Sustain excellence and support system leadership
Senior Leader prompts:	• What evidence shows high-quality teaching sustained over time? • How well are pupils learning independently and demonstrating metacognition? • Where is innovation improving learning without compromising consistency? • How effectively does external QA validate our evaluation?
Middle Leader prompts:	• How consistent is strong practice within my team across contexts and cohorts? • Where are staff leading, mentoring or influencing others? • Which practices should be scaled, shared or celebrated? • How can practice be refined further without adding complexity?
QA outcome in Wave 3:	Validated excellence, strong internal and external confidence, and sustainable Teaching & Learning leadership.

Teacher:	Observer:	Focus:
----------	-----------	--------

Key:	Not seen	Not fully embedded	Well- established
------	----------	--------------------	-------------------

Compliance Check									
Criteria	R	A	G	N/A	Criteria	R	A	G	N/A
Calm Environment?					Key vocabulary clear?				
Visual timetable used well?					Work is well-presented?				
Inclusive strategies for pupils?					Children are engaged?				
Following behaviour policy?					A focus on metacognition?				
Appropriate resources?					Good use of additional adults?				
Oracy strategies?					Strong focus on foundational knowledge?				
Sticky Knowledge clear?					Subject knowledge?				

Pedagogy and Practice						
Phase 1 - Retrieval		Phase 2- Model			Phase 3- Guided Practice	
Criteria	R	A	G	Criteria	R	A
Teacher activates prior knowledge and refers to previous learning.				Learning objectives and success criteria are shared clearly.		
Previous lesson is connected to this lesson.				Introduce key knowledge, vocabulary and skills clearly, to all.		
Whole class feedback from previous lesson.				Clear teacher-led direct instruction as a worked example- "I do."		
Children given the opportunity to correct/ re-visit/ pre teaching.				Teacher may give examples of common misconceptions as non-examples, which have been planned for.		
Support staff are supporting children in this phase of learning.				Metacognition is clear- the children know the teacher is modelling using 'I do' and what they are going to be learning today.		
Metacognition is clear- the children know they are using retrieval and why.				Seamless transition between modelling and guided practice.		
Steplab strategies used to secure attention from the very start and pupils are engaged as a result.				Support staff and resources are used to create inclusive practice, removing barriers for pupils.		
				Support staff and resources are used to create inclusive practice, removing barriers for pupils.		

Phase 4- Independent Practice				Phase 5- Review			Assessment				
Criteria	R	A	G	Criteria	R	A	G	Criteria	R	A	G
Most pupils are confident and able to apply learning independently.				Adequate time is given to properly review learning.				Formative assessment is evident throughout the lesson to inform the teacher's next steps.			
Teacher and support staff are working with focus groups, which are flexible on a daily basis.				Opportunities to summarise key learning points and check for understanding.				Student responses to feedback demonstrate understanding, and subsequent progress.			
Scaffolds are provided to support the pupils who are not ready to be independent.				Fully inclusive for all children.				Clear criteria underpin all assessment, whether it is verbal, teacher, self or peer.			
The adults in the room are responsive to the pupils and their learning and build in individual targets for pupils.				Metacognition is clear- the children know they are using a review and why.				Metacognitive approaches are embedded, meaning students plan, regulate and monitor.			
Tasks have clearly been designed for fluency.				Pupils are given chance for self and peer- assessment.				Questioning is high-quality, inclusive and deep.			
Steplab strategies are used consistently meaning that pupils are engaged and on task throughout the lesson.				Next steps are identified and the next lesson is discussed. Learning is celebrated.				The adults in the room have acted responsively to live learning and made adjustments.			

Feedback Conversation:

It was effective when:

Next time try:

Follow-up PD opportunities to support next steps:

Primary Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Proforma

KS1/KS2 Work Scrutiny



Teacher:	Observer:	Subject:	Year:
-----------------	------------------	-----------------	--------------

Key:	Not seen	Not fully embedded	Well- established
-------------	-----------------	---------------------------	--------------------------

Criteria				N/A
Sustained strong presentation, in line with the school's presentation policy.				
Handwriting in books follows the school's policy, with the correct pencil grip and letter/ number formation.				
Work on Seesaw follows the school's policy.				
Progress over time is noticeable.				
Aspects of AFL is evident.				
Clear progression in objectives.				
Work matches planned curriculum entirely.				
Feedback is purposeful/ effective and actioned.				
Misconceptions are addressed.				

Feedback Conversation:	
It was effective when:	Next time try:
Follow-up PD opportunities to support next steps:	

PLA Learning Walk Proforma

Teacher:	Observer:	Date of LW:	Period/Time:	Class observed:	Subject:
----------	-----------	-------------	--------------	-----------------	----------

Pedagogy and Practice – ‘As quickly as possible but as slowly as necessary’							
Planning/Adaptive Practice		Instruction/Responsive Teaching			Assessment		
Criteria	R	A	G	Criteria	R	A	G
The 5-phase is used to support effective lesson sequencing (S1, S4)				Modelling, scaffolding and reading strategies (see are used so that students fully understand the expected standard (S3, S4, S5)			
Teachers explicitly plan and adapt subject-specific vocabulary, reading, and writing strategies that support students in thinking, communicating, and working like disciplinary experts (S3, S4)				Questioning is high-quality, inclusive and deep (S2, S3, S4, S6)			
Clear interventions and/or adjustments for key students are planned and implemented (S1, S4, S5)				Opportunities for collaboration and discussion are intentionally built into learning (S4, S6, S7)			
Books demonstrate knowledge and skills developing over time, showing clear curriculum sequencing (S2, S4, S6)				Disciplinary literacy is explicitly taught and embedded in lessons, with students given time to practise and secure learning independently (S3, S4)			
R = Missed Opportunity		A = Observed			G = Clear Strength		

T&L: The PLA Way		
Create Culture and Secure Attention	R	A
“Hands free, tracking me in 3, 2, 1”		
Insist on 100% attention		
Positive reinforcement		
Optimise Communication and Drive Thought	R	A
Visualiser		
Student examples		
Task lists		
Scaffolds		
Choral / echo reading		
Tier 2/3 vocabulary practice		
Gather & Give Feedback and Ensure Consolidation	R	A
Show me boards		
1-4 check		
Heads down, hands up		
RAG cards		

Area of strength	
It was effective when...	
Area for growth	
Next time try ...	
Follow up LW?	Yes ☐ No ☐
Signed Teacher:	Date:
Signed Observer:	Date:

PLA Learning Walk Proforma

Student Voice

Questions for students	Student feedback
• How are you finding this lesson today? • What are you learning at the moment?	
• Do you feel like you can ask for help if you need it?	
• What does the teacher do that really helps you do your best and improve your learning?	
• Can you tell me about a time when the work really challenged you?	

Teacher:	Observer:	Date:	Period/Time:	Class observed:	Subject:
Meet & greet	4-part grapple	Planners & equipment	Register taken	Pride in presentation	Orderly end

Classroom Culture							
Criteria	N	E	S	Criteria	N	E	S
Expectations and routines are embedded. (TS7) (SM2, SM3)				The PD system is fully embedded, with praise and sanctions being used effectively (TS1, TS7) (SM2)			
N = Needs Attention				E = Expected Standard			
				S = Strong standard			
Pedagogy and Practice							
Planning			Instruction			Assessment	
Criteria	N	E	S	Criteria	N	E	S
5 phase lesson sequence is used effectively to ensure that progress is made within the subject (TS4) (SM1)				Teachers ensure pupils use oracy prompts to develop their spoken language, enabling them to articulate ideas clearly and in standard English (TS3) (SM5)			
Books/lessons demonstrate a coherent, sequenced curriculum, with clear knowledge and skill progression (TS2, TS4, TS6) (SM1)				High quality thinking and outcomes are modelled through visual exemplars and fluent narration (TS3, TS4) (SM4)			
Teaching is highly responsive where pupils are identified (venns) and effective wave 1 interventions are recorded and used to remove barriers and support progress (TS1, TS5) (SM4)				Varied opportunities (collaborative or independent) are provided for pupils to engage with lesson content (TS7) (SM2, SM7)			
Scaffolds are used appropriately to support learning; with evidence they are being gradually removed to promote independence (TS4, TS5) (SM4)				Pupils are able to demonstrate deep understanding through extended, high quality red zone activities (TS3) (SM7)			
Teachers use targeted reading strategies to explicitly teach Tier 3 vocabulary, ensuring pupils understand and accurately apply subject-specific language (TS3, TS4) (SM4)				Pupils confidently interact with complex subject relevant texts due to appropriate modelling of reading strategies (TS3, TS4) (SM1, SM5)			
N = Needs Attention			E = Expected Standard			S = Strong standard	
What does the teacher do to support you in lesson? Can you give examples?			How does the teacher model expectations & success in lessons?			Show me how your teacher checks your work and provides you with valuable feedback	

Habits	Needs Attention	Expected standard	Strong standard
Classroom Culture (TS1, TS7) (SM2)	Expectations and routines are inconsistent. Behaviour management is reactive leading to low-level disruption and loss of learning time.	Creates a calm, orderly classroom where expectations are clear and consistently applied.	Builds a highly positive, self-managing classroom culture rooted in respect, consistency, and high expectations.
Subject and Curriculum Expertise (TS3) (SM1)	Curriculum planning lacks clear sequencing or alignment with long term goals.	Demonstrates secure subject knowledge and plans from a well sequenced curriculum.	Exhibits deep subject and curriculum expertise. Lessons are intellectually ambitious, coherent, and inspiring.
Modelling & Explanations (TS3, TS4) (SM4)	Explanations lack clarity and structure. Modelling is limited or absent, leaving pupils unsure how to approach tasks.	Provides clear, structured explanations that build on prior learning. Uses modelling strategies (e.g. "I do – we do – you do") and worked examples to guide pupils through tasks.	Delivers expert, precise, and engaging explanations that make complex ideas accessible. Models high-quality thinking and outcomes through visual exemplars and fluent narration.
Assessment for Learning (TS6) (SM6)	Assessment is infrequent or superficial. Gaps in knowledge and misconceptions go unnoticed or unaddressed.	Uses a range of formative assessment strategies to check understanding and identify gaps in learning.	Embeds assessment seamlessly, addressing misconceptions, where teaching is adjusted to meet learner's needs.
Adaptive & Responsive Teaching (TS4, TS5) (SM1, SM4)	Teaching does not sufficiently account for pupils' varied needs. Tasks and resources are not adapted, leading to gaps in understanding or lack of challenge.	Demonstrates awareness of individual pupils' needs and plans accordingly. Uses assessment and scaffolding strategies to ensure accessibility and challenge for all.	Teaching is highly responsive, precise, and inclusive. Deep understanding of each learner informs adaptive planning and live teaching decisions.
Practice, Independence and Reflection (TS2, TS6) (SM7)	Opportunities for independent practice and reflection are limited or unfocused. Pupils rely heavily on teacher direction and struggle to apply learning independently.	Provides regular opportunities for retrieval and extended independent practice. Success criteria are clear and used to guide improvement.	Creates a culture of independence, mastery, and continual improvement. Retrieval, feedback, and reflection are embedded habits.
Strong Foundations (TS3, TS4) (SM1)	Curriculum does not prioritise the systematic development of language, vocabulary, or reading.	Curriculum design promotes language development and reading proficiency	Language, vocabulary, and reading are at the heart of the curriculum.
Next steps:			

Observer:

Teacher

Date:



**South
Pennine
Academies**

An excellent education for everyone

**The Gateway
Lowfields Business Park
Lowfields CI
Elland
HX5 9DX**

01484 503 110

office@spacademies.org