

# Mentor development programme

## Mentoring ECT: Classroom practice



### Standard 4 – Plan and teach well-structured lessons

This case study was written by an assistant headteacher mentoring year 2 and a year 1 ECTs.

#### *Q How would you sum up standard 4?*

Standard 4 is an integral part of the programme as it encompasses the everyday practise of teachers in all key stages, in all types of settings. The learn that and how to statements focus on not just the planning of effective lessons through their structure but goes much deeper into thought processes, misconceptions and subject retention.

#### *Q How did you support mentees with specific elements of standard 4?*

The learn that and learn how statements that I have identified as the most important are

4.6. Questioning is an essential tool for teachers; questions can be used for many purposes, including to check pupils' prior knowledge, assess understanding and break down problems.

4.7. High-quality classroom talk can support pupils to articulate key ideas, consolidate understanding and extend their vocabulary. Learn how to stimulate pupil thinking and check for understanding through including a range of questions in class discussions to extend and challenge pupils.

I have highlighted these as being particularly important as they support the retention of knowledge and vocabulary, allow for children to have vital thinking and reflection time and promote a cyclical learning model where children begin to recognise patterns, make links and ultimately build confidence in their learning.

## *Q. What common pitfalls and challenges should mentors be aware of?*

### Challenge 1

ECTs can become fixated on the physical written plan and teaching from this with fidelity as a way of ensuring children meet their high expectations. Although structured planning is important, it is also important to empower our ECTs to know when to be flexible and use their teacher judgement to know when to reassess the direction of their lesson to ensure children are supported and misconceptions are addressed.

### Challenge 2

ECTs may find adapting learning for a range of learners, particularly those 'in the moment' next steps challenging and possibly overwhelming. Encourage your ECT to build a bank of next steps to extend and challenge children's learning using their knowledge of where the subject has been and where it needs to get to.

### Challenge 3

Your ECT may not have the experience to predict misconceptions, so teach them a mind-set to support them in putting themselves in the child's shoes whilst making links to previously taught lessons of a similar nature, encouraging reflection and foreshadowing.

## *Q. What practical advice do you have for new mentors?*

Use mini-modelling sessions to support specific parts of a lesson. For example joining your ECT in one of their lessons to teach a mini-plenary. It should be informal and supportive and the area you model should be coached out of your ECT as an area they have identified in themselves.

To support your ECT signpost them to specific teachers, with those teachers' permission, who showcase particular strengths so that they are seeing a range of teaching styles as they develop their own teaching style but also encourage them to go further afield into other settings where possible too.

To build upon your ECTs confidence in encourage your ECT to continuously reflect on their lesson plans and empower them to adapt as they go; sometimes a simple post it note before a lesson to guide them can help or at the end as reflection.

## *Q. What is your top tip for mentoring standard 6?*

Empower your ECT to use their teacher judgement as part of the structure of a lesson – it is OK to not get it right every time but use this as a learning opportunity

# Implications for practice

Key learning from this practice piece relates to the following ECF standard:

## **Standard 4 – Classroom practice (Plan and teach well-structured lessons)**

4.6. Questioning is an essential tool for teachers; questions can be used for many purposes, including to check pupils' prior knowledge, assess understanding and break down problems.

4.7. High-quality classroom talk can support pupils to articulate key ideas, consolidate understanding and extend their vocabulary. Learn how to stimulate pupil thinking and check for understanding through including a range of questions in class discussions to extend and challenge pupils.