

I have been teaching at Cottenham Primary School for almost 7 years; I have always believed it to be a great place to work and have always thoroughly enjoyed my job as a teacher. However, over the last 2 years, with the introduction of our KRC, I have further developed my passion and enthusiasm for teaching and education as a whole. Our school journey has been incredibly exciting and eye-opening with regards to the delivery of lessons we teach, how we assess lessons and also the content in which we deliver across the school. In this post I intend to share with you my journey over the last 2 years with regards to how both my teaching practice has developed and also the development of my role as Teaching and Learning Champion.

I graduated from University with a degree in Psychology, but I always knew I wanted to be a teacher. Whilst at University, I particularly enjoyed the neuroscience, cognitive and educational psychology modules I completed and, when I heard about the specific link a KRC has to cognitive science, I became all the more interested and enthusiastic about shaping our curriculum to incorporate many techniques based on practical research with real results.

I was lucky enough to attend some professional development sessions led by the Inspiration Trust and I was able to refresh my knowledge of cognitive science and, more specifically, how it relates to delivery in the classroom. These sessions, along with some background reading, highlighted the importance of ensuring children have truly 'learnt' the concepts we are teaching them: that information has been transferred from working memory, into long term memory and can be recalled when necessary and applied to a range of contexts. The key here being that children are able to recall this knowledge and then apply it to a range of contexts.

As a school, we initially spent time sharing the background behind the KRC and then began looking around to find suggestions for **how** we can ensure the delivery of lessons at CPS allows children to transfer essential knowledge into their long term memory and that they are able to retrieve and apply this information. Fortunately, our Head teacher came across a book by Doug Lemov: Teach Like a Champion (TLAC). This book became my bible for teaching practice and I was able to take techniques from this book, try them out in the classroom and then adapt, where necessary, to suit the needs of the children both in my class and in our school as a whole. It is worth mentioning that I found reading this book both refreshing and reassuring: the techniques were similar to what I, and other teachers in school were doing already, but with effective, subtle tweaks that made their consistent implementation even more effective. As a Senior Leadership Team, we selected a few of the techniques to really focus on and to share with the whole-school staff. I also ran a TLAC group with a small number of teachers whereby we discussed the techniques and how we were using them in our classroom. It was interesting to see how the techniques had been adapted to suit the needs of children from EYFS up to Year 6. The techniques we selected included: targeted questioning, cold calling, choral response and tracking.

The consistent implementation of these techniques in my classroom resulted in children becoming more focused (and so were able to provide a greater number of accurate answers to questions), more interested and attentive when their peers were speaking (more children were building on the answers of others) and I was able to see evidence in children's work of a greater depth of knowledge and understanding of the concepts taught. One specific example highlighting the effectiveness of this approach that comes to mind is a science unit I taught in Year 3, 2 years ago. The unit was on the human body and more specifically a healthy lifestyle. The introduction of the KRC meant we had, through careful and thorough planning of units, identified the key knowledge we wanted the children to learn (this differed to the 'knowledge' that was covered in previous years by the introduction of specific vocabulary including macronutrients and micronutrients and also further detail on the impact each nutrient group has on the body. This information was also sent home and

highlighted clearly to the children on a 'Knowledge Organiser'); how this information would be delivered (this included the use of text to share information with children, the TLAC techniques mentioned previously and also the use of visual scaffolds, which were created in the lesson with the children and then referred to throughout the unit and beyond to ensure information was retrieved and rehearsed on a regular basis) and how we would know they had learnt this information (measured partly by targeted questioning throughout the lesson but also through the work the children produced). The results I saw following the teaching of this unit were incredibly positive for all children in the class: the children enjoyed referring to the visual scaffolds regularly and would often ask me to quiz them on the information. I also overheard two children in the class, who were running their own knowledge club one lunchtime, using the same techniques (cold calling, choral response and the use of visual scaffolds) with younger children who attended their club. I also saw increased sophistication and depth of knowledge in the writing they produced throughout this unit of work.

Since then, we have developed our curriculum even further: we now use high quality text to support the delivery of key knowledge; we use a range of methods to assess whether the children have retained the knowledge taught and can apply this knowledge to different contexts; visual scaffolds are used consistently across the school and in different forms- dual coding is used as are cloze procedures to scaffold children's recall of key knowledge; a strong emphasis has been placed on the use of 'Tier 2' (words of high-utility for literate language users) and 'Tier 3' (words used less frequently and in relation to a specific domain) vocabulary in lessons; staff professional development enables us to share best practice across the school, spend time planning lessons as a year-group team, ensuring thorough and carefully planned lessons and also enables us to develop subject-leadership through the use of monitoring, researching hypotheses and defining what success in our subjects looks like.

The previous paragraph is a very brief summary of the developments we have made more recently but I will leave future bloggers to elaborate on their implementation and effectiveness. I hope this post has enabled you to get a snapshot into my journey through the implementation of our KRC at CPS. It is a journey we are still on and this continues to excite me: something I love about our school is that we are always changing and experimenting with new ideas; we are not perfect but we are a school made up of enthusiastic, reflective and hard-working practitioners who enable children to be the best versions of themselves through a broad and balanced curriculum.