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FEATURING

**Ensuring outcomes by
creating an inclusive
classroom climate**

Katie Martin

**Responsive assessment
in the wider curriculum**

Luke Lovelidge

**Moderation with
mixed-age classes**

Holly Lovell

**A strategic vision for
live coaching**

Sarah Meaden

**Transforming student
engagement through
mini whiteboards**

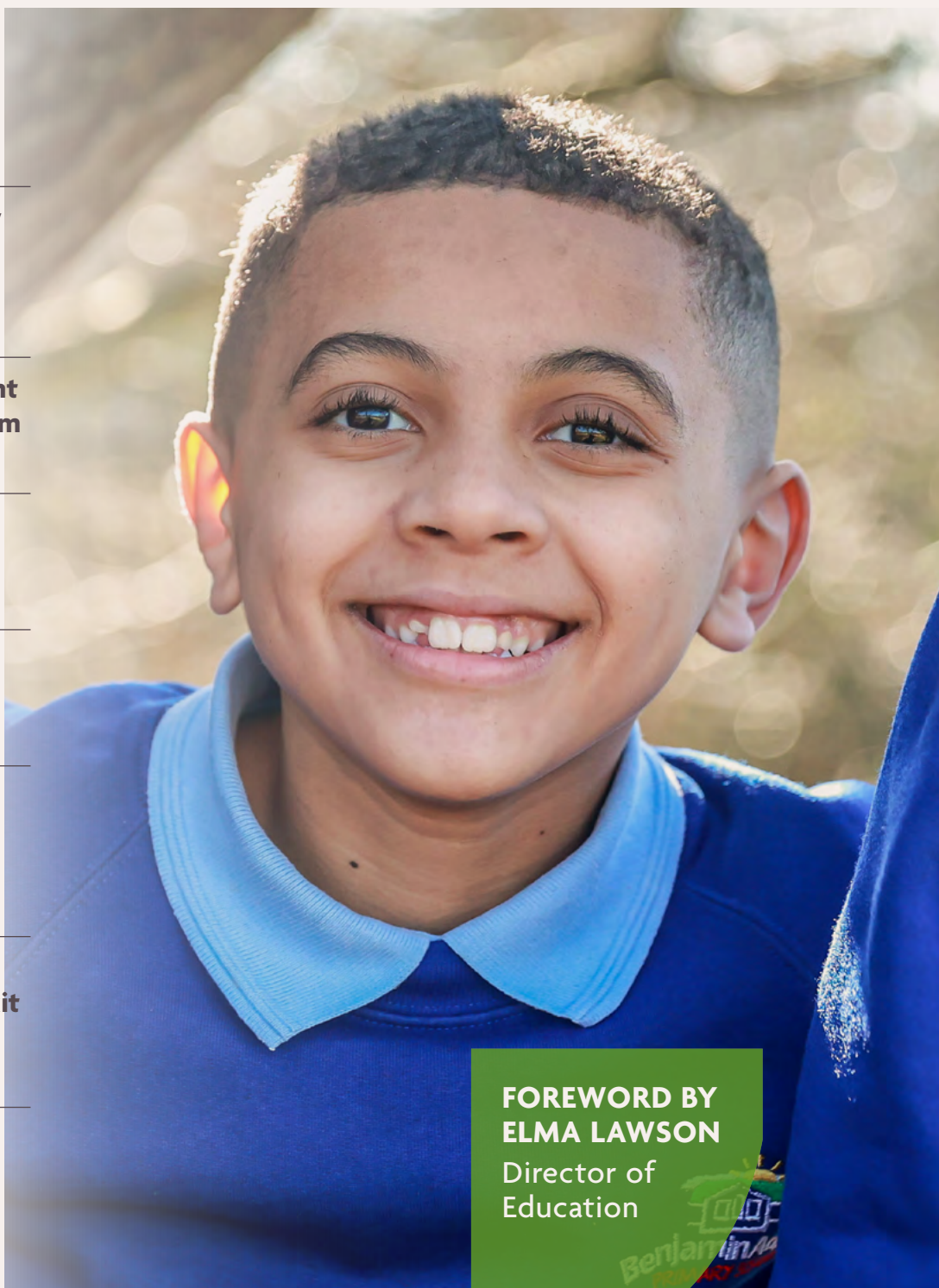
Leona Hopwood

**Small assessment, big
impact: The role of exit
tickets at OSA**

Katleen Bureau

**FOREWORD BY
ELMA LAWSON**

Director of
Education



By Elma Lawson

Director of Education

Anthem Schools Trust



How is bowling like teaching?

At the halfway point of Year 2 of our education strategy it is important to stop and reflect on our every student mission. The Anthem Way has had a great impact on pedagogy across our schools but are we truly meeting the needs of every student, every lesson, all the time?

This ethos underpins our ambition to improve outcomes for every Anthem student and to change mindsets (no excuses) so we can collectively raise standards across the piece. All our internal QA processes, from CRDs to trust-level data on Progress Teaching, are telling us that we are not yet there for every student. In many classrooms we are still teaching to the middle.

Remember Shelley Moore's bowling ball analogy which inspired our education strategy? The hardest shot in bowling is the 7-10 split, also known as 'goal posts', 'bed posts', 'snake eyes'! This is when the bowler is left with a pin on the far left and a pin on the far right after mis-throwing the ball and hitting the middle of the pins.

Imagine the ball is the lesson and the pins are the students. If we aim for the middle with an attitude of doing the best we can, the pins who are left are the students who either need the most challenge or the most support. Professional bowlers throw the ball down the lane at a curve to knock down the most pins and create a better dynamo effect. To do that with one shot, you have to change your aim and go for the pins that are hardest to hit!

The challenge we have is to ensure that in every classroom we are truly teaching to the top and scaffolding down so that all students are challenged (every pin is hit). We teach our knowledge-rich curriculum to the top to ensure all students access high-level knowledge and skills as an entitlement. We want to avoid what Christine Counsell calls the 'denial of knowledge', none of us have the authority to decide that some students are 'not able' enough not to receive the most challenging diet. We need to find ways to adapt and get them there via a different route. Same destination, different journey.

The way to make this happen is through an utter relentlessness in our leadership of teaching and learning. If we are forensic around teacher development, homing in on granular areas for development and then providing deliberate practice via expert coaching, we will reap the benefits and achieve the best outcomes for every student!

The Anthem Leaders toolkit outlines the leadership behaviours that leaders at all levels should adopt to really have impact in influencing every teacher in every classroom. Similarly our Teaching Assistants Practice Guide details the steps that TAs can take to maximise their impact on the learning of our most vulnerable students in lessons. Our Adaptive Teaching toolkit provides easy strategies for each SEND need and our Inclusive Teaching Audit tool is a handy reflective tool which identifies excellent practice.

We've codified it all! We just need that relentless, energetic, enthusiastic and mission focused leadership alongside great CPD and coaching at all levels to drive it.

Of course, we cannot employ great adaptive and responsive teaching without great formative assessment. We need to know what students know and where the gaps are to be able to support. Are we all as teachers clear on the difference between adaptive and responsive teaching and how they link to The Anthem Way? Do we constantly anticipate, act and adapt in the classroom? While we rightly conceive of adaptive teaching as commonly occurring as knowledge and skill gaps appear in busy lessons, expert teachers can make vital planning steps to anticipate for adaptive responses before they teach too. If we really know every student well, we can anticipate what is coming and prepare in advance.

This edition of *Versed* showcases some great granular case studies of individuals and schools doing just that! Thank you to Luke, Sarah, Katie, Katleen, Leona and Holly for your contributions.

Our March leadership conference also looks at the strategic leadership of adaptive teaching and avoiding the 7-10 split (goal posts) shot – how are we supporting, challenging and developing all teachers to teach to the top and scaffold down?

Enjoy the read!

By Katie Martin

Class Teacher

Lincoln Carlton Academy



At Lincoln Carlton Academy, we believe there is no better way of ensuring every child thrives than creating a 'safe haven'. This is outlined in the relational approach woven throughout the *behaviour, relationships and routines and scaffold and challenge strands of The Anthem Way*.

Like many other schools, we experience the juggling act that managing children's social, emotional and mental health, as well as their academic needs, can be. And we understand, like most, how striking a balance can be the crux of enabling every child to

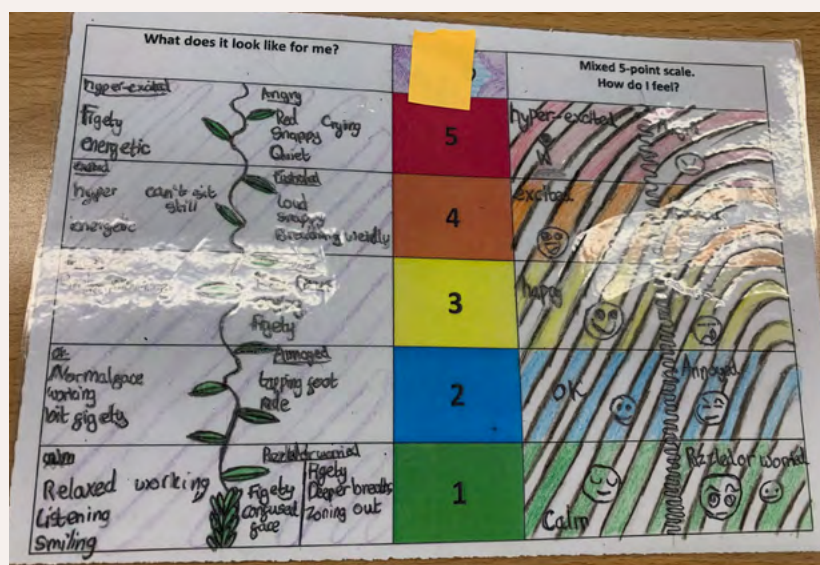
succeed. Following CPD led by (Anthem Head of Inclusion) Kelsey Clark-Davies, we have striven to create classroom environments which are safe spaces, and ensure our learners feel valued. This has not been done through some expensive, elaborate new system but rather through us, as professionals, looking at our own practice, considering what our learners need, and how we are going to provide this for them.

Making the weather

First and foremost, we recognised how important it was to get our learners 'off on the right foot' at the start of the lesson. We pinpointed transitions as a time where many children experienced heightened emotions, so we introduced 'regulation time' - an opportunity for children and adults alike to participate in mindfulness activities such as focused breathing or meditation to calm their bodies and minds before beginning their learning. Resoundingly, our learners have told us this helps them to feel relaxed and better able to concentrate during lessons.

Furthermore, we acknowledged the importance of 'equity' and recognised that the same approach for all didn't mean the same success for all. For example, within my own classroom, there are those learners who need movement to help them focus and concentrate. Similarly, there are some who may find the classroom environment overstimulating and benefit from a sensory break. Like us as adults,

Ensuring outcomes by creating an inclusive classroom climate





The introduction of 'cosy corners' has created safe, comfortable spaces to enable children to take part in lessons who might not otherwise felt able to.

we also noted how the children's moods could be varied and how we needed to be responsive in our teaching to address this.

Settled conditions

We identified that catching disengagement early could prevent escalation for some children. Across school we adopted personalised five-point scales for all children to support them communicating this to us, alongside using subtle clues such as facial expressions, fiddling with equipment or even a lowered gaze to giveaway when a learner might be feeling overwhelmed.

The solution wasn't about making a big deal out of these behaviours, but sometimes offering quiet words of encouragement, a joke, or discretely offering support through resources such as word mats to make

their learning more accessible. Sometimes even presenting learning in a different way, using post-it notes to identify examples rather than writing them down, prevented learning from seeming insurmountable.

Finally, we considered what do we do for those children who we felt, despite all we were doing, were just finding it tough. How could we make the classroom a place where they wanted to be?

The idea we came up with was cosy corners: whether this be some cushions placed to the side, a special chair or a comfy mat. These were all possibilities that were cheap and required minimal space. Almost as soon as they were introduced, we noticed learning taking place in these areas, where before this may have just not felt possible for these children. For the children, they

articulated how they felt safe and comfortable to take part in their lesson especially when they were having a tricky time or an off day.

A bright outlook

Already we can see the huge difference we have made to the children by implementing the relational approach and understand that it is a whole team effort. Over time, we are seeing children who state they feel happier and assessment data which shows good progress even from some of our most hard to reach learners.

Our leadership team continue to hold us to account, and we are always thinking 'what next'. Right now the 'what next' for us, direct from the children, is ensuring the use of visuals is maximised.

By Luke Lovelidge

Headteacher

Benjamin Adlard
Primary School



As part of our ongoing curriculum development, we have recently turned our focus at Benjamin Adlard to formative assessment within the wider curriculum and making sure it is as responsive as possible to pick up and close gaps and facilitate responsive teaching.

This fits with the *constant feedback and assessment* and *use your knowledge from formative assessment to plan next steps for learning strands* of The Anthem Way. It also bridges the gap between curriculum and assessment which is made explicit through the Anthem curriculum and assessment principles.

Responsive assessment in the wider curriculum

Laying the foundations

Our curriculum is carefully mapped to ensure knowledge builds progressively as children move from unit to unit and year to year, equipping them with the foundations needed for the next stage of their education. However, we found that teachers were frequently commenting on gaps in children's background knowledge, meaning they often had to reteach key concepts from previous units or year groups before moving forward.

To address this issue, and ensure that no knowledge gaps are missed, we introduced a new assessment system designed to check and reinforce essential knowledge at every stage and make sure we are responsive ongoing, not just at the end of a unit!

To tackle this challenge, we implemented low-stakes quizzing in knowledge-heavy subjects such as science, history, geography, and RE. These quizzes are no longer than 15 questions and take no more than five minutes to complete. They are designed to be accessible and stress-free for all. Pupils access them independently by scanning QR codes, and for those who need support, questions are read aloud to remove any literacy barriers that might otherwise obscure their understanding. Multiple choice questions are given at times to support SEND learners.

We use Microsoft Forms to create these quizzes. The app automatically breaks down the data, allowing teachers to quickly identify both whole-class knowledge gaps and individual misconceptions. Teachers are given dedicated time to analyse this data and plan a Curriculum Catch-Up Day, where they reteach key concepts using a structured, research-informed approach. Through the I DO, WE DO, YOU DO, teachers explicitly model learning, provide guided practice, and then give pupils the opportunity to apply their knowledge independently.



‘We are strengthening our wider curriculum, building secure knowledge foundations, and ensuring every child can access the learning ahead with confidence.’

Precision, precision...

The key to this approach is precision. By using assessment data to target specific knowledge gaps, we ensure that learning is responsive and that children truly are ready for the next stage in their education. Through this process, we are strengthening our wider curriculum, building secure knowledge foundations, and ensuring every child can access the learning ahead with confidence.

To ensure that the knowledge reinforced during Curriculum Catch-Up Days truly embeds in pupils’ long-term memory, we have built in a system of continuous review. The quizzes take place at the end of each big term, but they don’t just assess the most recent unit, they also revisit concepts that were retaught during catch-up sessions. If children still haven’t consolidated certain key pieces of knowledge, these

concepts are identified for further targeted reteaching. In addition, we use flashbacks at the start of each lesson as a retrieval tool, embedding key questions from previous learning to strengthen recall and deepen understanding over time.

Seeing the bigger picture

Throughout this process, we have been mindful that our assessment approach isn’t just about testing isolated facts. While the quizzes

check for core knowledge, we also ensure that pupils are developing a deeper understanding of the bigger picture in subjects like history, geography, and RE. To achieve this, pupils continue to answer a unit question at the end of each topic, demonstrating how their knowledge connects to overarching concepts and themes.

However, we recognise that for our pupils to engage meaningfully with these bigger-picture ideas, they need secure background knowledge something that many of them do not naturally acquire through life experiences.

This approach ensures that all children, regardless of their starting point, have the essential knowledge they need to access and succeed in their learning. By systematically identifying and addressing knowledge gaps, we are not only improving retention but also ensuring that every child is equipped to build on their learning with confidence.

Pillars and progress

To ensure that our assessment system continues to drive progress, teachers are expected to complete a document

called Pillars to Progression when analysing quiz data. This document breaks each subject down into emerging and expected criteria, helping teachers accurately identify where children are working within the wider curriculum.

Moving forward, further CPD will be provided to support teachers in using these documents effectively. It is crucial that all staff have a clear understanding of the criteria for expected and emerging so that assessments remain accurate and consistent across year groups.

Below: Teachers use Pillars of Progression documents such as this one to analyse children's quiz data.

Subject Unit		Term	
Science – Animals and humans needs for survival		Autumn 1	
	Substantive knowledge	Working scientifically	
Emerging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know and name some animals that belong to the group mammals, fishes, reptiles, amphibians. Know humans are mammals. Know some animals eat meat, some animals eat plants and some animals eat both. 	Ask questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate their curiosity. With support, think of ideas for answering their questions Observe and measure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With support, explore the natural and made world using their senses. With support, the children use magnifying glasses or tablets with magnifiers to make observations. With support, the children sort and group object Recording <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With support, the children talk about what they have observed. They sometimes draw and make marks to record their observations. Interpret, report and evaluate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With support, the children demonstrate and talk about what they have done and noticed. 	
Expected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All mammals need air, water, food and shelter to survive. Mammals are carnivores, herbivores or omnivores. Fish need air, water, food and shelter to survive. Amphibians need air, water, food and shelter to survive. They need air, water, food and shelter to survive. Reptiles need direct heat to survive. Humans are mammals. Humans need air, water, food and shelter to survive 	Ask questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask one or two simple questions linked to a topic. Answer questions developed with the teacher often through a scenario Observe and measure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe closely using simple equipment Make careful observations to support identification, comparison and noticing change. They use appropriate senses, aided by equipment to make their observations Recording <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and record data to help in answering questions. Classify using simple prepared tables and sorting Interpret, report and evaluate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use their observations and ideas to suggest answering questions 	
WHOLE CLASS BARRIERS TO LEARNING		WHAT, HOW AND WHEN?	
What knowledge are the whole class <u>not secure</u> on?		What will you do to close gaps? How will you do this? When will this happen?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characteristics of each animal group – focus on reptiles and amphibians Asking one or two simple questions linked to a topic. Use observations to suggest answers to questions 		Curriculum Catch up Day Revisit animal groups (reptiles and amphibians) in more depth to ensure knowledge of the characteristics of each group is secure. This will then enable reteaching of lesson 6 where sorting reptiles and amphibians can be taught in more detail. A live intervention had been used already for identified children but requires more in-depth teaching.	
PUPILS WORKING AT EMERGING AND THEIR BARRIERS TO LEARNING		Flashbacks – Spring term	
What knowledge gaps do pupils working at emerging have?		Which of these animal groups does NOT have scales?	
JC, DN, LS, LHH, JS, BS, SS Curriculum Catch up Day		1. Fish 2. Reptiles 3. Amphibians	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characteristics of each animal group – focus on reptiles and amphibians 		Which of these animal groups needs direct heat to survive?	
These will be explicitly retaught. Children will then have opportunities to sort animals into their groups (observe and measure).		1. Reptiles 2. amphibians 3. fish	
Future teaching opportunities		Future teaching opportunities	

Additionally, further CPD will focus on identifying and assessing children working at pre-emerging levels. At times, pupils with reading and writing barriers are being given tasks they cannot access, meaning assessments are sometimes measuring their ability to complete a task rather than their actual subject knowledge.

By refining our approach, we can ensure that all children regardless of their literacy skills are assessed fairly and given the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding in a way that reflects their true knowledge.

Time/Subject	Focus	Independent activity
9.00 – 9.30 – Geography	Re teaching of weather forecast. (What is a weather forecast?)	Children watch a forecast. Children to verbally produce own weather forecast using symbols (in small groups).
9.00 – 9.30 – Geography	Difference between geographical equipment (weathervane, anemometer, thermometer)	Children revisit equipment previously set up to measure wind speed, temperature, wind direction for the day. (in small groups).
9.30 – 10.00 – Geography	Difference between weather and climate	Children map out the climate over seasons – what we expect the weather to be – what we would expect to wear. Then use a weather map to identify the weather for 1 day per season – what we would wear.

‘By refining our approach, we can ensure that all children regardless of their literacy skills are assessed fairly.’



Above: An example of a Curriculum Catch-Up Day plan.

By Holly Lovell

Assistant Headteacher
and Year 6 Lead

Abacus Belsize Primary



The importance of adaptive and responsive teaching becomes doubly important when you have combined year group classes as we have had historically in Years 5 and 6 at Abacus.

We currently have two primaries in the trust with experience of combined classes but know that some secondaries have nurture settings with combined year group students being taught together. Having mixed-age classes can prove challenging at times, particularly in a one-form entry school. However, it also presents an opportunity to drive incredibly high standards for writing across Years 5 and 6.

Moderation with mixed-age classes



'Three-weekly moderation has been transformative for us in making sure the needs of every single child are met and that progress is rapid.'

At Abacus, three-weekly moderation has been transformative for us in making sure the needs of every single child are met and that progress is rapid.

Same destination, different journey

When starting our Literacy Tree journey, we opted for the Year 6 planning sequences for our Year 5/6 pupils, adapting it to suit the needs of the class. This fits with the Anthem Curriculum Principles of pitch to the top and scaffold down. We wanted to push Year 6 as high as possible and by default allow Year 5 to be brought along, whilst scaffolding for those who needed more support.

Although there were a few creases to iron out initially, we soon found our groove. Exposing pupils to a wide range of genres and reading and writing opportunities across the curriculum, along with an ambitious, adaptive approach to the teaching of writing resulted in pupils producing outstanding outcomes. Year 5 sometimes required additional writing frames and more input via live marking and TA support during the YOU DO stage. However, at times it was a challenge to distinguish between the writing of the Year 5 and the Year 6 children. Same destination, different journey!

Accelerating progress

Due to larger numbers in our current cohort, our Year 5 and 6 classes are no longer merged, though both classes are currently using the Year 5 planning sequences. Early into this

'As a team we moderate the outcomes of *every* child across Year 5 and 6 together.'



academic year, upon completion of some in-house writing moderation, we quickly identified a dip in the standards of Year 5 writing. Consequently, the Year 5 teacher and I have worked closely together on planning ever since.

We have found that excellent scaffolding strategies, via writing frames, additional WE DO, carefully targeted support for SEND students, and the high expectations and challenge for greater depth have helped us to make excellent progress across upper Key Stage 2. The result? Accelerated progress in Year 5. It was a conscious effort to put so much scaffolding in place and it has paid off.

What goes around...

The most powerful part of this process comes at the end

of every three-week writing cycle. Without fail we ensure that we meet and moderate to inform our next steps so that we are continually building and striving for excellence.

As a team we moderate the outcomes of *every* child across Year 5 and 6 together. Every book is out and lined up and we work systematically through them. This allows us to reflect and respond to our approach, informing future planning. Protecting time for the two teachers with leaders' input enables rich professional dialogue to identifying next steps. Next steps are identified both in terms of supporting targeted children but also what needs to happen regarding combining scaffolding and challenge that can be used for multiple children across both classes.

Much like The Anthem Way, this evaluative approach is cyclical, not linear and lends itself to the principle that all teaching should be reflective and adaptive and all formative assessment and feedback should be used to plan the next sequence of learning. This ongoing cycle has proved very successful for us and, as a school, we have now decided to continue to use this approach, whether or not our upper Key Stage 2 classes are merged.

Collaboration has always been at the heart of what we do in Anthem, and we believe that our next step lies in rolling out this approach to other phases. Although the planning will not be shared, we have no doubt that the close collaboration and frequent moderation will support success across the school.

By Sarah Meaden

EYFS/KS1 Senior
Deputy Headteacher
and RWI Lead

Judith Kerr
Primary School



practice, and ultimately improved outcomes for our students.

Through strategic leadership and hands-on involvement, we are fostering a school environment where both staff and students thrive.

An on-the-spot solution

In keeping with the theme of responsive practice, we don't want to waste a minute with either student learning or staff development and so have been using live coaching with teachers to fix gaps in student learning instantly. This is preferable to instructional coaching, where

relationship over time has been a crucial foundation for this work, enabling open communication and ensuring that coaching is effective and impactful. By fostering an environment of psychological safety, I have been able to guide my ECT in refining her practice, helping her to grow in confidence and effectiveness in delivering high-quality phonics lessons. Regular check-ins, reflective discussions and an open-door policy created an atmosphere where the ECT felt comfortable seeking guidance and implementing new teaching techniques.

The magic of modelling

Following a recent RWI Development Day, I had my own taste of live coaching from our consultant who, during a learning walk of phonics teaching, modelled live coaching for several of our teachers and supported me through the process with various groups across the key stages. This real-time support allowed for immediate feedback and powerful action steps that had an instant impact on the phonics teaching. I was then able to replicate this during my own 'drop in' coaching sessions as part of my ongoing monitoring.

During one of my live coaching sessions, I modelled how to effectively identify 'special friends' and use 'Fred talk' to break down words. By demonstrating how to explicitly draw children's attention to these elements, I helped her focus on key learning points in her lesson delivery. This modelling reinforced the importance of precision in phonics instruction

A strategic vision for live coaching: An ECT's journey at JKPS

The Anthem Leaders' Toolkit and the Live Coaching Companion have been instrumental in my role at Judith Kerr as a Senior Leader this year. Part of our focus as an SLT team has been to develop a culture of coaching, and drive change by being visible in classrooms and developing teachers through leading by example with our own practice.

By using the toolkit's strategies, we have built a strong foundation for professional development, ensuring that coaching is embedded in our school's culture. This approach has empowered teachers, encouraged reflective

we'd give the feedback after the lesson. Instead, we fix 'in the moment' things that could close gaps in student learning there and then. For example, in coaching an ECT teaching phonics I spotted a missed opportunity to reinforce a sound that students were mispronouncing, so intervened there and then. I modelled it for the teacher, who then reinforced it herself.

Supporting my ECT through live coaching has been a rewarding and impactful process, particularly in the context of phonics sessions in the Reception classes at JKPS. Establishing a trusting professional

and provided her with a clear framework to replicate in her own teaching. As a result, she gained confidence in ensuring that her pupils were decoding words accurately through 'my turn, your turn', and developing strong phonics foundations. They see what success looks like and therefore have improved motivation and confidence, which is evident when I visit their lessons, and they are excited to show off their amazing reading!

Be open to opening up

An important aspect of our coaching relationship has been my willingness to be vulnerable as a leader. I have openly shared my own experiences of being coached during development days, demonstrating that professional growth is a continuous journey. We have spent vital time planning together, sharing ideas, and engaging in team teaching, which has strengthened our professional bond. Additionally, I have provided opportunities for my ECT to observe my teaching, giving her a practical insight into effective phonics teaching. This openness has encouraged her to ask questions and embrace coaching as a positive and supportive process.

Through our coaching conversations, my ECT has also considered the impact of high-quality phonics teaching on the wider curriculum. She has explored ways to promote independent learning in continuous provision by embedding phonics strategies across different areas of learning. By ensuring that children have meaningful



Sarah has found that modelling aspects of practice on the spot has provided her ECT with a clear framework to replicate in her own teaching.

opportunities to apply their phonics skills beyond structured lessons, she is fostering greater independence and confidence in their literacy development.

Following the live coaching, I followed-up with observations, reviewed lesson recordings, and encouraged her to self-reflect on her practice, empowering her to recognise her strengths and take ownership of her professional growth.

Going live with strategic development

By having a clear vision of the phonics expectations of each group, I have been able to support my ECT in sequencing her lessons to ensure children are well-prepared for their next stage of learning. This approach has enabled us to plan targeted support, deliver new parent/carer workshops and train support staff to lead interventions, ensuring

that no child falls behind in their phonics development.

One of my most impactful coaching sessions was captured on film by Laura Grainger in Autumn 2 this year. She spoke to me about to me about my coaching with my ECT, having visited our school the year before and met us at the beginning of our journey and it gave me an opportunity to really consider the impact my coaching had had on my ECT. The conversation felt like the reflection I needed as a leader, highlighting the responsibility we all have for modelling, promoting and successfully embedding The Anthem Way which defines an expert teaching model for use in every lesson.

This term we have turned our focus to supporting and empowering our middle leaders in our continued commitment to our strategic leadership development for live coaching at JKPS.

By Leona Hopwood

Head of Year 13 and
Teacher of Science

St. Mark's Academy



Mini whiteboards are used widely at St Mark's Academy to check student progress and understanding at key points during each lesson. This strategy sits within both the *constant feedback and assessment* and the *use your knowledge of formative assessment* strands of the Anthem Way.

I use this strategy relentlessly because it is an effective way to gather whole-class responses and to address and unpick misconceptions. It ensures high think and participation ratio because all students are thinking and participating. There is no escape and I can tell at a glance who has understood and not

knowledge or misconceptions. We need to correct these before giving students the opportunity to practice and develop fluency with the correct knowledge. Therefore, whilst mini whiteboards can be used to check for understanding at any point of the lesson, I commonly use them between the WE DO and the YOU DO so that they are building fluency with the correct knowledge and accurate skills.

I am also a huge fan of students completing the retrieval DO NOW on mini whiteboards because the prior knowledge being checked there is always crucial to the lesson that I am teaching that day and so if there are gaps and misconceptions there I can't build on it. It also sets the tone for the rest of the lesson, that there is no escape from learning and all students need to think hard and contribute.

'Best yet'

At St Marks we had whole school CPD on adaptive and responsive teaching from January and we worked on the idea of 'no missed opportunities for responsive teaching.' This tied into the CPD offer where we got the opportunity to model what excellent practice looks like using a success criterion and we were coached by our peers and we talked through our lesson planning.

I am very open to improve my practice and we have a mantra of 'best yet', where we are all open to growing. So this CPD and this focus for me was welcomed and appreciated. Student voice

Transforming student engagement through mini whiteboards

understood and where the misconceptions are. This means that I can fix them instantly. The process of me challenging and supporting in response to their answers also allows students the opportunity to redraft responses and adjust their thought processes before starting to complete independent practice.

We cannot build the cumulative fluency that The Anthem Way aims for if there are gaps in

told me that they also welcomed the strategy as they appreciate instant feedback and instant affirmation of success.

Tackling misconceptions

There's a video of me on the Anthem Institute using mini whiteboards to check for understanding with my Year 10 class. You'll notice that when there is a wrong answer I ask some of the students to explain their thinking behind the wrong answer (rather than me going straight to the right answer).

This metacognitive talk helps both me and the students to pinpoint exactly where they went wrong, especially with some of the more procedural elements of science so that we can get right to the heart of the misconceptions.

Getting right to the heart of the misconceptions then allows me to infer judgements about the wider domain and wider concepts that might require re-teaching. This is in contrast to just re-teaching that particular narrow question again. Re-teaching the question might fix that specific question but if students still have wider misconceptions then they will make mistakes again with other similar questions because that misconception is still there.

Inference about the wider domain is key. Adam Boxer has written some excellent blogs on this and our Anthem effective mock exam feedback video explains this. But of course the principles apply to feedback at any time, not just from mock exams. Constant feedback and assessment as the strand of The Anthem Way states!

Celebrate and challenge

So in summary, this strategy has served as a reflective and planning tool for me the teacher, but has also given students further insight into their gaps in knowledge and the ability to correct and to build on their understanding of concepts. With the use of mini whiteboards, students' efforts can quickly be celebrated, and this strategy provides opportunity to further challenge pupils.

To build on this even further, peer talk and metacognitive talk can be used to push students into challenging each other's responses. See the Anthem videos on rally coaching and the literacy and oracy practice guide.

Leona is a huge fan of students completing the retrieval DO NOW on mini whiteboards.

'I am very open to improve my practice and we have a mantra of 'best yet', where we are all open to growing.'



By Katleen Bureau

MFL teacher

Oxford Spires
Academy



Exit tickets are a whole-school strategy at Oxford Spires to ensure that all staff teach responsively and reflect often on what knowledge and skills students have acquired so that teachers can close any gaps or misconceptions straight away next lesson.

These fit with the *constant feedback and assessment* and *use your knowledge from formative assessment* strands of The Anthem Way, as well as ensuring that every student is benefiting from formative assessment. Effective implementation of exit tickets is tracked through coaching with Steplab and middle leader drop-ins on Progress Teaching, and we receive guidance through coaching and Teach meets.

Small assessment, big impact: The role of exit tickets at OSA

A powerful tool

In my experience as a languages teacher, exit tickets are a simple yet powerful tool for assessing students' understanding at the end of a lesson. They not only inform your teaching but also help establish a calmer exit routine, setting the stage for the next class.

An exit ticket will allow you to quickly check if the core knowledge of the lesson, has been acquired

by students. By asking students to reflect on a core concept, exit tickets provide immediate feedback on whether they've grasped essential knowledge. If over 20 per cent of students struggle with a question, consider reteaching the concept. This practice promotes stronger, more secure understanding among students.

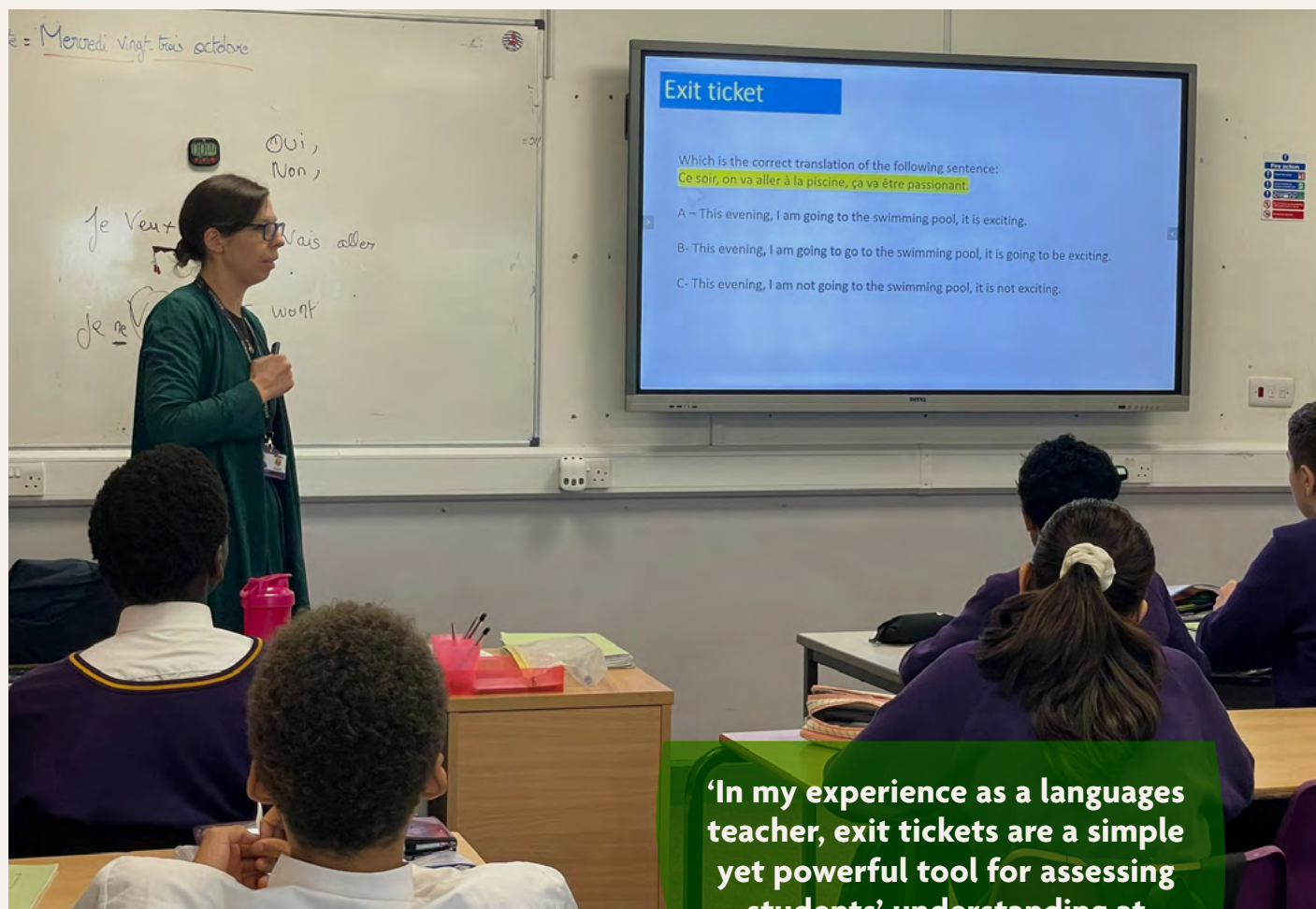
You can ask students to write their answers on a small piece of paper and hand it to you as they leave or use mini whiteboards; both methods ensure full class participation. We can reflect and take action on what adaptations to make for individual students next lesson as well.

An exit ticket can also be the first step to a successful exit routine which will keep the students in a calmer and more focused mindset for the next lesson. Additionally, this process encourages you to condense the lesson into one core concept, making for a valuable reflective exercise.

Meaningful reflection

At Oxford Spires, we prioritise continuous improvement in our teaching methods through CPD, coaching, and deliberate practice. Deliberate practice has let me rehearse and receive immediate feedback from my colleagues, so I felt well-prepared the first time I used the exit ticket concept in a class. Collaborating with my department allowed us to brainstorm effective questions and formats, enhancing our exit ticket implementation.

Exit tickets are a great tool as they don't require a lot of preparation,



‘In my experience as a languages teacher, exit tickets are a simple yet powerful tool for assessing students’ understanding at the end of a lesson.’

Katleen has worked together with her departmental colleagues to enhance exit ticket implementation.

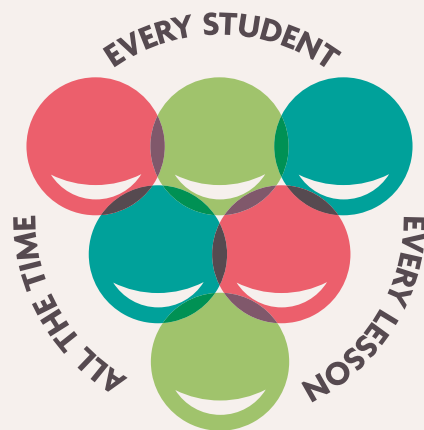
you can add a slide at the end of your lessons or even write down the question and answers on your board. You can also use them to support the development of student’s metacognitive skills as they have to think and reflect on their learning, hence helping to transfer the knowledge into the long-term memory.

To maximise their effectiveness, select questions that challenge students without being overly difficult. For example, rather than asking a factual recall question, pose a scenario that requires critical thinking.

Versatile and effective

In summary, exit tickets are a versatile and effective tool that bring up meaningful reflection for both teachers and students. By providing a structured way to assess understanding, they not only help teachers identify areas needing reinforcement but also encourage students to engage with their learning more thoughtfully.

Try incorporating them into your next lesson and observe how they can enhance learning outcomes.



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