



## Adaptive Teaching At Regent Farm

### What is Adaptive Teaching?

Adaptive teaching involves responsive, in-the-moment adjustments based on pupil needs, moving away from rigid, pre-planned differentiation to high-expectation teaching for all. Every child learns differently and an adaptive approach enables teachers to focus on the whole class and adapt their teaching to make it appropriate for all. At Regent Farm, we adapt our teaching to respond to the different strengths and needs of all our pupils, removing barriers to learning and allowing all our children opportunities to meet the expectations of the lesson.

It involves using diagnostic information, for example through questioning, observation, assessment, and pupil responses, to modify teaching in real time so that all children can access learning.

Not all pupils learn at the same rate and may require different kinds of support in the classroom to succeed. Being able to understand pupils' diverse learning needs is an important part of teachers adapting the support they provide. Adaptive teaching is important because:

a) It prevents fixed expectation grouping

*By avoiding rigid differentiated tasks, adaptive teaching keeps all pupils working towards the same high-level goals, reducing the risk of limiting progress for pupils with SEND or lower prior attainment. Removing 'ceilings' to tasks not only supports understanding and learning, but also raises aspirations for the future and generates a culture of self-belief.*

b) It supports SEND learners without isolating them

*Adaptive methods allow pupils with additional needs to access the same curriculum with the right support at the right time, which is vital given the documented attainment gaps for SEND pupils.*

c) It enhances emotional and academic engagement and achievement

*Studies show that adaptive teaching strategies positively influence long term learning. Pupils, especially those with SEND, often report lower happiness with schoolwork. Responsive teaching helps them feel successful and included, mitigating emotional barriers.*

e) It supports diverse classrooms

*Classrooms are increasingly varied in terms of ability, life experience, language, and background. Adaptive teaching explicitly recognises and responds to this variability.*

## How Is It Different From Differentiation?

Differentiation traditionally refers to planning different tasks in advance to meet need. It often involves multiple worksheets or separate activities for different groups. Research suggests this approach can increase teacher workload and lower expectations for certain pupils; it is putting a predetermined ceiling on a child's learning based on a judgement made prior to a lesson.

Adaptive teaching, by contrast:

- Is more fluid and responsive, focusing on adjustments during teaching rather than pre-planned task variation.
- Maintains consistently high expectations for all pupils while varying the support, scaffolding, or pace based on ongoing classroom observations.
- Avoids rigid groupings and prevents pupils being confined to "ability groups" with different levels of challenge.

Adaptive teaching does not however remove the need for differentiation at times. There will still be pupils, particularly those with SEND, who need different materials or strategies.

For some children, adaptive teaching alone is not always sufficient. They may require:

- Highly scaffolded or alternative formats
- Specialist resources (e.g. symbol-supported text, assistive technology)
- Adjusted pacing, chunking, or sensory breaks

These forms of differentiation fall under reasonable adjustments, not whole-class adaptive teaching.

Adaptive teaching should be the main classroom approach because it is responsive, inclusive, and maintains high expectations. But differentiation remains essential for pupils whose needs cannot be fully met through whole-class adaptive strategies alone.

*In summary: differentiation changes the task; adaptive teaching changes the support.*

## How Is Adaptive Teaching Implemented In Classrooms?

Research identifies several practical strategies for implementing adaptive teaching effectively:

### a) Anticipate barriers to learning

Being able to anticipate barriers to learning can help a teacher adapt their practices to the wide range of learning needs of the pupils they teach. Key to this is understanding pupils' prior knowledge and any specific difficulties that pupils with SEND may need adaptation or support with. Prior knowledge acts as a foundation for learning a new topic and could include key vocabulary, concepts or skills. When pupils can commit some key information to their long-term memory, it helps them to learn more complex ideas. If pupils have less well-developed prior knowledge or misconceptions it may hinder learning, particularly if new ideas are introduced too quickly.

Teachers need to anticipate the sorts of misconceptions or common errors pupils make when they are learning about the specific topic. Predicting where prior knowledge and misconceptions will create challenges is an essential first step to supporting all pupils in their learning.

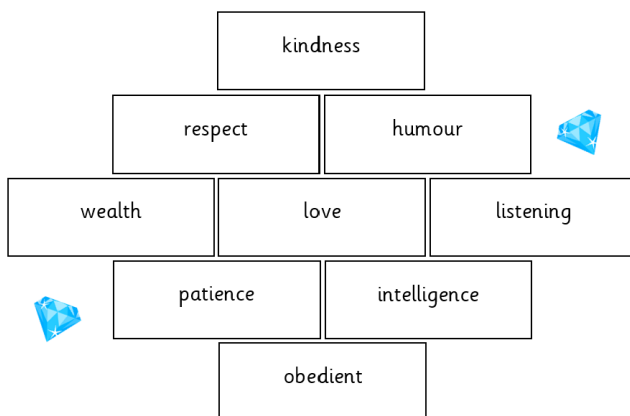
It's also important to consider that pupils with special learning needs may experience additional barriers and challenges.

Pre-teaching is also an important classroom skill in adaptive teaching. Staff will identify potential barriers to learning (such as key vocabulary) and introduce them to some learners before the main lesson. This supports understanding and raises confidence during the core teaching tasks.

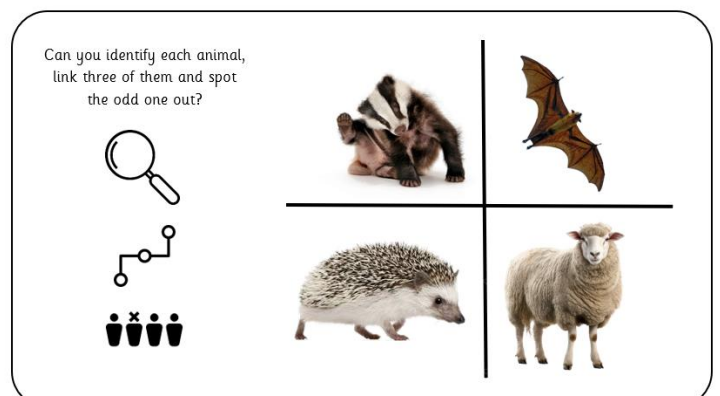
Planning careful task design is another key part of adaptive teaching in the classroom. Instead of simplifying the curriculum, teachers adapt how pupils access it for example, through the nature of the task; providing visual supports; or offering alternative ways to demonstrate understanding. Written tasks are not always necessary to show and develop understanding. At Regent Farm, our lessons involve numerous techniques to show learning such as drama, discussion, recording devices, drawing or a school visit.

Some examples of these task designs are shown below:

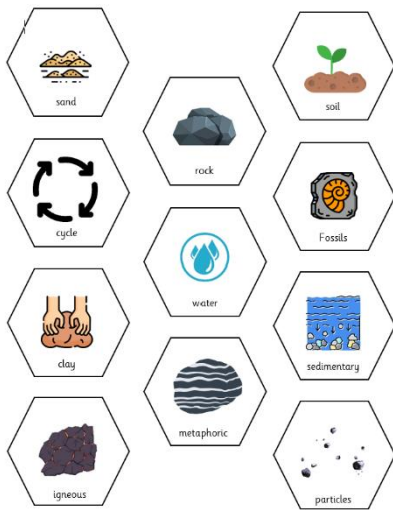
Thinking about the character, how would you rank the nine words you've been given?



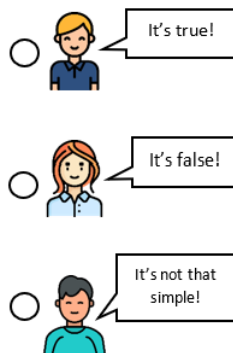
**Diamond Ranking**



**Odd One Out**






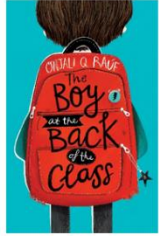
**Hexagon Linking**



**True, False or It's Not That Simple?**

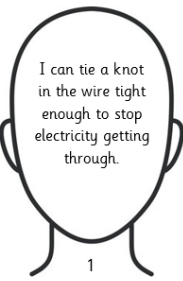
Summarise the story in:

-  • a word
-  • a sentence
-  • a paragraph



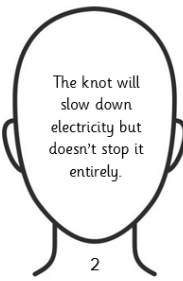
**Word, Sentence, Paragraph**

Who do you agree with and why?



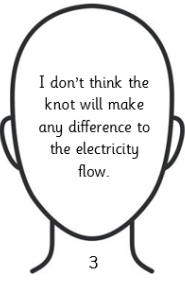
I can tie a knot in the wire tight enough to stop electricity getting through.

1



The knot will slow down electricity but doesn't stop it entirely.

2



I don't think the knot will make any difference to the electricity flow.

3

**Talking Heads**

Often, the most important part of assessing children's understanding with some of these open ended tasks is through the word 'why'? Teachers look for children to articulate their reasons with key learning: are they able to justify their response linking to the learning?



**b) Use Formative Assessment**

Making effective use of formative assessment is another way to introduce adaptive teaching. The key to achieving this is using assessment in a diagnostic way, providing the teacher with actionable information regarding what pupils have learned or understood.

There are different approaches to formative assessment, depending on the subject, topic, the types of misconceptions involved and teachers' knowledge of pupils' starting points and needs.

Teachers employ strategies such as questioning, mini-whiteboard checks, thumbs up/down, or observations to check understanding and adapt accordingly. These approaches enable teachers to monitor the understanding of all children, not just those who volunteer an answer.

### c) Respond and Adapt

Following diagnostic assessment, it's important to act on this information with a tailored response. Teachers at Regent Farm aim to identify the nature of a particular error, how many pupils have misunderstood the concept and how critical this misunderstanding is. They can then choose an appropriate approach depending on the nature of the error.

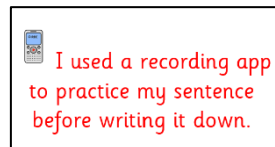
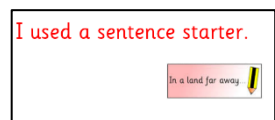
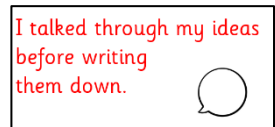
Some of these approaches may include:

- Scaffolded Support

*This may include modelling, word mats, sentence stems, or use of concrete apparatus. Adaptive support should be temporary and flexible, and not impose a limit to a child's learning or progress.*

*Technology can also be an important tool in adaptive teaching, supporting teachers to model learning visually and by providing aids for children to record or generate ideas.*

*When adaptive support is used to support a child's learning within their books, a sticker/comment will be added to show this or VF (verbal feedback) may be annotated within the book.*



- Explicit Instruction

*A lesson may include teacher demonstration followed by guided practice before moving into independent practice. This 'my turn-our turn-your turn' approach to learning allows children to gradually reduce their need for the adult and deepen their understanding.*

*The "My Turn" phase allows the teacher to clearly demonstrate the desired skill, language, strategy, or process. This ensures pupils see accurate examples before attempting tasks themselves. "Our Turn", or the guided step, where teacher and pupils attempt the skill together, builds confidence by reducing cognitive load and helps staff to see misconceptions in real time. By gradually shifting responsibility to the learner, the "Your Turn" stage supports independent application and success.*

- Flexible Grouping

*Teachers move away from fixed-ability seating to temporary, mixed-ability or similar-needs groups, changing based on the skill being taught.*

- Targeted Questioning & Feedback

*Use of questioning to stretch understanding, such as "no hands up" or asking children to elaborate on answers using their Voice 21 skills. This provides an immediate response to misconceptions.*

- Using Support Staff

*As adaptive teaching relies on responsive, real-time adjustments based on pupils' needs, support staff significantly enhance adaptive practice in our classrooms.*

*TAs make this feasible by providing support such as:*

- *structured scaffolding*
- *modelling*
- *guided practice*
- *vocabulary pre-teaching*
- *behaviour and emotional regulation support*

*Adaptive teaching thrives in classrooms that are dynamic and flexible; Teaching Assistants at Regent Farm support this flexibility and responsive approach throughout school.*

# 1 FOCUS

## on what makes a SUCCESSFUL LEARNER

Hunting out clues and information



Learning from each other



**Teamwork** Amazing collaboration



Communication skills



Celebrating the small steps

Overcoming challenge



**Determination**



Children learning the skills of perseverance and resilience

Effort

Consideration of other feelings



Embracing differences



**Respect**

Good manners

Listening and reflecting on opinions



Asking questions



**Curiosity**

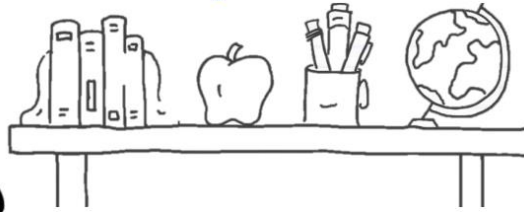


Thinking outside the box

Critical thinking is encouraged



### What will I see in a classroom at Regent Farm?



Learning objectives which build on prior lessons

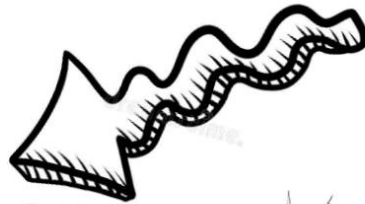


Applying learning to real life contexts

Challenge and investigation



Celebration of ideas



Modelling and support, guiding children to independence at a pace right for them



Progressive learning



# 3 SECURING PROGRESS



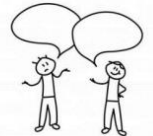
Well planned curriculum focusing on knowledge and skills

Peer critique to support and challenge



Purposeful feedback from teachers

Opportunities for effective talk



# 2 APPROACHES

## TO PLANNING LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Enjoyment and laughter

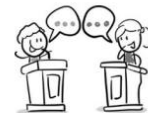
Practical equipment and resources



Active lessons with practical experiences and purposeful outcomes



Healthy, supportive debates



Culture of ambition



# Adaptive Teaching Summary



## Anticipate Barriers

- different levels of prior knowledge
- vocabulary
- a particular production skill such as writing
- a particular SEND
- decoding written text
- limited working memory
- cultural experience
- EAL
- a common misconception
- a lack of metacognitive knowledge or strategy
- inherent complexity of resources/information

*Don't confuse barriers with desirable difficulty and remove all challenge!*

## Plan To Address Them

- read text in advance
- supply background knowledge
- use pictures/video to contextualise upcoming information
- teach vocabulary
- introduce a concept via discussion
- teach necessary learning behaviour
- improve accessibility (e.g. clarity of resources, font size, proximity to speaker, visibility of whiteboard, reader pens)
- plan to scaffold
- prepare a model to share with, for example, a visualiser
- plan targeted support from a TA



## Use Assessment to Elicit Evidence of Learning

- questioning
- tests
- production tasks (e.g. writing, setting up an experiment, painting, performing)
- think pair share
- hinge questions
- labelling diagrams
- answers on sticky notes or mini-whiteboards

Assessment information informs subsequent planning and in-the-moment adaptations.

Other considerations:

How will you monitor responses? Does the assessment method itself create barriers?



## Examples of In-The-Moment Adaptations

- adjust the level of challenge
- change your language
- clarify a task or provide steps
- identify what "good" looks like
- highlight essential content
- re-explain a concept or explain it in a different way
- give additional (or revisit) examples and non-examples
- use peer tutoring
- elicit via questions
- allocate temporary groups
- provide an additional scaffold
- use an analogy
- set an intermediate goal
- provide a prompt
- structure a group attempt before an individual attempt
- improve accessibility (e.g. proximity to speaker, visibility of whiteboard, read a text to the student)



BEFORE TEACHING

DURING TEACHING