



Shireland Collegiate Academy

# Checking for Understanding policy

2025/26

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| <b>Date this management plan was first produced.</b> | <b>July 2025</b>                             |
| <b>Next Full Review Date</b>                         | <b>Annually – July 2026</b>                  |
| <b>Person that produced this plan.</b>               | <b>Vice Principal (Quality of Education)</b> |

## Rationale:

Checking for understanding is a vital component of effective **teaching and learning** in a secondary academy, forming a cornerstone of the assessment policy. It ensures that students are actively engaging with the material and allows teachers to identify misconceptions or gaps in knowledge in real time. Through strategies such as questioning, formative assessment, and classroom dialogue, teachers can adapt their instruction to meet learners' needs more precisely. Additionally, **marking and feedback** play a crucial role in this process by providing students with clear, actionable insights into their progress and areas for improvement. This continuous loop of checking, responding, and refining supports a culture of high expectations and academic growth, and ensures that our students can remember more and do more during each sequence of learning.

## Our Strategic Principles:

- In our pedagogy, classroom teachers will use a range of strategies including digital tools, to check student understanding and to ensure that all students are able to move forward, deepen their knowledge/skills, or gain fluency.
- Our marking and feedback is **meaningful, manageable, and motivating**.
- Our marking and feedback is underpinned by the principles of **WWW** (what went well) and **EBI** (even better if) to help students understand areas of strength, and how to improve their work.
- Time is given to students to respond to formative and summative feedback to help drive their progress forward.
- Checking for understanding will be evidenced through **verbal, written, and digital** work. Each department has flexibility and responsibility to provide feedback in a **timely** way that best supports the delivery of their subject.
- Teacher comment and feedback will be written in **green** pen, and students' response to feedback will be written in **purple** pen.

## What does the research say?

### Feedback

Very high impact for very low cost based on extensive evidence.



+6

*Education Endowment Foundation, teaching and learning toolkit*

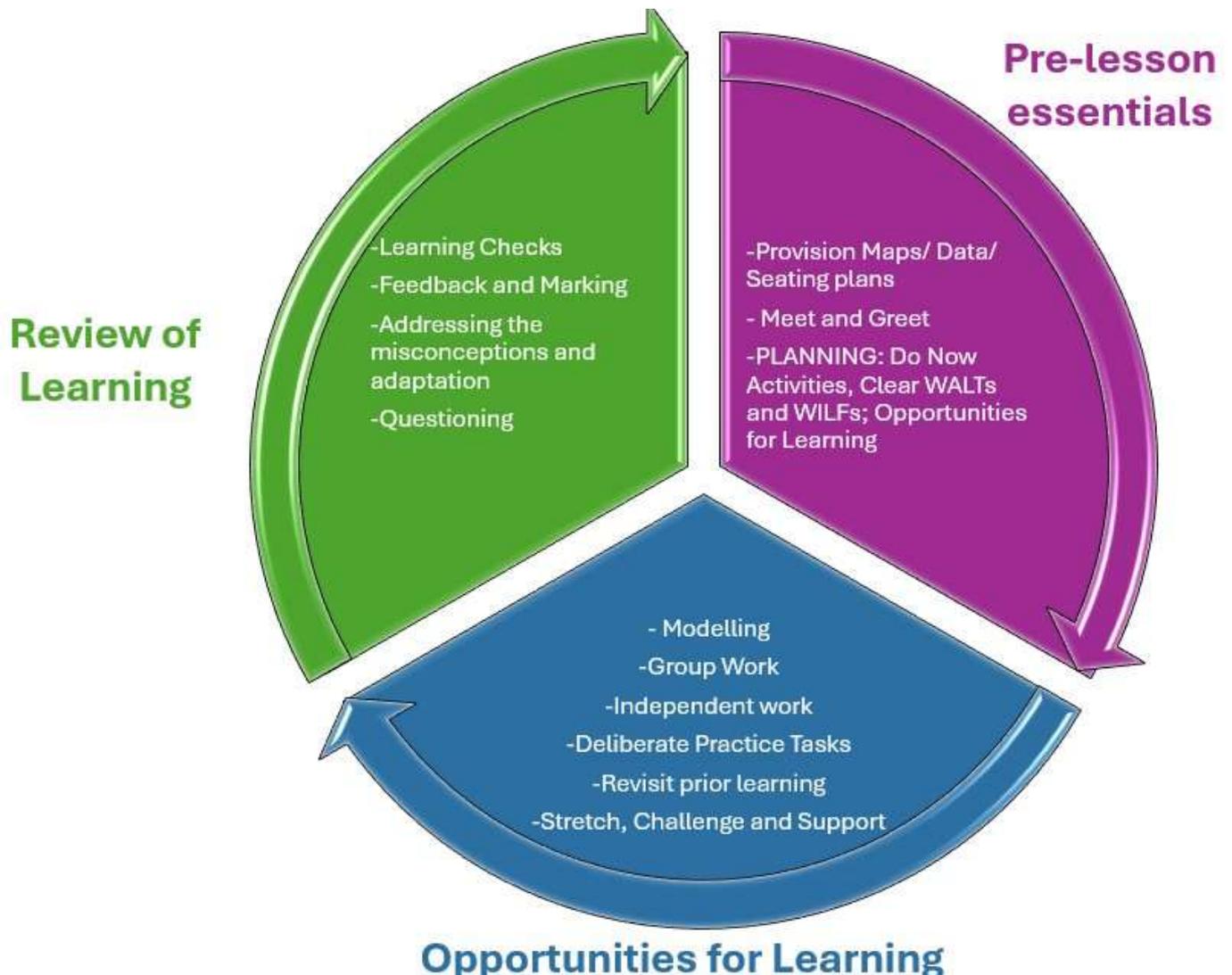
Our policy is underpinned by the evidence of best practice from the Education Endowment Foundation and other expert organisations. Meta-analysis by the Education Endowment Foundation shows that effective feedback should:

- Redirect or refocus either the teacher's or the learner's actions to achieve a goal.
- Be specific, accurate and clear.
- Encourage and support further effort.
- Be given sparingly so that it is meaningful
- Put the onus on the students to correct their own mistakes, rather than providing correct answers for them.
- Alert the teacher to misconceptions, so that the teacher can address these in subsequent lessons.

## Teaching and Learning – Learning cycle:

Our learning cycle provides the structure for an individual lesson, or a series of lessons that make up a unit of learning. The cycle is underpinned by Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction (2012).

Rosenshine identified that the most effective teachers frequently check for student understanding and address misconceptions. This **should occur where necessary throughout each phase of the teaching cycle**, not just at the end of a lesson or unit of work. This **formative** assessment is also supported by **summative** assessment where **outcomes are forensically analysed to address gaps in knowledge and provide feed-forward progression for students**.



## Teaching and Learning – Classroom strategies:

To check for student understanding, our teachers will employ a range of strategies. These might include:

|   | <b>What this might look like</b>   |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Live feedback in the lesson to review and correct work immediately</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher circulation (“Intentional monitoring”), giving verbal or written feedback on their work.</li> <li>- Questions, hints, or modelling and scaffolding next steps.</li> <li>- Gathering feedback from verbal responses, mini-whiteboards, book work, etc.</li> <li>- May involve further support, challenge or a change of task.</li> <li>- May re-direct the focus of teaching or the task.</li> <li>- Teacher stops pupils periodically to re-teach/re-focus with input from the class.</li> <li>- Immediate improvements/corrections may be evident in the child’s work via live marking annotation.</li> <li>- Online resources may provide immediate feedback to pupils.</li> <li>- Could be led by teaching assistants, other adults, peers, or involve student self-assessment.</li> </ul>             |
| <p><b>Formative feedback at the beginning/ during/at the end of the lesson to address gaps in knowledge and review learning</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do Now activities/plenaries/periodic learning checks provide an opportunity to review learning and offer feedback during the lesson or task.</li> <li>- Teacher stops pupils periodically and reviews the success criteria, models, or verbalises their thought process and directs pupils to check their own work.</li> <li>- Pupils should be regularly involved in marking their own work and checking and then correcting mistakes throughout the lesson. May take the form of self- or peer- assessment against an agreed set of criteria.</li> <li>- May involve strategies such as “hinge” or “exit” questions that allow the teacher an assessment opportunity.</li> <li>- Teachers use information gathered and adapt the current lesson or future lessons to address gaps in knowledge/skill</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Formative and summative feedback in written and digital work to consolidate learning</b></p>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides teachers with opportunities for assessment of understanding.</li> <li>- Includes a balance of “light touch” marking or “deeper marking” at staff discretion which will provide more detailed feedback for assessment purposes.</li> <li>- Teachers regularly note common misconceptions and successes to inform the next lesson or identify who needs responsive intervention.</li> <li>- Whole Class Feedback strategies may be used to address common misconceptions or re-teach knowledge.</li> </ul>   |

## Literacy:

Literacy marking is a crucial aspect of **maintaining high academic standards across all subjects**. It reinforces the importance of clear, accurate communication and supports students in developing essential skills in **spelling, punctuation, grammar, and subject-specific vocabulary**. All staff, regardless of subject specialism, have a shared responsibility to mark for literacy, as this collective approach ensures consistency and reinforces expectations across the curriculum.

## Marking codes:

-  Spelling error
-  Punctuation error
-  Capital letter missing
-  // New paragraph
-  ^ Missing word
-  ← grammatical error identified

## Quality Assurance:

The academy's Quality Assurance schedule will regularly monitor the processes for checking understanding via regular scrutiny of written and digital work, and the quality of classroom teaching.

Work scrutiny will regularly take place at department and SLT level and will also form part of staff CPD (Continuing Professional Development) at department level.

Learning walks, Teaching and Learning reviews linked to whole school CPD, and the staff appraisal process will regularly sample the classroom environment to ensure our practices and expectations are successfully embedded.

Student and staff voice will provide valuable feedback in determining training needs and support to continuously evolve and embed exceptional practice and standards.

## Technology:

The academy utilises a range of digital hardware and software including Microsoft Forms and CoPilot to enhance teaching and learning, identify and address misconceptions, and support the delivery of meaningful and engaging feedback.

Microsoft Class Notebook is the central platform used by staff to organise learners' digital work, streamline and enhance formative assessment, and provide targeted and personalised feedback.

Vocational subjects use assessment record sheets from the exam board that specify exact feedback requirements. All vocational subjects use excel tracking sheets to demonstrate progress and give feedback, shared either with a whole group or individually depending on the subjects and stored on Teams, OneNote or class sites.

OneNote is mostly used as an online exercise book for coursework units and is not always marked as the coursework tasks are the assessed documents.

# How do we check for understanding at SCA?

| Faculty   | Work  | How do we check understanding?  | Frequency                                   | Practice   | How do we check understanding?   | Frequency                                 | Assessment/testing   | How do we check understanding?   | Frequency                                     |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| Art (inc Textiles and Photography)                      | Sketchbooks<br>Mounted boards<br>Student drawers/<br>portfolios<br>Microsoft Sway<br>Microsoft<br>PowerPoint<br>Microsoft Teams | Verbal feedback<br>Assessment sheet<br>WWW/EBIs<br>Student self-assessment and peer assessment<br>Students are also given individual pack briefs<br>Group critiques   | In lesson                                   | Sketchbooks<br>Experimental pieces<br>Physical and digital student portfolio | Verbal feedback  | In lesson                                 | End of topic practical outcome<br>WWW/EBIs   | Verbal feedback<br>Assessment sheet<br>WWW/EBIs<br>Student self-assessment and peer assessment   | Termly  |
| Business Studies  | Exercise Books /<br>Activity sheets   | Student self-assessment and peer-assessment<br>Marking and questioning in books to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>Feedback sheet for exam questions<br>Purple pen student response tasks<br>Feedback on Microsoft Teams for assignments<br>Feedback on Microsoft OneNote tasks. | Fortnightly                                 | Exercise books /<br>Activity sheets<br>Microsoft Teams                       | Student self-assessment and peer-assessment<br>Marking and questioning in books to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>WWW/EBI<br>Purple pen student response tasks<br>SENECA mark book<br>Feedback on Microsoft Teams assignment<br>RAG rating on tracking sheet | After each topic/termly                   | Assessment sheets<br>End of topic summative assessments<br>Mock exams (digital/physical) | Class tracking sheet<br>Assessment sheets<br>End of topic test marking<br>Mock exam paper marking<br>Individual assessment feedback sheets                   | After each topic/<br>assessment/<br>mock exam |
| Computer Science  | Microsoft OneNote   | Whole class feedback via Microsoft Teams<br>Individual Question Level Analysis feedback<br>Individual revision feedback   | Monthly                                     | One note<br>MS Teams   | Whole class feedback via Microsoft Teams<br>Purple pen student response tasks<br>Individual Question Level Analysis feedback<br>Individual revision feedback   | Monthly                                   | Microsoft OneNote<br>Microsoft Teams   | Whole class feedback via Microsoft Teams<br>Purple pen student response tasks<br>Individual Question Level Analysis feedback<br>Individual revision feedback | Monthly                                       |
| Design and Technology (inc Product Design and Graphics) | Booklets<br>Microsoft Teams<br>Microsoft OneNote  | Marking and questioning in books to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response tasks<br>Online feedback   | In lesson - verbal<br>Fortnightly - written | Booklets<br>Microsoft Teams<br>Exercise books<br>Microsoft OneNote           | Marking and questioning in books to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response tasks   | In lesson - verbal<br>Fortnightly in work | Work booklets<br>Microsoft Teams<br>Mock exams   | Marking to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response tasks<br>WWW/EBIs<br>RAG rated assessment sheet                          | After each topic                              |
| English   | Microsoft OneNote   | Student self-assessment and peer assessment<br>Marking and questioning in books to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response tasks   | In lesson                                   | Microsoft OneNote  | Student self-assessment and peer assessment<br>Marking and questioning in books to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response tasks  | Fortnightly                               | Microsoft OneNote assessment folder<br>End of topic summative assessments                | WWW/EBIs<br>Purple pen student response tasks<br>Microsoft Forms   | Monthly                                       |

|  |   |   |   |   |  |  |   |  |                                      |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| Geography  | Exercise books<br>Microsoft<br>OneNote  | Verbal feedback<br>WWW/EBIs<br>Student self-assessment and peer<br>assessment<br>Live marking   | In lesson                                     | Exercise books<br>Microsoft<br>OneNote<br>Seneca            | Whole class feedback<br>Student self-assessment and peer<br>assessment<br>Marking and questioning in books<br>to enhance learning/challenge<br>misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response tasks | Monthly                                      | End of topic summative<br>assessments<br>Mock exams   | Whole class feedback<br>Student feedback sheets<br>Individual Question Level Analysis<br>feedback<br>Purple pen student response<br>tasks  | Mid-topic<br>and after<br>each topic |
| History (inc<br>Government<br>and Politics)            | Exercise books<br>Microsoft<br>OneNote  | Marking and questioning in books<br>to enhance learning/challenge<br>misconceptions   | In lesson                                     | Exercise books<br>Microsoft<br>OneNote                      | Student feedback sheets<br>WWW/EBIs<br>Purple pen student response tasks   | Monthly                                      | Mock exams<br>Microsoft Forms<br>Microsoft OneNote  | Whole class feedback<br>Student feedback sheets<br>Individual Question Level Analysis<br>feedback  | Termly                               |
| ICT  | Microsoft<br>OneDrive<br>Exercise books<br>Student booklets<br>Dropbox  | Marking and questioning in books<br>to enhance learning/challenge<br>misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response tasks<br>Verbal feedback<br>Student self-assessment and peer<br>assessment | In lesson                                     | Microsoft<br>OneDrive<br>Exam accounts<br>Student booklets  | Marking and questioning in books<br>to enhance learning/challenge<br>misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response tasks<br>Verbal feedback<br>Whole class feedback                                | After each<br>topic                          | Microsoft OneDrive<br>Microsoft OneNote<br>Exam accounts<br>End of topic summative<br>assessments<br>Mock exams   | RAG rated assessment sheet<br>Individual Question Level Analysis<br>feedback<br>Marking to enhance<br>learning/challenge<br>misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response<br>tasks<br>Whole class feedback | After each<br>topic                  |
| Literacy for<br>Life                                   | Exercise books<br>Assessment<br>folders   | Live marking<br>Verbal feedback<br>Marking and questioning to<br>enhance learning/challenge<br>misconceptions   | In lesson                                     | Exercise books  | Student self- assessment and peer<br>assessment<br>Purple pen student response   | Monthly                                      | Mid-topic and end of<br>topic summative<br>assessments<br>Mock exams  | Assessment record sheets<br>Personalised feedback with<br>student response task  | Termly                               |
| Maths (inc<br>Further<br>Maths)                        | Exercise books<br>Folders   | Live marking<br>Verbal feedback<br>Marking and questioning to<br>enhance learning/challenge<br>misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response<br>Mini whiteboards                              | In lesson                                     | Exercise books  | Personalised feedback with<br>comments<br>Coded marking<br>Dr Frost videos for individual<br>student response  | After each<br>topic                          | End of topic summative<br>assessments<br>Mock exams<br>Dr Frost videos  | Personalised feedback with<br>student response task<br>Individual Question Level Analysis<br>feedback  | Termly                               |
| MFL (inc<br>Spanish,<br>German, and<br>French)         | Exercise books<br>Assessment<br>folders   | Live marking<br>Verbal feedback<br>Mini whiteboards<br>Purple pen student response  | In lesson                                     | Exercise books<br>Written essays                            | Student feedback sheets<br>WWW/EBIs<br>Individual Question Level Analysis<br>feedback and personalised tasks<br>Written feedback   | Monthly                                      | End of topic summative<br>assessments   | WWW/EBIs<br>Student feedback sheets<br>Individual Question Level Analysis<br>feedback  | Termly                               |
| Performing<br>Arts (inc<br>Dance, Drama,<br>and Music) | Exercise books<br>Practical lessons<br>Student<br>worksheets<br>Apple MacBook<br>(GarageBand)<br>Microsoft Teams<br>Microsoft<br>OneNote<br>Practical lessons | Verbal feedback<br>Student self-assessment and peer<br>assessment<br>WWW/EBIs<br>Questioning to enhance<br>learning/challenge<br>misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response<br>RAG cards   | In lesson –<br>verbal<br>Monthly -<br>written | Practical lessons<br>Exercise books<br>Microsoft<br>OneNote | Verbal feedback<br>Student self-assessment and peer<br>assessment<br>WWW/EBIs<br>Individual Question Level Analysis<br>feedback and personalised tasks<br>Purple pen student response<br>RAG cards | In lesson –<br>verbal<br>Monthly-<br>written | Practical assessments<br>Mid-topic summative<br>assessment<br>End of topic summative<br>assessments<br>Mock exams<br>Controlled assessment<br>Microsoft Teams<br>assignments<br>Videod practical work | Verbal feedback<br>WWW/EBIs<br>Student feedback sheets<br>Written feedback<br>Whole class feedback<br>RAG rated assessment sheet<br>Personalised feedback with<br>comments                                 | After each<br>topic                  |

|                    |   |   |           |   |   |             |   |   |         |
|--------------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|-------------|---|---|---------|
| Religious Studies  | Exercise books<br>Folders                           | Live marking<br>Verbal feedback<br>Marking and questioning to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>Extension questions  | In lesson | Exercise books<br>Microsoft Forms<br>SENECA                       | WWW/EBIs<br>Purple pen student response tasks<br>Student self-assessment and peer assessment  | Monthly     | End of topic summative assessments<br>Mock exams                      | Whole class feedback<br>Purple pen student response tasks   | Termly  |
| Science            | Exercise books                                      | Live marking<br>Verbal feedback<br>Marking and questioning to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>Student self-assessment and peer assessment<br>Purple pen student response | In lesson | Exercise books  | Live marking<br>Verbal feedback<br>Marking and questioning to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>Student self-assessment and peer assessment<br>Purple pen student response<br>Personalised feedback with student response task | Fortnightly | End of topic summative assessments<br>Online assessment<br>Mock exams | WWW/EBIs<br>Purple pen student response tasks   | Termly  |
| Social Sciences    | Microsoft OneNote<br>Exam accounts<br>Work booklets | Live marking<br>Verbal feedback<br>Marking and questioning to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response  | In lesson | Microsoft OneNote<br>Exam accounts<br>Work booklets               | Live marking<br>Verbal feedback<br>Marking and questioning to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response  |             | Exam accounts<br>End of topic summative assessments<br>Mock exams     | Assessment record sheets<br>WWW/EBIs<br>Personalised feedback with student response task  | Yearly  |
| Travel and Tourism | Exercise books<br>Microsoft OneNote                 | Live marking<br>Verbal feedback<br>Marking and questioning to enhance learning/challenge misconceptions<br>Purple pen student response  | In lesson | Microsoft Teams assignments<br>Exam booklets<br>Microsoft OneNote | Verbal feedback<br>RAG rated assessment sheet<br>Whole class feedback<br>Purple pen student response  | Monthly     | Exam accounts<br>End of topic summative assessments<br>Mock exams     | Whole class feedback<br>RAG rated assessment sheet<br>Personalised feedback with comments<br>Assessment record sheets<br>WWW/EBIs<br>Personalised feedback with student response task | Monthly |

## Checking for Understanding — Glossary of Key Terms

Key:

Blue – Education Technology terms/programmes

Green – Classroom teaching terms/strategies

| Term                                   | Definition  |
|--|---|
| Adaptive Teaching                      | Adjusting lessons and activities to meet the needs of different learners so everyone can succeed.               |
| Do Now Activities                      | Short starter tasks at the beginning of a lesson to get students thinking and ready to learn.                   |
| Dropbox                                | An online storage tool where students and teachers can share and access files securely.                         |
| Exam Accounts<br>(Vocational subjects) | Online platforms provided by exam boards for vocational subjects, used to submit coursework and track progress. |
| Exit Questions                         | Quick questions at the end of a lesson to check what students have learned before they leave.                   |
| Feedback                               | Information given to students about their work to help them improve and understand what went well.              |
| Formative Assessment                   | Ongoing checks during learning (like quizzes or questions) to see how well students understand the topic.       |
| Hinge Questions                        | Key questions in a lesson that help teachers decide if students are ready to move on to the next step.          |
| Microsoft Copilot                      | An AI tool that helps teachers create resources, analyse data, and support learning.                            |
| Microsoft Forms                        | A digital tool for creating quizzes and surveys to check understanding quickly.                                 |
| Microsoft OneNote                      | An online notebook where students and teachers can store and organise classwork and feedback.                   |
| Microsoft Sway                         | A tool for creating interactive presentations and reports for lessons or projects.                              |
| Microsoft Teams                        | A communication and collaboration platform for sharing work, assignments, and messages.                         |
| Misconceptions                         | Incorrect ideas or misunderstandings that students may have about a topic.                                      |
| Peer Assessment                        | When students review and give feedback on each other's work.  |
| Pedagogy                               | The methods and approaches teachers use to help students learn effectively.                                     |
| Quality Assurance                      | Checks carried out by school leaders to make sure teaching and feedback meet high standards.                    |
| Question Level Analysis                | A detailed review of test answers to see which questions students found easy or difficult.                      |
| RAG Rating                             | A colour-coded system (Red, Amber, Green) to show how well students understand a topic.                         |
| Scaffolding                            | Support given by teachers (like hints or examples) to help students complete challenging tasks.                 |
| Self-Assessment                        | When students check their own work against success criteria to see what they did well and what to improve.      |
| Seneca Learning                        | An online learning platform with interactive revision activities for many subjects.                             |
| Sequence of Learning                   | The planned order of lessons and topics to help students build knowledge step by step.                          |
| Summative Assessment                   | End-of-topic or end-of-term tests that show what students have learned overall.                                 |
| Verbal Feedback                        | Spoken comments from teachers during lessons to help students improve immediately.                              |
| WALT                                   | "We Are Learning To" – a statement that explains the lesson's learning goal.                                    |
| WILF                                   | "What I'm Looking For" – a statement that explains what success looks like in the lesson.                       |
| Whole Class Feedback                   | When teachers give feedback to the whole class about common strengths and mistakes.                             |