Bentley Wood
High School for Girls

Curriculum, Teaching & Learning Policy

Part of the Quality of Education Suite of Policies

Committee Responsible:	**Curriculum and Achievement**
Reviewed by:	Kieran Robinson & Francis O'Sullivan
Review Date:	June 2025
Approved by Committee:	10th June 2025
Next Review Date:	June 2026

Curriculum statement

Intent

At Bentley Wood, we have the highest expectations for all students to achieve their best. We achieve this through a highly ambitious carefully sequenced curriculum, delivered from Year 7 to 13. This is based on gaining knowledge and skills that enable all students to achieve and succeed in their future education and employment. Our curriculum is underpinned by our CARE values; Communication, Achievement, Respect, Empathy.

Our curriculum covers the national curriculum and external qualifications but goes beyond preparing students for exams and tests. Students are well prepared for life in modern Britain and are aware of how they can make a positive contribution to society and environment.

Our carefully sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum provides all students the opportunity to achieve their best and to develop as confident young women:

- An inclusive curriculum, teachers further scaffold the curriculum to ensure all groups of students make progress
- all students are enabled to develop their literacy, numeracy and oracy skills, at an appropriately challenging level, in all subjects across the curriculum
- reading is included as a continuous skill development across all key stages for students of all abilities
- students' oracy skills are developed to enable them to confidently speak and listen
- time is provided for students to practice what they know and deepen their understanding
- intellectual curiosity and artistic appreciation is interwoven across all subjects
- spiritual; moral, social, cultural and physical development are central to our curriculum as part of developing the whole person

Years 7 -11

Students study a broad range of subjects from years 7-11, starting with full coverage of the National curriculum in years 7 and 8 and moving onto a full EBacc style curriculum in Years 9, 10 and 11. In addition to the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, P.E. and R.E., all students are able to study: art; computing; drama; geography; history; a range of modern languages, music and three technology subjects. At KS4 we add business studies, Latin, health and social care and psychology as part of our provision.

We ensure breadth and balance is maintained with GCSE choices and give every student the opportunity to develop their passion and interests as they grow. All students continue to study the core subjects and select each of the following: a modern foreign language (French or Spanish); humanity (geography or history) and a creative subject (art, graphics, textiles, drama, food and nutrition, music, PE or Latin). The percentage of students studying the EBacc is high, in the top 2% nationally, and students achieve well. Creative and practical subjects continue to be popular at KS4.

Years 12 & 13

At KS5 A level students select four A levels from over 14 subjects in year 12. This enables them to make an informed choice about the 3 or 4 subjects they want to continue with into year 13. Level 3 BTEC Health and Social Care is offered as a vocational route.

All students have a weekly PSHE curriculum program which includes age appropriate RSE lessons.

Implementation

"The quality of teaching is hugely important to the outcomes of young people, and great teaching can be learnt. *Raising the quality of teaching within existing schools is probably the single most effective thing we could do to promote both overall attainment and equity. (Wiliam, 2018)."*

from 'The Great Teaching Toolkit', 2020

The curriculum provides a framework for teaching students in school. The overall purpose is to:

- provide parity for all groups of students
- engage students promoting their curiosity and intuitiveness to learn and apply their knowledge and skills in different contexts
- provide students with a rich and detailed understanding of each subject
- challenge all groups of students
- help students learn empowering knowledge and remember it

At Bentley Wood, we all recognise our responsibility to teach students well through our curriculum. Teachers reflect carefully about how to share their subject knowledge through clearly presented materials that engage and inspire discussion. Curriculum design and its implementation is supported by Ofsted curriculum and subject reviews.

Lessons are appropriately scaffolded to ensure the curriculum is inclusive so that all groups of students can achieve the highest standards. Assessment is at the centre of an effective curriculum. Teachers regularly check work and address misconceptions and gaps in learning to ensure all students' learning needs are met. They direct students to the next steps in their learning through written and oral feedback.

Bentley Wood High School has invested considerably in IT so that it can be used to further support the implementation of the curriculum. Bentley Wood High School is embedding a student IT device scheme so that all students have excellent access to IT both in school and at home to support their learning. Teachers will utilise technology appropriately to support the progress and assessment of all groups of students through the intended curriculum. We have had a pedagogical focus on 'Pedtech'. This ensures we are using technology in a pedagogically informed manner.

"The question is no longer whether technology should have a place in the classroom, but how technology can most effectively be integrated to improve outcomes."
Educational Endowment Fund

"Technology will not replace great teachers, but technology in the hands of great teachers can be transformational."
George Couros, educator, author of the Innovator's Mindset

Bentley Wood recognises that great teaching is the heart of what we do. Consequently, we have moved explicitly to an evidence-informed pedagogical culture over recent years. We expect teachers to implement the curriculum using elements of such evidence-informed pedagogy. We support and train staff, in many ways, in pedagogical techniques such as retrieval practice, metacognition, dual coding, cognitive load theory, 'thinking hard' strategies, and so on.

The curriculum in each subject area is sequenced to ensure that students can recall prior knowledge and build upon this making connection within and across subjects. Students will revisit previous learning and be able to show their understanding through activities which require application of prior knowledge. Skills for future learning and employment e.g. teamwork, critical thinking, listening and speaking, are developed in all areas of the curriculum.

Students' complete homework tasks that reinforce the skills and activities already experienced and prepare them for the next steps in their learning. We extend our curriculum further with a rich programme of experiences through trips, additional activities and clubs. Weekend and evening pursuits including university access courses, lectures, theatre visits and the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Many trips and visits are organised to support and add breadth to the curriculum such as Geography field trips, Classics trips to the British Museum and presentations of classical plays on our school grounds, Drama trips to great plays in central London, MFL and History trips to abroad, and ski trips to France or Italy open to all.

We are fully committed and able to deliver all aspects of our curriculum in school in our classrooms and through a virtual platform if needed.

Impact
The effectiveness and delivery of our curriculum is reviewed systematically by leaders through our half termly monitoring, evaluation and review (MER) system. (See Appendix C).

- all groups of students can access an appropriate curriculum
- students contribute positively to their learning
- students learn well within and beyond the classroom; attendance/participation in enrichment activities is high
- high rates of progress are delivered by the school for students of all abilities and backgrounds
- students' progress to their next stage confidently and show commitment to lifelong learning

- students develop respect for each other and members of the community and understand how to stay healthy and safe
- student focus groups consistently feedback about how much they value their teachers

The curriculum will be supported by appropriate continuing professional development for teachers.

Monitoring Evaluation Review (MER)

The effectiveness and delivery of our ambitious curriculum is reviewed systematically through our half termly monitoring, evaluation and review (MER) cycle. There are two MER structures, 1) HOY/Pastoral and 2) HOD/Curriculum. This allows us to measure the impact of our curriculum intent and its implementations and ensure it is inclusive. Middle and senior leaders have clear roles to jointly lead and support their pastoral and departmental teams at all stages in the process. Activities are designed to challenge and enable consistency, celebrate good practice and firmly establish a school held belief that we all should have the very highest expectations for all our students. (See Appendix C for overview).

Learning visits

This is an entitlement for teachers, helping to support their professional development, enabling them to demonstrate and explore good practice. Senior and middle leaders are accountable for the the impact of the curriculum and undertake regular lesson visits to inform the process of self-evaluation. Individual lesson observations are carried out within a culture of professional dialogue.

Our lesson visit proforma reinforces our school's focus on evidence-informed pedagogy. We use termly or half-termly pedagogical foci, and embedded lesson visit prompts in Bluesky (our lesson visit platform), to maintain our focus on continually developing our teaching practice. Lesson visits are one method of quality assurance which let us know how successfully the types of pedagogy we train staff on are being embedded.

Learning walks

Learning walks are also a part of our evaluation process. These are shorter and less formal visits for purposes such as monitoring students and the progress of different groups. These learning walks would be for less than half the lesson and teacher performance would not be recorded. Learning visits may be at any time:

- For purposes of action research
- School review periods where there will be a specific focus;
- HODS/HOYS will arrange their own
- SLG visit lessons to fulfil their duty to quality assure student learning experience

Student focus group/questionnaires

We believe that all students are entitled to contribute actively in shaping their educational experience they and their fellow students receive. Through our MER focus groups are used to evaluate their learning experience. Our students and school council support our ethos that students are empowered to give their opinions and suggestions on an open, honest, secure yet constructive way. Student focus groups should be a cross section of a class of year group to gauge a wide variety of views.

Work Scrutiny

Students' books/work will be scrutinised to help gauge the quality of teaching, learning and progress over time preferably with the student so that a full understanding of their learning is provided in context.

Peer Observations

This is carried out on an informal basis and staff are encouraged to observe each other in order to develop their own practice. Peer observations are jointly agreed upon by teachers and usually have a specific focus.

Responsibilities

Governing Body:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets;
- Ensuring enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements;
- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, science and (subject to providing the right to withdraw) religious education, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement;
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEND);
- All courses provided for pupils below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, are approved by the secretary of state;
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements;
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum;
- Pupils from year 8 onwards are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced.

Responsibilities of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met;
- Ensure standards of teaching are high, reflecting our focus on evidence-informed pedagogy, and that interventions and support are offered in Departments we line-manage where required
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board;
- Where appropriate, the individual needs of some pupils are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from all or part of the National Curriculum;
- Manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate;
- Ensures the governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum;
- Ensures the governing board is advised on whole-school targets to make informed decisions;
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN;
- Ensure standards in IT remain high so that teachers and students can use IT to effectively implement and engage with the curriculum.

Responsibilities of Head of Department and responsibility holders within the department:

- To ensure their subject curriculum reflects the whole school curriculum intent, implementation and impact stated earlier in the policy;
- To follow the curriculum planning expectations set and agreed by senior and middle leaders (Appendix A);
- To lead their teams on the implementation of an ambitious inclusive curriculum
- Ensure standards of teaching in their Department are high, reflecting our school focus on evidence-informed pedagogy
- To ensure interventions and support are offered where required to improve teaching practice, working with the attached Senior Leader where appropriate
- To measure the impact of their curriculum and ensure it meets the needs of all students;
- To resource their departments curriculum creatively and effectively;
- To review and update documents with their teams at appropriate times through the departments MER cycle and as a response to examination analysis;
- To ensure teachers have access to subject specific continual professional development.;
- To ensure that short, medium and long-term schemes of learning provide opportunities for teachers to utilise student's IT device to support their learning.

Responsibilities of Head of Year / Deputy Head of Year:

- To monitor the implementation and impact of the curriculum across subjects as part of the MER cycle and exam analysis;
- To provide feedback to SLG and Heads of Department where appropriate to support the further development and implementation of the curriculum;
- To ensure the PSHE/RSE curriculum reflects the whole school curriculum intent, implementation and impact stated earlier in the policy;
- To follow the curriculum planning expectations set and agreed by senior and middle leaders for PSHE/RSE;
- To lead their teams on the implementation of an ambitious inclusive PSHE/RSE curriculum;
- Ensure standards of teaching PSHE/RSE are high, meeting the needs of most able as well as the least able, including use of 'thinking hard' discussions to promote learning and engagement
- To offer support to colleagues where required to improve teaching of PSHE/RSE, working with the attached Senior Leader where appropriate
- To measure the impact of the PSHE/RSE curriculum and ensure it meets the needs of all students;
- To resource their PSHE/RSE curriculum creatively and effectively;
- To ensure teachers have access to PSHE/RSE specific continual professional development;
- To review and update documents with their teams at appropriate times through the pastoral MER cycles;
- To ensure that all students are coming to school with the right equipment ready to learn (including student's fully charged IT device).

Responsibilities of the class teacher:

- To be fully skilled and informed to deliver their department curriculum effectively
- To ensure they follow all the schedules maintaining consistency across the team
- To be actively responsible for developing and improving their own teaching practice, utilising the resources the school provides – CPD, resources, and so on – to drive their professional development
- To actively engage with best practice and educational research to develop their knowledge of evidence-informed pedagogical practice
- To feedback and develop the curriculum with their teams;
- To appropriately utilise their IT device to support the delivery of the curriculum;
- To appropriately facilitate student's use of their IT device to support progress through the curriculum and help them learning and remember more.

Responsibilities of the parent carer:

- To take an interest in all aspects of the school curriculum and positively encourage full commitment to the curriculum on offer;
- To engage with the school about their daughter's progress through her curriculum;
- To attend all parents evenings;

- Allow students to charge their IT device overnight ready for school the following day.

Responsibilities of the student:

- To engage fully in all aspects of the school curriculum;
- To try their best and behaved in a way that allows others to achieve their best;
- To bring their fully charged 1:2:1 IT device into school every day.

Important documents to refer to:

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Careers Guidance and Inspiration policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Learning and Teaching Policy
- More Able Students Policy
- Assessment Policy
- British Values Statement
- EAL Policy
- Feedback and Marking Policy
- Homework Policy
- SMSC policy
- Curriculum Website documents
- Curriculum Plan – Key Stage 3 to 5
- Planning for curriculum change
- Year 7 welcome pack
- KS4 GCSE selection booklet
- Bentley Wood 6th form prospectus
- Harrow Collegiate 6th Form Brochure
- School Improvement Plan - MER schedule
- OFSTED research document: An investigation into how to assess the quality of education through curriculum intent, implementation and impact

Appendix A: Levels of curriculum planning

Short term: Lesson

What do we mean by a short-term plan?
- ***Lesson by lesson plan for a unit of learning***

Expectations
Short term planning includes
- lesson intent & success criteria
- Activities utilising student IT devices explicitly planned
- stretch & challenge- teaching to the top & scaffolding down
- pedagogy planning
- explicit teaching of memory-techniques
- teaching key words/technical terms
- addressing misconceptions
- specific reading opportunities
- links to careers/ advice

Each lesson/SOL available on the shared drive within a separate folder

What is the purpose of short-term plans?
- *evidence of an ambitious curriculum being implemented*
- *supports collaborative planning and reduces workload*
- *supports induction and subject specific CPD*

Medium term: Topics

What do we mean by a medium-term plan?
- ***A coherent plan that outlines the sequence of learning across a half term/term***

Expectations
Medium term planning includes:
- An overview of the unit with skills and knowledge to be developed
- Key topics identified with clear intent linked to SOLs
- Explanations of sequencing / interleaving across topic
- Clear planning of stretch & challenge with scaffolding for SEND
- homework
- reading
- assessment and follow up plans
- character development opportunities
- links to careers/ advice
- enrichment and student leadership opportunities

What is the purpose of medium-term plans?
- *evidence of a well-planned ambitious curriculum*
- *supports joint departmental planning / subject specific CPD*
- *supports induction*
- *ensures consistency for a team to keep on track with their teaching*
- *shows clearly when to assess*
- *supports student and teachers in preparing for formal assessments*

Curriculum map: Key stages

What do we mean by a curriculum map?
- *A plan that shows the 'learning journey' of a student from KS2-5 within that subject*

Expectations:

Curriculum mapping includes:

- overview of the course
  clearly demonstrates how knowledge and skills are sequenced developed coherently across and between key stages
- clearly demonstrates how knowledge and skills are developed coherently between key stages
- enrichment opportunities

What role does a curriculum map play?
- *shows how key skills and knowledge will be built, consolidated and developed between key stages*
- *features on the school website – parent and student friendly language*
- *departments can plan coherently how skills and knowledge will be interleaved between topics over time*
- *links between concepts can be seen across a key stage*

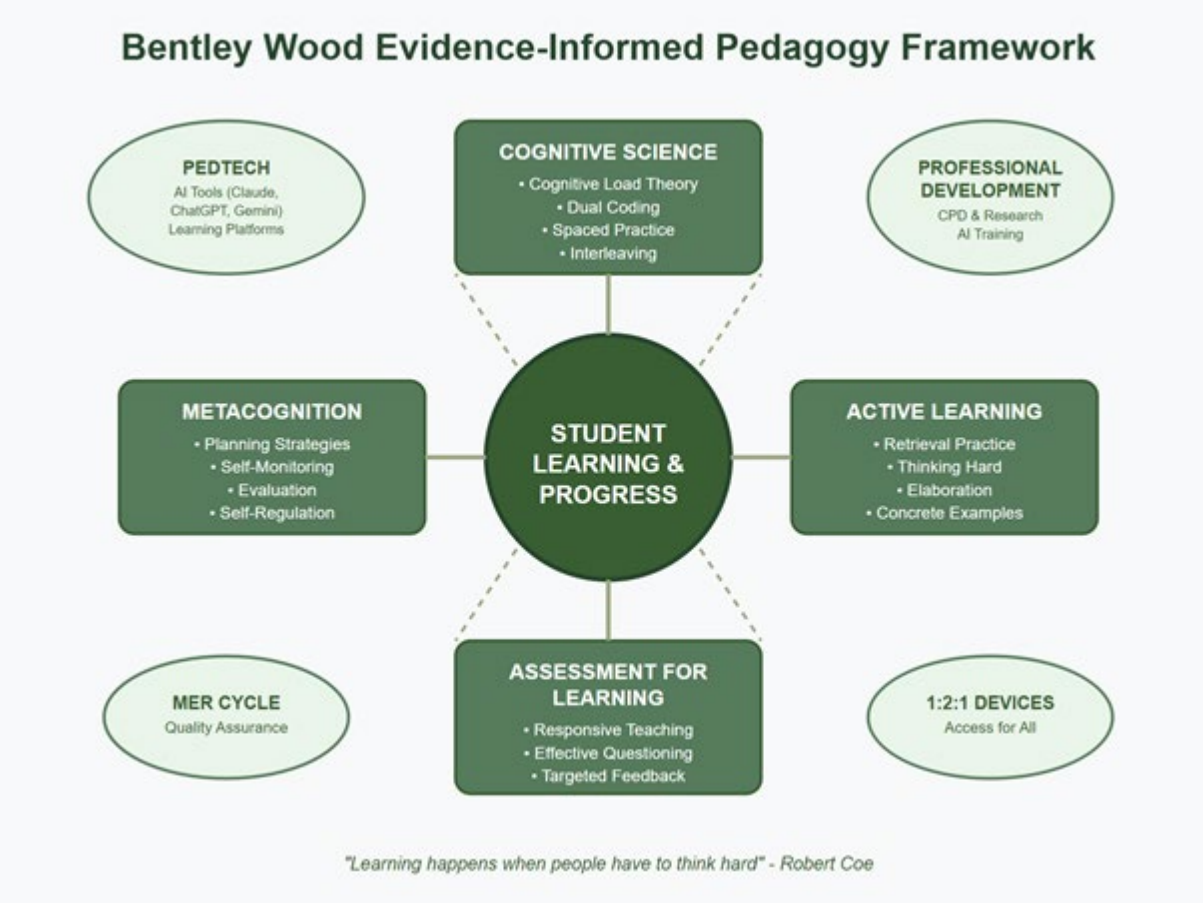
Appendix B: Great Teaching - Evidence-Informed Pedagogy at Bentley Wood

"Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better"

— Dylan Wiliam

Our Pedagogical Framework

At Bentley Wood we harness the best available research, cognitive science and professional expertise to maximise learning. Evidence-informed pedagogy is our common language for planning, teaching and reflecting, ensuring that every lesson maximises student learning and retention.



Core Principles of Evidence-Informed Teaching at Bentley Wood

1. **Cognitive Science Foundation**
    a. **Cognitive Load Theory** – We structure lessons to manage intrinsic, extraneous, and germane cognitive load, ensuring students can process new information effectively
    b. **Dual Coding** – Combining verbal and visual information to strengthen memory pathways
    c. **Spaced Practice** – learning is revisited at expanding intervals to secure long-term retention.
    d. **Interleaving** – mixing topics and problem types to deepen discrimination and transfer.

2. **Active Learning Strategies**
    a. **Retrieval Practice** – frequent, low-stakes recall tasks that shift knowledge into long-term memory.
    b. **Elaboration** – pupils explain, justify and connect ideas, adding meaning and depth.
    c. **Concrete Examples** – specific instances illuminate abstract concepts.
    d. **Thinking Hard** – designing activities that require effortful thinking, as "learning happens when people have to think hard" (Coe, 2013)

3. **Assessment for Learning (AfL)**
    a. **Responsive Teaching** – using formative assessment checks to adapt instruction in real-time
    b. **Effective Questioning** – planned questions that probe understanding, promote deeper thinking, and reveal misconceptions.
    c. **Feedback** – timely, actionable guidance that pupils can act on.
    d. **Self- & Peer-Assessment** – developing students' ability to evaluate their own and others' work (metacognition)

4. **Metacognitive Development**
    a. **Planning Strategies** – pupils learn how to approach tasks strategically.
    b. **Monitoring Progress** – pupils check their understanding as they work.
    c. **Evaluation** – pupils judge the success of strategies and outcomes.
    d. **Self-Regulation** – gradual release towards building independent, reflective learners who can direct their own learning

Pedtech & AI to Empower

Pedtech is **the pedagogically-informed use of educational technology** to amplify, not replace, great teaching. It is distinct from—but complemented by—our **1:2:1 device programme**.

What Pedtech Looks Like	**Examples & Tools**
Automating retrieval and spacing	Carousel Learning, Educake, Seneca schedule quizzes and analyse gaps
Generating high-quality exemplars & dual-coded visuals	Claude, ChatGPT, Gemini, Gamma, TeachMateAI
Streamlining formative assessment	Microsoft Forms, Google Quizzes with instant analytics
Supporting modelling & explanation	Visualisers, AI image generators, on-demand screencasts

Pedtech Principle: *Technology is adopted **only** when it demonstrably strengthens an evidence-informed move (e.g., retrieval or modelling). Devices serve learning—not vice-versa.*

AI Tools to Support Teaching

- Staff are trained and encouraged to use AI tools (Claude, ChatGPT, Gemini, TeachMateAI, Gamma, etc.) to:
    - Create high-quality, differentiated resources efficiently
    - Generate varied practice questions and examples
    - Reduce workload while amplifying resource quality
    - Design evidence-informed learning activities
- AI supports but never replaces professional pedagogical judgment (see our AI policy)

1:2:1 Device Strategy: Our 1:2:1 device programme complements our Pedtech approach by ensuring all students have access to these pedagogically-selected tools both at school and home. Devices are used in lessons when they enhance evidence-informed teaching strategies. Our 1:2:1 devices provide equitable access to these tools and sit **alongside** other resources (mini-whiteboards, textbooks, slideshows).

Example of Evidence-Informed Lesson Routine

(One possible structure. While we are not prescriptive about lesson structure, this example demonstrates how evidence-informed principles can shape a lesson. Teachers are encouraged to adapt and vary their approach based on subject needs and learning objectives)

1. Beginning (Activation)

- Retrieval starter linking to prior learning.
- Share learning intentions & success criteria.
- Activate relevant schemas.

2. Explanation & Modelling

- Managing cognitive load through careful sequencing
- Using worked examples and dual coding
- Making thinking processes explicit

3. Guided Practice

- Scaffolded application with gradual release
- Checking for understanding through questioning
- Addressing misconceptions immediately

4. Independent Practice

- Deliberate practice with increasing challenge.
- Metacognitive prompts for self-monitoring ("What strategy will you use?").
- Opportunities for elaboration & connection-making.

5. Consolidation

- Summary retrieval / exit ticket.
- Feed-forward to future learning.
- Homework spaced & interleaved.

Note: *Effective evidence-informed teaching can take many forms. The key is that pedagogical choices are grounded in research and 'what works', not that lessons follow a rigid template.*

Professional Development Expectations

- Engage with educational research
- Implement evidence-informed strategies consistently, using educational technology where it adds value.
- Reflect on practice using our lesson observation framework
- Share best practice through peer observation and collaboration
- Continuously develop pedagogical expertise

Measuring Impact

We evaluate the effectiveness of our evidence-informed approach through:

- Student progress data analysis
- Lesson observations focused on pedagogical strategies
- Student voice feedback on learning experiences
- Work scrutiny examining the impact of teaching methods
- Regular review through our MER cycle

At Bentley Wood we do not merely teach subjects—we apply the science of learning so every pupil can know more, remember more, do more, and achieve their potential. Great teaching saves lives.