

Handout 4.2: A questioning code of practice

Best  **practice every day at our school is seen when ...**

- a. There is a whole-school approach to questioning, in which the purposes of questions used are clear (stretch and challenge).
- b. Planning has the Key Questions (lower- and higher-order) which would structure a task or activity and the learning outcomes to which the questioning is linked.
- c. Staff communicate to pupils what these learning outcomes are, against which pupils' responses would be anticipated (links with AfL).
- d. Strategies used: for example, devil's advocate; probing/follow-up questions (who agrees? disagrees? who can tell me more?); asking for a summary; non-verbal responses are also encouraged (thumbs up!/down!); PMI/OPV/C&S; etc.
- e. Questions are differentially targeted at specific pupils¹ and several, rather than just one question/s are asked of the same pupil to encourage thinking aloud; and pupils are asked to choose other pupils to answer a question.
- f. Prompting questions (including non-verbal questions) used effectively to develop individual responses, to gain alternatives and/or to clarify what has been said.
- g. Questions (including in verbal and written 'marking') are used to challenge thinking; ALL pupils are challenged effectively.
- h. Pupils provided with opportunities to ask questions (of themselves, their peers and of other adults in the classroom) and criteria for 'good questions' are discussed.
- i. Questions used stimulate higher- as well as lower-order thinking, encouraging analysis and reasoning, justification, speculation and creative thinking.
- j. There is not always an expectation of 'one' answer ... ask the pupils to propose several different responses and possibilities and respond non-judgementally.
- k. Classroom and school displays and materials incorporate higher- and lower-order questions, and are interactive for pupils ... including Challenge Corners/Boxes.
- l. Pupils are given the appropriate 'waiting' or 'thinking' time to respond to questions; Think, Pair, Share strategy is used as appropriate; offer a range of response ways².
- m. Pupils provided with effective feedback and feedforward to develop learning (AfL) including use of self-assessment, peer coaching strategies, data analysis, pupil tracking.

Sample material from the DIY training pack *Questioning for Challenge* by Ann Bridgland.
Order from www.optimus-education.com/shop



¹ Target at anyone who had toast for breakfast; anyone who likes Marmite; anyone who watched X last night; more able; etc.

² Answer in pairs; answer by at least four of you; answer as a 30 sec role-play; answer as a drawing/diagram; answer as a musical etc.