

Myth 6: “Weaker students should study easier work.”

The Truth

At The Four Stones MAT, we believe that “a teachers job is not to make work easy. It is to make it difficult.” (John Hattie). By this, we mean that all lessons should contain challenge and that all students should be entitled to learn the same knowledge and have the opportunity to experience the same curriculum. However, we recognise that there is a difference between asking a student to work hard and challenging them to a point where it causes stress and creates a barrier to learning. Therefore, knowledge of our students is key when planning for challenge in a lesson.

Our teachers use the knowledge of their students to plan purposeful activities that motivate students to show determination and resilience when challenged. With the challenge in place, teachers ensure that they provide adequate temporary scaffolding, ensuring everyone is supported to achieve their potential. Scaffolding is about using different strategies to exploit the same resource.

What you will see in practice:

Teachers thinking aloud to give students access to ‘expert thinking’

Teachers providing prompts to support student thinking

Teachers providing checklists that students can use to assess their own work and to identify what they are missing

Teachers providing high-quality exemplars that students can use to compare to their own work

Teachers providing poor exemplars that students need to improve

Teachers providing frameworks as aide memoires for working out ideas

Teachers questioning to prompt and guide student thinking

Teachers making connections to previous learning

Teachers explicitly teaching key vocabulary in advance

Teachers using visual aids

Did you know?

Studies show that Scaffolding helps students bridge the gap between what they know and what they need to know, supports them as they develop new skills and breaks down unfamiliar skills into smaller, easily accessible ideas.

The way teachers interact with students affects students’ achievement (Praetorius et al. 2012). Scaffolding and more specifically contingent support represents intervening in such a way that the learner can *succeed* at the task (Mattanah et al. 2005). Contingent support continually provides learners with problems of controlled complexity; it makes the task manageable at any time (Wood and Wood 1996).

Further info

Click the image below for more information.

