

## 3a. The Benefits of Teaching Metacognition Explicitly for Pupils

Metacognition has often been defined as 'thinking about thinking' but it is much more than this..

Having a metacognitive approach can be beneficial in both supporting teachers and children to reach their potential. Metacognitive thinking, although it appears to come naturally to some children and is largely dependent on adult input in the early years, can tail off if not taught explicitly in the classroom. It is therefore important to develop self-regulated learning in the classroom.

### Benefits to pupils

#### Improves progress and attainment by seven months

A metacognitive approach can improve pupil progress and attainment by seven months for free-school meal pupils and disadvantaged pupils.

#### Powerful predictor of maths performance at age 6

Research indicates that metacognition is a powerful predictor of maths performance at age 6 largely through its effect on counting ability

#### May help make up for cognitive limitations

An adequate level of metacognition may compensate for pupil's cognitive limitations'.

### Develop language capability

Teaching metacognitive strategies explicitly helps develop language capability in all areas of learning by helping pupils to transfer what they have learnt from one context to the next, or from a previous task to a new task, thereby practising and embedding key vocabulary.

### Helps to filter out information and help to focus on important aspects

Developing metacognition and self-regulated learning helps filter out unnecessary information, which is a very important skill to have as we are continually being bombarded with information. Being able to filter out information can lead us to develop insights, as we begin to then focus on what is important.

### Improves motivation, behaviour and redirects attention

It enables the teacher shift and redirect attention to where it is required in the learning. It helps pupils refocus their attention should they find it wandering. It can also be used to promote teacher neutrality, where the focus for behaviour is shifted from the child to the task in hand; this can be highly motivating for pupils. Motivation in turn leads to improved confidence, which then impacts on memory, and progress and attainment.

### Helps to deepen learning

One of the key principles underpinning the development of metacognitive strategies is challenge. When pupils receive that right amount of challenge, it helps to develop reflection, which is crucial in developing metacognition and self-regulated learning.

### Improves teamworking skills

Group efficacy can also be developed through the dialogical teaching element of metacognition and learning becomes deepened and embedded. Pupils improve their teamworking and prosocial skills and this leads to them becoming socially interdependent.

### Helps to critically evaluate learning

Exploring areas of difficulty and difference enables pupils to develop deeper thought processes required to critically evaluate their learning.

### Improves critical thinking, problem-solving, reasoning and memory

Metacognitive strategies enable novice pupils to journey from knowing knowledge to critical thinking and helps them to use the knowledge to solve problems and to reason. This helps to embed learning deeply and helps to develop big ideas and schemas of deeper learning, which improves memory.

What other benefits are there for pupils?