Key Characteristics of Quality First Teaching

QFT originates in the then Department for Children, Schools and Families’ guide to personalised learning published in 2008. The key characteristics are summarised as:

* highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives
* high demands of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning
* high levels of interaction for all pupils
* appropriate use of teacher questioning, modelling and explaining
* an emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk both individually and in groups
* an expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently
* regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate pupils.

(DCSF, 2008) *Personalised learning – a practical guide* 00844-2008DOM-EN

QFT should be on offer to all students; the inclusion of all in high quality, everyday personalised learning. The approaches listed below are cited as being the best way to reduce from the start the number of learners who need support with their learning and/or behaviour. The list could help remind classroom teachers about strategies to employ in order to engage and motivate all students, including those where there is concern about progress:

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| **Lessons should include:** | **Teachers should provide opportunities for :** |
| Freedom and flexibility |  | Reflecting on and talking through a process |  |
| Consistency of expectations |  | Reflecting and evaluating at the end of a process |  |
| Explaining and illustrating |  | Exploring and investigating |  |
| Guided learning |  | Choosing tasks |  |
| An element of humour |  | Working with different people within well thought out group work |  |
| Directing and telling |  | Developing independence |  |
| The chance to have fun |  | Working at individual pace |  |
| Explanations of clear targets and how to reach them |  | Interesting and relevant extension activities when work is completed quickly  |  |
| Summarising and reminding |  | Making useful mistakes, and learning from them in a supportive environment |  |
| Practical work |  | Taking risks when working |  |
| Study skills taught through subjects |  | Extended interaction and dialogue |  |
| Treating children as intellectual equals |  | Challenging beliefs and perceptions |  |
| Variety |  | Alternative forms of recording |  |
| Chances to have the whole class involved |  | Working beyond the syllabus |  |
| Quizzes and competitions |  | Questioning and being curious |  |
| Thinking activities |  | Investigation and problem solving |  |
| Drama and role play |  | Making connections with the real world |  |
| Activities of varying length appropriate to task and need of class/individual learner |  | Demonstration (teacher and other pupils) |  |
| Time limited tasks |  | Consolidating and embedding learning |  |
| A focus on big ideas |  | Demonstrating their own love of learning |  |