

## How we make learning challenging – in a good way!



Children learn in different ways and at different rates. Queens Road Academy approaches learning by first ensuring key knowledge from previous years is remembered or understood, then introducing the new learning. We know some pupils grasp key ideas quickly and we provide a learning diet for them which is more complex. We challenge these pupils through an approach to learning called Blooms Taxonomy. This approach is very important to the way we deliver our curriculum topics in 2-year cycles, as we can ensure the learning between adjoining years groups is progressively more challenging.

Some ways this may be observed is:

- **Remember** — At the lowest level of thinking, kids are expected to recall, such as place names, dates, facts and events. Locating, matching and finding are sample tasks at this level of complexity, as is identifying the 5 Ws (who, what, when, where, which).
- **Understand** — Slightly more complex than simply recalling, the understanding level requires kids to demonstrate comprehension. Typically, they would be asked to explain, classify, infer or summarize.
- **Apply** — Using what they have learned in a new way exemplifies the application level. At this level, kids might be asked to solve, model, construct or experiment with different elements of the subject.
- **Analyse** — Breaking something down into steps or component parts typifies the analysing level, as does finding evidence to support inferences or generalizations. Thinking tasks at this level include categorising, dissecting and spotting differences.
- **Evaluate** — At this level, the cognitive demand is pretty high. Kids might be asked to make a judgment based on a set of criteria, to prove or disprove, to justify or give an opinion.
- **Create** — The greatest demand is at the creating level. Here, kids are required to put information together in a new or unique way. They might be asked to design or construct, to theorize or invent, to propose a plan or a solution.

### HOW CAN PARENTS SUPPORT KIDS WITH HIGHER ORDER THINKING?

Parents can support their kids in developing higher order thinking by attending to the questions they ask them. Rather than simple yes and no questions, focus on open-ended enquiries where kids can draw upon their own life experiences. Higher-level questioning will prompt higher order thinking in kids. Help kids envision a scenario and imagine they are there, then ask them questions that require complex thinking. Here are a few question stems that could be adapted to a variety of situations: What would happen if . . .

- How is this like (blank)? How is it different?
- Can you think of another way to solve this problem?
- Does this remind you of anything/anyone you have seen/met before?
- What is most important?
- How could we prove that . . .?

