

Coaching for Schools

A guide for schools and teachers ...

*“Coaching is releasing a teacher’s potential to maximise their own performance.
It is helping them to learn, rather than teaching them. “*

TE@CHER TOOLKIT

Classroom Ideas, Teacher Training, School Resources

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What is Coaching?

Every school will be committed to improving the practice of all teachers, but how they do this is another matter. The first question to ask, is does your school follow a quantitative or qualitative approach for supporting teaching and learning? If it's the former, the the likelihood is that teachers are teaching for performance in observations rather than to support teaching and learning. Providing coaching for every member of staff and to continue to invest in teaching and learning (to move away from lesson gradings and one-off performance) is something that should be taken very seriously and with careful planning, coaching is a solution for schools which can unlock teacher-potential that can improve the learning of students.

Questions you should answer / discuss with colleagues:

- What benefits do you get from the formal observations?
- How can you be even better at teaching and learning?
- How do we move away from one-off performances?

Definitions:

A coaching relationship is often misunderstood and is confused with mentoring.

- **Mentoring** is an ongoing relationship that lasts for a long period of time, taking a broader view of the person; meetings are often informal.
- **Coaching** has a set duration and meetings are held in a more structured nature, and on a regular basis. Coaching always focuses on specific development areas, with the agenda focused on achieving specific, immediate goals.

What is it? Why do you do it? How is it done?

Write up a collaborative definition that helps you clarify what coaching is.

What is coaching?	What isn't coaching?
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•

“Schools have a wealth of talent and a wide range of experience and expertise. Coaching can enable a school to unlock this potential and empower all teachers to further develop their skills as effective classroom practitioners. “

Why?

- To recognise that all teachers are learners and that we can learn from each other.
- To increase the amount of rich dialogue about teaching across the school.
- To improve the overall quality of teaching and learning.

List 3 attributes are most proud of that you to bring to teaching?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How?

It will be the coach's first responsibility to ensure teaching staff are clear about expectations and can offer this with support and challenge. To underpin this aim, the most important aspect of any coaching programme, will be the rigorous training to support the coach and provide the time offered to complete this vision. It will be the moderators [as suggested in this document] who will support the coaches in achieving and implementing the programme.

The *teacher* will **not** be expected to complete learning walks with their coach as part of their programme. This is not the purpose of coaching. The aim is for the coaching to be classroom based and focused on what is happening in classrooms. The coaching methodology is for the role of the coach to ask questions and not suggest or give personal preferences. Video observation is also recommended and should also be used to support teacher development.

The Role of a Coach:

- **The role of the 'coach'** Is the person who steers the coaching conversation with the teacher. Through the use of open questions, the coach allows the teacher to reflect upon the learning experience in the classroom.
- **The role of the 'teacher'** is in charge of their own development and is at the centre of the coaching conversation. They will be on a challenging journey through open reflection, of the effectiveness of learning in their classroom, and how they can contribute to improving it even further.
- **The role of the 'moderator'** is to quality assure the development of all coaches by observing coaching conversations between teacher and coach. The moderator will only support when conversations get stuck.

Coaching Conversations:

This is the 'learning dialogue' that takes place between the coach, the teacher and the moderator. The aim of the conversation is to allow the teacher to move forward through self-reflection and by unlocking their potential in specific areas of teaching and learning.

Role 1: The coach

This is the person who steers the coaching conversation with the teacher through use of open questions. The coach allows the teacher to reflect upon the learning experience of the pupils in their classroom; to support the teacher in selecting strategies that will help improve the learning experience of all pupils.

Skills required from the coach

- To listen actively, accommodating and valuing silence.
- To concentrate on what is actually being said, using body language to signal attention.
- To relate sensitively and work through processes to build trust and confidence.
- To draw on evidence from practice; including evidence-based research for development.
- To understand the goal of the teacher and to observe, analyse and reflect on practice.
- To make coaching conversations explicit and interpret feedback collaboratively.
- To use open questions to raise awareness, reveal beliefs and enable the teacher to act.
- To relay what is being said, mirroring words to check meaning and/or value thinking.
- To set aside existing relationships based on experience, role, hierarchy and friendship.

Role 2: The teacher

The teacher is in charge of their own development, so they are at the centre of the coaching conversation. The teacher should be on a challenging journey of self-discovery, through open, honest and non-judgemental reflection of the effectiveness of pupils' learning in their classroom. How they contribute to improving pupils' learning even further, will be the overall aim and acknowledging that we all have areas to work on, is not admitting failure; rather that we have more potential. Coaching conversations should help unlock this.

Skills required from the teacher

- To act and respond positively to feedback in order to acquire better knowledge and skills.
- To discuss practice and core concepts in a professional dialogue with their coach.
- To understand personal needs and develop strategies that respond to dialogue.
- To observe, analyse and reflect upon practice and make explicit in follow-up conversations.
- To think and act honestly on personal development of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- To teach better in-line with the Learning and Behaviour for Learning policies.

Role 3: The moderator

This is the person who will provide a check and balance as staff develop skills in coaching and learn how to be effective coaches. The moderator will listen and observe both the coach and the teacher during the coaching conversation and ensure that the methodology of coaching conversations are strictly followed. When the conversation gets stuck, they are the person who will aim to get it going again through the use of open questions.

Skills required from the moderator

- To maintain the ability, to gauge when to intervene and when to remain a silent observer.
- To listen, analyse and reflect upon the conversation between the coach and the teacher.
- To support the coach in maintaining a questioning style approach during the conversation.
- To support the teacher in developing reflective responses, and to questions posed.

Quality Assurance:

The moderators will quality assure the entire process. The will include:

- Communicating the criteria required for coaching and coaches.
- To verify the nominations of teachers to be coached in term 1.
- To identify the coaches in term 6 and term 1; to train the coaches in term 6 and term 1.
- To quality control the coaching taking place in term 2 and term 4..
- To quality assure coaching conversations in term 3 and term 5.
- To facilitate feedback and development of the programme and those participating.
- Note, one term equates to 8 weeks.

What is a common vernacular?

All coaches will be trained before they can coach any other member of staff. It will be expected that all coaches follow a common vernacular - largely vocabulary from a school's teaching and learning policy, behaviour for learning policy or vision and values. Conversations must follow the G.R.O.W format and feedback conversations will follow a P.P.I.P.L format.

It will be a requirement that all coaches follow a specific script with key attributes developed and refined in listening and questioning teachers who are being coached. The common vernacular is defined and sequence provided below.

Conversation Structure: (GROW)

How a coach should construct their conversation using G.R.O.W.

1. G (**Goal**) What do you want?
2. R (**Reality**) What is the current situation?
3. O (**Options**) What could you do?
4. W (**What** and by when?) What will you do?

How a coach should structure their feedback using P.P.I.P.L

1. **Praise** (link to previous action step)
2. **Probe** (start with Q to narrow focus)
3. **Identify** (identify future support)
4. **Plan** (Solution Focused)
5. **Lock** (lock in action points)

What is the methodology when using common vernacular?

All coaches will refer to a common vernacular using key phrases from e.g. [T & L policy](#).

Coaching Common Vernacular		
Mark	Plan	Teach
Secure overview	Clear and precise	Teachers of literacy and numeracy
Primarily formative	Learn	Learning outcome
Yellow box	'So why?'	Key words
Regular	Evidence	Go with the learning
Marking code	Differentiation	Working hard
	Quality First	Key strategies
	Meets the needs of all students and groups	Learning has stuck
	Seating plan	
	Mint class	
	No dead time	
	Flying start	
	Parkinson's Law	

Coaching for Coaches

Questioning Skills

One of the most important skills of a coach, will be the **listening and questioning** that allows the teacher to reflect and unpack the learning intentions in their classroom. How far they achieved these, with a focus on how things could be done differently next time will be the focus of the coach. The coach should only use open-ended questions which will give the teacher a chance to reflect and think deeply and thoughtfully about the learning in their lesson. Avoiding 'why' questions is a helpful coaching tip, as the purpose of coaching is to look inwardly at oneself to drive personal development. 'Why' questions often lead to a teacher exploring external reasons, rather than personal cognitive decisions, that may not necessarily help a person move forward or improve the learning in a lesson.

- For example, the coach asks 'why did you take answers only from pupils with their hand up?'
- The teacher replies. 'I did this because my line manager at my last school said this was a great idea!'

Instead, the coach could ask 'what impact did you, taking answers only from those pupils with their hands up, have on the learning of pupils who never put up their hand?'

The teacher now has to really think about the impact this is having on the learning of all pupils. The teacher might reply 'I always do this, but I can see now that as a result of taking answers only from those pupils with their hands up, I never get to hear from the quieter pupils and I am unable to check understanding and what pupils have learnt'.

Top two tips for effective questioning

1. Always use open questions = answers that cannot have a 'yes' or 'no' answer.
2. Avoid asking 'why' questions.

Question Matrix Grid

	Is? / Does? Present	Has? / Did? / Was? Past	Can? Possibility	Should? Opinion	Would? / Could? Probability	Will? Prediction	Might? Imagination
What? Event							
Where? Place							
When? Time							
Which? Choice							
Who? Person							
Why? Reason							
How? Meaning							

G.R.O.W Model - for structuring your conversation

Some **possible** questions to guide your structured conversations - select **before** discussions start.

Goal

- What would you like to discuss? What would it be useful for you to discuss in this session?
- What did you want to achieve in the lesson? What would you like to achieve?
- What would you like to be different when you leave this session?
- What would indicate to you that this has been time well spent?
- What do you want instead of the problem?
- Imagine you were successful. What is that like? What will you be doing differently?
- What would you notice? What would it be like if things were better?
- When things are more like you want them to be, what will students do differently?

Reality

- Where are you right now? What are the facts?
- Let's look at the evidence from the lesson. What does it tell you?
- What really pleased you about the lesson?
- On a scale of 0 -10 where are things right now?
- What tells you that you are at 6? How did you get there? How do you keep the 6?
- Have you taught that lesson before or since? What happened then?
- What were you doing or thinking differently when it worked better
- Tell me about the last time this issue was
- How achievable is it?
- What have you tried so far? Was it helpful?

Options

- What are your action to achieve your goal? What options have you thought of so far?
- What are the different ways you could achieve the goal?
- Who might be able to help us? Would you like suggestions from me?
- Which option would you most like to act on?
- Who or what will be useful to you in this process?
- If you are 5 on your scale now, what does 6 involve? What would it take to move higher?
- What are the possibilities? Best one?

What next (and When)?

- Which option will you take? What are the next step? How will you do it?
- How committed are you to this action? Scale of 0-10? When will you achieve it?
- How will you recognise you've reached your goal? What would be the first signs that things were moving in the right direction?
- What ,might get in the way? What support might you need? Could I be of assistance?
- How and when can you get the support?

P.I.P.P.L Model - for structuring your feedback

- **Praise** (link to previous action step)
- **Probe** (start with Q to narrow focus)
- **Identify** (identify future support)
- **Plan** (Solution Focused)
- **Lock** (lock in action points)

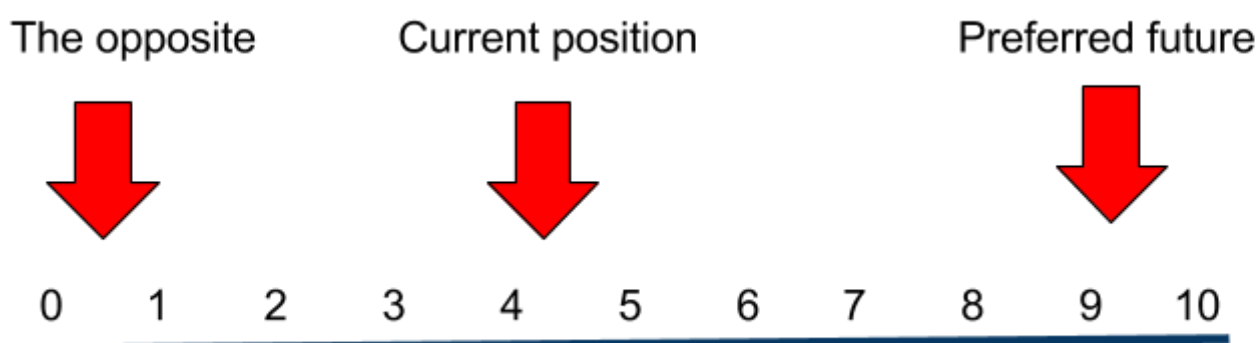
The Miracle Question

The miracle question is a method of questioning that a coach uses to aid the coachee to envisage how the future will be different when the problem is no longer present. Also, this may help to establish goals. Once asked, focus on what will be different when the miracle happens.

- Image if Disappeared. What would it look like?
- I wonder if ...

Scaling

Imagine a scale from 0 to 10 represents achieving your outcome or when you have reached your goal (preferred future) and 0 is the opposite. Where are you right now? This is subjective, but by picking a number, there is implicit acceptance that there is a 0 and 10, generally they are not at either and movement or change is possible.



Coaches must direct attention towards competence. How come you gave yourself that number rather than X? You can help the develop the answer in detail, building a picture of:

1. What is working well?
2. How they are tapping into these skills? And, what or who is helpful or supportive?
3. *What tells you that you are at 6? How did you get there?*
4. *What would it take to move 1 point higher? How long did it take you to get to 6?*
5. *What do you need to do to keep you 6? How come it's not - 1?*
6. *What did others do to contribute/help/support?*
7. *What's stopping you from slipping one point lower down the scale?*

A major part of this process is to move the coachee towards their goal.

Focus area	Coaching Questions
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What were the learning objectives for the lesson? ● How were the learning objectives differentiated to meet the needs of (named individual or group)? ● You organised specific resources to help (named individual or group). Let's talk about how effectively these supported his/her/their meeting of the learning objectives. ● How do learning objectives for the lesson develop from previous work? ● What next steps in pupils' learning in this issue/area.
Differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What did the high/ medium/ low ability pupils achieve in the lesson? ● What else might you do to ensure that (named individual or groups) achieves well? ● What support was offered to pupils with SEN/ EAL? ● How does this lesson link to previous learning/ the next lesson for (named individual or group) ● How do you know that the needs of (named individual or group) were met? ● What were the objectives for the teaching assistant supporting the lesson? ● How did the teaching assistant help (named individual or group)?
Pupil behaviour and attitudes to learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How did (named individual or group) apply themselves to the tasks/ learning required? ● What was the impact of the behaviour of (named individual or group) on their own learning/ the learning of other pupils? ● What might you do to encourage positive attitudes/ behaviour of (named individual or group)? ● How was the teaching assistant used to support work application and behaviour expectations?
Achievement and progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What were the learning objectives in the lesson for the class or (named individuals or group)? ● How did (named individual or group) achieve the learning objectives set? What is the evidence for this? ● Was the level of challenge appropriate for (named individual or group)? What is the evidence you have used to reach this judgement? ● How did you measure the progress (named individual or group) made in the lesson? What is the evidence for this? ● How easy/ difficult did (named individual or group) find the objectives of the lesson? ● What might you do to help (named individual or group) achieve even more or make even better progress in lessons?

SEN/ G&T/ Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What individual needs does (named individual or group) have that are relevant to this lesson? • How were the tasks/ lesson content/ your expectations adapted for (named individual or group) needs? • What further provision could be made for (named individual or group)? • What learning needs are identified in (named individual's) communication passport? What provisions did you make to support these needs? Were they effective? • What else could (named individual or group) have achieved in the lesson? How might you help them achieve this?
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What opportunities for assessment were built into the lesson? • What assessment information did you derive from the lesson? • What does the assessment information tell you about the pupils' learning and future needs? • How does the evaluation of the lesson contribute to your overall assessment of of the pupils' achievement? • How effectively were you able to assess the understanding of pupils?
Pupil independence and ownership of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the balance between teacher-directed learning and independent pupil learning in the lesson? • How effective was this balance in relation to the learning objectives? • How might any shift in this balance be achieved? • How much independent did (named individual or group) take? • How might this be further extended?
Resources and learning environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective were pupils in accessing the necessary resources and equipment in the lesson? • How might this have been even further improved? • What support for the lesson's learning objectives could pupil's gain from the classroom displays and resources? • What further resources might have extended this support for pupils
Diagnostic marking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively are the Yellow Box comments moving the pupil forward in their learning? • How effectively are students responding to the comments? • How could you help pupils improve their responses to Yellow Box comments even further? • When you next mark (named individual or group) work, how could you create a dialogue between the teacher and pupil?
Other useful phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was your intention behind....? • What might you do differently about....next time? • How else might you have approached....? • What was the impact of....? • Your chosen focus was.....explain how you approached.....

Coaching Templates


Observation Training:

Watch the first 10 minutes of a lesson and complete the lesson observation grid. Focus only on what the teacher says and does and how this impacts on the learning of the students.

1) What does the teacher say/do?	2) What impact does this have on learning?	3) Questions to ask
<p>“Right! Sit down; books out. Quieten down ...”</p> <p>The teacher does not meet and greet students at the door.</p>	<p>Negative start. Controlling commands rather than doing. Students arrive on their terms, rather than being made aware: this is my classroom. This is what you need to do.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is this something you do every lesson? 2. What would happen if you stood at the door at the start of the lesson? 3. Could you start the lesson with “Welcome; nice to see you; the work isthis is what you need to do ...”

Ask Better Questions

This (optional) template should be used when observing a coaching lesson. Remember, observers are 'looking at' not 'looking for' when supporting the teacher in selecting strategies to improve learning.

1) What does the teacher say/do?	2) What impact does this have on learning?	3) Questions to ask
		

Coaching Reflections

Using your focused lesson observation notes from a lesson, the section on 'coaching roles' and the section on 'questioning skills' in this booklet, role play three coaching conversations in your group with each colleague taking turns in each role: the coach, the teacher and the moderator. Record your thoughts on 'what went well' and 'even better if' after each role.

Teacher as the coach - what went well?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Teacher as the teacher - what went well?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I wonder if ...

Teacher as the moderator - what went well?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reflections of the process

Window 1: (Term 2)

My role for window 1 was the teacher/the coach/the moderator (circle as appropriate). Using the coaching roles and skills (page 4), reflect on what went well and what could be better, specific to the role you played in window 1?

Teacher as the teacher - What went well?
1. 2. 3.
I wonder if ...
What have you learnt from your experiences of coaching conversations?
What impact has the coaching progress had on your teaching and professional development?
Did you come across any issues or barriers?
How could your coaching relationship overcome these issues? What support is needed?

Reflections of the process

Window 2: (Term 3)

My role for window 1 was the teacher/the coach/the moderator (circle as appropriate). Using the coaching roles and skills (page 4), reflect on what went well and what could be better, specific to the role you played in window 2?

Teacher as the teacher - What went well?
1. 2. 3.
I wonder if ...
What have you learnt from your experiences of coaching conversations?
What impact has the coaching progress had on your teaching and professional development?
Did you come across any issues or barriers?
How could your coaching relationship overcome these issues? What support is needed?

Reflections of the process

Window 3: (Term 4)

My role for window 1 was the teacher/the coach/the moderator (circle as appropriate). Using the coaching roles and skills (page 4), reflect on what went well and what could be better, specific to the role you played in window 2?

Teacher as the teacher - What went well?
1. 2. 3.
I wonder if ...
What have you learnt from your experiences of coaching conversations?
What impact has the coaching progress had on your teaching and professional development?
Did you come across any issues or barriers?
How could your coaching relationship overcome these issues? What support is needed?

Reflections of the process

Window 4: (Term 5)

My role for window 4 was the teacher/the coach/the moderator (circle as appropriate). Using the coaching roles and skills (page 4), reflect on what went well and what could be better, specific to the role you played in window 3?

Teacher as the teacher - What went well?
1. 2. 3.
I wonder if ...
What have you learnt from your experiences of coaching conversations?
What impact has the coaching progress had on your teaching and professional development?
Did you come across any issues or barriers?
How could your coaching relationship overcome these issues? What support is needed?

Role of the moderator:

This is the person that will provide a check and balance as we develop our skills in coaching and learn to be effective coaches. The moderator listens and observes both the coach and the teacher during the coaching conversation and ensures that the rules of coaching are followed. When the conversation gets stuck they are the person who aims to get it going again through the use of open questions. Below is a checklist for the moderator to use during the coaching conversation to help guide them in their role, please tick off and take notes to help you support the coach and the teacher.

The coach:	Observations:	Question to ask the coach?
The coach should be steering the coaching conversations.		
The coach should avoid asking why questions.		
The coach should be using evidence from the lesson observation to prompt reflection. They should not be talking about what they liked or disliked about the lesson or how they would do it.		
The coach needs to ensure that the coaching conversation ends with actions and next steps for the teacher.		
The teacher should be thinking about next steps and actions to help the teacher improve the learning experience for pupils in their classroom even further.		
The teacher should respond openly and thoughtfully to questions being asked by the coach to help them reflect.		
Is the teacher feeling comfortable? You can suggest to reschedule the coaching conversation if the teacher is finding it difficult to continue.		

Notes:

FAQs

All teachers:

1. **Is coaching a formal observation?** No. It is separate to anything you have ever done before and does not sit with performance management or formal observations.
2. **What is a serious issue identified during a coaching session?** If a serious problem is discovered, it has to be dealt with. For example, a safeguarding problem follows normal channels; a sustained period of ignoring policy and/or listening to advice.
3. **How are staff identified to become a coach?** Nominations are made via Heads of Faculty.
4. **How are staff identified for coaching?** Nominations are made via Heads of Faculty.

New teachers to the school:

5. **I am a new member of teaching staff. Do I have to receive coaching?** Yes. All new staff to the school will receive the school's 'welcome induction', as well as CPD as part of the coaching programme.

Support Staff:

6. **Can a member of support staff be a coach?** Yes, if applicable to your work in the classroom.

Newly Qualified (NQT) / Recently Qualified (RQT):

7. **Can I have receive coaching as well as NQT induction?** Yes, both processes will be separate.
8. **I'm an RQT, can I be coached?** Yes, but through Head of Faculty nomination.
9. **I'm an RQT, can I be a coach?** Yes, following at least two years' successful appraisal.

Experienced teachers:

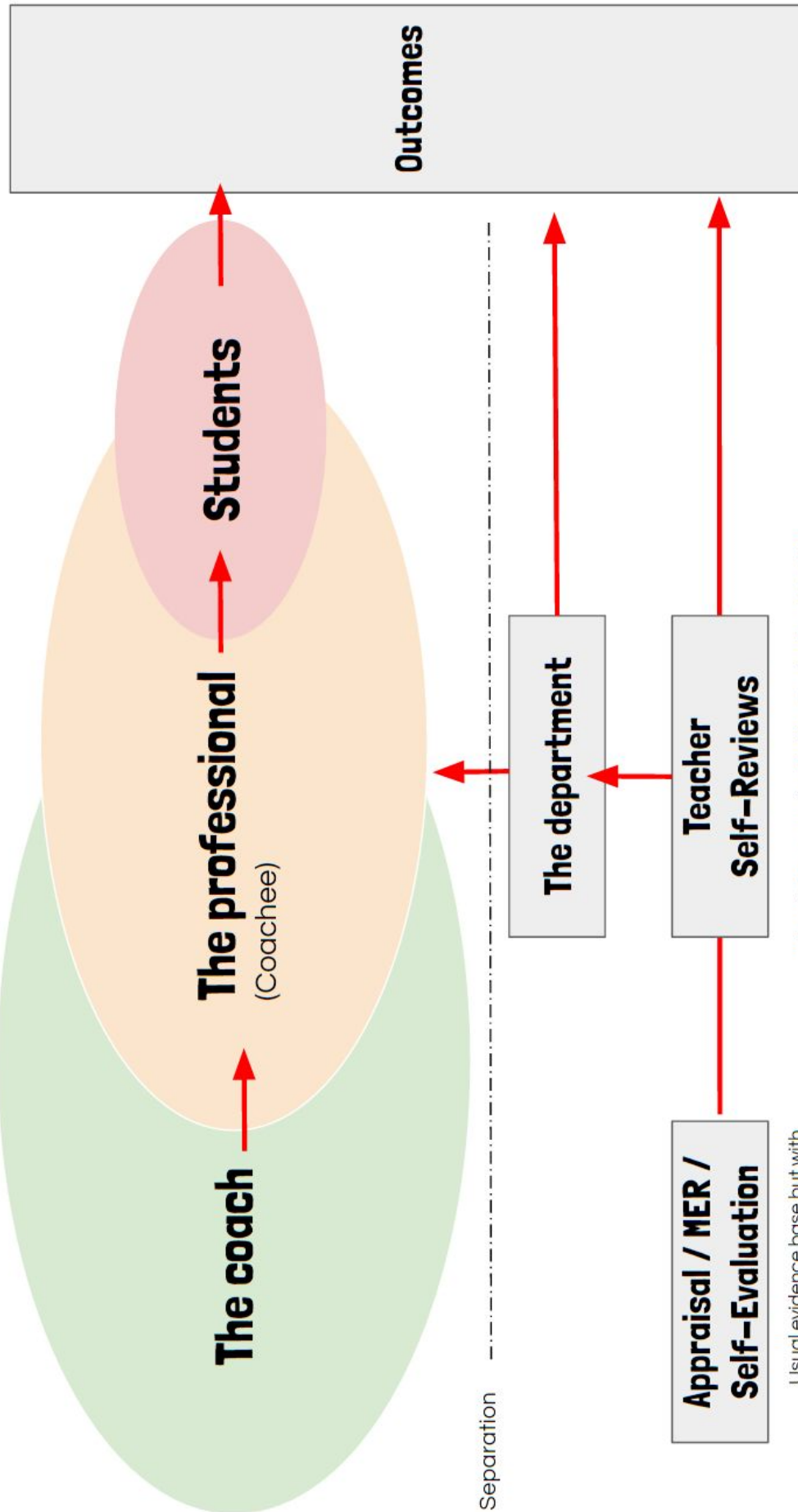
10. **I'm an experienced member of staff. Do I have to be a coach?** No, but this does not also mean that you will not receive coaching.
11. **I am a member of teaching staff on threshold. Do I have to do it?** Yes, it is expected that you will do this as part of your remit to highly competent, substantial and sustained.
12. **I'm a member of the Middle and Senior Leadership Team, should I be a coach?** Yes, this will form part of your job responsibility and it will form part of your role.

Appraisal and Performance Management:

13. **How will coaching sit alongside appraisal?** It won't. It is a very separate process. Coaching is not linked to performance management.
14. **Is this just a support plan in disguise?** No. This is a genuine attempt to offer staff the time, funding and training to be able to frequently observe, to improve teaching and learning dialogue across the school; to improve the overall culture of teaching and learning.

Under-performance:

15. **What if a member of staff is underperforming?** How are staff identified should be through performance management and not through lesson observation. Coaching will be offered as a solution to support all members of staff. The appraisal process and performance management will remain separate.



Usual evidence base but with no formal observations, unless concerns

A (new) 2-year cycle starting September 2016/17

Doodles: