

A knowledge-driven school

(From the Head of a large comprehensive school in the North of England to her teachers)

We are the people who offer powerful and shared knowledge to the nation's children. That knowledge comes from centuries of learning, and from the research of universities and subject associations. It is powerful because it enables children to interpret and control the world: it is shared because all our children should be exposed to it. It is fair and just that this should be so. It is unfair and unjust when children are offered poor quality knowledge which fails to lift them out of their experience.

Here are 10 things to remember

- (1) Knowledge is worthwhile in itself. Tell children this: never apologise that they need to learn things.
- (2) Schools transmit shared and powerful knowledge on behalf of society. We teach what they need to make sense of and improve the world.
- (3) Shared and powerful knowledge is verified through learned communities. We need to keep in touch with universities, research and subject associations.
- (4) Children need powerful knowledge to understand and interpret the world. Without it they remain dependent upon those who have it.
- (5) Powerful knowledge is cognitively superior to that needed for daily life. It transcends and liberates children from their daily experience.
- (6) Shared and powerful knowledge enables children to grow into useful citizens. As adults they can understand, cooperate and shape the world together.
- (7) Shared knowledge is a foundation for a just and sustainable democracy. Citizens educated together share an understanding of the common good.
- (8) It is fair and just that all children should have access to this knowledge. Powerful knowledge opens doors: it must be available to all children.
- (9) Accepted adult authority is required for shared knowledge transmission. The teacher's authority to transmit knowledge is given and valued by society.
- (10) Pedagogy links adult authority, powerful knowledge and its transmission. We need quality professionals to achieve all this for all our children.