THE META METHOD

FOR SCHOOLS 2026/2027

META METHOD

The Elephant Group

Skills Builder PARTNERSHIP

The Elephant Group

Elephant Access

META METHOD

WHO WE ARE

We are The Elephant Group. We were founded in Elephant and Castle in 2018 by a group of headteachers who wanted to help more young people from state schools to get into competitive universities and degree courses.

WHAT WE DO

We currently offer two core programmes: Elephant Access, and the Meta Method, each designed to address a different but complementary dimension of student success.

OUR VISION

Every student's success should be defined by potential, not circumstance.

OUR PURPOSE

We exist to build the attainment, skills and knowledge that empower every student, whatever their potential, and wherever it leads them, to take their next best step.

OUR VALUES

are central to all that we do.

WE CHALLENGE

WE ARE COLLABORATIVE

WE ARE IMPACT-DRIVEN

THE META METHOD

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL AND DEVELOPING CORE SKILLS

The Meta Method is The Elephant Group's programme for building the essential skills every young person needs to succeed, whatever success looks like for them.

At its core, it teaches students *how to learn*. They get practical tools to plan their work, manage their time, their behaviours, and work out what's *helping them improve* and what isn't.

These are the skills that sit underneath every grade, every qualification and every next step: GCSEs, sixth form, apprenticeships, university, or employment.

HOW IT WORKS

We create interactive content to develop transferable skills that are built around the three metacognitive keys of knowing yourself, knowing the task, and knowing strategies. This content is carefully scaffolded to meet the needs of each cohort, and mapped to the metacognitive cycle of plan – monitor – evaluate.

Over the last year we've worked with

2,600
students across over

30
schools and

6
universities to deliver long-term or single-session content.

"Research shows us the value of metacognition. Very few organisations have developed a systematic way to develop these skills with pupils. TEG's programme provides targeted support to schools and their pupils to significantly boost their independence and resilience."

DR HUGH MUNRO, HEAD OF ACCESS, WADHAM COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

WHAT IS METACOGNITION?

METACOGNITION IS THE AWARENESS (OR KNOWLEDGE) OF OUR OWN THINKING AND LEARNING

IT IS THINKING ABOUT YOUR OWN THINKING!

META	ABOUT SELF
COGNITION	THINKING/KNOWING/ LEARNING
METACOGNITION	UNDERSTANDING YOUR OWN WAYS OF THINKING

THE POWER OF METACOGNITION: WHY IT MATTERS

The use of metacognition as a **powerful tool** to support outcomes in the classroom and beyond is backed by decades of research, which shows that effective teaching **and application** of metacognition can:

Boost Attainment – EEF: +8 months' progress; very low cost, high impact.

Improve Self-Awareness & Performance – Students who learn to assess their own learning perform better.

Strengthen Critical Thinking – Metacognition uniquely predicts critical thinking ability.

Build Self-Regulation & Motivation – Learners take greater ownership of their progress and develop strategies to manage motivation, thoughts and learning behaviours.

Support STEM Success – Metacognitive prompts and strategies can improve maths and science outcomes.

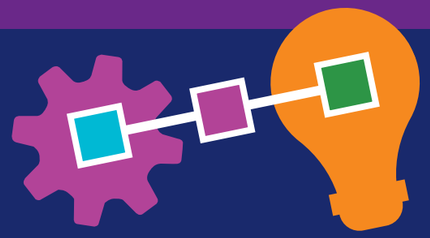
Build Skills for Work & Employability – Self-regulated learning develops transferable skills including goal-setting, adaptability, independent working and reflection, and has been linked to employability and career development.

Support Successful Transitions – Metacognitive skills help learners become more independent, understand their strengths, adapt their strategies and navigate changing expectations in education, training and beyond.

"Metacognition enables learners to transfer knowledge across subjects and develop the capacity to become independent, self-improving lifelong learners.

EDUCATION WHITE PAPER, FEBRUARY 2026

THE META METHOD – EXPLICITLY TEACHING META SKILLS



The Meta Method is our vehicle to teach metacognition and other meta skills. It's highly interactive, with an emphasis on practice and teaching transferable skills that stick.

The Meta Method is built around the three keys of metacognitive thinking:

KNOWING OURSELVES AS LEARNERS

Recognise your strengths, habits and learning preferences, identify what helps you to succeed in different contexts, and where you might need to adapt.

KNOWING STRATEGIES

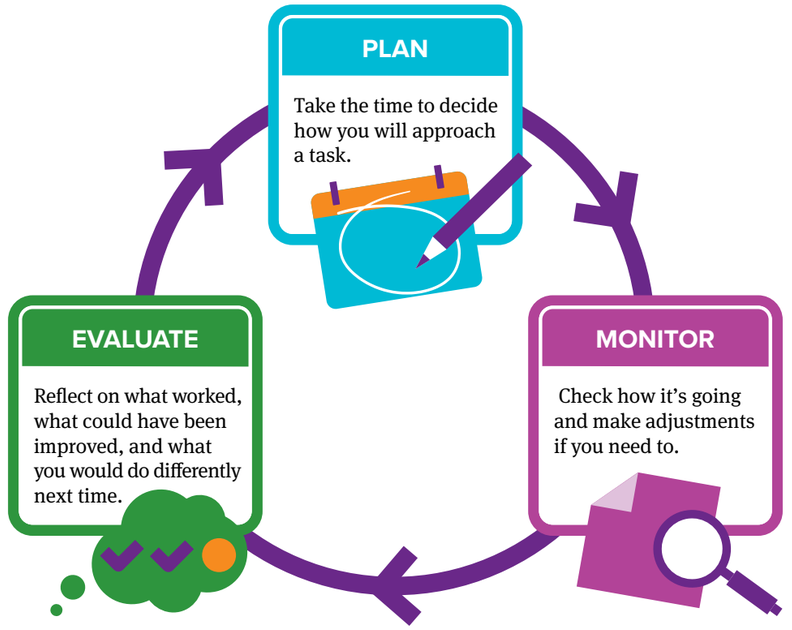
Explore high-impact strategies. Learn when and why to use different approaches, and reflect on what has worked for you in the past. Build a personalised toolkit that works for you.

KNOWING THE TASK

Make sense of the task, break it down into smaller parts, identify the key requirements and what success looks like, and make informed decisions about how to approach it.

TURNING KNOWLEDGE INTO SKILLS

We help students apply the three keys of metacognitive thinking to a cycle of planning, monitoring, and evaluating.



THE META METHOD JOURNEY

2023/24

Wraparound sessions for Year 9–11 university access

Year 10 Meta Study Pilot for HEPPSY

2024/25

Continuation of HEPPSY Pilot Year 11 Meta Revise

Online and in person Y13 delivery for Ark schools

Online outreach for Wadham College, Oxford

2025/26

Meta Transition… Press & play content… Meta Method for KS2…

Year 9 Working Class White Boys – mentoring event

Year 10 outreach – mentoring event

Meta Success: Y7–11 all-through programme

2026/27

HEPPSY Year 12 and 13 sessions to join Y10 & 11 delivery

Y7–11 Raising Attainment

The Meta Method (MM) was created in 2022 for a Uni Connect project in South Yorkshire and delivered in 2023 to help students at five Sheffield schools, supporting students in GCSE attainment.

The MM was quickly commissioned by top universities to support the development of metacognition skills as part of outreach and WP provision.

We launched an online version for Wadham College, Oxford which led to wider delivery of 'press and play' content for schools.

Most recently, we have delivered both standalone and subject-specific sessions to support transition, study confidence, and help-seeking skills for contextual students.

META METHOD

Skills Builder UNIVERSAL FRAMEWORK

Students learn to recognise their strengths and weaknesses and reflect on their learning habits and strategies from everything from their learning environment to how they consume information.

META METHOD THEMATIC ANALYSIS

THE META METHOD SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF KEY META SKILLS IN LEARNERS OF ALL AGES

Metacognitive Benefits for Learners

- **Self-Awareness & Reflection**
  Recognise strengths, habits, and strategies to improve future learning.
- **Goal Setting & Planning**
  Define clear objectives, plan steps, and manage time effectively.
- **Monitoring & Self-Regulation**
  Track progress, adapt strategies, and respond to challenges.
- **Problem-Solving & Critical Thinking**
  Break down complex problems and make informed, strategic decisions.
- **Self-Efficacy & Resilience**
  Build confidence, persistence, and adaptability to overcome setbacks.

READY TO GO PROGRAMMES

We can work with cohorts from 5-100 students. We're happy to work with you to create a bespoke programme, but our most popular models are:

META SUCCESS	7-11	2 1-HOUR SESSIONS PER YEAR GROUP
Highly interactive with student booklets. Builds metacognitive skills, academic confidence, goal-setting and aspiration across the whole secondary journey. Cohorts of 30–100 students.		

META STUDY & / OR REVISE	10-11 & / OR 12-13	1-3 1-HOUR SESSIONS PER TERM
Flexible programme tailored to your year group's needs. Sessions cover study skills, revision techniques, self-regulation and goal-setting. Interactive worksheets in every session.		

META FORWARD	7-11 & / OR 12-13	1-3 1-HOUR SESSIONS PER TERM
Targeted at Pupil Premium / disadvantaged cohorts who might need additional support. Combines metacognitive skills with self-belief, goal-setting and growth mindset. Can be delivered to small groups from 5 students. Designed to raise aspirations, support those at risk of NEET, and narrow the attainment gap.		

WHAT WE DO

From school-wide programmes to single sessions, we'll work with you to understand where your students need to go, and scaffold interactive content to help get them there.

We can support students from Y7-13, delivering content that explicitly teaches vital skills including:

- **Study skills**
- **Revision skills**
- **Teamwork and communication**
- **Problem solving**
- **Goal setting**
- **Resilience**
- **Transition and help seeking**

"(the most valuable skill or concept that I've learnt is) what I do wrong and how to fix it because usually I'm told how to fix it, but I don't know what I'm meant to be fixing.

YEAR 11 META METHOD PARTICIPANT"

"The Meta Method programme provided an interactive, engaging and inspirational opportunity for students to learn more about themselves and how they can maximise their learning — highly recommended!

GEORGINA KOSANOVIC, YEAR 11 TEACHER, THE STOCKWOOD PARK ACADEMY"

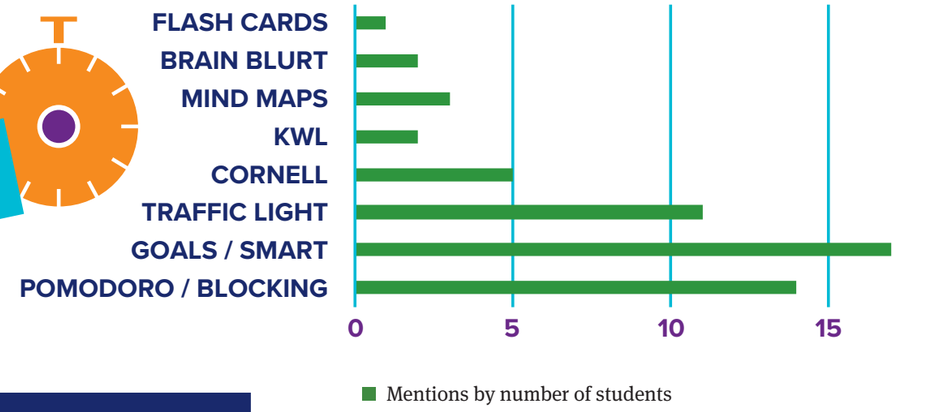
OF YEAR 10 AND 11 STUDENTS:

97%
OF STUDENTS
specifically named at least one strategy that was covered in sessions within their evaluations

85.2%
OF STUDENTS
said that they have used the skills developed during Meta Method sessions during their revision

73.5%
OF STUDENTS
said that Meta Method sessions had changed the way they see themselves as a learner, with the remaining students selecting "don't know"

MENTIONS BY NUMBER OF STUDENTS



"It made me think about my study techniques."

"It made me procrastinate less."

"I revise more effectively no matter how good or bad my day has been."

"Setting goals for myself is less daunting."

"It makes my grades rise."

"Pacing myself has been easier."

It was notable that many of the students who were able to explain how they had applied metacognitive strategies were those who had extensively completed most activities within the other Meta Method booklets.

META METHOD THEMATIC ANALYSIS

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Independent thematic analysis of completed Meta Study resource books showed improvements in:

- Recognition, understanding, and application of metacognitive strategies
- Confidence and self-efficacy
- Aspirations and motivation

Thematic analysis concluded that

- Students who have participated in the Meta Method sessions are developing skills that enable them to recognise, understand and in some cases apply metacognitive strategies to enhance their self-efficacy and confidence in learning.
- The short and intermediate-term outcomes outlined within the theory of change are being met and the longer-term aims are being worked towards by some learners.

The clearest evidence that students had learned to apply metacognitive strategies was in examples where students could clearly detail the approach they had taken and its value within an academic setting. This was very clear within the following response:
"I found that problem solving was the activity that helped me most because I found it helped me in Maths with more difficult equations"

WADHAM PROJECT

- Year 11 students
- Meta Study and Revise
- 6 sessions in total

23
SCHOOLS

90%
OF TEACHERS WOULD RECOMMEND

~375
STUDENTS

"I've stopped working just for marks and started taking charge of my own learning."

"I can clearly see I am getting higher grades, especially in science, which I was not so good at last year."

"My grades have jumped from 7s to 9s."

IMPROVED BY +0.34*
"I understand what metacognition is."

IMPROVED BY +0.32*
"I am able to apply metacognitive techniques to help me learn more effectively."

IMPROVED BY +0.22*
"I have the skills I need to achieve my goals for the future."

* LIKERT SCALE

"It was a fantastic way for the students to come together and work on revision to support a difficult time. This also had a positive impact on their mental health.

JAYSHREE SHAH,
QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL"

HEPPSY

- Year 10–11 students
- Meta Study and Revise
- 9 sessions in total

70
YEAR 10 LEARNERS

ACROSS 5 PRIORITY SCHOOLS

75% ATTENDED THE FINAL YEAR 10 SESSION

MEASURABLE IMPROVEMENTS

in Metacognitive Practice and Familiarity with Metacognition across all schools

CLEAR EVIDENCE

of improved confidence, self-efficacy, aspiration, and career thinking

> The Meta Method is broadly achieving its intended short- and intermediate-term outcomes.
>
> **HEPPSY DATA & EVALUATION TEAM, UNI CONNECT / OFFICE FOR STUDENTS**

OUR PARTNERS CHOOSE THE ELEPHANT GROUP'S META METHOD BECAUSE:

- ☑ **we are agile**
- ☑ **we don't believe in a one-size-fits-all approach**: we create bespoke programmes to meet your priorities
- ☑ **we are skilled at making complex concepts easy to understand** and — crucially — apply to a range of scenarios
- ☑ **our engaging, interactive content offers a cohesive approach**, which allows practitioners to embed metacognitive thinking into learning activities.

The Meta Method slides and resources are distinctive, highly interactive, and designed to take a complex concept and help students to make it "stick" across a range of contexts.

HOW WE CAN WORK WITH YOUR SCHOOL...

We can work with you to meet your priorities. This can include:

- **BESPOKE PROGRAMME CONTENT CREATION FOR YEARS 7-11**
- **ONE-OFF WEBINARS, ASSEMBLIES, OR PRESS-AND-PLAY SESSIONS**
- **TEACHER CPD AND TRAINING WITH TRAINING NOTES AND POWERPOINTS**
- **FOCUS ON META SKILLS AND THEIR APPLICATION IN REVISION, STUDY, SELF-EFFICACY AND SELF-REGULATION**

READY TO DISCOVER YOUR META METHOD?

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO CONSIDER:

AGE GROUPS

We've created content for all age groups from Y7 through to Y13

DELIVERY METHODS

- By you – with all content created by The Elephant Group including staff training
- By The Elephant Group – in person
- By The Elephant Group – online live or recorded
- By The Elephant Group – you'll receive press and play content and full training for supporting staff

DESIRED OUTCOMES

For example: GCSE/A-Level attainment through study/revision skills, teamwork and communication, goal setting, academic transition support, help-seeking behaviour

TYPES OF PROGRAMME

- One-off sessions (all age groups)
- Multiple session programme delivered across the academic year
- Cohesive – sessions delivered across school years
- Wraparound – ensuring current outreach/ academic content includes meta skills

RESOURCES

Our interactive booklets and worksheets support student engagement

EVALUATION

Participants will be asked to complete simple evaluation forms.

We would be delighted to explore how this could support existing priorities and contribute to your wider goals.

team@theelephantgroup.org

The Elephant Group

META METHOD

Skills Builder UNIVERSAL FRAMEWORK

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The Elephant Group is a charity, registered No. 1185878

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