

St Mary's Catholic High School



Supporting
Disadvantaged
Pupils in the
Classroom



Guidance for Teachers

(Updated 2021)

Teachers at St Mary's summarised some of the barriers to learning which might be experienced by disadvantaged pupils in the following ways:

Living in circumstances which create financial constraints, low aspirations, loss of routine and structure and limited parental engagement.

Aspirational, financial and educational (literacy & numeracy) limitations to achievement.

Material deprivation and low aspiration compounded by negative attitudes to education.

Personal to the individual, rooted in their prior learning experiences and home environment and, all too often, resulting in a lack of self-esteem.

Think:

Heterogeneous not homogenous.

BUT, is there a way in which we might

Whole school ethos of attainment for all



Our schools are places of hope. When we gather together to study we form a community... Humiliation can play no part, if we are to give each other the courage for the journey. No-one can lead unless they understand from within another's panic upon meeting a new situation, or struggling with a new problem. Above all [we must have] the courage to make mistakes, to risk being wrong. Meister Eckhart said that "one seldom finds that people attain to anything good unless they have first gone somewhat astray."

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon

Our target will always be to ensure that groups of

5 Guiding Principles

T & L Policy for PP pupils

Quality First Teaching:

At St Mary's we aim to provide a consistently high standard of teaching, through our;

- ✓ setting expectations, no pupil premium pupil will be moved sets due to academic performance.
- ✓ careful monitoring of performance using data.
- ✓ tailored teaching and support to suit our pupils.
- ✓ sharing of best practice.

This approach is supported by a body of research which has found that good teachers are especially important for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

For poor pupils the difference between a good teacher and a bad teacher is a whole year's learning.

(social mobility commission 2014).



5 Guiding Principles

T & L Policy for PP pupils

1) Incorporate a behaviour for learning (BfL) target into learning objectives for every lesson (when appropriate):

Positive and disciplined relationships are key to all teaching and are especially important with pupils who may face barriers to learning. Aim to create develop positive and supportive relationships, by ensuring expectations are clear. Where there is little support from home a learning gap can appear. Encourage the development of self-regulation skills which will help to bridge this gap by enabling positive learning experiences.

Example:

Good when you can use form and style appropriate to a newspaper article

Even better if you can show awareness of your audience (the reader)

Excellent when you adopt a range of techniques to engage the reader

Today *I will use active listening skills, making notes as necessary. I will ask considered questions at the appropriate time only.*

According to the **EEF**, social and emotional learning strategies benefit disadvantaged or low-attaining pupils more... especially when approaches are embedded into routine practice and supported by professional development and training for staff.

5 Guiding Principles

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2) Plan for the Individual

See pupils as individuals, each with their own challenges, talents and interests.

- Identify what might help each pupil make the next steps in their learning, whether they are performing below, at, or above expectations.
- Focus on providing targeted support for under-performing pupils during curriculum time (as well as providing learning support outside school hours).
- Seek out strategies best suited to addressing individual needs, rather than simply fitting pupils into your existing support strategies.

Don't just target PP pupils. Let them work with other students so there is an impact on both groups; but the group that benefits the most is the PP pupils.



5 Guiding Principles

T & L Policy for PP pupils

3) Employ positive discrimination in favour of feedback to disadvantaged pupils:

- ✓ Give feedback to PG students first, when you are fresh, and in greater detail
- ✓ Live mark for PP pupils during lessons
- ✓ Offer regular verbal feedback and engage in their paired / group dialogue
- ✓ Shape feedback as questions and instructions which prompt pupils to an active response

Research by **The Sutton Trust** says that effective feedback should:

- ✓ *Be specific, accurate and clear e.g. "It was good because you..." rather than "Well done" or "Good work"*
- ✓ *Compare what a learner is doing right now with what they have done wrong before e.g. "I can see you were focusing on improving X as it is much better than last time's Y"*
- ✓ *Encourage and support further effort (achieves a balance between support and challenge)*
- ✓ *Be given sparingly so that it is meaningful – too much feedback can stop learners working out what they need to do for themselves*
- ✓ *Provide specific guidance on how to improve and not just tell students when they are wrong*

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4) Oral language intervention (similar to meta-cognition and collaborative learning strategies):

Create opportunities for PP pupils to rehearse answers and ideas to promote understanding and confidence

- ✓ Ensure pupils are equipped to talk productively by structuring tasks clearly
- ✓ Provide scaffolding to ensure that pupils are able to formulate useful questions and articulate their ideas
- ✓ Simple think, pair, share activities are an easy starting point and will increase participation for all pupils
- ✓ A good antidote to low resilience – pupils are more likely to share an answer they have already rehearsed and trialled with a smaller audience

EEF:

All pupils appear to benefit from oral language interventions, but some studies show slightly larger effects for younger children and pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds (up to six months' benefit). A number of studies show the benefits of trained teaching assistants effectively supporting both oral language skills and reading outcomes.

5 Guiding Principles

T & L Policy for PP pupils

5) Questioning:

- ✓ **Use a targeted question followed by a supplementary question for ALL PP pupils, in EVERY lesson.**
- ✓ Adopt the use of pause time to allow pupils to formulate their reply where necessary and make sure you revisit pupils with deeper analytical and synthesis questions.

Specific practices which have good evidence of improving attainment include:

- ✓ effective questioning
- ✓ challenging students to identify the reason why an activity is taking place in the lesson
- ✓ making students generate answers, even before they have been taught the material

The Sutton Trust



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