

St Mary's Catholic High School



Supporting
Disadvantaged
Pupils in the
Classroom



Guidance for Teachers

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 usefully summarise needs in order to formulate a shared, consistent approach?

Role modelling: RESILIENCE



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

Disadvantaged pupils, perhaps more than non-disadvantaged pupils, may lack positive role models and this may hinder the formation of productive relationships inside and outside of school.

5 Next Steps

(Towards a 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 Next Steps

(Towards a T & L Policy for PP pupils)

2) Use seating plans effectively and consistently:

Consistent standard layout

The preferred choice for composing seating plans at St Mary's is via the **class charts** app. In addition to these colleagues may wish to compose their own desk plans. In this instance the standard expected key components would feature – target and current grade, contextual groups: PP, EAL, SEND

Whenever possible, seat disadvantaged pupils at the front of the class where:

- You can monitor their progress, engagement and productivity
- You can offer regular and immediate verbal feedback, particularly positive reinforcement and clarification
- You will be reminded to use targeted questions

Wall		Target Grade: 6c Sam	Target Grade: 6c Emily	Target Grade: 5a Jason (SEN A)	Target Grade: 4a John (PP)
Target Grade: 6c Oliver	Target Grade: 5a Sophie	Current Grade: 6c	Current Grade: 5a	Current Grade: 5b	Current Grade: 4a
Target Grade: 6c James (EAL)	Target Grade: 5a Grace	Target Grade: 6c	Target Grade: 5a	Target Grade: 6c Anna	Target Grade: 6c Max
Current Grade: 6c	Current Grade: 5a	Current Grade: 6c	Current Grade: 5a	Current Grade: 5a	Current Grade: 6c
Target Grade: 5a Susanne	Target Grade: 5a Thomas		Target Grade: 5a Thomas		Target Grade: 6c Mary
Current Grade: 5a	Current Grade: 5b		Current Grade: 5a		Current Grade: 6c
Target Grade: 5a Holly	Target Grade: 6c Michael	Target Grade: 5b Macie	Target Grade: 5b Jack (PP)	Target Grade: 5a Robert	Target Grade: 6c Sara
Current Grade: 5b	Current Grade: 6c	Current Grade: 5a	Current Grade: 5b	Current Grade: 5b	Current Grade: 5a
Target Grade: 5a Thomas	Target Grade: 6c Elizabeth	Target Grade: 6c Kery	Target Grade: 5c Eve		Target Grade: 6c Anthony
Current Grade: 5b	Current Grade: 6c	Current Grade: 6c	Current Grade: 5c		Current Grade: 5a
Classroom			Target Grade: 6c Richard		Target Grade: 6c Isobel
Group			Current Grade: 5b		Current Grade: 6c

5 Next Steps

(Towards a T & L Policy for PP pupils)

3) Employ positive discrimination in favour of feedback to disadvantaged pupils and in the marking of their books:

- ✓ Mark PP books 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*

5 Next Steps

(Towards a T & L Policy for PP pupils)

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 Next Steps

(Towards a T&L Policy for PP pupils)

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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