

## Evaluate approach to KS2 writing and review relational behaviour

ELP case study using the spiral of enquiry methodology in a primary school to:

- Evaluate a new approach to writing in KS2
- Review of a new relational behaviour approach
- As a part of our race equality audit

**School/ Context:** North Ealing Primary School is a 3-form entry with 78 place Nursery.

A high percentage of SEND pupils and those with an EHCP plan across the school, alongside high levels of mobility, approximately 18% in receipt of pupil premium and 60% English as an Additional Language.

### Key points (summary of the project)

We wanted to know if each learner can explain what success looks like at North Ealing or their life in general? SLT started with the spiral approach to establish if the children think and know that school staff are aspirational for the children in the school. This started with a school wide discussion about what we all understand by 'success' as a concept.

- From that it was decided to use the approach to look at the impact of an intensive staff CPD about the teaching of writing undertaken the last two years, with a particular focus on what helps the children do well and how they know.
- One member of SLT also used the approach to review the new Relational Behaviour policy introduced this year at NEPS.
- Finally, the Race Equality lead has begun to use the approach as a part of our diversity audit within school.
- The approach used was short 1-1 sessions with the children where a series of questions were asked to aid discussion about their sense of belonging and their progress in learning. A follow up session was also needed for any further clarity.

### Purpose

To develop pupil and teacher agency within a spiral of enquiry approach.

### What were your reasons for doing this work?

Initially we very interested in finding out about what the children believe the staff think about them in terms of aspirations and success. Once this study had been completed, we could see the value of applying the spirals approach to evaluating our intensive staff training on the teaching of writing.

In addition, some children approached SLT with concerns over the new relational behaviour policy changes and it was felt the spiral approach could be useful in eliciting any concerns. Finally, the approach has been incorporated into the school's diversity audit-this is ongoing.

### Who were you targeting?

We mainly targeted KS2 pupils as follows:

- Year 4, 5 and 6 sample of children to discuss what success looks like and who they think believes in them within school.
- For writing- Year 4 group whose progress in writing was a concern.
- Year 5 and 6 (mix of ability, EHCP, PPG, mobile and EAL) to discuss how the teaching of writing has supported them and led to greater levels of progress and achievement.
- For the relational behaviour policy we carried out conversations with some year 4 and 5 pupils who felt that the old individual merit reward system was better than the new house point reward system. This prompted opening a discussion around individual success, teamwork and reward.
- As a part of the Race Equality audit the approach was used with the Black Caribbean and Mixed Caribbean and Somalian children from Yr 3-6.

### What were your success criteria?

The initial scan were a series of questions-that all children could name an adult or two who believe they will achieve well in their life in them and how they know that. That each learner can explain what success looks like at North Ealing.

- Writing-that the children could identify what helps them with their writing and if they could find examples of this in their work, school experience and to use this with staff in order to review the CPD approach.
- Relational policy -The spirals completed here were based around the idea of success and what success looks like and feels like for the pupils at NEPS and how it is celebrated.
- Race Equality-for the children to express a sense of belonging at NEPS. For NEPS to have a greater understanding of what this looks and feels like in school and our community as a whole.

### What did you do?

#### 1. Scanning

- Writing-this followed a round of triangulation after 18 months of intense CPD on writing development-we needed to establish which elements of the teaching and learning in writing were having the greatest impact for the children in KS2.
- Relational inquiry-this developed from groups of children through channels such as school council and pupil voice sessions, having concerns about the new approach introduced in September.
- Race equality-parent group and staff CPD-series of questions used looking whether the children feel represented within the community and where etc...

#### 2. Focussing

Writing-set of questions set out below:

- What helps me learn? -range of answers around teacher modelling, Knowledge Organisers, Big Questions, Oracy skills etc...
- What are you learning and why is it important? Most children spoke about needing writing skills in the future for jobs, college etc...
- How am I doing? Most children knew how they were doing as a result of teacher feedback, peer assessment and a number of Year 6 children spoke about the progress they have made this year. They used their books to select pieces of work that they wanted to talk about.
- Where do I need to go next? the majority of children know that they need to work on/think about

- What do I need to do to get there? Able to discuss how certain strategies are helping them e.g. shared writes, teacher modelling, vocabulary set out etc...
- Is there something I need help with?

### Relational policy spiral

Through the spirals a good insight into how pupils felt success was recognised was built up, what success looks like in their classroom and if there is a place for teamwork in recognising success.

Race Equality-broad set of questions about the children's experience across all different areas of school life.

- All children could state 2 people who feel they will succeed in life (Sports teacher, current class teacher, post lock down teachers, SLT)
- All children stated what happens when they do good work eg house points, share work, good work awards and praise.
- All, bar one child, could articulate what they were learning and why it was their favourite subject (I excluded PE as an option).
- All could state they learn about different people and their stories. They felt they didn't learn enough about where those people came from and related geography.
- All said they had seen books with diverse range of people but not enough available in class libraries or school library.
- All said they look at marking- if lots of pink they know they are doing well) and verbal feedback to work out how they are doing and Year 6 stated they used SATs performance to gauge this.

### 3. Developing a hunch (how are we contributing to this situation?)

Writing-following very intensive and hands-on CPD we felt it was critical to look at which elements of our approach to the teaching of writing were having the most impact. This also allowed staff to reflect on their confidence in the approach to the teaching of writing etc...

Relational policy-started with feedback from children that the new approach was not quite working for them. There seemed to be an assumption amongst the working party who introduced the new approach that all the children would be very enthusiastic about a greater team approach-this also highlighted that some of the children are less motivated if the success is not about them alone.

Race Equality-Feedback from a range of stakeholders through the Race Equality programme we are running with staff and families-based on our review of the whole curriculum and building upon the decolonisation of the curriculum journey that we are presently undertaking. The concept of 'belonging' is critical here and the work has revealed a number of avenues that need further work and thought.

### 4. New learning

The teaching of writing-taking the main aspects of the approach that the children have highlighted as the most helpful and ensuring consistency across the whole school. For example, most of the children spoke about the teachers writing their own examples and how this supported their learning. Discussions with regard to the idea of a community of writers, a concept we introduced a number of years ago.

Relational policy-Children said that their success is recognised through comments in their books, having work displayed, house points, well-done awards and celebration assemblies and that teachers make them feel good about themselves when they have succeeded.

The children felt it was important to have their success recognised at school because it inspired them to keep going, motivated them to do even better, and makes them more likely to achieve something else in school, makes them feel good about themselves and it makes them become a better person.

Lots of children said that working as a team is a better way of achieving something as there are more people to help you succeed. The children said that by working as a team it demonstrates good sportspersonship and shows you are a good person. There was discussion around the idea that when working as a team everyone contributes something different and that this can aid success. The children felt that the house point approach was them working as one big team. There was no mention of recognition boards at this point.

When discussing what success looked like in the classroom, the children stated that they had their work displayed, their contributions included on the working wall, house points would be seen, children would be focused and well behaved and the teachers would be praising them. No mention of recognition boards at this point.

All the children interviewed stated that they would celebrate their peer's success and be happy for them.

When looking at what motivated them to succeed there were mixed answers. Some children mentioned their family and friends, some said rewards motivate them and some talked about their future prospects.

The final point discussed was how teamwork can play a part in recognising success for all and not just a few. We talked about always the same children getting praise, rewards and special jobs to do. The children offered suggestions such as supporting the children that do not get as much praise so that they can get more praise in the future. Rewarding a child 3x maximum in a day so that there is a fair share of praise and reward for all. Some children said they would help motivate the other children and inspire them to get more praise and encourage team work.

Only one child mentioned using the recognition board as a form of getting all children to achieve and get praise.

### 5. Taking action

Writing development-recognised the value of the CPD approach we used. The approach was that following whole school training year groups were given intensive/bespoke sessions with the trainer where they worked on their own specific learning units. This ensured consistency and a depth of understanding in addition to the teams being able to trial the approach with support from a specialist.

Relational policy-Going forward we will need to ensure that the recognition board is higher profile and also looking at the consistency of house point rewards and how these are recorded both individually and as a house team-add to whole school CPD. Overall though, the children like the team element of house points and also seem happy with the recognition they get when they succeed.

Race Equality work-building on the curriculum work based on the information from the children below-

All could tell me that they learn about different people and their stories. They felt they didn't learn enough about where those people came from and related geography.

All said they had seen books with diverse range of people but not enough available in class libraries or school library.

Next steps with the children

If the school could do one thing differently to help your learning, what would it be? What is one positive thing the school has done that has contributed to who you are today?

#### **What has been the impact on pupils?**

Writing development- There is a greater confidence and pride in the children's work. The children can more readily articulate their knowledge about how they learn-metacognition. Children feeling empowerment by the 1-1 sessions in that they could express their ideas honestly (as we often do pupil voice sessions in small groups).

Relational Behaviour policy- Overall though, the children like the team element of house points and also seem happy with the recognition they get when they succeed.

Race Equality-direct line of enquiry for the focus group to be able to share their experience about school life-this will continue into the next academic year.

#### **What has been the impact on teachers?**

- A greater understanding of the value of pupil voice with regard to evaluation.
- Additional information to support reflection on school life e.g. the diversity audit and the need for further representation within school.
- To challenge assumptions e.g. that all the children would prefer the new approach to behaviour and the motivational factors such as teamwork etc...
- Thoughts about how this approach works with our community and the need to promote all voices.

All three areas we have used the Spirals approach to investigate are key points on our school development plan. The Spirals approach has provided a depth of understanding enabling us to analyse specific aspects of good practice. For example, the positive impact of teacher modelling in developing writing skills and how the children feel about access to resources that truly reflect the diversity of our community. As we plan for 2024-25 we will use these findings as an integral part of our SDP updates.

#### **How have you shared your learning with others?**

Shared with staff, governors, parents and our Learning Clusters

#### **Articles, websites, resources:**

- Centre for Strategic Education seminar series 234: A framework for transforming learning in schools: Innovation and the spiral of inquiry by Helen Temperley, Linda Kaser and Judy Halbert.
- Leading Through Spirals of Inquiry: For Equity and Quality by Judy Halbert and Linda Kaser
- Education Endowment Foundation [www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk](http://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)

Contact Sally Flowers [sflowers2.307@lgflmail.org](mailto:sflowers2.307@lgflmail.org) for further details

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