RETHINKING ASSESSMENT CASE STUDY: SHEPHALBURY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Collaboration for equity and inclusive learning for all: Assessment and curriculum approaches to support collaborative learning in the classroom.

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About the project:

This project was a partnership between HFL Education and Rethinking Assessment and focused on collaboration in the classroom with Year 5 pupils. It aimed to support and develop approaches to assessment and pedagogy which promoted equity and a sense of belonging to all children. Over the course of one academic year, schools worked to deepen approaches to pedagogy and assessment of collaboration, with the aim of designing and piloting a digital learner profile to capture and evidence learning and achievement beyond a narrow set of academic data.

Who are we?

Shephalbury Park Primary School is a one form entry primary school in the heart of Stevenage. We have a strong focus on child centred education, developing the whole child and we have a fantastic outdoor environment surrounding the school. Creativity, challenge and enjoyment are at the very core of everything we do. We have a strong culture of learning throughout the school, which is promoted through our Shephalbury LEARNER attributes. These attributes are woven throughout our school from the outset in Nursery, through play, all the way through the year groups to Year 6, through their academic learning, and into our staff team and wider community.

What did we do?

We focused initially on the planning process, taking time to understand how we could embed the skills to develop collaboration within our curriculum planning. Throughout the planning

process, we would begin with the unit of work, look at the lesson objectives and then add an activity that was linked to the curriculum objectives, but that also developed a specific part of the skill of collaboration.

Some examples included, writing joint stories or producing joint pieces of artwork. One project on the book 'Mixed' involved the children creating their own town as a group, developing vocabulary around this, which led to them to write a joint poem. We have completed scientific drawing and scientific activities together and collaborative activities in Maths and English. For example, the children created a story collaboratively, where they all had to contribute to each aspect of the story.

We used the assessment framework for collaboration (see below, with credit to HFCMAT) as a reference point to help the children see the progression and the steps to take in learning the discrete skills that make up the disposition of collaboration. It would typically become part of the learning sequence for that lesson, for example, sharing our focus on listening with the children as part of the start to the day. We would discuss, 'how does that look? What skills do we need to employ?' We discussed, 'what skill in particular do you struggle with as a class, or as an individual?', and then they chose an area and a discrete skill to focus on.

Collaboration

Collaboration	Starting point	Emerging	Developing	Deepening	Mastering
Sharing *(and presenting)*	I need support to share my learning with others	I share my learning with and peers and / or the teacher to review I understand the importance of sharing my learning more widely	I share my learning / products with larger groups or the class	I can confidently share my learning / product for evaluation by others I can confidently share learning to a wide audience including experts outside of school	I confidently share my learning / product to a wide audience, including experts I can assess the quality of learning based on checklists / self generated success criteria

Collaboration	Starting point	Emerging	Developing	Deepening	Mastering
Feedback - giving and receiving	I understand what feedback is and how it can help I listen to feedback am beginning to think about feedback I could offer	I listen to feedback and I act on it I begin to give feedback to others	I am open to feedback and actively listen to what is said I can give constructive feedback to others and am sensitive when doing so	I actively seek feedback from others and I use critical feedback positively I ask for clarification of key points I give precise feedback to others that brings about change	I can provide challenging feedback with empathy (radical candour) I create positive conditions for feedback to be given and received

Collaboration	Starting point	Emerging	Developing	Deepening	Mastering
Co-operating appropriately	I work on my own

I am developing my confidence to work in a group situation | I respect others and understand that people think differently

I understand roles when working in a group

I can identify what needs to be done for a successful 'team' outcome | I respect what other people say and respond appropriately

I willingly try different roles in a group

I participate in all necessary activities in simple tasks | I see things from other people's points of view

I coordinate effort, inclusion and participation by all members of a group
For example, I invite group members to speak / participate

I build confidence in others
For example, I encourage others to expand on ideas "That's a really good idea, can we hear some more.."

I build on other people's ideas
For example, "I see what you are saying and I could add…" | I participate throughout tasks and try alternative strategies or multiple attempts during difficult tasks

I am an effective negotiator and can address and resolve conflict in a group |

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In terms of the learner profile element, we developed the Google Site and added to our 'whole school' learner profile which we began to develop at the beginning of this project (see below).

The children populated a Me as a Learner page using a teacher model we created from the Rethinking Assessment template:

We used curriculum time in Computing to begin with, to support the children to develop the basic IT skills in building a google site, inputting text and photos, for example:
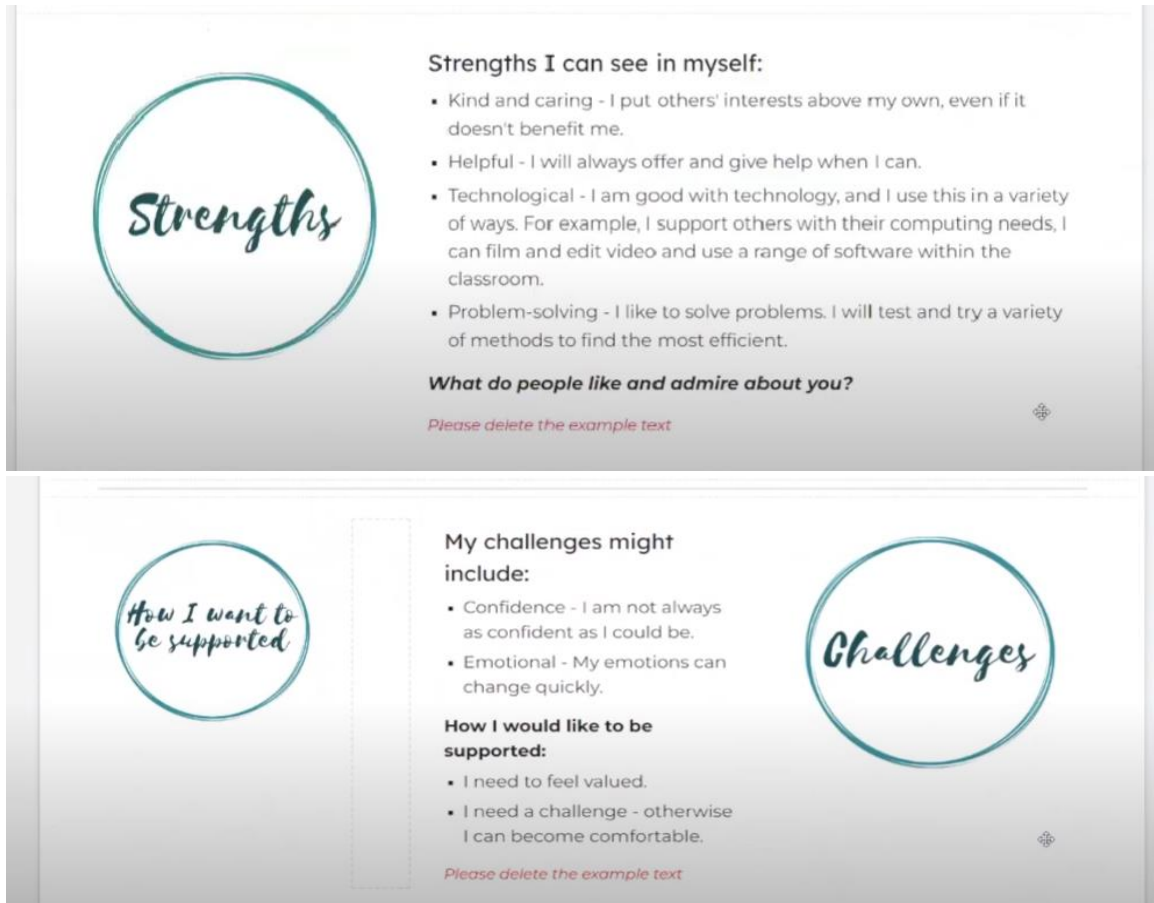
We then moved on to use the learner profile as a way for the children to independently capture evidence of any examples, across the curriculum, where they felt they had demonstrated the skill of collaboration. For example, if they think that they have demonstrated collaboration in Maths, History or English, then they could write about that, as seen below:
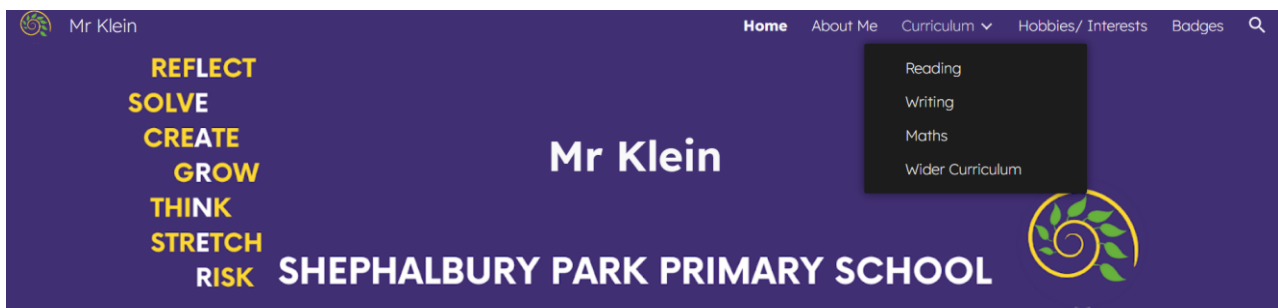
We used the daily Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time as a way to encourage this regular reflection, with small groups of children accessing the laptops daily, enabling each child to update their learner profile weekly.

What did we learn?

Despite the short space of time over we did see an impact on the children and they are now more tolerant of each other during group activities. We do still have some children who still like to take the lead in projects, but they're more mindful of that and ready to reflect, becoming more self aware. The work produced in groups has led to some very good outcomes in English and maths, particularly in English at times. Collaborative skills that the children have learned in English and Maths have supported PE learning because they've started to work together more and use those skills more effectively.

This project has drawn my class together more, and allowed that to flourish a little. The collaborative activities between year 5 and 6, were a challenge when we did this right at the beginning of the project as the children hadn't yet developed the necessary skills; but by the summertime it is clear to see the skills that they have improved, particularly in year 5. In particular, 2 or 3 specific children who were typically very quiet, and didn't share their thoughts and feelings at the start of the year, now are a lot more confident. They have developed this year in terms of discussion, collaborating and working together, having the confidence to step out and say what they're thinking.

Because of the learning processes that we've experienced here, the children understand that everyone is allowed their voice. Everyone is allowed the chance to speak, and it has supported our school Shephalbury LEARNER attributes - solving problems, taking a risk, being creative - all of which has fed into the project really well.

Building the skill of collaboration takes time and you need to drip feed into lessons; rather than taking a large chunk of time out of a lesson, focus on one small thing alongside your curriculum content. For example, if I want to teach about how we work together and how we listen to each other, I don't use 5 min or 10 min of a lesson work on the discrete skill: Instead, I feed it in and I don't expect masses of progress between the start of that lesson and the end. My aim is that they're a little bit more aware of that skill during that conversation and over time it builds up. As a teacher you may feel that you've spent 2 weeks on listening with little improvement, patience

is needed - there will often be something 3 or 4 weeks down the line where they're having a discussion and you then see the improvement.

With the learner profile, whilst it might be time intensive to start with, as the children become used to using the the learner profile, it becomes much easier over time and is ultimately worth it. Over the course of the project I found that their ability to independently reflect on their learning grew and improved. At the start they were looking for the teacher to lead, but now they're a lot more independent in those tasks. Now, they like the opportunity to share their point of view.

Our main learning is that developing learner profiles and using them to regularly evidence learning and reflection is entirely possible with the timing that you have - once the foundations are down, maintenance and ongoing reflection needs 15 mins per week, per child.

What are our next steps?

We are focused on developing the good practice that we've built this year and to extend that across the school with specific year groups in the first instance. This year we have delivered whole school staff meetings to share what we've done, to encourage other staff. We are also looking to innovate in embedding collaboration more deeply across the school - for example, collaboration across year groups more widely. We will support next year's year 6 staff to maintain the learner profile, with the hope over the next few years that every year group will have the opportunity to develop one.