



PILGRIM SCHOOL CASE STUDY



The Pilgrim school is Lincolnshire's hospital school. This means that the school provides education for pupils who are too ill to attend their mainstream school. Pupils have a wide range of needs. Some pupils are recovering from major operations at a regional health centre. The overwhelming majority are seen by CAMHS and have anxiety, depression and suicide ideation. Reflecting a national profile, a significant number of pupils are on the ASD spectrum or in the LGBTQ+ community.

Hospital schools are unusual. There are only 16 in the country. They are usually sited in a hospital! We are not. When I started as head teacher, the school operated as a tuition – outreach centre. There was a learning base in Lincoln but otherwise the school operated from sure start centres, libraries and youth clubs. It was not unusual for a table tennis table to be used as a class desk for group work!

There was no blue print for what kind of curriculum the school should have. The pupils had normally been out of school for a long time. Many, but not all, pupils come to us having shrunk their worlds to a point where they feel safe and in control. Many critical questions were therefore necessary to embark upon a vision and approach for the setting. How much work should



be based on “educational recovery” and personal development? What should our aspiration be? Was it enough to allow the pupils to re-engage with education or did we want more for them? How much should we allow our facilities to determine our curriculum – we had no science labs or technology facilities. We had a small pool of teachers – should we allow them to dictate our curriculum based upon what they felt comfortable in teaching?

OUR APPROACH

1. Have a clear rationale for what you are going to do.

Governors and leaders knew two things. Firstly, that the curriculum needed to be futures orientated. The curriculum had to be capable of lifting pupils to a better place than where they had been. This meant that the curriculum could not be based on a deficit model, it had to be asset strengthening. The curriculum had to build upon the success and strengths that individual pupils had, not try to remedy things they did not have (unless essential for them to move on.)



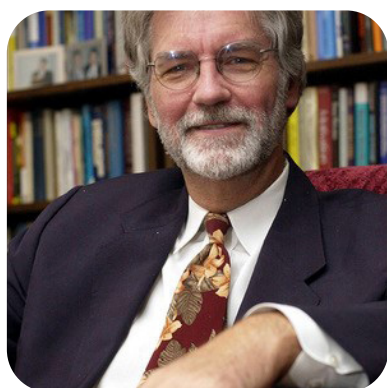
Secondly the curriculum had to be holistic and aligned. This means that instead of creating false binary alternatives, such as a pastoral led curriculum or an academic curriculum, the different parts of the curriculum had to work together. At its best, each component mutually supports and reinforces the others to create cohesion and to yield positive outcomes.

We looked for an overarching concept or principle that could pull the curriculum together. We looked at resilience, post traumatic growth and psychological optimism. None of these seemed to work in the way that we needed. We then came across the writings of Rick Snyder and Shane Lopez and their work on the psychology of hope. This became the focus of our curriculum. We selected hope as a central focus of our curriculum because:

- The psychology of hope teaches people to think in a particular way not to rely upon feelings;
- Hope is measurable by using a simple questionnaire;
- Hope is predictive in nature. From a person's level of hope we can predict how successful a person will be in a range of future areas- including success in school, positive physical and mental health, socio-emotional regulation and attendance.
- Hope is malleable, it is not fixed and can be taught.

Having selected our central concept we then completed a desk top research exercise where we looked at what hope was. We looked at how communities learn. This meant that we encountered the work of Albert Bandura and his social-cognition theory and this helped us create sources of hope within the school.

From this we wrote our curriculum research document. This was about a 10 000 word document that explained what we wanted to achieve, and a series of recommendations from the research base of what needed to be included for it to work. We then checked our findings with academics from the University of Lincoln, University of Michigan USA and the University of Alberta in Canada. This gave us hope that we were on the right track.



How did he act with hope?

Goals: Firstly, Marcus wanted to play for Manchester United. Subsequently he wanted to reduce child food poverty.

Having pathways: As a youngster Marcus practiced football every day. Now, he continues to work tirelessly to reduce child poverty.

Working towards a goal: There were different routes to both his football career and awareness raising about food poverty. He has found ways to work around obstacles in his way.

Marcus Rashford:

A Pilgrim Hopeful Hero

"Big things rarely happen overnight and good things rarely happen as if by magic."



What is

a Hopeful Hero?

These are famous people whose stories are talked about across all subjects. They have been voted for by members of the school community because their stories reflect the three strands of Hope:

1. Setting goals
2. Having pathways
3. Working towards the goals

What is his story?

Marcus was the youngest of five children and was raised by their single Mum who had multiple jobs to try and make ends meet.

Aged 11, at his Mum's request, he enrolled on Manchester United's Schoolboy Scholar scheme, partly because there was catered accommodation on offer.

Marcus' football career has since gone from strength to strength, even after being a victim of racist abuse following an England penalty miss in Euro 2020.

However it is his awareness raising in relation to child food poverty which has set him apart! During the pandemic, Rashford campaigned for free school meals to be continued during lockdowns and throughout the school holidays, helping to raise enough money for the provision of more than 21 million meals. He has spoken very openly about his own experiences and has so far written two books aimed to help young people fulfil their destiny.

2. Be clear about how you are going to do things.

We created a cross cutting network group in school. This group then created a theory of change for the Hope Curriculum. A theory of change is a technique that is commonly used in charities and third sector organisations. It is a logic – sequence model. This means that you work out the desired outcomes that you wish to achieve then logically work out what needs to happen and what different groups of pupils need to do for the outcomes to be achieved. The actions and activities need to be definable and there needs to be a logical connection between them. We started with:

- the outcomes that we wanted to achieve,
- the building blocks of what was needed to achieve the outcomes by:
- specifying what pupils would do;
- specifying what the adult would do
- specifying what leaders would do.

From this we generated a series of pathways:

Creating mastery through remembering a logical, sequenced, cumulative curriculum;

In Maths the team planned an overall learning pathway across KS3 and KS4. They identified the knowledge required and how the big concepts in maths identified by NCETM were going to be developed. Each unit within the overall plan has a delivery plan (scheme of work) and knowledge identified through a schema. The schema identifies the knowledge that pupils will gain and the order in which they will gain the learning. These are shared with pupils. Consequently, pupils know what they have learnt, what they will be learning next and what previous knowledge needs to be built upon. This can help lessen anxiety because the curriculum is known and quantifiable.

Creating mastery through assessment for learning;

The Science team use, as do others, their schemas as the basis of formative assessment. Teachers and pupils use these as the basis for recall tasks and activities. Pupils also use them as a check to see which areas their knowledge is strong and what needs reinforcing. Teachers also use worked examples in science with success criteria so that pupils can clearly see what they are aiming for. Teachers routinely model processes and think aloud so that pupils hear the decisions that are made as they tackle problems. This helps pupils rehearse hopeful thinking in the classroom.

Creating mastery through learning a hopeful and learning language;

The school uses bedrock to help pupils learn academic vocabulary. In addition, the school has identified its hopeful language. A series of words that staff and pupils learn alike that helps frame a hopeful and positive outlook. These words include: Sisu, Ubuntu, Meraki, Ikigai, Wabi Sabi and Kintsuigi. This helps pupils intentionally learn a set of attributes and ways of thinking which promote hopeful thinking.

Learning hopeful narratives and stories;

The school has identified three hopeful heroes. Their stories allow pupils to learn about hope through the experiences of others.

Each hopeful hero has an individual schema which tells the hero's story and how they set hopeful goals, how they found different pathways, how they found the motivation to do it and who their cheerleaders are.

We also wrote how the heroes showed *sisu*, *ubuntu*, *meraki*, *ikigai*, *wabi sabi* and *kintsuigi*. Each hero has at least one quote as a memorable message. We then mapped how pupils would meet our three heroes both inside and outside the curriculum.

Hearing a hopeful voice;

The school invites in speakers from British Limbless Ex Servicemen's Association. An ex Royal Logistic Corps Bomb disposal officer talked about their life changing experiences in Afghanistan.

They talked about how the experience impacted them. This clearly resonated with our own pupils.

Having caring and empathetic relationships.

We have thought carefully and intentionally about the kind of relationships we have had. We work with the staff through CPD on setting professional boundaries, the difference between empathy and sympathy and what we actually mean by care.

Each of the 6 pathways had a detailed school improvement key. This went into more detail about what would need to occur for this pathway to achieve the outcomes. We also wrote an evaluation schedule by which we could evaluate the progress the curriculum had made.



3. Be intentional about building capacity for change.

It is not enough for leaders to simply identify the changes that they want to see in the classroom. That is the easy bit. Leaders need to pay careful attention to the conditions within a school that allow changes to take place and become embedded. We have the added complication that our school is on a split site – also a proportion of our staff, who are working with pupils in the home, are peripatetic. This meant that there were natural barriers to change as well as the normal barriers in a school.

We wanted teachers to increase their hope and a sense of efficacy. Efficacy is the belief that your environment and circumstances are changeable. People with low sense of efficacy see their environment as fixed and uninfluenced. A teacher's sense of efficacy has a large and significant impact upon their work and outcomes for children – see J. Hattie vol. 2. To increase a sense of efficacy we were intentional about the following:

Connecting actions to outcomes.

Teacher's need a sense of what they are doing in the classroom having an impact. Leaders can use qualitative data of course to evidence positive change but, and especially in early stages, outcomes are more likely to be qualitative in nature. They are also likely to be smaller in nature. Leaders capturing staff doing good and helping them see the impact of their work is crucial.

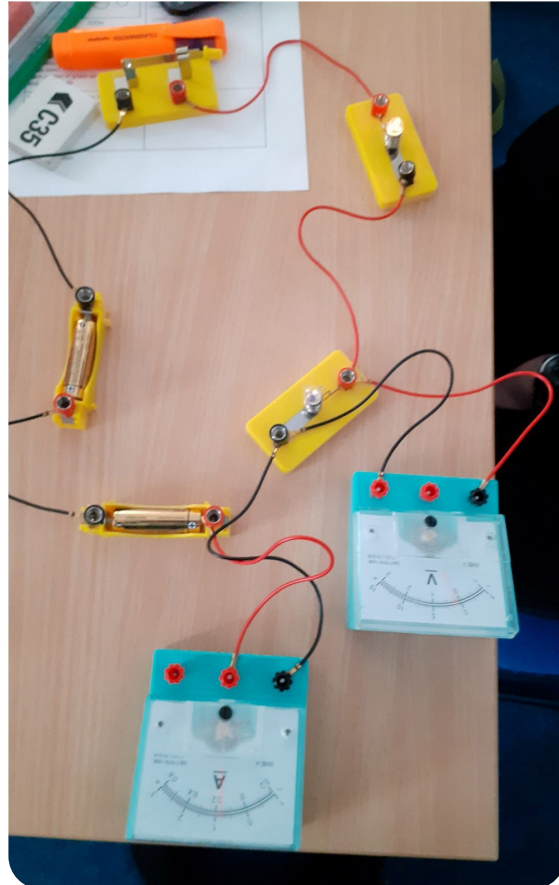
Creating space and collaboration.

Many make the claim that collaboration is a virtue in itself. We disagree. For us collaboration has to have a purpose and an intent. The use of our evaluative framework helped to sharpen our collaborative work. We created departmental teams and cross cutting teams to work on aspects of the curriculum. We were fortunate that when we had created space on the timetable. Every Wednesday afternoon the

school timetables Well Being on Wednesday (WOW). This is run by the school pastoral staff with indirect supervision by teachers. Consequently, teachers have directed time on a Wednesday afternoon but no direct teaching. This meant that leaders could direct this time for collaboration, workshops and professional learning as well as meetings. If we had not arranged this then the pace of change and depth of change would have been much slower and shallower.

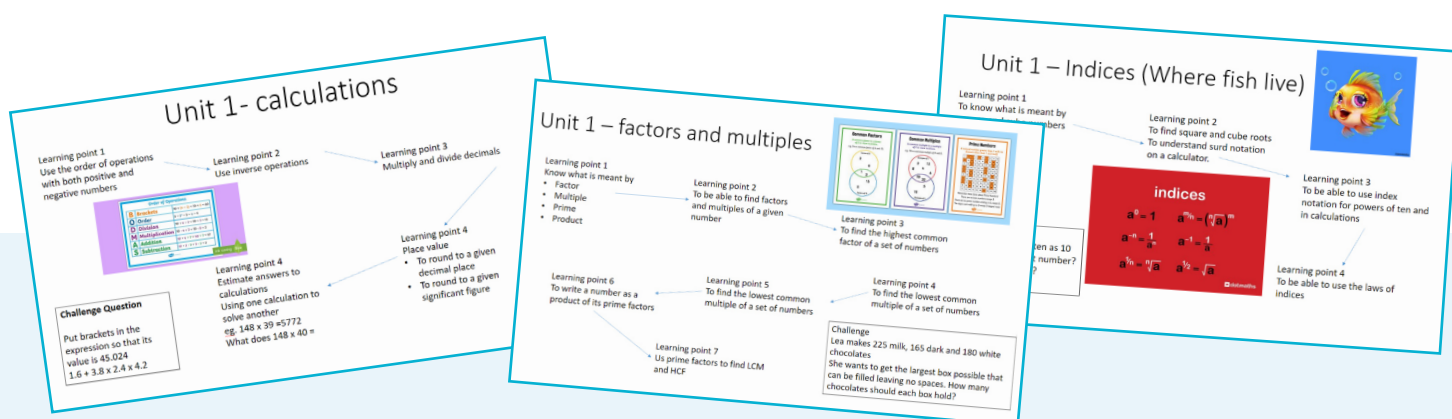
Coaching.

We are a coaching school and believe it is an invaluable tool for staff development. This is because it helps staff find meaning in what they do; it helps staff solve their own problems, it helps staff mediate the change that we wish to see into the particular context of their classroom; it helps change become nuanced and granular. There are other benefits too. We have found that staff who engage in coaching changed the language that they used with children. They would begin, naturally, to use coaching questions and require pupils to become more reflective. Our approach to coaching was intentional. We trained 1 senior leader to CMI Level 7 in coaching. They became the lead coach for the school. Coaching became part of the school CPD offer and was open to everyone. Of our 3 lead coaches one was a teacher, one was a pastoral member of staff and another was from the administrative team. This was then cascaded out further and evaluated. It is now part of the culture of the school.



Culture and Communication.

All school leaders create a culture. The question becomes about whether this culture is intentionally or unintentionally created. Culture is created by leaders signalling what is important and what is valued and then making this a systemic feature of the school. People working in schools look for authenticity from their leaders and whether their leaders walk the talk and actually behave in ways which support the values they profess. This meant for us that if we were to create hope for our pupils then we had to create hope for our staff as well. Communication is key. You cannot over communicate what you are doing and why. Making sure everybody knew what they were doing and why and how their part of the process connected with everybody else's. We paid careful attention to our performance management systems and thought about how they are used to model hopeful thinking for our staff.



The impact of this is that we have a school experience which is intentional. We know why we doing the things we are doing and how they fit with the rest of the curriculum. Our attendance, whilst low compared to mainstream settings, is at the highest it has ever been. We are school that very rarely restrains or excludes (our last exclusion was over 6 years ago). Our pupils achieve well academically including GCSE grade 9 in English and grades 8 and 7 in history and RE last year. More importantly, perhaps, our pupils can learn that tomorrow can be a better day than today.

LINCOLN NEWS...

This Term our topic for WOW has been nature and we have been on walks, made bird feeders and planted seeds for the garden to harvest later in the year. As part of this we have also had a trip to 'Happy Hooves' with students from the Baumber base and everyone had great fun cuddling the animals and bathing the tortoises!

We do pupil forum a little differently in Lincoln and leave the questions for the pupils to answer, here is the all-important prom question: (we might struggle to fulfil a few requests!)

For Red Nose Day in Lincoln we wore red and had a table tennis competition, at lunch we had a bake off and then sold the cakes. It was a really fun day and raised an amazing £29.18.

The 'Ultimate Uno Challenge' or UUC is well under way in Lincoln! Staff and pupils are battling it out to become the ultimate UUC champion!!!!!! Who will win????