

## Marown Primary School

**When I was appointed to my second headship at Marown Primary School on the Isle of Man, I was keen to develop a whole school culture that encapsulated the work around the 'Learning to Learn' philosophy. I wanted to ensure pedagogy focused more upon "how" children learn rather than "what" children learn, and offer the pupils an inventive, aspirational and motivational curriculum.**

Our journey as a school started in September 2011. The school was viewed as a successful school and had strong foundations for learning in place.

The Isle of Man is a self-governing Crown Dependency and schools have their own curriculum called the Essentials for Learning Curriculum. There are significant differences to the English education system, for instance we do not administer end of Key Stage SATs. The Island does not have external inspection to monitor the schools, preferring to use a system of school based self review and evaluation, which is subject to external validation.



The Island's curriculum is not prescriptive; rather it attempts to provide broad parameters in which a school can develop flexible, exciting and memorable learning experiences that support the development of a broad range of academic, social and personal skills. Central to the curriculum are six learning dispositions, known as the 6Rs. These are based on the work of Guy Claxton and Building Learning Power.

This was our starting point. The key driver for change for the school was a planned 'Learning to Learn' term where each week we introduced a different technique across the whole school. We wanted to equip the pupils with all the tools and strategies that would enable them to access their learning and make them feel successful as individuals and as learners at Marown School.

We began the term by considering ourselves as learners and reaffirming with the pupils our yearning to cultivate a deep-rooted love for learning. Each member of staff then led one individual week, which included planning a staff meeting, assembly and resources, and presenting the technique ready to use in the classrooms. Reflection time was also included. We introduced a broad spectrum of techniques including De Bono's Thinking Hats; the TASC wheel; Visual Maps; James Nottingham's The 'Pit'; Carol Dweck's work on growth mindset; and Enquiry based learning (all staff are P4C trained).



Alongside this as a school community we worked on a set of school values and also curriculum drivers decided by the pupils. These have taken two years to establish.



We also introduced David Hyerle's Thinking Maps. I attended the Thinking Schools Conference in 2014, and attended a workshop led by David Hyerle. We then held a whole school professional development day, led by TSI, which introduced the concept of Thinking Schools. This was followed by the school's Deputy attending two day Thinking Maps training.

We like Thinking Maps and Thinking Hats! Thinking Maps are one tool used in our classrooms to promote metacognition amongst pupils. They are visual representations of thinking and help pupils see their own learning pathway or the thought processes utilised to solve a problem. We use them effectively with De Bono's Thinking Hats. The Thinking Hats are an extremely useful tool to use with pupils to promote creative, natural thinking and an awareness of what others may be feeling or thinking.

My role as a Head was to then pull all the strands together which we have done through our learning toolkit, the Marown Learning Jungle. My starting point was to consider successful pupils at Marown as global citizens (UN Rights of the Child), as individuals (School Values), as learners (6Rs and Marown Learning Skills), and as critical thinkers (De Bono's Thinking Hats). The toolkit is split into six parts, with six animals representing one of each area. The toolkit includes posters, stories, statements, assemblies and awards.

Embedding the Marown Learning Jungle across the whole school has been a fascinating and enlightening journey. To support our learning journey we have recently appointed a Cognitive Development leader who is co-ordinating the school's work towards Thinking Schools accreditation. This will involve further liaising with pupils, staff governors and parents, and creating a 'Drive Team' to oversee the school's work.

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