



Healthy Schools Plus Case Study June 2010

St Marys is a Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School that is a part of the diocese of Plymouth. We are a single year group entry with 208 pupils on roll. It has the distinctive ethos and character of a Catholic School where our faith is at the heart of all that we do and our Mission focuses our endeavours. As a school we aim to:

1. Nurture children to be happy, healthy, and secure and who are treated with equal dignity and respect, ensuring every child's contribution is encouraged, valued and celebrated.
2. Equip our children with all the abilities needed to regard life as a gift to be lived to the full. (John 10:10)
3. That the reality of prayer and worship become meaningful personal experiences which permeate everything we do.
4. Support parents in their role as the first educators of their children in the ways of their faith and life and develop and maintain good relationships between the school, home, parish and wider community.
5. Enable each child to reach their full potential by providing an enriching and relevant curriculum, within a caring learning environment.

We choose to focus on the area of Emotional Health and Wellbeing as this linked closely to our work with the TAMHS project. As a school we were aware of the correlation between emotional health and wellbeing and attainment and achievement. All teaching staff could identify children in their classes who were exhibiting low self-esteem or emotional resilience and it had become increasingly noticeable that children needed an opportunity to practice and develop their social and emotional skills.

R-Time was introduced throughout the school as wave one provision for the whole school. This was to ensure that there was the progressive development of social and emotional skills throughout the school.

All teaching staff were involved in a training day on R-Time delivered by John Pascoe, accredited R-Time trainer. This involved a series of demonstration lessons followed by a staff meeting attended by all teachers and teaching assistants. We were very aware of the importance of a whole school approach to R-Time and as such we

adopted the 3 golden rules of R-Time across the school to be used in class and also in the playground at lunchtimes. After the r-time session children in year 4 commented

“It made me feel I could be friends with anyone”

“We can work with people we don’t normally work with”

“We practiced using polite manners, making us feel good inside”

“It promoted good teamwork”

We also adopted a system of giving children golden tickets when they were observed following one of the golden rules. The golden tickets are placed in a special golden box and 7 tickets are pulled out of the box at our Golden Assembly on a Monday morning. The child who has their ticket pulled out the box first receives the ‘St. Mary’s Superstar’ trophy to keep for the week and the remaining 6 children who have tickets pulled out of the box are also rewarded with the opportunity to sit on ‘The Captain’s Table’. The Captains Table is a special table in hall at lunchtime that is set with a tablecloth, glasses and china crockery and the children eat lunch with Mrs. Scarborough, the Head Teacher. The implementation of R-Time has had the impact that all children are aware of the importance of good manners and social skills and has ensured that they have the opportunity to apply these skills in everyday contexts.



As R-Time is dependent on a whole-school approach we also focused on lunchtimes and provided training for the Lunchtime supervisors on a related programme entitled 'Looking after Lunchtimes'. They were introduced to the R-Time principles and the 3 golden rules. The training also focused on the importance of positive interactions with the children. Following the training the lunchtime supervisors were each asked to give out 5 golden tickets at lunchtimes. The children were soon noticing that positive behaviour was being noticed and celebrated and this improved their interactions with each other.

The golden ticket system works in collaboration with our whole school behaviour system. When children receive a golden ticket they also are moved up the ladder to show their special behaviour. Each class has a class trophy that they award to further celebrate achievement.

Each child in the Reception Class was buddied with a child in Class 5. Each week they join together for an R-Time session so that the older children can model social skills and interaction. This has been an extremely positive experience for all involved and for the children this is a highlight of their week in school. The children in class 5 have the opportunity to show their nurturing and caring personalities and the children in the Reception Class benefit from such positive role-models.

R-Time has been such a success we decided to share this good practice at our celebration of the TaMHS project for the Falmouth cluster of schools. A wide range of people were invited to attend including Head Teachers, teachers, learning mentors and educational welfare officers. The process that we undertook to begin R-Time in school was outlined and a group of children from year 1 demonstrated an R-Time session, exemplifying the 6 step process and how they interact with one another and show good social skills.



For a group of year 3 and 4 children who we decided needed further targeted intervention to develop their emotional resilience and confidence we began a Pyramid Club. We began by considering all children in years 3 and 4 and thinking about their social and emotional needs. The class teachers then suggested children who may be suitable for a Pyramid club and we undertook a Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire that identified the most suitable children for the pyramid club. Those children were then considered at a meeting to ensure that the group dynamics were appropriate for the children to benefit fully from the opportunity. A matrix showing the results of the strengths and difficulties questionnaires was completed. Those children who were identified as suitable for pyramid club all demonstrated a high need in the emotional and pro-social categories. During the Spring Term we ran a Pyramid Club for 8 children with 3 Club Leaders. All the children were enthusiastic and their confidence levels and social and emotional skills developed in varying degrees. At the end of the pyramid club the strengths and difficulties matrix was completed again and all children had made improvements in their emotional and pro-social skills, with the majority of children now demonstrating a low emotional and pro-social score.



The children said

“It helped me to make friends and work with other people” (Year 3 girl)

“It was fun and we made friends. The best part for me was the trip. It was so special and just for us.” (Year 3 boy)

“It was good to work with children from another class. I liked choosing what we wanted to do” (Year 4 boy)

“It was fun and especially for us when we had our trip. I liked wearing my club t-shirt” (Year 4 girl)

A parent said

“Thank you for giving this opportunity. (My Child) is enjoying it and is getting so much from it”

