# **Principal's Sabbatical Report 2014**

# Focus: Connecting Vision, Learner Outcomes, Pedagogy, and Learning Spaces

# Greg Watson Mt Roskill Grammar School

# **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to the Ministry of Education for granting me this sabbatical award and to the Mt Roskill Grammar School Board of Trustees for their support of my sabbatical leave during Term 3. Thank you to Mr John Wilkinson, Acting Principal and other members of the senior team for their excellent leadership during my time away from school. Thank you to Principals at schools in Auckland and in Adelaide who gave time to show me around learning spaces in their school and to discuss the link between their ideas about the way teaching and learning should happen and the learning spaces they had developed.

# **Purpose**

I set out to describe the features of 'modern learning environments' to inform future decision making. My research questions were

- How and where do people learn in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?
- How do people prefer to work?
- How do you cater for teams of teachers?
- How does learning occur in our community?
- What implications does this have for school architecture?
- What implications does this have for MRGS, an established traditional school as we support 21<sup>st</sup> century learning?

My reading and visits drew me back to exploring the links between our school vision and values, the nature of teaching and learning that could enact these, and the nature of the learning spaces that would enable this teaching and learning. To simply describe the characteristics of modern learning environments independent of constraint sets of our schools vision values and context is to leap too quickly to a problem solution. Elmore's (2011) exploration of "I used to think, and now I think" comes to mind. Atkin (1996) suggests that the approach should be to "balance the focus of our attention on the practice or action with a focus on the core values and beliefs of the organisation and the expression of these values and beliefs and principles or guidelines for action".

She suggests the points of reference are always

- What do we value?
- What are the beliefs about learning which underpin a particular practice and are they reasonable beliefs based on current research on how we learn?
- How does our current practice help us achieve what we value?
- How will a suggested new or different practice improve our ability to achieve what we value and believe?

With this in mind the purpose of the sabbatical thinking became connecting vision, learner outcomes, pedagogy, and learning spaces. I visited eight schools in Auckland and four in Adelaide as part of the CEFPI conference (Council of Educational Facility Planners International) to explore these relationships.

# **Outcomes in thinking**

Our school curriculum thinking is represented in a 'curriculum map' linking vision and values to curricular and co-curricular structures (Appendix 1). The school vision is to develop 'successful powerful learners who are active and responsible citizens'. The vision is not only for students to gain qualifications and character, but to develop agency and ownership both academically and socially. That's the powerful and active part of the vision, what the New Zealand Curriculum calls confident connected lifelong learners. My reading enabled me to elaborate on these concepts. Appendix 2 is a summary drawn from reading and applied to our school context. Table 1 was developed from these ideas. It describes

- Learner dispositions, capabilities and outcomes that flow from our vison.
- Matching principles for effective teaching.
- Implications for learning spaces.

# **Outcomes for practice**

The sabbatical outcomes have acted as a platform for on-going development. The school Board of Trustees spent a day visiting selected schools to develop first hand understanding of the range of learning spaces being developed and to see how our pedagogical principles could be supported by these spaces. The school's curriculum team used the effective teaching principles as a launching pad for further development work of the Roskill Effective Teacher Profile. Appendix 3 contains a draft of the first part of this thinking making explicit what we would expect to see in teacher practice and student learning experience. Development of the Roskill Effective Teacher profile is an annual goal for 2015.

Vision	Values	Learner			Principles for	Effective Teaching Profile	Principles for Learning Spaces
		Dispositions	Capabilities	Outcomes	for Effective Teaching		Learning spaces
Successful powerful learners who are active and responsible citizens.	Maaakitanga Whanaungatanga Excellence Responsibility Respect	Resilience Perseverance/ Commitment  Courage/Tenacity/ Drive Independence Self-management Self-discipline High self esteem	Social confidence/skill  Communication  Collaborative skills  Thinking skills  Reflective learner  Metacognition  Writing skills  Digital literacy	Qualifications Character Capabilities	Expert curriculum knowledge.  Focus on Relationship.  Focus on achievement for all.  Develop learner ownership.  Develop learner agency.	Command of subject knowledge and curriculum objectives.  Uses assessment tools consistent with learning objectives, with a strong emphasis on formative feedback.  Put student engagement at the centre of thinking about learning.  Balance care and expectation.  Create structures in which learning relationships can develop.  Ensure learning is social and often collaborative.  Be demanding for each learner but without excessive overload.  Set challenging but achievable tasks for each learner.  Regular specific feedback with suggestions for improvement.  Embed explicit literacy teaching.  Make connections to prior learning/ experiences.  Clarity of expectation and use assessment strategies consistent with these expectations.  Flexible curriculum structure.  Differentiate and personalise learning.  Model being a learner.  Stimulate curiosity.  Work from practice to theory.  Explore real life situations.  Explore issues that are student issues.  Support students to evaluate their own work and progress.  Encourage learning from mistakes.  Teach metacognition.  Inquiry to further develop pedagogy.	Physical design is inspiring Innovation, openness and light.  Enables Visibility Learning spaces are deprivatised so that teachers can easily observe each other's teaching.  Workshop environment Integrate rich special purpose spaces with flexible adaptable multipurpose spaces.  Connected to outside Quality physical attributes Sound, light and temperature.  Learning anywhere, any time Seamless access to IC and learning spaces.

# Appendices - Appendix 1

advice and guidance are provided also. Year level

co-ordinators oversee the students' progressions

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee oversee the Formal Curriculum

to ensure that every member of the learning community

can thrive as a learner. This is done by developing:

· Relevant and meaningful courses and pathways;

and teaching practices.

through the various academic pathways.

# Learning Areas & Departments

The learning content is organised into different Learning Areas within departments, students learn various subjects within courses designed to capture their interests and facilitate their academic progress.

# Structures

# Sports

These co-curricular activities enable learning in the skills relating to Citizenship. These include competition, participation, sociability, resilience and a can-do attitude.

Students are encouraged to take part in a wide range

# Principles

Academic Programmes & Pathways within both the Formal Curriculum and Co-Curricular programmes. Departments provide courses that are targeted at various ability groupings and provide pathways to success for each learner. Careers

# **Ouality Learning**

### Learning to Learn. Aspiring to Excellence.

This is the core business of both teachers and students. There is a focus on both the learning and the learner. At MRGS, quality learning occurs

# Successful Powerful Learners

Our focus is on academic success, helping all of our students to become aspirational learners. We seek to develop in students a desire to achieve excellence, together with an enjoyment and understanding of the learning process.

Vision

## Enriched by Diversity

Open to the richness that each person brings. The learning community welcomes diversity as an invitation to go beyond one's self and toward developing relationships that are mutually beneficial and educative.

Whanaungatanga

# Cultural, Musical & Performing Arts

Students celebrate the diversity of their backgrounds and interests by participating in these co-curricular

As with the sports program, these activities enable learning in the skills relating to Citizenship: competition, participation, sociability, resilience and

# Manaakitanga

# **Quality Responsive Teaching**

Students bring different concepts, cultures. understandings and outlooks to the classroom. Quality and responsive teaching is sensitive to the needs of all learners and involves them in the learning process.

# Active Responsible Citizens

Active citizens seek and create opportunities to make a difference for the better, putting personal skills and competencies to work for the good of the community and each member within it. Responsible citizens build respectful relationships, and are sensitive to others' when making decisions.

# House System

a can-do attitude

Students are supported in their form classes and houses where they have further opportunities to participate, compete and lead. Here too, students develop skills for citizenship and are encouraged to develop supportive and respectful relationships with their peers, form teachers and deans.

### · Systems for mentoring and feedback; · A comprehensive Professional Learning Programme; · Evidence based Review Systems for the curriculum structures

# Responsibility

## **Partnerships**

### Community, Whanau, Campus.

The school is a focal point for its community, and seeks to be the catalyst for community development and aspiration. The school works to advance government objectives and to fulfil the needs of the economy, employers, parents and students.

Professional Learning

Teachers develop their skills in quality and responsive

Evidence based Teacher Inquiry and Self Review;

· High Leverage Strategies aligned to School Goals;

· Collaborative Reflection and accountability through the

professional learning programme that includes:

· Professional Learning Circles (PLCs);

appraisal system.

teaching pedagogies by participating in a robust, on-going

## Respectful Relationships

### Learning about self and others in an orderly and ethical learning environment.

Respectful relationships require personal authenticity, honesty, courage and intelligent practical decisions in each complex situation. An orderly and ethical learning environment is provided so that all in the learning community may treat one

# Respect

another with dignity and help each other to flourish.

effective pedagogies across the curriculum

- Writing;

- Mentoring and Tracking

# Pastoral Structures

Within these structures, systems and routines are put in place

- Maintain Orderly and Ethical Learning Environments
- Promote commonly understood concepts of respect.
- Promote and draw upon commonly held values
- Develop a Restorative Ethos.
- Operate Good Routines and Fair Disciplinary

# Student Leadership Opportunities

Some of the avenues open to students to develop leadership skills are as Prefects, House Captains and captains of teams, as members of the Student Council or House Committees, as sports team and cultural activity coaches, mentors and as Peer Support leaders and Mediators

## Lead Teams

Lead Teams of highly motivated teachers develop their own practice in order to lead others and spread Lead Teams in 2013 include:

- F-Learning
- Restorative Practices;

# Appendix 2: Developing vision, pedagogy and learning spaces in the MRGS context

## Vision

Successful powerful learners who are active and responsible citizens. For our learners to become 'fit for life'. Our learners will be equipped with ready to use knowledge, skills and attitudes including social skills, the ability to assume responsibility for their learning and working. Their learning will enable them to participate in society and successfully choose and pursue a career and deal proactively with change.

## **Values**

Manakitanga, Whanaungatanga, Excellence, Responsibility Respect.

Our values will encourage students to develop inquiry skills and individual agency, and contribute empathetically to communities of learners.

## **Learner outcomes**

Our learners will gain qualifications, and build capabilities and character.

## **Nature of learning**

Clear statements about learning expectations in learning areas and in learning capabilities enable students, teachers and families to recognise measure, discuss and chart progress. The overarching objective is adaptive competence – the ability to apply meaningfully – learned knowledge and skills flexibly and creatively in different situations. This is opposed to 'routine expertise' – being able to complete school tasks quickly and accurately but without understanding. However to seek to exercise competence without foundation content quickly risks becoming an empty technique. Content mastery and learning capability go hand in hand.

## We recognise that:

- No two learners learn the same way or bring the same prior knowledge to a learning experience.
- When students work at learning together there is deep understanding of the material.
- When students initiate learning they learn more.
- Learning connected to real contexts is more powerful.

# **Learning Environment**

The learning environment is realised through

- School expectations and values.
- The pedagogy used to equip students with qualifications, and build capabilities and character.
- The innovative use of digital resources and learning spaces.

# Principles for effective teaching

Quality teaching focuses on student achievement (including social outcomes), facilitates high standards of student outcomes for a range of students and is responsive to student learning processes. Pedagogy promotes learning orientations, student self-regulation, metacognitive strategies and thoughtful student. Use formative practice and curriculum expertise to build learner knowledge.

- Focus on relationship.
- Focus on achievement for each student.
- Develop learner ownership.
- Develop learner agency.
- Be a learner.

# **Learning Spaces**

"Learning Environments should facilitate engagement, be motivating and recognise the social nature of learning, allow for individualised pedagogies and formative assessment as well as larger group work, and facilitate work that makes a variety of connections" (OECD ,2011).

## **Inspiring learning setting**

Physical design and decoration as symbolic that innovation is in train. The importance of openness and light.

# **Enables Visibility**

Learning spaces are deprivatised with staff work areas being located adjacent to and visible from the learning areas (or learning commons). No doors or glass so that teachers can easily observe each other's teaching. A sense of openness so that everyone feels a sense of belonging to a community where the focus is on learning.

# Workshop environment

Integrate rich special purpose spaces with flexible adaptable multipurpose spaces to provide a dynamic workshop environment for learning.

## Connected to outside

# **Physical attributes**

Quality sound, light temperature attributes.

## Learning anywhere, any time

Seamless access to ICT ease of access to learning spaces beyond the traditionally defined school day.

# Appendix 3: Developed Roskill Effective Teacher Profile

# Roskill Effective Teaching Profile (RETP)

# **Powerful Learning Responsive Teaching**

Principles of Effective Teaching What could this look like in your pra outcomes?	
	I little effect on the quality of Teachers who are positive change agents
4 Francis Comiculos Kanadada Tanahas Asakint U. I. I. I. I.	d little effect on the quality of Teachers who are positive change agents
1. Expert Curriculum Knowledge Teachers' subject matter knowledge had	· · ·
(TOHUNGA) student outcomes. What was the differ	( 3 /
knowledge but more about how teacher	rs see the surface and deeper
Experts at the front end of the New understandings of their subject Hattie (2)	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,
Zealand Curriculum, their subject area	because of interesting and exciting learning
and able to make connections with other Teachers at MRGS are passionate and i	inspired about their teaching experiences.
learning areas. and subject and this should be the major	or promotion attribute of the
school.	Teachers who continually engage with their
Conceptual understanding of subject	subject area so they are "at the fore-front of
How teachers deliver the surface and Teachers are supported by a professiona	al development that: learning".
deeper understandings of the subject.	dings of their subjects(s).
* Supports learning through analyses	of the teachers classroom   Frequent interactions with teachers who have
interactions with students.	positive belief in them.
* Helps teachers know how to provide e	effective feedback.
* Attends to students affective attribute	es. Learning in the classroom that is 'mapped' and
* Develops the teacher's ability.	monitored with explicit feedback from their
	teacher as to next steps in learning.
Teachers seek pathways in their curriculu	um area and teaching to;
* Solve instructional problems.	Expert teachers who can quickly recognise the
* Interpret events in progress.	sequence of events occurring in the classroom.
* Being sensitive to context.	
* Monitoring learning.	Teachers who know that intelligence is
* Testing hypothesis.	changeable rather than fixed (Dweck, 2006); who
* Demonstrating respect for all in the so	chool. have high respect for their students and show a
* Showing passion for teaching and lear	<u> </u>
* Helping students understand complex	kity.
	Teachers using SOLO to develop learning intentions, success criteria and questions for
Professionalism at MRGS is achieved by	teachers and school leaders
working to achieve 'visible learning inside	e'.
	Teachers seeking to receive feedback from
	students to inform and improve their practice.

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