

Seminar/Briefing Record



Seminar – Visible Learning

Venue: Council Chambers, Midlothian House

Date: Monday 20 June 2016

Time: 2 pm

Present: Councillor Baxter
Councillor Bennett
Councillor Constable
Councillor Imrie
Councillor Johnstone
Councillor Milligan
Councillor Muirhead
Councillor Pottinger
Councillor Rosie
Councillor Wallace
Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive
Mary Smith, Director of Education, Communities and Economy
Grace Vickers, Head of Education
Sarah Philp, Principal Educational Psychologist

Apologies: Councillor de Vink

Councillor Constable welcomed the attendees and invited the Head of Education to Introduce the Seminar on Visible Learning.

1 Introduction

Item No.	Item Title	Presented by:
1.1	Introducing Visible Learning	Head of Education

Note

The Head of Education introduced the session by re-stating our vision to create a World Class Education System and the important role that Visible Learning has within this ambition for Midlothian. There has been an extensive training programme in place for schools led by the Educational Psychology Team. Today the Teachers and Pupils from Hawthornden Primary, Lasswade Primary, St. David's High School and Roslin Primary will present an outline of their Visible Learning journey by sharing their learning experiences.

The Head of Education introduced Sarah Philp, Principal Educational Psychologist.

2 Background

Item No.	Item Title	Presented by:
3.2	Visible Learning in Midlothian	Principal Educational Psychologist

Note

The Principal Educational Psychologist gave a brief background on the Visible Learning approach based on the research of John Hattie. Visible Learning's foundation is evidence based, what works best, what makes the biggest difference and what is the key information. The Visible Learning programme provides a one size fits one approach and there are five strands to Visible Learning. The session will demonstrate how in Midlothian this has developed as a language of learning, a culture of challenge (through growth mindset and the learning pit) and the pupils' ability to talk about their progress in their learning and the developed pupil – teacher dialogue. The 'Five Strands' of Visible Learning are: Assessment Capable Learners; Know the Impact; Inspired and Passionate Teachers; Effective Feedback and Visible Learning Schools.

The Principal Educational Psychologist explained that the Teachers and Pupils from the 4 Midlothian Schools would talk about their progress and how over time they have developed their own strategies in school.

Item No.	Item Title	Presented by:
3.3	Celebrating Visible Learning in our Schools	Hawthornden Primary School Lasswade Primary School St David's High School Roslin Primary School

Note

Acting Depute Head Teacher and two P4 pupils from Hawthornden Primary School demonstrated to the Seminar Culture Learning through growth mindset and the Learning Pit. The Teacher gave a brief introduction and the children enthusiastically shared their experiences in growth mindset and their experience in the Learning Pit.

Some of their comments included: *'using class discussions to support each other', 'knowing it is ok to make a mistake and to learn from this', 'not giving up – I can't do it yet' – but keep trying', 'it was ok to go into the Learning Pit', 'discussing different ideas with friends' and 'trying different strategies'.*

The culture in the classroom is that it is ok to make a mistake and learn from this. The positive challenge of Learning Pit and the different strategies that can be used.

Acting Principal Teacher and two P6 pupils from Lasswade Primary School demonstrated to the Seminar defining characteristic learners, Learning Superheroes. The Teacher explained the involvement of families to develop skills in teamwork in life and the significant shift of what makes a good learner. The pupils shared their positive experiences with the seminar on Language of Learning and Learning Superheroes.

Some of their comments included: *'practice to achieve high standards', 'ask questions – be curious', 'be imaginative and enthusiastic', set goals to achieve; 'I used to be upset when I made a mistake – now it is ok to make mistakes and learn from them', 'Learning Superhero feedback – assessing the Teacher and challenge what works well – Numeracy Natter'*

Using different strategies and enjoying learning. 'You can Improve and it is extraordinary'.

Maths Teacher and two S4 pupils from St David's High School demonstrated to the Seminar the Understanding progress and talking about Progress. The Teacher explained this was about making a change from focussing on attainment to progress and doing this in 3 ways: Time – Making Learning Visible – Communicate Learning in involving Parents. The pupils shared their experiences with the seminar on how they achieved this.

The pupils highlighted the use of grafts for tracking their progress and in using this they could see what sections required more work and what their achievements were which was very useful in revising for exams. The teacher explained this gave the pupils ownership of their learning and the introduction of Student led Parent's evenings where the pupils talked about the areas they were

struggling with and what they were good at was very positive for both parents and pupils. Also if a parent was unable to attend parent's evenings the pupils could still demonstrate their progress with them at home using their recorded progress.

The Teacher stated after 2 years there was very positive feedback on improved learning and encouraging pupils to progress and assess the information on their own learning.

Principal Teacher and two P7 pupils from Roslin Primary School demonstrated to the Seminar Pupil Teacher Dialogue. The Teacher highlighted the introduction of the Learning Council at Roslin Primary School and the improvement in pupil involvement and the positive contribution in decision making. The Teacher explained that pupils from Beeslack High School attended the Learning Council and this was a very positive experience for the pupils at Roslin Primary School, they were able to ask questions about the School and alleviate any worries they may have had in moving to High School.

The pupils explained that as part of the Learning Council they did a class observation and they were able to ask the children how they were getting on and then provide feedback to the Teacher. The Teacher explained this was very positive in giving feedback to teachers. Some of the feedback received from the pupils was: *'pupils sometimes felt they were not getting challenged', sometimes not easy and sometimes not hard enough'*.

The Class Observation assisted Teachers in looking at what could be improved and be more effective. Inspired passionate Teachers and the shift in dialogue. Listening to Pupils through their eyes.

4 Plenary

The Principal Educational Psychologist thanked each school in demonstrating the different approaches in the five stands of Visible Learning. The positive shared language of learning across Midlothian and the consistent approach to improved learning and teaching.

The Principal Educational Psychologist also highlighted to the Seminar that in recognition of the impact of Visible Learning, Midlothian has been asked to co-host the first Scottish Visible Learning Conference in November.

Councillor Constable thanked everyone for attending the Teachers and Pupils from the Schools for their very positive presentations.