

DORSET PRIMARY SCHOOL 5132

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING POLICY

DEFINITION:

Collaborative learning is an educational approach that requires all members working together to search for understanding, develop solutions or complete a task that supports learning goals.

PURPOSE:

Dorset Primary School is committed to developing an inclusive collaborative learning environment that will enhance learning for all.

BROAD AIMS:

1. To promote collaborative learning within the school community.
2. To build a greater understanding of the elements of collaborative learning.
3. To empower all members of the community to be proactive participants.
4. To engage students as active learners through increased responsibility and joint ownership.

GUIDELINES:

Students:

Understand and ***follow*** flexible group norms and protocols which includes but is not limited to:

- working together towards a common goal;
- accepting individual responsibility for participating and contributing to group tasks;
- maximising their personal learning and that of their peers by understanding the protocols for working collaboratively;
- actively seeking, listening to and respecting the opinions and contributions of others;
- and
- providing targeted and constructive feedback to peers.

Teachers:

Establish flexible group norms and ***explicitly*** teach students to work as a team by:

- regularly setting group tasks and goals;
- assigning different roles within groups, valuing the diversity of all;
- keeping groups between 3-5 students;
- focussing on enhancing problem solving and critical thinking skills;
- incorporating different types of learning scenarios, e.g. 3D construction, debates, collaborative writing, open-ended problem solving tasks etc.;
- differentiating learning by assigning group content based on student readiness;

- promoting interactions by organising students in flexible groupings in which group membership varies and may be based on friendships, mixed abilities or common interests.

Parents:

- actively participate to support students in their learning;
and
- form a working partnership with Dorset community members.

SEQUENCE FOR COLLABORATIVE LEARNING TASKS:

1. Plans or designs a collaborative task that will allow students to work in collaborative groups to achieve a common goal - this may be negotiated with students.
2. Explicitly teach a collaborative skill that the students require to succeed, such as:
 - active listening;
 - negotiating and compromising;
 - contributing equally and taking responsibility;
 - accepting others' ideas;
 - brainstorming;
 - problem solving;
 - and
 - delegation.
3. Organise short, sharp activities to practise and/or consolidate collaborative skills.
4. Explore major collaborative task, including goals and steps.
5. Organise diverse and varied groups.
6. Provide a framework/structure/timeline to assist students.
7. Assist groups to plan, outline and/or design their task.
8. Regularly check-in and monitor groups' learning and progress via group conferences, learning circles and class share times.
9. Assist students to reflect upon the success and challenges of their collaborative learning task.
10. Provide feedback.
11. Celebrate students' work.