



Circle Time Policy

School Mission Statement

At Glencraig Integrated Primary School we aspire to maximise the skills and talents of our pupils and staff in a respectful, happy, and caring environment, enabling them to become fulfilled and responsible citizens.

Updated:	October 2023
Board of Governor Reviewed:	October 2023
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Rights Respecting School

At Glenraig Integrated Primary School we are a Rights Respecting School and uphold the articles contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Article 13 - Children have the right to share freely with others what they learn, think and feel, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms other people.

Rationale

The whole school Quality Circle Time model involves a commitment from staff to the establishment of an ongoing timetabled process of circle meetings through which to address the key interpersonal and organisational issues affecting school development. The model incorporates a range of strategies to ensure that not only does everyone feel supported and an integral part of the management system but also that their relationship skills are continuously being enhanced. All the children and adults are encouraged to take an equal responsibility for the solving of theirs and others concerns and a striving towards the creation of a positive school ethos.

“The Whole School Quality Circle Time Model..... can help improve and maintain high standards of behaviour and discipline” Guidance notes from DfEE entitled Social Inclusion: Pupil support July 1999 (circular no.: 10/99).

Specific Aim

To promote positive behaviour and respectful relationships through working on moral development within a structured circle time approach.

Objectives

- ❖ To raise the self-esteem and morale of staff, pupils and all those involved in the school.
- ❖ To create listening systems within the school.
- ❖ To promote a system of behaviour management leading to high moral values and self-discipline.
- ❖ To teach personal and social education in a contemporary manner.

The Circle Time Model and the Revised N.I Curriculum

Circle time is effectively a listening system so can be regarded as an integral part of the Literacy Curriculum under the auspices of Talking and Listening.

Key Stage 1

Pupils should be taught to listen carefully and to show their understanding of what they see and hear by making relevant comments. In considering what has been heard, pupils should

be encouraged to remember specific points that interested them and to listen to others' reactions.

Key Skills

Pupils should be taught conventions of discussions and conversation. E.g., taking turns in speaking, and how to structure their talk in ways that are coherent and understandable. Pupils should be encouraged to listen with growing attention and concentration and to respond appropriately and effectively to what they have heard and to ask and answer questions that clarify their understanding and indicate thoughtfulness about the matter under discussion. They should use talk to develop their thinking and extend their ideas in the light of the discussion. They should be encouraged to relate their contributions in a discussion to what has gone before, taking into account differing views.

How Circle Time fulfils these criteria

- ❖ Children are taught and practise skills of thinking, looking, listening, speaking and concentrating.
- ❖ Rounds encourage all children to raise specific points and to listen to one another's responses.
- ❖ Discussion teaches children the skills of debate i.e., thoughtful consideration and evaluation.
- ❖ Circle games require children to listen and respond to instructions.
- ❖ Circle games encourage children to share ideas and develop imagination.
- ❖ Circle activities give children the opportunity to practise sentence structure and expand their vocabulary.

Key Stage 2

Pupils should be given opportunities to talk for a range of purposes, including:

- ❖ Exploring, developing and explaining ideas,
- ❖ Sharing ideas, insights and opinions.
- ❖ Drama/role play may be used as a medium for language development.

Key Skills

Children should be taught to listen to others, questioning them to clarify what they mean and extending and following up the ideas. They should be encouraged to qualify or justify what they think after listening to other opinions or accounts and deal politely with opposing points of view.

Language development

Pupils should be taught to use increasingly varied vocabulary. The range of pupils' vocabulary should be extended and enriched through activities that focus on words and their meanings, including:

- ❖ Language used in drama, role play and word games.

How Circle Time fulfils these criteria

- ❖ The circle time model has a basic strategy that operates during Open Forum i.e., Plan, Do and Review.
- ❖ Children have an opportunity to identify any problem area. It could be concerning work, behaviour or a community problem. Then with the help of their peers they explore the range of options open to them and decide on an action plan which will be put into effect during the following weeks.
- ❖ This plan will then be reviewed in a subsequent Circle Time meeting.
- ❖ Circle Time includes a wide range of drama activities including improvisation and a range of role play methods chosen to help the group explore any current theme or issue that concerns them.
- ❖ Warm-up exercises are often based on word games designed to encourage flexibility, memory and spontaneity. Through the circle the children are encouraged to address each other, to ask each other questions and to respond respectfully to differing points of view.
- ❖ A basic ground rule of Circle Time is that no child may make any negative personal comment to any other. This ensures respect at all times.

The Circle Time programme in Glencaig has been developed as a result of input from individual teachers in conjunction with the areas of the curriculum taught each year. Therefore, the programme is tailored for each teacher and class and incorporates various aspects of e.g., W.A.U, R.E and P. D.M. U throughout Foundation and Key Stages 1 & 2.