



Rosendale: A Kagan Model School

By Gavin Clowes and Kate Atkins



Certified Model School

Rosendale Primary School

London, England

2018

It's All About Engagement!



Gavin Clowes, Director KaganUK, with Kate Atkins, Headteacher Rosendale Primary School

Over the years Gavin Clowes, has conducted numerous professional development events with Rosendale Primary School teachers and TA's. Gavin has always been impressed with how quickly students and teachers alike have adopted Kagan Structures at Rosendale and at the fidelity with which teachers are implementing the structures. All of this at a time when schools across the UK are facing enormous external pressures in part due to ever tightening budgets.

Proud Rosendale

Rosendale is proud to be a Kagan UK Cooperative Learning Model School. Kagan structures encourage every child to be actively engaged in the learning process. Through the use of Kagan structures, students are taught how to learn cooperatively with their peers, while simultaneously required to have individual accountability for their own learning. As a direct result of infusing Kagan's Cooperative Learning into our students' daily learning experiences, their social skills and character virtues improve, thus decreasing discipline issues school-wide. With behaviour distractions kept to a minimum, our teachers are able to focus more time on instruction and learning, which positively impacts our students yearly academic achievement. All teachers at Rosendale are required to receive extensive and on-going Kagan Cooperative Learning training throughout their years of teaching at our school.

Pupil Premium

There were several drivers for the decision to implement Kagan Cooperative Learning at Rosendale Primary School. Closing the attainment gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium children was one of them, but as important was the school's growing understanding of evidenced based practice and the need to question traditional teaching methods and styles. The Teaching and Learning Toolkit compiled by the Education Endowment Foundation has synthesised many research studies and highlighted that collaborative learning, metacognitive strategies, feedback and oral language interventions all had a high impact on children's learning. Research had also indicated that children explaining learning to other



children was extremely effective in deepening the understanding of more able pupils and as a result many schools, including Rosendale, used 'talk partners' to try to achieve this.

'Talk Partners'

Looking closely at the reality of talk partners revealed that there was not equal participation and that the children who needed to talk and practise were the very children who were silent. So, the question that we faced was "How can we implement peer tutoring and classroom discussion in a way that makes an impact on children's achievement?" Our starting point to answer that question was, how are other schools doing it? And we visited other schools across the country to look at what was working well and what would suit Rosendale's context and found it in a school in the North West of England that had introduced Kagan Cooperative Learning (a system of pedagogy which promotes cooperation and communication in the classroom). It was love at first sight!

Our plan was to implement Kagan Cooperative Learning as a way of teaching across the school during the academic year. Once we had taken this decision, we contacted a Consultant (the wonderful Gavin Clowes of KaganUK/T2TUK) to look at the training we could provide. We set aside two INSET days to have Days 1 and 2 of the 4-day Kagan Training programme delivered to all staff. At the end of Day 1, we agreed a set of targets that all teachers would achieve and the time scale for completing them. For example, we agreed that all children in KS2 would sit in mixed attainment teams of four from the start of the term and by the end of the first training day, all the teachers had put their children into heterogeneous teams. There were other targets agreed around implementation as well and the senior team took responsibility for making sure those targets were met and providing the support needed.

Support

Over the course of this academic year we continued to train staff with lots of in class support, including in-class coaching from the Kagan trainer who ensured fidelity and consistency by running twilight sessions to address common issues and also by 'fixing' classroom practice during the coaching sessions. He also gave lots of feedback to the senior team highlighting staff who needed more support and suggestions on how to help them and staff that would be good mentors for others.

We realised that this fundamental change to our pedagogy would take time to implement, two or three years, and would need lots of support and training. We were in this for the long term and so decided to send two of our own staff to become In-School Kagan trainers so that they could provide regular support, for example every month they ran an Adult Learning Session focussing on getting one particular Kagan structure right, looking at how to match content to structure and addressing issues that had come up as a result of classroom monitoring. We also deepened our understanding of the philosophy of cooperative learning.

Hearts and Minds

The choice to use Kagan Cooperative Learning as opposed to any other form of mixed attainment teaching was influenced by its focus on whole school ethos as well as giving staff a structured format to follow. Making such a fundamental change to classroom teaching had to satisfy both hearts and minds, so throughout the training we revisited the moral purpose behind it as well as how to ensure that we met this. We regularly reinforced to staff that we needed to use visual timers because we wanted to make sure that all children got an equal opportunity to talk and that we no longer used hands up and called on one child because we wanted all children to engage with the teaching. So, training focused not only the 'how' but also on the 'why'.

We also made sure that we practised what we preached. All our Adult Learning Sessions use Kagan Cooperative Learning structures and we sit in mixed teams, not with our friends, so that all the staff get to work together and know each other. We use simple structures in assemblies and when we observed lessons

at the beginning, we looked for the use of Kagan Cooperative Learning and made sure that all our feedback focussed on that.

We have never taken our eye off the ball and we have been relentless in insisting on this pedagogy, even six years on we still have monthly training sessions and we evaluate our training needs regularly.

Honoured

We are honoured to have become a Kagan Model School and hope that we can support more schools on their journey to becoming truly cooperative

Podcast

Link to podcast discussion between Kate Atkins and Gavin Clowes

<https://rosendale.researchschool.org.uk/2018/10/06/podcast-episode-33-kate-atkins-gavin-clowes/>

A Letter to Kate Atkins and the Staff of Rosendale



We at Kagan are extremely proud of your accomplishment in becoming the first Kagan Model School in the UK. Your certification represents a great deal of inspiration, hard work, caring, and dedication.

When I think of what it means to implement Kagan methods school-wide, I think of students being educated in a caring culture, which fosters positive values for a lifetime. With the Kagan approach we transform social orientation.

There are only three ways people can orient socially: Against, Alone, or With. Traditional classroom structures foster Competitive and Individualistic social orientations, as students are encouraged to work alone and in competition with other students. With Kagan, students are encouraged to work cooperatively. When a whole school adopts Kagan, students internalise a cooperative orientation as they pass through school.

Why is this transformation of social orientation so important? Imagine a student who has left school having internalised one of the three social orientations. The student encounters someone in need. The student with a competitive social orientation says to herself, "I am better than that person in need." The student with the individualistic social orientation says to himself, "That person in need is not my problem." But the student with the cooperative social orientation says to the person in need, "How can I help you?"

With simple cooperative learning structures, we make it a better world. As a school you are making a huge difference in the lives of your students and in the lives of those they touch.

Congratulations,

Dr. Spencer Kagan

Co-Director, Kagan Professional Development

To Learn More

Kagan UK is an organisation dedicated to bringing Kagan Structures and methods to United Kingdom teachers and schools.

For details on KaganUK Institutes, workshops and conferences go to www.T2TUK.co.uk or contact Mathew Frame, KaganUK office manager, Tel: +44(0)1625 573223 Mathew.Frame@T2TUK.co.uk