SPIRALS OF INQUIRY
MOSMAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Context/ **School-wide focus**: 	School-wide delivery of contemporary literacy sessions including the implementation of consistent reading and reading comprehension strategies K-6. Senior school executive participated in a number of professional learning sessions to develop a foundational understanding of the Spirals of Inquiry process. In addition they visited several schools to build their capacity in facilitating Spirals sessions. The team unanimously decided that we should implement Spirals of Inquiry as the model for future professional learning. Immediate action was taken to ensure teams could meet every three weeks for 2 hours during school hours, supported by the Sports in Schools Australia program. This enabled teachers to be released off class to participate in collaborative learning sessions.
Scanning phase: 	After completing a school-wide review of current data (PLAN, NAPLAN, formative and summative assessment tasks and teacher observations) it was evident that staff development was required in effective literacy group implementation and the consistent delivery of reading decoding strategies as well as reading comprehension strategies. The development of school-wide expectations that teachers will enter data using PLAN for all aspects and for all grades, led to a school-wide shift towards formative assessment strategies being used across the board. It was widely agreed that a need for deeper understanding and skill development in both the Literacy Continuum and Formative Assessment practices was needed if any significant shift in pedagogy was to occur. Students initially had individual learning goals in Writing which then progressed to teachers having a keen interest in what is really going on for our learners in other aspects of literacy and numeracy.

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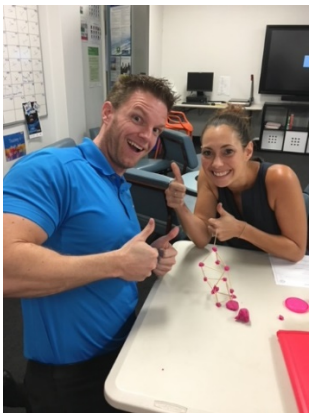
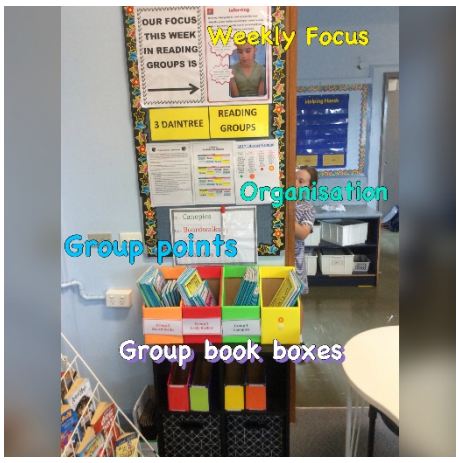
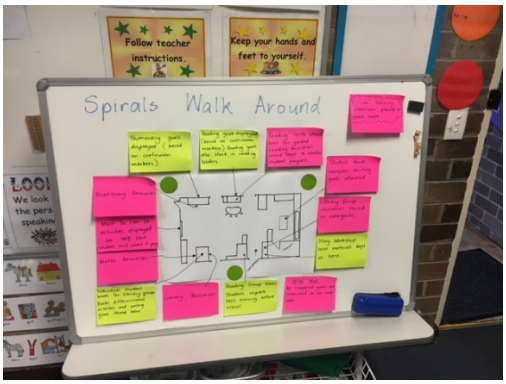
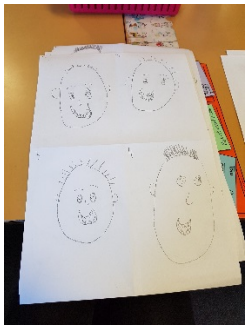
Focusing phase: 	As a school, it was evident there were inconsistencies across grades and stages with a range of experienced and beginning teachers throughout the school. We needed to shift the focus to make the learning across the school contemporary, visible and consistent in Reading and Reading Comprehension as our target areas for professional learning. Through unpacking explicit literacy sessions, we wanted to shift the school culture to one where every teacher was responsible for implementing contemporary literacy pedagogy in their classrooms on a daily basis.
Developing a Hunch phase: 	Explicit teaching and student engagement were drivers for the development of the stage-based hunches, where teachers reflected on their classroom practice and recognised the importance and need for consistency in programming and school-wide scope and sequences to ensure all students had daily access to decoding and comprehension strategies, as well as the time to develop these skills with their students. A mix of formative and summative assessment tasks were used to test the hunches at various stages throughout the process and student achievement was regularly measured (through task-based activities, interviews and surveys).
New Learning phase:  	Helen Timperley, Carol Dweck and John Hattie's research and findings were integral in developing the theoretical knowledge behind the Spirals processes. Staff were engaged in professional readings and targeted activities in the classroom to further their understanding of the research into best practice. Whilst we knew the direction in which we needed to embark, staff morale was challenged due to a perceived increased workload and prior mindsets, where some staff demonstrated resistance to change. Hence Carol Dweck's work on growth mindset was imperative to promote change amongst both students and staff. The power of *yet* and bringing about positive thought processes for staff was paramount to the success of our new learning. We acknowledge that this

	process will be ongoing learning for our teachers.
Taking Action phase: 	Prior to starting Spirals, the foundations of Formative Assessment, specifically Learning Intentions Success Criteria (LISC) were well established at MPS. The implementation of providing effective feedback to students and the setting of learning goals were areas still to be explored. We began with a review on LISC, so that all staff (particularly those newly appointed) as well as students had a purpose as to what they were learning and why it was important. Current programming was modified, notably in reading and reading comprehension to ensure staff had a foundational understanding of the Literacy Continuum and syllabus requirements. Initial learning in developing student friendly 'I can' statements facilitated this process and from this learning we were able to create student friendly learning goals and subsequently targeted feedback was able to be given to students based on their learning needs. A focus on developing individual student learning goals resulted in greater student involvement and self-regulation in their learning.
Checking phase: 	To enable staff to share their learning with colleagues we held a Spirals Walk, where every teacher opened their classroom for the afternoon. Teachers felt because what they had learnt had changed their teaching practices and impact was evident, it was timely to share the changes made in classrooms. Staff were empowered to see that they make a difference to the achievements of their students and were keen to share and celebrate this. Professional dialogue has become more frequent within the staffroom and staff are keen to share photos and videos of their impact on student learning. Teachers are becoming more reflective on their own understanding and openly discuss changing their practice depending on what they have learnt through their Spirals sessions. Our handover data has become more specific as teachers see the necessity of having specific markers so

	that they can build upon them immediately in the new year with their new class. Time is a precious resource and staff have seen the impact that 3 weeks can make to a child's learning. Teachers actively set goals and targets to achieve within this timeframe to ensure that they are continually moving students through the continuum of learning.
Future directions: 	Our staff have indicated their desire to be involved in school visits within and beyond our community of schools. We believe in the benefits of seeing Spirals in action outside our own context, collaborating with our colleagues and utilising the resources they have created for their Spirals. Our teams will continue to host other schools who visit for introductory Spirals learning, so we too can share our own learning. Visiting educators have watched our Spirals sessions, with the number of schools we are connecting with set to expand over the course of the year. The next steps for us will involve creating stronger connections with other Spirals schools and a deepening understanding of Formative Assessment, Growth Mindsets and the Spirals of Inquiry process itself.



Every child deserves a champion – Rita Pierson