

The Class Environment – Seating arrangements

Children and young people had quite a lot to say about the classroom environment and what helps them learn and what can get in the way.

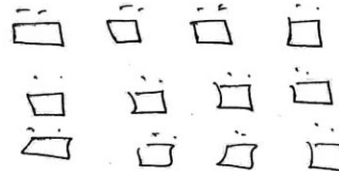


Air vent
medium heat

Vicky age 12 thinks
"Seeing everyone in the classroom and not being too hot." Makes her feel good about learning and



Vicky feels not so good about learning when:
"Boiling heat; set out straight classroom."



Air vent
boiling

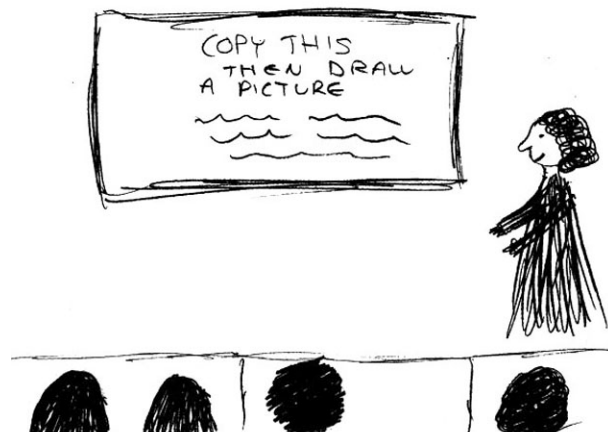
teacher



However this was not the view of everyone. In one class they were doing a project on the Victorian era and had all the desks facing the front. They felt this was useful and they found it easier to concentrate.

There was mention in discussions about how useful it was to sit next to a friend in class. There was recognition that it was not

helpful to sit next to someone you did not like or get on with, but that sitting next to your best friend did not help you do your best either. It was suggested that sometimes teachers are good at putting you next to someone you work well with.



Hazel, aged 12, felt that when you first came to the secondary it might be best if you sat next to someone you know from primary but then, *"After a while the teacher lets us sit beside someone we like, so we've had a chance to get to know one another."*

The [Appointment Clock](#) was one suggestion made by pupils in one primary school where this was used. They felt this not only helped them learn better, but helped them be more inclusive as well. Each pupil gets an appointment clock and has to make an appointment with 12 different people, one for each hour. This means they have to move outside of their immediate circle of friends, but could avoid anyone they really didn't get on with. For different activities in the day, the teacher would request pupils to keep their 2 o'clock (or whatever) appointment and so pupils sit next to different people over the day.

This is what the pupils said about it:

"Better when teacher chooses [who you sit beside] or you would choose the same one all the time."

"We use the attention clock you make 12 appointments. The teacher says 'go to your 12 o'clock appointment'."

"Yes, it helps you work better; you make better friends as well. You change it each term; you can choose the people; you can pick different people each term."

"It helps bullying and so on; you get to know each other better."