

Promethean®



A quick guide to encouraging teacher and student collaboration

Enhance your school's results and attainment

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Why should you be collaborative? | 4 |
| Collaboration in use | 5 |
| Techniques for working collaboratively | 7 |
| Overcoming the barriers | 8 |
| Using technology and space | 10 |
| In conclusion | 14 |

Introduction

Use collaboration to transform your school's teaching, attainment and performance.

*“Among the top 16 skills pupils need for the 21st century are **collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, adaptability and social awareness.**”*

World Economic Forum

Collaborative learning is rising fast on the education agenda, as evidenced by its recent inclusion in the PISA 2015 assessments. Whilst enhancing learning within schools, it's also increasingly important to colleges, universities, and businesses. That's because it develops the soft skills they're looking for – communication, decision-making, flexibility, problem-solving and team working. Undoubtedly, your school will already be working collaboratively to some extent, but the level to which it is done consciously, systematically and effectively will vary.

Schools which are interested in innovation are already investing in techniques and technologies that help pupils to work together faster and better,

in and out of the classroom. However, many schools haven't tried a systematic collaborative approach yet, or are struggling to implement it.

Key to success is understanding how space, technology and pedagogy need to be adapted so that students and your teachers alike can maximise the opportunities open to them.

This guide provides you and your teachers an overview of collaborative learning as well as tips for your teachers on making use of it.

| Why should you be collaborative?



Higher achievement

Students learn and progress better when they're interacting with other pupils.



Psychological health

Collaboration helps to develop social skills, emotional maturity, the ability to cope with adversity, trust, optimism, and autonomy.



Lasting learning

Pupils are more likely to remember something learned from or with a peer.



Diversity

Students learn to recognise and value their own and each other's differences and strengths, and to respond to different learning styles and perspectives. It's an effective way to draw in outlier students.



Confidence

Learning to bring and defend their own ideas, to communicate, and to present their work helps students to develop their confidence and personal identity.



Citizenship

Collaboration is a skill for life; it can enhance every relationship and improve the way individuals negotiate with the world around them, throughout their lives.

I Collaboration in use

Many organisations now routinely use collaboration techniques to deliver new solutions and innovations. For example:



Hackathons

A range of organisations (such as NASA, the NHS and MacDonalDs) use software development competitions to discover innovative solutions which benefit the economy and society.

Schools can do it, too!

King Athelstan Primary School in Kingston upon Thames ran a two-day hackathon in April 2016 in partnership NotOnTheHighStreet.com. In the same month, Y11 and Y12 pupils at Whitgift School ran a hackathon with Qredo to develop an Android app which lets parents track their children's location.



Co-creation

Businesses increasingly collaborate with third parties to develop products and services. FedEx, for example, worked with medical suppliers to develop a sophisticated logistics technology for delivering donated organs).

Schools can do it, too!

Schools could contact local businesses and ask for a project, or work with another school (perhaps overseas), to deliver a solution based on collected evidence. They could invite in an expert from industry or academia to inspire and guide them in advance, mentor them during the project, and/or review the outcome with them.



Open innovation

Large organisations (including the NHS) often ask their customers for ideas, and then work closely with them to deliver the most appropriate solution.

Schools can do it, too!

Sorrell State School in Australia worked with the local surfboard club to clean up the beach next to their school; they used a huge range of skills including environmental awareness, planning, letter-writing, mural art, horticulture and construction – and they even raised government funding.



Collaborative research

Businesses, charities, universities and research centres may use mass collaboration to tackle a wide range of problems.

Schools can do it, too!

Research Councils UK runs a scheme called the School-University Partnership Initiative (SUPI) in Manchester, bringing contemporary research to life for young people. For other ideas, explore how universities partner with businesses and adapt an idea which works for your school.



Many organisations
now routinely use
collaboration
techniques to deliver
new solutions and
innovations.

Techniques for working collaboratively

There are no hard and fast rules for working collaboratively. It can be as simple as a classroom activity in pairs, or as sophisticated as a project shared between schools in different parts of the world.

Whatever you choose to do, there are three key approaches:

01 Full collaboration

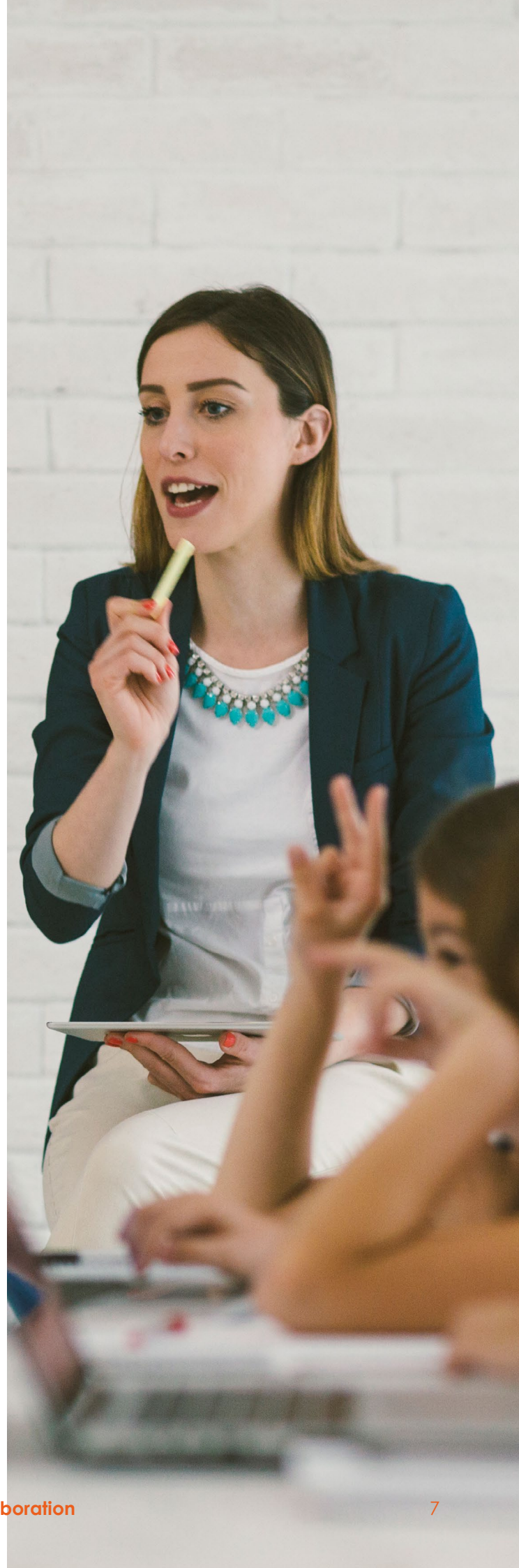
Pupils work with others towards an identified goal; they are accountable to one another and learn to self-manage that responsibility. They learn to expect, respect and take advantage of each others' differences.

02 Co-operation

Pupils work inter-dependently rather than together (like the cast and crew of a theatre production). Roles and responsibilities are defined but negotiable, with a strong sense of accountability.

03 Competition

Although this may at first sound counter-intuitive, healthy competition can be an effective way to get pupils working towards a goal either as individuals or teams, and can help to develop entrepreneurship and leadership skills. Of course, it needs careful handling to ensure that all pupils benefit.



I Overcoming the barriers

Moving to a collaborative approach isn't a quick fix; it's a whole-school journey for both staff and students.

On the other hand, it isn't an overwhelming proposition, either. It doesn't require abandoning your teaching methods; on the contrary, it invites you to use the best model for each circumstance.

There are some common misconceptions about collaboration, which will need addressing in order to assure co-operation among pupils and staff:



Developing understanding

Teachers and students may see collaboration as a fad, or as cheating. Perhaps they've had bad experiences in the past. They may see individual assessment as easier and more credible, or feel there are no tried and tested ways to assess collaboration.



Exploring new pedagogies

Collaborative working offers great flexibility for whole-class, multi-team, small-team and individual settings. Educators will need to know how to form effective groups for different purposes, and why and when to recompose those groups. They'll also need tactics for managing pupils who struggle or resist.



Celebrating success

Some teachers may lack confidence and skills in collaborative pedagogy; others may think they're already 'doing collaboration right', or that it can't work. One way to begin is to see where collaboration is already being done well within the school: success stories are inspirational.



Reassigning control

Students will need to take greater ownership of their learning, which means your teachers will need to feel comfortable passing over a degree of control – further developing their skills as facilitators.



Changing the use of time

Your teachers may worry about the extra work and time it might take to innovate new ways of teaching. In fact, for lots of reasons, collaborative working should involve less work.



Tools and communication

Pupils will need to be helped to develop the right social skills, and be provided with the technological tools, in order to remain collaborative and engaged. They should also be consulted on the restructuring of lessons and curricula, and asked for regular feedback and ideas.



“Up to 25% of the learning that happens in classrooms today is **critically dependent on peer talk.**”

Graham Nuthall

The Cultural Myths and Realities of Classroom Teaching and Learning

I Using technology and space

Spatial awareness

While collaboration is a social act, students (and any other collaboration partners) don't need to be sitting at the same table or be in the same room, or even be working at the same time. Collaboration does away with the boundaries of time, space and group size.



Consider the following:

- Within the classroom, are layouts rigid – or can they be adapted easily for different activities involving differently sized teams? For example, from working in pairs to a group presentation to watching a drama.
- Is the classroom flexible enough for students to move fluidly between technologies and workstations as they move through different tasks?
- Is the teacher fixed at the front and always in control, or is there scope for pupils to lead?
- How can pupils remain connected, contributing and collaborating from beyond the classroom? For example, on field trips in the UK or overseas, at home – or even in hospital.
- How can spaces far beyond the typical reach of the pupils be integrated? For example, when connecting with experts, industry or other schools.

As you'd imagine, all of this means that collaboration is hugely enabled by technology.

Technology for schools

Technology gives students a hands-on approach and means **they aren't limited by face-to-face and in-school lessons.**

Now that many schools provide tablets or have a BYOD (bring your own device) policy, here are some quick and easy ideas:

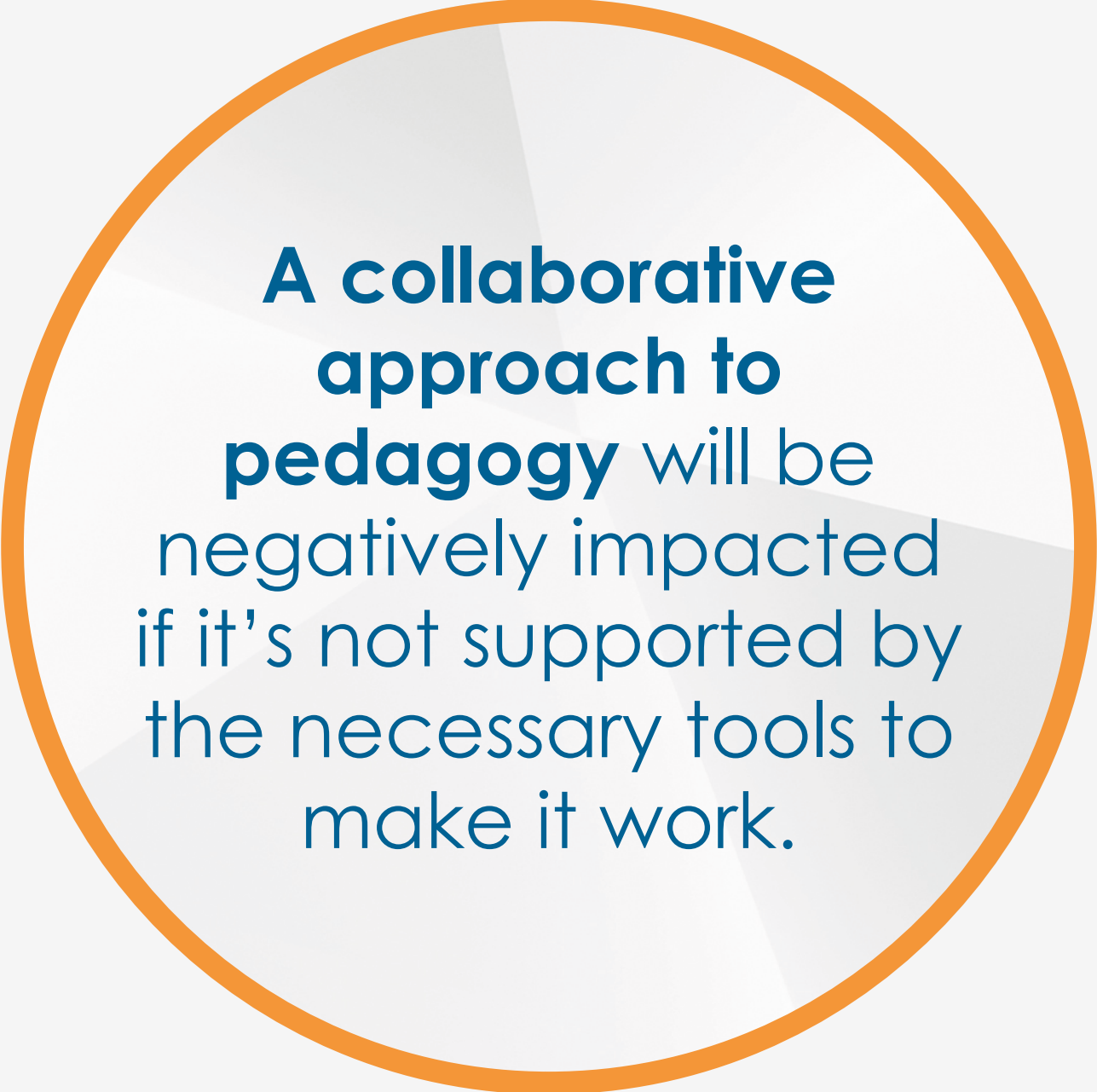
- Class blogs can be used for collaborative research, writing and publishing.
- Polling options are usually available on your interactive, front-of-class display like [Promethean's ActivPanels](#).
- PowerPoint or [Prezis](#) can be used to create shared presentations, and [Glogster](#) creates multimedia posters.
- Smartphone video-recording and editing offers a different way to present work: pupils can upload their videos to a private area in [YouTube](#), and see each other's work there.
- [Skype](#) offers free, easy videoconferencing with schools overseas, universities or businesses.



Education technology

A collaborative approach to pedagogy will be negatively impacted if it's not supported by the necessary tools to make it work.

[Promethean's ActivPanel](#) is an interactive display that turns the traditional classroom into a collaborative learning hub to share ideas, practice team-based problem solving, manipulate images and edit digital content, all at the same time. The ActivPanel connects your teachers to the vast, ever-expanding world of educational apps that foster collaborative learning and encourage creativity.

A large orange circle is centered on the page. Inside the circle, the text is arranged in a block. The words 'A collaborative approach to pedagogy' are in a bold, dark blue font. The rest of the text is in a regular, dark blue font. The background of the circle is a light gray with a subtle geometric pattern of overlapping triangles.

A collaborative approach to pedagogy will be negatively impacted if it's not supported by the necessary tools to make it work.

About ActivPanel

Personal computing is sometimes considered too personal, with students working in standalone 'silos'. However, a front-of-class display like ActivPanel brings classroom content and collaboration together into one engaging, front-of-class solution, creating a captivating, tablet-like experience.

With an ActivPanel, all students can collaborate together, and teachers can assess their work in real time. Since the ActivPanel makes learning much more fun, pupils engage more and their learning 'sticks' – and it's easier for teachers to gauge the impact of their lessons.



Your teachers can use an ActivPanel to:

- Deliver interactive lessons with dynamic information flow between teacher and student devices (e.g. tablets, notebooks, laptops, Chromebooks, etc.)
- Share digital content such as videos and images, quickly and easily.
- Customise content, tasks and lessons with free, accompanying software — ActivInspire and ClassFlow.
- Create interactive lessons, polls, quizzes and team-based activities directly on the panel.
- Share learning in real-time with the whole class, increasing discussion and participation.
- Allow pupils to learn the way they do at home, extending learning beyond the classroom and instilling independent problem-solving skills.

In conclusion

Collaboration is a future-focused approach to enhanced learning, engagement and empowerment, capable of transforming the performance of pupils, classes, teachers and schools.

At the same time, it isn't overly prescriptive or complex. By reading around the topic, getting your school on board and being willing to learn through trial and error, you can get off to a great start.

Collaborative working depends on the appropriate use of space, technology and pedagogy, but plenty of support exists.

Start rationalising your school's technology today [find out more about ActivPanel!](#)



| About Promethean

At Promethean, we're focused on providing inspiring and engaging digital tools that redefine the modern classroom. We design interactive, award-winning education technology, including the revolutionary front of class display ActivPanel that allows educators to enhance their teaching methods and improve attainment across their schools.

Our content hub, ResourcEd, provides in-depth analysis of the current education landscape for teachers, SMTs and education leaders. We discuss everything from holistic strategic insight to practical tips that staff can implement quickly and easily.

To find out more about Promethean or our education technologies, visit the Promethean World website. Or get in touch:

Phone

+44(0) 1254 298598

Email

info@prometheanworld.com

Address

Promethean House,
Lower Phillips Rd,
Whitebirk Industrial Estate,
Blackburn BB1 5TH

Why not share this piece with your colleagues or staff?