

## SUPPORTIVE SEATING PLANS

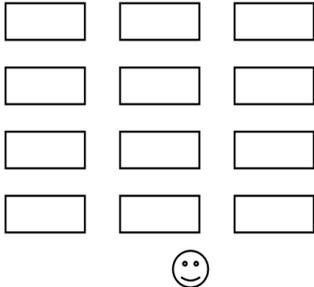
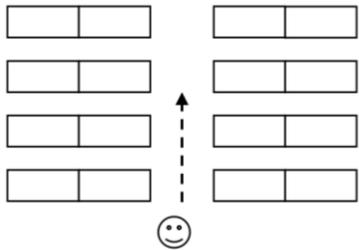
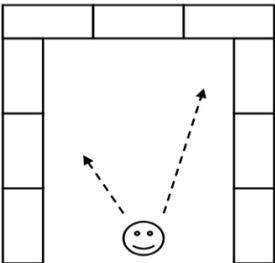
### Why spend time thinking through your seating plans?

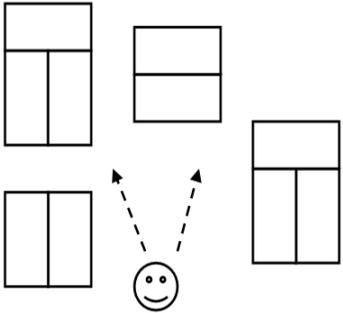
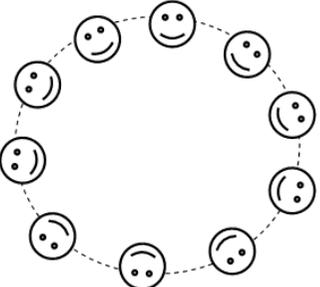
*They help promote good behaviour and effort...*

- Putting in place a seating plan right from the beginning of the academic year will help establish teacher authority from the start. Periodically re-arranging seating plans will also help maintain good behaviour and vary student interactions – so long as such changes are presented as a supportive measure rather than a punishment.
- Students are creatures of habit, and will try to sit in the same place with the same people – new seating plans will typically be met with some resistance during the first few lessons but if persisted with, will then become 'the norm'. Seating plans changes can help build students' resilience to change and vary their social experiences.
- Whereas some students are disruptive in lessons and seek attention inappropriately, there are some students who will withdraw and actively avoid attention. Seating plans can assist with 'settling' the more boisterous learners - and assist with 'stirring' more passive learners.

*They help reduce barriers to learning...*

- Well-thought out seating plans can make differentiated lessons easier to plan and deliver.
- Seating plans can play students to their strengths in terms of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles.
- A good seating plan can counter 'distance-decay' – where students sit towards the back and in turn are less likely to engage in learning and more likely to get involved in low-level disruption. This is often the 'hiding place' of less able learners.
- A good seating plan can counter 'overlooking' – where students who sit at the front tables (typically a mix of conscientious, competent learners and vulnerable, lower-ability learners) often fall beyond the teacher's typical line of sight - and support.
- Thinking through seating arrangements for students with additional needs / SEN (often by referring to their IEPs) will help address difficulties with concentration, listening skills, literacy etc.

Type	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p><b>Standard rows</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Effective in terms of helping establish a quiet, teacher-directed lesson.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reduces opportunities for negative interaction between boisterous students.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suited to more traditional teaching styles - auditory input backed up by visual cues.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provides opportunities for paired learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted views and hearing for the back row.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sometimes results in students on the front row being overlooked.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reduces interaction / opportunities for group learning.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tends to leave the teacher rooted at the front of the classroom.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> When the teacher is supporting students 1-1, it leaves other students out of their line of sight – providing opportunity for disruptive behaviour.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Joined rows</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Space-effective.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suited to more traditional learning styles – auditory input backed up by visual cues.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provides some opportunities for small group learning with little movement / disruption required.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provides some space for the teacher to move around the class to support students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted views and hearing for the back row.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sometimes results in students on the front row being overlooked.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tends to leave the teacher rooted at the front of the classroom.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> When working with students 1-1, leaves other students out of teacher's line of sight – providing opportunity for disruptive behaviour.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Horseshoe</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Great for getting around the class and supporting all students on a 1-1 basis.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good visibility and hearing for students.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good for visual learning activities.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promotes student interaction which can be used productively through class discussion.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An often used unconventional pattern so students should adapt quite easily to it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disruptive students will communicate with each other across the room.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not very conducive to group work.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Those sat towards the front ends are facing the board at an angle.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Takes up more space than traditional seating plans. Maybe unworkable with large groups of students.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Group tables</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ Great for differentiation.</li> <li>☑ Informal – encourages students to participate in discussion, problem solving and other forms of collaborative learning.</li> <li>☑ Easy for the teacher to circulate around the room providing support to different ability groups.</li> <li>☑ An often used unconventional pattern so students should adapt quite easily to it.</li> <li>☑ Good for kinaesthetic learning activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☒ Some students will have poor visibility and hearing due to having their backs to the teacher.</li> <li>☒ Lack of attention and chatting can be a problem – harder to control low-level disruption.</li> <li>☒ Encourages students to sit in friendship groups, which doesn't always help create the required ability or social mix.</li> <li>☒ Disruptive students will tend to congregate around a table.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Circles</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ Great scope for productive student interactions.</li> <li>☑ Encourages everyone to get involved.</li> <li>☑ Great for auditory learning activities in terms of debates and discussions.</li> <li>☑ Also good for group reading and role-play.</li> <li>☑ Levels the playing field - friendship and ability groups are less obvious.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☒ Not easy to set up with rectangular tables! Works best where there is a space that students can move their chairs to.</li> <li>☒ There may be a scramble for seats and disruption as students adapt to an unconventional seating pattern.</li> <li>☒ Will likely require movement of furniture before and after an activity.</li> </ul>