

# **The Bangor, Exeter and Oxford**

## **Mindfulness-Based Interventions**

### **Teaching Assessment Criteria**

#### **(MBI:TAC TEACH)**

### **Addendum for Mindfulness Training in Schools**

This addendum includes contributions from Richard Burnett, Rebecca Crane, Chris Cullen, Tamsin Ford, Mark Greenberg, Claire Kelly, Willem Kuyken, Liz Lord, Dominic Morris, Sophie Sansom and Sarah Silverton (alphabetical order).

#### **Background and context**

The MBI:TAC was developed to assess the competence and adherence of MBI teaching (R.S. Crane et al., 2012). It has been extensively used in training and research contexts and shows promising psychometric properties (R. S. Crane et al., 2013). This addendum should be used alongside the latest 2016 version of the full MBI:TAC manual. It adds additional information to enable the MBI:TAC to be used to rate classroom teachers teaching mindfulness to young people in school contexts. In rating mindfulness teaching, competent general classroom teaching is generally assumed but of course the classroom teachers' general teaching competency will also be borne out in how they teach a mindfulness curriculum.

Assessors should themselves be proficient MBI teachers and normally also be school classroom teachers.

An additional adherence checklist relates to the .b curriculum developed by the Mindfulness in Schools Project. Assessors should normally have been trained in .b themselves to complete these ratings or be very familiar with the curriculum and issues in teaching the curriculum.

#### **Domain 1: Coverage, pacing and organisation of session curriculum**

- The curriculum is presented in a clear and engaging way in accordance with the instructions in the teacher manual
- The teacher adapts well to any constraints under which s/he is working (e.g. time of lesson, size and lay out of classroom, black out blinds etc.)
- Teacher is able to **balance the goals of the lesson while responding to spontaneous events**

#### **Domain 2: Relational skills**

- Teacher is mindful of the boundaries about how appropriate it is for students to share more personal thoughts and feelings in a classroom context, given the lack of

confidentiality in a school environment. For example, knows when to stop them for their own wellbeing.

Pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND) or behavioural issues are skilfully managed in the classroom. For example, a pupil with attentional and/or behavioural difficulties is able to learn as much as possible from the course whilst causing minimal disruption to the class dynamic. If they are unable to participate, the teacher skilfully deals with the situation by, for example, from encouraging them to quietly get on with another activity, or rest their head on desk and sleep, or quietly listen to music on headphones. This is with a view to enabling the learning of the whole class.

### **Domain 3: Embodiment of mindfulness**

- Teacher knows when to mindfully step in and out of 'teacher mode' if disruptive behaviour is impeding the progress of the lesson and class control is becoming an issue. Teacher shows willingness to be firm and use sanctions, without losing their presence and sense of perspective.

The teacher is able to communicate their confidence and trust in mindfulness, even in the face of doubt, scepticism or resistance in the group.

### **Domain 4: Guiding mindfulness practices**

- The appropriate schools-based MT in schools practices are taught in ways that children can understand and use them.
- Practices are guided in the way teachers were trained to guide practices, using appropriate vocabulary for this age group.
- Practices are guided from the experience of the teacher participating in practice with the group but maintaining appropriate visual contact as the group requires.
- The teacher moves around the classroom skilfully when required, e.g. to gently wake up a snoring pupil, or to move closer towards a giggling or misbehaving clutch of pupils.
- Teachers evidence good judgment in knowing how to manage pupils' sleepiness/wakefulness. This includes knowing the pupils and how to manage posture in terms of wakefulness/sleepiness. It may sometimes be appropriate for pupils to be encouraged to have their heads stay up as they practice and equally it may sometimes be appropriate when exhaustion prevails to allow them to rest their heads on their desks, and be allowed to sleep.

### **Domain 5: Conveying course themes through interactive inquiry and didactic teaching**

- Teacher demonstrates understanding of the curriculum and is able to relay this through the curriculum

- Teacher knows how to contextualise and make relevant any PowerPoint images, words or concepts which the class may not immediately understand or connect with.
- Teacher does not introduce extraneous activity, but may show initiative in bringing the curriculum to life in line with its aims and intentions through examples or activities.
- The teacher uses any aides (e.g., PowerPoint, video and props) skilfully such that they support the teaching rather than lead it. Whenever possible, general learning is 'drawn out' of pupils rather than 'telling' them. However, there are passages in the lessons that are more didactic, particularly when introducing a new idea.

### **Domain 6: Holding the group learning environment**

- The teacher is aware of necessary/relevant information about individuals' needs in this group to be sure that they are able to respond to the group in skilful ways.
- The teacher is aware of the setting's safeguarding procedures and uses those appropriately, as necessary. For example, the teacher might find ways of directing a pupil to other sources of help within the school if appropriate.
- Classroom management appropriately supports delivery of the mindfulness training. Strategies to engage and support individuals to participate as fully as possible are used where these complement the approach of the mindfulness lessons. For example, the teacher is able to adapt his/her teaching style in whichever way is required to 'hold' the group. Sometimes this may be gentle, patient and receptive (the 'guide on the side' mode); at other times it may be entertaining, even eccentric, and faster-paced (the 'sage on the stage' mode); at other times the teacher may have to shift into a stricter and more authoritative mode to 'hold' a misbehaving class, so that mindfulness training is feasible, and then know how to shift back into a more classical mindfulness teacher mode without losing balance.
- The teacher transitions well between different phases of a lesson (e.g. from a more didactic phase, into a video clip, into a practice, out of the practice into pair work etc.). This includes the ability to orchestrate difficult whole class transitions quickly and smoothly (e.g. in Lesson 3 getting all the pupils out of their chairs and onto the floor, or getting them up and standing in a circle in Lesson 7 if using 'shock ball').
- Teacher uses discipline skilfully when required. S/he does so in a way which is in line with the school's disciplinary procedures and child safeguarding policies. Once discipline is used, the teacher is able to move on with the lesson without being too 'thrown' by the previous, necessary intervention.
- Teacher maintains sense of humour and perspective throughout. If the pupils are not in the mood and everything s/he has tried to get them into the mood for practice has failed, s/he accepts this, tears up the lesson plan and salvages what s/he can.

## References

Crane, R. S., Eames, C., Kuyken, W., Hastings, R. P., Williams, J. M. G., Bartley, T., . . . Surawy, C. (2013). Development and validation of the Mindfulness-Based Interventions - Teaching Assessment Criteria (MBI:TAC). *Assessment, 20*(6), 681-688. doi: Doi 10.1177/1073191113490790

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