



Learning and Teaching Newsletter

December 2021

After two years of learning and teaching that have been very different from what we're used to, this session has been about getting back to basics with a focus on delivering really high-quality learning and teaching with the pupils back in our classrooms. We already have a detailed Learning, Teaching and Assessment policy with appendices full of great ideas you can lift and use in your classrooms, including what pupils are telling us about what makes a great lesson.

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Collegiate Group wanted to build on this work this year. We decided to focus on three key areas; digital learning, pupil leadership of learning, and feedback. Each sub-group has provided an update on their plans and the work carried out so far.

Digital Learning

- Covid 19 has accelerated the need for change and investment in Digital Learning. As a school, we made phenomenal progress over the last two years, so we are determined not to lose this.
- The World of work will no longer be the same with employers now shifting their mindset onto digital platforms as part of their business model.
- Young people must be prepared for the world beyond school, and we can support this through developing confidence of navigating leading digital platforms.
- We can reduce the stress and workload from trying to 'catch' learners up who have had long periods of absence, and we can enhance the learning and teaching in our classrooms by minimising disruption caused to L&T due to absences from staff and pupils, develop confidence and resilience in pupils and independent thinking and working.



Phase 1 of implementation is to establish consistent access.

This term we are trying to break down barriers to accessing online platforms and resolve log in issues. As a team, we are working in partnership with pupils, pastoral staff, teachers, and PTs to ensure that:

1. Every pupil is part of a class team for every subject
2. Every teacher has a class set up on teams for all their classes (S1-6)
3. Every PT is an 'owner' of their department teams.
4. Any pupils who do not have access to digital platforms are identified.
5. Issues with log ins are resolved.



Embed digital practice in our approach to learning and teaching at all levels, to become masters in the usage of meaningful digital platforms, applying consistent application in the use of Microsoft Teams and SACHEL ONE.

Enable pupils to seamlessly access their learning via the class digital platform and have a clear understanding of their role in independent learning and responsibility to catch up on work missed.

Establish meaningful CLPL to enable staff to access a secure use of digital platforms and their usage.

The digital Learning team is led by Debbie Martin.

Pupil Leadership of Learning

As part of the Pupils Leading Learning Workstream, we are committed to developing and sharing different techniques which promote pupils leading their own learning within the classroom environment.

Over the past couple of months, we have been gathering different techniques from various subject faculties with the vision of creating a toolkit which will be easily accessible to everyone in the New Year.

The hopes for this are to open professional dialogue amongst all teachers and create an environment where we create multiple opportunities to facilitate pupils leading their own learning, and that of others. It is envisioned that following using any of the techniques for the toolkit that the pupils will be asked for feedback on the activity they were engaging with, creating more opportunity for Pupil Voice within their classrooms.

The team is also keen to develop a promotional video demonstrating our pupils leading their own learning and documenting their experiences of how this has led to more engaging and meaningful lessons for them. We will also have a focus on how these activities have led to improved confidence, resilience and help to create an ethos of responsibility for all.

The pupil leadership team is led by Gemma Denny.

Feedback

We talk about feedback a lot in school. Learner conversations, tracking conversations, ongoing verbal feedback, written feedback on homework and assessments. The team's vision is to clarify the language used around feedback and produce a tool kit that can be used consistently by staff and pupils across the school. It is hoped this will improve the quality and consistency of feedback received by pupils, will empower pupils to give effective peer feedback, and will reduce the amount of time teachers have to spend providing written feedback. Highly effective feedback is essential in empowering pupils to improve their attainment, and there clearly can't be a one-size-fits-all approach, but the team have been observing excellent practice in Modern Languages, Science, and in Business & Computing and are working on a flexible and user-friendly format. More information to follow soon!

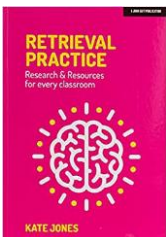
There are some examples of feedback sheets in the Learning and Teaching Resources folder on the server.

The feedback team is led by Alison Flett.

Speedy CLPL

Each term, this section will be used to highlight easy reads, insightful podcasts, short videos, or twitter accounts to follow for great ideas on Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

Read This



We tend to think that most learning occurs during the initial encoding stage—when students get information “in” by re-reading, reviewing, and taking notes. However, one of the most robust findings from 100+ years of cognitive science research is that a significant amount of learning occurs when students pull information “out” through retrieval practice.

Buy on Amazon for £8:
<https://amzn.to/3s8Uy2D>

Copies coming to the CLPL Library soon

Listen to This



Changing Conversations Podcast: In this episode, Amanda Corrigan (deputy head of the School of Education at the University of Strathclyde) talks about developing the best teachers to support Scotland's children and young people. She chats with Sarah and Billy about what really matters in becoming a great teacher, and they all share advice for teachers new to the profession and those further into their career. Amanda tweets @ajcorrigan

Listen on Spotify:

<https://spoti.fi/3p2NTVu>

Follow This



@impactwales

Providing support to schools that has real impact. The Impact Podcast - professional learning discussions for teachers
<http://anchor.fm/ImpactHome>

Follow on Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/ImpactWales>



A great account to follow for chat on all things learning and teaching. Look out for the sketch notes (similar to our vision, values and aims) which look fantastic and would be great for wall displays.

If you have any interesting articles, podcasts, videos, or twitter accounts you'd like to share in the next newsletter, please email them to Steven Gould.

Learner Experience Review - Business and Computing

The first Learner Experience Review of the session took place in November. The Business and Computing team welcomed SLT, and ELT from Humanities and HFT (who are being reviewed later in the year) to the department to observe classes, talk to focus groups of pupils and to meet for professional dialogue sessions. The review went very well and there was excellent practice observed and discussed. Examples of the great practice included:

- Excellent working relationships between staff and pupils
- High expectations of pupils, and lots of praise, including excellent value-based praise postcards
- Pupils spoke about trust in the staff, teachers knowing them well, and the highly organised nature of the department
- Consistent lesson structure and resources across classes
- Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, HOTS, Starters and Plenaries built in to teaching materials
- Highly effective feedback procedures utilising achievement logs and assessment analysis sheets ensuring pupils know their current working level, strengths, and next steps
- Engaging learning contexts and clear links to the world of work
- Opportunities for pupil voice, both formally and informally
- Excellent use of technology to enhance learning, not just learning about technology
- Lots of examples of highly effective formative assessment
- Rigorous attainment tracking system and high levels of parental contact
- Strong leadership, and excellent teamwork and peer support amongst staff

With the permission of the department, examples of the praise post cards, lesson slides, achievement logs, and assessment analysis sheets will be added to the Learning and Teaching Resources folder on the server.

CLPL Survey

The next self-evaluation period starts after Christmas. We are looking at Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion, and Raising attainment and achievement, so this will be the focus for CLPL and external peer partners.

Could you please take a few minutes to complete a short (4 question) survey so I can ensure the CLPL offer is tailored to the needs of as many of you as possible. Your input is very much appreciated, and all answers will be treated in confidence. The survey can be accessed here - <https://forms.office.com/r/xTS3Y92fZi>

Peer Partners

Thanks to everyone who has already completed their departmental peer-partner visits this term. There was to be a specific focus on any element of Learning, Teaching and Assessment to tie in with our self-evaluation and CLPL focus. I've really enjoyed reading through the observation forms. Here are some of the comments on the great practice taking place in our school that stood out.

Well-structured lesson, linking back to learning intentions at the end.	Established routine and all pupils were engaged fully.
All students attentive and engaged.	Expectations were clear from the outset.
Clear learning intentions referred to throughout the lesson.	Pupils engaged and enthusiastic, and clearly enjoyed the team activity.
The task was broken into manageable segments, pausing to allow time for writing answers to questions.	Clear structure to lesson, and excellent questioning of pupil's prior learning.
Differentiated questioning used to build on prior learning.	The pupils really enjoyed the activity, and they were all engaged.
A focused and calm classroom environment.	Excellent pace, challenge, and support.
Pupils filed out their analysis sheets a question at a time, identifying any areas they need to focus on for the final exam.	Pupils worked well on their starter activity and were happy to volunteer their answers.
Great use of 'no hands up' to engage all learners in questioning.	Effective peer evaluation.
Excellent pace and timing throughout – every second of the lesson used effectively.	Pupils were encouraged to develop the depth of their answers throughout questioning.
An exemplar was shown at the beginning to provide clear expectation and encourage challenge to meet this target.	Good rapport with pupils and one to one support throughout lesson.
Great use of pupil names throughout the lesson, encouraging all pupils to engage throughout.	Motivation, perseverance, and engagement of pupils.
The pupils could use their phones to Google information they wanted as well as using the textbooks and booklets from the class.	At the end of these series of lessons, the pupils will then become experts to teach each other about their findings.
The use of concepts and ideas that the pupils were familiar with meant that the class engaged with the class discussions and quickly grasped the new concepts and ideas.	The teacher has high expectations of her pupils and used praise well throughout the lesson. Pupils were supported with their learning when required and responded well to this support.
Overall, I was incredibly impressed by the level of engagement in the class, the routines pupils were in and the general feel of the class.	The teacher worked hard to increase pupils' self-confidence, knowledge and ability throughout the lesson.

Excellent examples of true/false board, hotseats, throw the ball questions, SHANARRI discussion and reinforcement of learning.	Pupils were motivated and engaged as it was their own choice on what to research and include on their poster.
Good use of questioning technique with Think/Pair/Share utilised. Again, all pupils were engaged during this activity.	Effective questioning techniques for learners to give their own explanations of their process for arriving at an incorrect answer and in doing so correcting their own misunderstanding.
The teacher had an excellent rapport with the class which ensured everything ran smoothly.	Using manipulatives (plastic numbers) to guess, check and improve solutions.
This starter allowed the pupils to engage as soon as they entered the classroom and allowed the teacher to greet the pupils in a friendly manner and deal with any minor issues, like pupils being unprepared for class.	After sharing answers on Show-me Boards pupils were then encouraged to explore the answer in more detail through class discussion, looking at advantages and disadvantages – great example of encouraging pupils to engage with their HOTS.
The main aims and objectives were focussing on employability, raising attainment and enjoyment.	Lesson pace was well judged. All pupils were engaged and worked well throughout the lesson, and there was effective support for all pupils.
The pupils enjoyed the competitive element of the lesson and were motivated to work hard and win the game.	This lesson highlighted the importance of consolidating the significant aspects of learning and teaching continually to ensure pupil engagement and achievement.
The teacher made appropriate use of digital technology both formally and informally. Some of the lesson was teacher led by power point and some of the lesson pupils worked individually and in groups using their own technology for research.	The teacher was fully aware of the support for pupils with ASN and incorporated this in her teaching. Throughout the lesson the teacher referred back to the aims of the lesson and again used them again in the plenary at the end of the lesson.
The teacher used Kahoot to give the pupils a quiz to prepare them for next week's lesson. The pupils enjoyed using ICT during the lesson.	Throughout the lesson pupils were given opportunities to Lead their learning and contribute/express their opinions to others.
Brilliant use of show me boards, including using pupils' answers to further explain knowledge and understanding.	Disengaged pupils were dealt with by scaffolding questions to their level, showing the teacher had a personalised understanding of each pupil's level and needs.
A learning carousel on types of stereotypes took place and the pupils were very engaged during this activity.	All pupils were included in the learning and lots of pupil led discussion took place.
Time was allowed for the pupils to work at their own pace on practice questions and collaborate with each other to reach the answer.	Stretching more able pupils with very challenging SQA past paper practice, whilst being able to support the less able to start to work through the easier parts of the questions.

If you haven't yet returned your peer-partner forms, please do so as soon as possible.

A quick reminder that department self-evaluation for QIs 2.3 and 1.3 should be completed and on the server by **Friday 14th January 2022**. The main focus is 2.3, and a detailed return is required. A return for 1.3 is also required but less detail is expected. Please discuss returns with link DHTs.