Watford Partnership FOR TEACHER TRAINING

WAT NEXT

LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Workshop Session 2

Planning for change

A guidance booklet for participants

This booklet is yours to write on.

It joins Session 1 as part of your portfolio. Annotate it, fold the corners, stick things into it. Nothing in here will be marked, graded or judged for its neatness.

The session lasts 90 minutes and will finish on time.

Name

School

Date of Session 2

NPTL Non-positional teacher leadership

Watford Partnership FOR TEACHER TRAINING

Welcome back

This is the second Wat Next workshop. In Session 1 you identified a concern that genuinely matters to you and wrote an initial reflective statement. Session 2 is where that concern becomes a plan.

Keep this booklet with your portfolio. Everything you write in it today, and every tool you are given, belongs in that growing record of your development work.

Where we are in the process

The teacher-led development work process runs through ten steps. Session 1 covered steps 1 to 3: reflecting on your values and concerns, identifying a focus, and beginning to consult colleagues.

Today we work on steps 4 to 6: clarifying your agenda for change, producing an action plan, and consulting colleagues about that plan.

Have your reflective statement out in front of you; it points to the focus you will develop today. If you did not draft one, don't worry: today's conversations will help you find your focus.

How today runs

Session 2 lasts 90 minutes and will finish on time. The running order below is a guide; your facilitators will flex it to suit the group.

What we will do	Tool
Welcome back and recap	Tool 1
Clarifying agendas for change, in trios	Tool 8
Inquiry through reading (signpost)	Tool 9
Elements in a development process	Tool 10
Maximising impact	Tool 11
Break	
Action planning, in small groups	Tools 12 & 13
Consulting colleagues	Tool 14
Record of participation	Tool 7
Close and preparing for the first tutorial	

Some sections below we read together in the session (a couple of quiet minutes) before discussing them. They are flagged "Read, then discuss". Tool 9 (inquiry through reading) is one to keep and use afterwards, as you build your plan.

Clarifying agendas for change

A concern is what troubles you. An agenda for change is what you resolve to do about it. The move from one to the other is the beginning of a development project, and it is the work of this first activity.

Listen for the two-part pattern that every example below uses: "I am concerned that..." names the concern; "I want to develop..." names the agenda for change.

Tool 8: From concerns to an agenda for change

READ, THEN DISCUSS *We read the three examples in the session, then discuss them in trios.*

In your trios, read the three examples, then annotate the margins with any issues you can see. Talk about them: were the concerns easy to recognise? Is it easy to see how a concern leads to an agenda? Then turn to your own.

Example 1: Helping silent pupils access learning

MY CONCERN

I am concerned about pupils who do not attract attention in the classroom. They are compliant and get on with the tasks set, but their learning is limited because they do not participate in discussions, ask questions or volunteer answers.

MY AGENDA FOR CHANGE

I want to develop strategies to help these pupils get the best out of their classroom experience and perhaps build their capacity to participate in the social learning process.

Example 2: Developing learning-to-learn strategies

MY CONCERN

I am concerned that my students are not developing the capacity for lifelong learning. They seem to depend on me and my colleagues to tell them how to learn. When they get to the sixth form, they flounder.

MY AGENDA FOR CHANGE

I want to develop techniques to help students reflect on and evaluate their own learning strategies so that they can become more independent as learners.

Example 3: A partnership with parents in the Early Years

MY CONCERN

I am concerned because many of our youngest children start school without any introduction to the world of books and words. From conversations with parents, it seems that many leave what they perceive to be learning to the school.

MY AGENDA FOR CHANGE

I want to develop strategies for drawing these parents into a partnership with the school so that children are supported in their learning at home as well as in school.

What is your concern? Try to begin: "I am concerned that..."

What might be your agenda for change? Try to begin: "I want to develop..."

Inquiry through reading

Once you have an agenda for change, it is worth seeing what others have already thought and tried. This is not theory versus practice: in the literature you will find helpful concepts (such as "scaffolding"), arguments, different perspectives and stories of teachers' own innovations.

If someone has done it before, that's good news

Look for reports of teachers' previous development projects as well as research. If you find a project on exactly your topic, that is helpful: your work can be informed by what came before, not derailed by it.

Tool 9: Where to look

- *Official national agencies, such as the Department for Education.*
- *Authors, commentators and consultants (for example, John Hattie).*
- *Researchers and research programmes (for example, Black & Wiliam, the TLRP, Leadership for Learning).*
- *Individual academics' websites.*
- *Professional associations and networks.*
- *Teachers' accounts in journals and at conferences (for example, the Teacher Leadership journal).*
- *Reports from organisations such as UNICEF, UNESCO and the OECD.*

What the literature can do for you

- *Accounts of innovations in practice: rich, illuminative vignettes of how a practice is done, and ready-made tools or materials such as lesson plans.*
- *Theoretical frameworks: key concepts, arguments and explanations to think with.*
- *Issues and questions: controversies (such as the one over synthetic phonics) and the obstacles others have met when changing practice.*
- *New perspectives: alternative viewpoints on practices you had assumed were beneficial, and whole bodies of literature you had not met.*

Elements in a development process

Every development project is unique to the person and the context, but the elements within them recur. Reading one real project makes the typical moves visible and helps you imagine your own.

Tool 10: Harminder's story

READ, THEN DISCUSS *We read Harminder in the session (about 4 minutes), then discuss and keep it for reference.*

Read Harminder's account and, as you go, note what you see as an important element in the process. The first is done for you: she began with a concern.

I am a teacher of science in a secondary school in England and was concerned about how best to mark students' workbooks. I wondered if the feedback really helped them to improve their learning.

I emailed the Head of Science to request a few minutes at the next department meeting to explain my concern. I told colleagues that students did not seem to be using my feedback, and suggested the problem might be the quality of that feedback. Many were sympathetic and shared my concern. Three colleagues volunteered to collaborate, so I suggested a short meeting over lunch; the Head of Department offered to pay for sandwiches from the department budget.

At our first meeting I outlined a process of review and the trial of new approaches over the following term. My proposals were welcomed, so we committed to a series of lunchtime and after-school meetings. To review our practice together, I suggested we each look through the books we had marked and list the most common comments we had written.

At the next meeting we shared our lists and discussed how useful the comments had been, both their clarity and any improvement in students' learning. I made notes, circulated a summary, and we continued over two further meetings, organising our ideas on paper.

I volunteered to categorise our recurring comments by purpose. Once we had amended the categorisation, we devised a tool to gather students' feedback on the comments we typically make. I also found a few articles on assessment feedback and shared these. We then devised a catalogue of comments more likely to help students improve, agreed to use variations of them in our marking, and asked students for feedback again, which let us improve the catalogue.

I prepared a presentation to share the story and outcomes at the end-of-term department meeting. Colleagues thanked us and said they would use our comment catalogue to improve their own feedback.

References: Black, P. & Wiliam, D. (1998) Inside the Black Box. London: nferNelson. Hattie, J. & Timperley, H. (2007) The power of feedback. Review of Educational Research 77(1): 81-112.

Discuss in pairs

Could this or that element feature in my own project? What are the challenges with these elements? What other strategies might Harminder have used?

The elements I could see in Harminder's project, and which might feature in mine:

Maximising impact

A development project should make a difference to something: call it impact, benefit or effect. It is tempting to think only of test results, but that is far too narrow. The categories below, drawn from research into teacher-led change, open up the full range of difference your project could make.

Tool 11: Categories of impact

READ, THEN DISCUSS *We read the nine categories in the session, then discuss and debate them.*

As you read each category, note in your booklet where you get an idea of how your plan might lead to that kind of impact.

- ***Improved student attainment.*** *Test or exam results improved; subject knowledge and skills developed.*
- ***Improved student disposition.*** *More positive attitudes; motivation, confidence and self-esteem; better behaviour.*
- ***Improved student metacognition.*** *Greater self-awareness; a stronger capacity to reflect on and evaluate their own learning.*
- ***Improved classroom practice.*** *You and your colleagues adopt new practices and improve established ones.*
- ***Improved personal capacity.*** *New skills, knowledge and attributes; greater purpose and commitment.*
- ***Improved interpersonal capacity.*** *More active participation in school development; stronger professional relationships.*
- ***Improved school structures and processes.*** *More effective decision-making; more collaborative working; more inclusive leadership.*
- ***Improved culture and capacity.*** *Better professional discourse; more coherent values; greater use of evidence.*
- ***Improved beyond the school.*** *Sharing good practice with other schools; publishing your work; contributing to the local community.*

What I definitely want my project to have an impact on, and what it might also affect:

Action planning

READ, THEN DISCUSS *We read both example plans in the session, then critique them and start your own.*

Everything so far has been leading here. In small groups you will examine two real teachers' action plans, one primary and one secondary, and then begin your own on the Tool 13 template. Use both examples whatever phase you teach: the method travels across very different schools.

Tool 12a Gulnara's plan (a primary school, Kazakhstan)

Concern: many of the youngest children start school with no introduction to books; parents leave "learning" to the school. Focus: engage parents as partners: a culture change, not a one-off event, challenging the assumption that some parents are anti-school.

Approach: consult the school director; win over a small group of open-minded parents; write a short document setting out the rationale and strategies used elsewhere; present to the whole staff and invite collaborators; then invite parents of one or two classes to discuss the ideas. Legacy: new whole-school practices within twelve months, and an annual review with parents.

Tool 12b Desmond's plan (The Grange High School)

Concern: a number of Year 9 students, mainly from disadvantaged backgrounds, seem completely disengaged: often absent, rarely doing homework, unmoved by the usual sanctions. Focus: develop strategies that target these students and enable them to benefit from what the school offers.

Approach: consult the Head of Year; design an appealing way (not a questionnaire) for students to talk about how they feel about school; hold a lunchtime meeting to recruit colleagues; look for research and previous projects; trial a small number of strategies and evaluate them together. Desmond names his challenge honestly: persuading colleagues that these students are entitled to an education even when they appear to reject it.

Pull the plans apart

In your group, discuss each plan in turn. What is strong? What is vague? What would you want to know? Where might it run into trouble? This kind of critical, friendly analysis is exactly what will sharpen your own plan.

Tool 13: Action plan template

Jot your first ideas under these headings now. You are not finishing a plan today; you are starting one, to bring as a first draft to your tutorial.

The concern

Why did you choose this focus? What is the problem, and how do you know it is a problem?

Project focus

What aspect of practice will your project focus on?

Impact

What do you hope the impact will be? Look back at the categories in Tool 11.

Activities

What will you organise over a period of 4 to 6 months, in chronological order?

Evaluation

How will you know whether the strategies you are developing are effective?

Preparation

What will you need to create in advance to lead these activities?

Legacy

What do you hope will continue beyond this project, and how might you build on it?

Consulting colleagues

Consultation is a continuous process, not a single step. Your development work will be stronger for colleagues' ideas, and consulting them early starts to build the collaborative links the project depends on. It is far better to consult early than to let colleagues discover your project indirectly; they may not feel sympathetic, or may object, if they feel they were never asked.

Tool 14: Consulting colleagues about your development work

Discuss each of the three considerations below, then note your own decisions.

Who would be the most suitable people to consult?

- *A colleague who you think would be interested.*
- *A colleague who you think would not be interested.*
- *The school principal.*
- *A colleague with a special responsibility that could be relevant.*

How best to approach those you want to consult?

- *By email.*
- *Informally in the staff room.*
- *Sending a note asking for a meeting.*
- *Making a presentation to the whole staff.*

How best to initiate the conversation?

- *Asking for their help.*
- *Explaining that you are involved in the NPTL programme and so...*
- *Seeking their advice.*

Be honest about the hard part

Many teachers find approaching colleagues daunting. "I don't feel confident about doing this" is a useful thing to admit. Naming it, and swapping good opening lines with others, is often the most valuable part of this exercise.

My decisions: who I will consult, how I will approach them, and how I will open the conversation:

Record of participation

As at the end of every session, spend two or three minutes making a brief record of what this session was about and anything you have resolved to do as a result. Use Tool 7 at the end.

Scribble it now, not at home.

This is a two-to-three minute job to be done on the spot. If you take it home, it will not get written, and its value is in being immediate rather than polished.

No judgement will be made about the quality of this record. It goes straight into your portfolio.

Tool 7 asks four questions

- *Content / activities: what happened?*
- *What did I learn?*
- *What do I need to do next?*
- *What have I valued most about this session?*

Before we meet again

1. *Draft your action plan using the Tool 13 template , and bring a first draft to your first tutorial.*
2. *Start consulting colleagues: at least one early conversation, using what you planned with Tool 14.*
3. *Add today's tools and your record of participation to your portfolio.*

Your first tutorial

Your facilitators will confirm the arrangements for your one-to-one tutorial. It is collaborative and conversational and a chance to talk through your developing plan, not an inspection. Bring your first draft, and don't be nervous.

Tools used today: all of these belong in your portfolio

Tool 7: Record of participation

Tool 8: From concerns to an agenda for change

Tool 9: Inquiry through reading

Tool 10: Example of a development project, Harminder

Tool 11: Categories of impact

Tools 12a and 12b: Example action plans, primary and secondary

Tool 13: Action plan template

Tool 14: Consulting colleagues

TOOL 7

Record of participation

Fill this in now: two or three minutes, scribbled on the spot. No judgement is made on its quality; it goes straight into your portfolio.

Date	***Session / event / activity***

Content / activities

What did I learn?

What do I need to do next?

What have I valued most about this session / event / activity?

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