

Thirteenth Partnership meeting - 10th May 2017

School Review Framework Update

To date eight reviews have been completed. There will be a further three reviews this term.

A decision whether to increase the timescale of the training phase (pilot) still needs to be made. What is coming out from the group is that increased training for school leaders is needed. The Standards and Achievement Team are looking to put together a CPD programme, which needs a central coordinated approach. Schools will continue to deliver their own training.

CPD opportunities for schools are provided by Unions and this will be helpful to the process.

There is concern that teachers are feeling over monitored, rather than being supported to improve teaching. The Support Board needs to address this to ensure future messages are consistent from the review team and then carried out by the actions of the senior leadership team in the school.

Although it is recognised that monitoring is important it should be the monitoring of the support programme, rather than individual teachers and their lessons which is the focus.

On the whole the response has been encouraging. Where the head teacher and leadership team understand and accept the reviewer's judgement then it becomes increasingly straight forward for the whole team to move forward to addressing the issues in the school.

Key to the process working is how the messages from the review process are interpreted and received by the staff. This will define how staff react to the supportive approaches to be put in place.

Autonomy in Schools – Next steps

The current approach for the Autonomy workstream, including a recap of the work undertaken at the Partnership to date was presented.

The department has to be mindful of the capacity within the system to enable greater freedoms for schools to happen. Department staff have to also know how to support schools rather than go and solve problems. This will evolve from the structure and role of the department and the measures and controls to be put in place. What has been produced to date is a framework of principles, not a straitjacket of rules.

There has been progress where schools begin to share resources on the business side which creates more opportunities for improved financial management.

Taking forward the DfE best practice reports in Jersey Schools

An overview of the three reports was presented.

The reports were commissioned by the Coalition Government as part of the workload challenge. The reports were published in March 2016 and addressed issues in England.

All reports are linked to reducing workload in schools. It is recognised that by providing teachers with more time this will then be spent on doing the things that they think will make more of a difference for their pupils.

Marking – is critical, feedback is critical. However, the practices around marking have become intensive. What has been shown is that the fundamental reason for marking has been lost and it has become more about accountability, not about pupil progress. There is no evidence of triple marking improving pupil progress, however there is evidence of feedback improving progress.

The meeting thought this was also an issue in Jersey and therefore needs to be explored.

Planning – this is an essential and fundamental part of teaching and learning. The lesson should be evidence in itself that planning has taken place. A 'paper trail' which is used for the purpose of accountability and for external audiences will not be effective planning. Again there is a perception of accountability, although it is suggested this is set by the head teacher. The use of templates simply become administrative tasks.

What is needed is a guide based on common sense. However, this will be open to interpretation between different schools so flexibility is key. The starting point should be trust in the teacher by the head teacher that the lesson will be positive. If there is concern, then it might be appropriate to see the actual plans. There also may be a specific requirement for NQTs to provide plans upfront to head teachers or after a lesson. This will be less of a need for experienced teachers.

Assessment and Data – this has become exacerbated in England due to assessment without levels and the rise of overelaborate assessment recording systems. Middle ground needs to be found in terms of the number of times summative assessment data is collected.

Teachers' Conference

The proposed date before the Easter break in 2018 was shared with the Partnership. The conference will centre on the development and embedding of the key building blocks of the system (e.g. School Review Framework, Assessment Framework etc) as well as focusing on staff wellbeing and future objectives.

Further updates will be provided to the Partnership at future meetings.