

Teaching and Learning

We have a significant percentage of good and outstanding teaching in many schools across Kent. The challenge remains to ensure that every child in every learning opportunity receives good or better teaching.

Teaching Standards make it very clear that all teachers are expected to be at least good practitioners in order for all pupils to receive a good education. Therefore ensuring that the teaching profile within each school is at least good requires the leadership to focus on the following steps:

- the eradication of inadequate teaching
- move teaching that requires improvement to at least good
- increasing the percentage of outstanding teaching

This requires the leadership of the school to set high expectations within the framework of a teaching and learning policy that sets good teaching as the baseline for appraisal. A significant programme of observations and drop-ins alongside a coaching and mentoring programme as well as opportunities for all staff to see good practice within and beyond their own schools will result in rapid improvement.

Teaching and Learning Support

Courses

School Improvement has a comprehensive programme of CPD for schools developed with schools for schools. The programme is focussed on teaching, learning and leadership and supported by a range of high profile conferences. This is administrated by the Training and Development team and organised by the CPD Programme Manager who liaises with Officers and Schools on a regular basis. Schools receive a newsletter termly regarding the upcoming courses and make all bookings through CPD online. Courses are open to all schools in and out of Kent. All courses and conferences are linked to key issues in school improvement.

Support for Schools

As well as the free core support for schools they can access additional support by buying into the School Improvement Service Level Agreement (SLA). This allows them to use credits to access CPD and bespoke support/training for their school from September 2014.

The area KAH (Kent Association of Headteachers) boards have funding to provide support for schools. Together with the SIA for that area they will be focussing on improving schools in their area that require improvement.

Schools can also obtain support from SLE's (Specialist Leaders of Education) through their Teaching School Alliance or via their SIA to be commissioned to support teachers practice/school improvement. Specialist support on a one to one basis by a coach/mentor along with a CPD programme in which teachers reflect on their own practice is one of the most effective ways of improving practice and raising standards. This support should be time limited for any teachers who consistently deliver inadequate or RI lessons. Where the school has ongoing concerns over a teacher's performance the Headteacher/Executive Headteacher should have an early conversation with Schools Personnel Service (SPS). Schools working with schools in collaborations should be able to support initial concerns through professional discussion and the sharing of good practice.

One of the issues that sometimes impacts on schools underperforming is the amount of activity school staff are engaged in outside of the school and their choice of courses. One aspect of the IA (Improvement Adviser) role will be to ensure that the school is engaging in appropriate CPD activity and that there is high impact on the school priorities as a result of engagement. It will be important to consider how the school is collaborating with other schools/collaborations on a district basis or by alignment with good and outstanding schools within other districts to secure a support network for sustainability.

County generic programmes available to promote good or better teaching are:

Every Lesson Counts for Teachers – consistently good (Primary & Secondary)

This programme runs over 7 weeks. There are 6 very practical sessions whereby teachers are encouraged to reflect on their practice with other professionals. During week 4 delegates are encouraged to observe good/outstanding teaching within another school. Pedagogical school based tutors (teachers or leaders) or consultants who are procured to undertake the delivery of the programme work closely with the delegates to provide practical hands-on training that can be directly used in the classroom after each session. This programme does require a school based mentor. It is expected that teachers become good practitioners either whilst they are on the programme or soon after. Details of central programmes can be found on CPD on-line. The programme has had considerable impact across the county.

Every Lesson Count for Teachers – good to outstanding

This programme, although carried out over a term, consists of 3 modules and looks at moving practice from good to outstanding. It builds the confidence of teachers to undertake action research either within their school or across schools/collaborations and to ensure all pupils make at least good progress with a significant number making outstanding progress.

Every Lesson Counts for Teaching Assistants

This is a one term programme that has been developed and piloted. The impact of this programme shows that teaching assistant's practices have improved and this has supported learning outcomes for pupils. Details of when the programme is running can be found on CPD on line.

Every Lesson Counts for Primary English and Primary Mathematics will be written during 2014-15 to support schools even further in raising standards.

Every Lesson Counts for English, Mathematics and Science for Secondary are available.

Every Lesson Counts for the Early Years is also available.

The aim of the programmes are to enable all practitioners to reflect with professional guidance and to make necessary changes to their practices, systems and procedures where relevant over a short period of time in order to improve outcomes for pupils.

Curriculum

The local authority will be working with schools and encouraging schools to support each other within their collaborations in order to develop programmes of study within the New National Curriculum. During the academic year 2014-15 there will be an opportunity for schools to be involved in a curriculum project which will enable schools to develop their curriculum further. The initial meeting will take place in a creative workshop environment which will hopefully help to generate professional discussion, share good practice and promote innovative thought. This will result in a creative, dynamic curriculum that pupils enjoy and continues to develop a thirst for learning which starts to prepare Kent's pupils for future roles and responsibilities, so they can contribute positively to society.

English, Mathematics, Science and ICT

Both Literacy and Numeracy support materials can be found on EduKent and will be free to L.A. Schools. Further materials can be accessed through the Literacy Toolkit and Mathematics Toolkit on KLZ (Kent Learning Zone) accessed through EiSKent. There is a new Kent Science Scheme of Work linked to the new National Curriculum which can be purchased from EduKent. ICT materials can be through the ICT toolkit where advice for the new National Curriculum can be found. As further materials are developed they will be made available to local authority schools through KLZ (accessed through EiSKent). Schools will be encouraged to share their curriculum development with others. This will help children to receive a great curriculum that encourages a thirst for learning.