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**LEARNING AND TEACHING IMPROVEMENT GROUP**

Minute of meeting, Monday 26thFebruary 2018

**Present:** Caroline Martin (Chair), Andrew Hay, Aubrey Sanderson, Colin Richardson, Gillian Cochrane, Victoria Lowe, Kelly Fairbairn, Sarah Martin, Bruce Watson, Andrew Garner, Matt Corfield.

**Apologies:** Bruce Robertson, Ian Yule, Duncan Robertson.

There were no matters arising from the last minutes.

The discussion on the Teaching and Learning Draft Policy was postponed until the next meeting owing to the absence of BR.

The standards meetings scheduled for 30th April and 4th June have been cancelled and given over to the LTIG to use for professional learning. Douglas Buchanan from Moray House has offered to come and speak to the staff about formative assessment on one of those dates. The group wanted more information on the nature of the session. Some group members voiced the opinion that they wanted an interactive session with practical ideas and did not want a session in which they were expected just to sit and listen. CM will try to find out more about what form any session offered would take. Some group members expressed disquiet that these standards meetings had been cancelled as they already had activities planned for them. Others wanted these sessions to be given over to planning and developing courses within faculties. The feeling expressed by many in the group was that this time was urgently needed. If this was not possible, however, then there were several suggestions as to what form professional learning workshops could take. VL proposed a session where faculties shared ideas for learning intentions and plenaries. Another suggestion was sharing ideas on how to use mini-whiteboards effectively. KF suggested collaborative lesson planning, based on an idea from the Japan chapters of *CleverLands*. Staff there plan a lesson together, then one of them teaches the lesson while the others observe. Afterwards there is a debrief session in which all the teachers come together again to discuss it. AH thought that this would be a good way to carry out peer observation rounds next session. CR proposed a follow up session on effective questioning in which specific techniques, such as bouncing the question, were examined. CM thought that a workshop on integrating discussion and managing it in lessons would be a good idea, given that it has the greatest effect size. Another proposal was a session in which teachers shared their ideas on and methods of lesson planning.

AH gave an update on the Technologies faculty fortnight. It stretched into three weeks because of the two snow days but otherwise went smoothly. Most faculty members chose which lessons they wanted to be observed. AH has prepared an action plan, based on Bruce Robertson’s report, which he offered to share with curricular PTs and the LTIG. He is aiming to streamline the action plan with the Faculty Improvement Plan and noted that there is currently no place on the FIP for this. AH felt that it was important that staff were not given extra work in addition to the FIP. AH went through the report with his faculty at their faculty meeting and they agreed next steps. CR will support the faculty with implementing these. AH said that the next time his faculty takes part in faculty fortnight, it will be interesting to compare the data from the first time and see if the changes agreed have been achieved. Another observation he made is that each faculty should be observed at different points in the school year. This year his faculty were preoccupied with prelims and he hoped that the next faculty fortnight for Technologies would be scheduled at a different time. He also said that in his previous school, the PT of the next faculty to be observed would be involved to give them insight into the process.

The next item on the agenda was sharing good practice. Expressive Arts have already filmed some lessons and they have found it a valuable way to share ideas as it enabled the faculty to discuss the lesson clip together. Although AS has been filmed and didn’t mind it, this was done spontaneously, and he told the meeting that he would not have enjoyed it if a date had been set in advance. VL said that very few of the lesson clips which are available either commercially or on-line involve a practical subject, therefore, this was another reason why she found filming lessons valuable. European Languages have agreed to trial filming lessons but have not yet begun to do so. The school has four I-Pads and Paul Watson has some Flip cameras. CR mentioned the “Teach Like a Champion” lesson clips. DR has this DVD.

The next item for discussion was peer observation week. CM returned to KF’s idea of collaborative lesson planning and AH’s suggestion to incorporate this into peer observation week next session, stating that this seemed like an ideal way for peer observation to evolve. The theme for the year could be “Planning Together”. AH then proposed that this could be tied in with professional enquiry.

CR spoke to the group about the EYHS Teaching and Learning website. He tries to update the site with posts every Thursday. AS, SM and VL have all contributed posts recently. CR asked the group to send him any interesting articles they find. CM said she had realised that the emails alerting staff to new posts had been going into the “other” email folder, rather than “focused”, which was why she hadn’t been seeing them.

KF updated the group on the progress of the professional reading group. The group has now met twice to discuss chapters of *CleverLands* by Lucy Crehan. The discussion so far has covered Finland, Japan and Singapore. At the next meeting, on Wednesday 7th March, the discussion on Singapore will be resumed and the group will also talk about the chapters on Shanghai. The aim of the group is that these discussions will lead to initiatives which will have a wider impact on the whole school. CM said that this was already beginning to happen through KF’s suggestion of shared lesson planning. At the last meeting of the reading group, DR had the idea of selecting quotations from the book and putting them on the staffroom noticeboards to promote discussion. Another proposal was for group members to talk about interesting parts of the book at faculty meetings. AH thought that the staff section of the bulletin could be used to share interesting points from the literature.

The next meeting will be on Monday 26th March in the staff conference room. VL gave her apologies in advance.

*C. Martin, 04.03.18*