

The New School at West Heath

Policy on Staff Training and Development

This policy should be read in conjunction with our policy for Staff Selection and Recruitment, Staff Induction and Equal Opportunities policies.

Introduction

Young people join our school having experienced a breakdown in their mainstream education. This may have been due to a number and combination of different reasons. They could include young people suffering a medical and/or emotional and/or psychological condition that has made it difficult for them to learn under traditional conditions. Alternatively, it might be a failing in the way local authorities and previous schools have recognised or been organised to respond to individual need. Against this background, our job is to ensure that our students have the opportunity to achieve their potential and develop their physical, mental, social, emotional, spiritual and moral capacities whilst they are with us. Ultimately, the intention is that they leave us ready to become active members of society and primed to be wise and responsible parents for their own children should they have a family in the future.

Our students have the right to the highest quality and calibre of staff. A team of skilful and caring professionals is essential if we are to achieve our purpose. The time that students spend with us represents an investment in their future and they require access to well motivated, appropriately qualified and experienced staff if they are to maximise this opportunity. Most importantly, our staff need to be potentially robust and unhesitatingly believe both in themselves and in our students and that through working together, our students can make the most of their opportunities when they are with us and before they leave us.

The benefits of an integrated staff training and development policy and programme have an impact on the following groups of people in our school:-

- Students will experience a higher standard and quality of education and care because the staff who teach and look after them and in any way responsible for them, will be more confident in their professional practice
- Staff will be sufficiently empowered to discharge their roles and responsibilities described in their job descriptions more effectively and efficiently
- Trustees will benefit from the commitment and loyalty of a staff group who feel sufficiently valued that their training and development needs are taken seriously.

Strategies

Training and development is provided on three levels:

- Whole school
- Staff Groups
- Individual

Whole school training and development is provided on designated staff training days and afternoons which total at least 5 full days each academic year. Issues that are relevant to all members of staff are discussed – typical examples are the needs of Asperger's and ADHD students, school policy and behaviour management.

Subgroups of staff – teachers, teaching assistants and care staff, subject teams have particular needs. These are usually provided on a full staff training day by splitting staff according to their requirements. In particular these are used to provide that training which enables such groups to work consistently and collaboratively. Typical examples might include recording systems and detailed policy and practice relating to specific aspects such as child protection.

Individual training is provided either in school or by providing the opportunity to go on an externally provided training event. Typical examples are subject specific training and issues relating to school management. Appropriate individual and group training is arranged for the specific needs of the support team.

“Raising the achievement of students is dependent on the contribution, commitment and continuing learning of the staff and others who work with a school. People are, therefore, a school's greatest asset”¹. This philosophy so accurately reflects one of our core values that we have entered into a partnership with the Investors in People (IIP) organisation to buy in their support and assessment package. We intend that through participation in this programme we will raise standards of staff development practice through achieving the IIP award.

Each individual member of staff benefits from an Individual Development Plan (IDP). The synthesis of IDP's across the whole school will profile our training priorities in the short, medium and long term. This information will be presented to our Trustees in the form of a costed Staff Training and Development Plan for their approval every October. Subsequently, the approved document will be accommodated within our School Development Plan for the ensuing year.

Throughout the year there will be opportunities for our school to demonstrate our proactive and responsive nature regarding staff training. For example we may be offered recommendations following an inspection regarding staff

¹Investors in People – Information for Schools 2001

development and can usefully use forthcoming In-Service Training time for this purpose. In this way, it is possible that we can respond to urgent and important staff training and development need by short circuiting the system. Additionally, we may wish to embed an initiative or development in practice dictated by the introduction of new Legislation the provision of timely training and development activity on these occasions will ensure the highest standards of practice are met and development activity.

Information from current systems that can contribute to emerging IDP's comprises the following sources:-

Staff Selection and Recruitment – All staff are appointed against roles and responsibilities outlined in respective job descriptions. The process of staff selection and recruitment itself may show training and development needs for individual members of staff at this stage. These will be noted so that they can be addressed within that member of staff's induction process or other training and development opportunities delivered at a later stage.

Staff induction process - All staff benefit from a programme of induction supervised by an identified mentor. Mentors will be nominated by the Principal and will use an individually developed staff induction checklist as a basis for the induction process. The induction checklist is used for all discrete groups of staff working in our school.

Work Review – All staff will benefit from a programme of work review e.g. Teachers will be appraised at the end of each academic year. Teaching Assistants will meet regularly by agreement with their individual mentor and Care Staff will similarly follow a programme of supervision. Secretarial, Security, Charity and Estate staff will also benefit from meeting with an individually identified mentor. The purpose of these meetings includes the following three essential elements:-

- To ensure that staff are getting their work done well and to provide a regular forum where staff know they can discuss worries or concerns
- To provide support for each member of staff according to individual need
- To identify and record individual staff development need

Audit of expertise – Our Staff Practice, Training and Development Group will ensure as a matter of course that we maintain and review a profile of individual expertise from amongst our staff group. This expertise can be shared or cascaded to colleagues whose work practice would benefit from the experience. Additionally, all staff attending short training courses must evaluate the benefits and relevance of the course and cascade their experience across the staff group.

Staff Training & Development

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:
Quality of Opportunity, Staff Recruitment, Selection & Disclosure

Appendices:

Monitoring of Policy Implementation is the responsibility of:
The Senior Leadership Team

Lead responsibility: Vice Principal – Student & Staff Welfare

Relevant Legislation: To be detailed in the next release

Annual Policy Review Required: Yes / No

Approved by: S.S. Committee

Date approved: 29/09/04

Ratified by: Trustees

Date ratified: 11/2004

Reviewed – no changes

Date:

Reviewed – with revisions

Date:

Revision No.

1.0

Guidance Notes

All Training and Development activity will be co-ordinated, reviewed, monitored and evaluated by the Staff Practice, Training and Development Group

The Short Course Evaluation Form

This form will be completed in every case when a member of staff attends an internal or external training course. The intention is that they evaluate the relevance and value of the course formally and the use of the form will aid subsequent discussion with the member of staff's line manager (see The Initial Review Form). Additionally, the form will be used to cascade information about particular training events to other members of staff, for example through display on the staff training notice board.

The Initial Review Form

The experience of colleagues or students in our school should benefit from all training and development activity undertaken by every member of staff. This form should be used as an aid in ensuring that each member of staff can implement the things they have learned from attending courses of training or other development activity. The form allows the member of staff to declare some prioritised objectives that will impact upon their professional practice as a direct result of attending the training and development activity. Essentially, it provides sound evidence that not only has the member of staff concerned benefited from the training, but those colleagues or students will also benefit thus demonstrating value for money. A synthesis of these forms will allow a strategic overview in monitoring the success and relevance of our schools training and development plan.

The Workplace Review Form

This form should be completed by the line manager and essentially verifies whether or not the objectives outlined in the Initial Review form have been met. As such, it will additionally provide sound information for the strategic management of staff training and development planning in our school.

The Individual Development Plan

This form should be completed as a consequence and conclusion of the individual appraisal process and passed to the staff representative serving on the Staff Training and Development group. This group will analyse all plans as a contribution to constructing our school's staff development plan.

The Staff Training and Development Record

This form is kept on each staff personnel file. It will be used to hold the details of all training and development activity undertaken by all staff

Flow Chart to Show the Use of Forms

Individual Development Plan (Reviewed Annually at the staff appraisal meeting)



Member of staff undertakes Training and Development Activity



Training and Development Evaluation Form completed by staff concerned and passed to line manager – copy on staff notice board



Initial Review form completed with line manager and passed to staff representative serving on Training and Development group (with Evaluation form)

Workplace Review form completed and passed to member of staff serving on Training and Development group.

Individual Development Plan

NAME:

Date of Appraisal:

Personal Objectives this year:
(in priority order)

School Objectives this year:
(in priority order)

Development Areas/Activities:
(in priority order)

Signed: Staff
Date

Line
Manager

Objectives will reflect what is required as a result of the development activities. The objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant to the development activity and time bound.

Development Activity Pre and Post Review

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Date details of Course fed back to staff meeting:

Initial Review. *This review should be undertaken as soon as is practicable following the development. The delegate and their manager will undertake the review jointly. The focus of the review will be on determining if the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the objectives, set earlier, has been provided by the development activity. This generic form has varying degrees of relevance in different circumstances. As much of it as seems useful should be completed.*

Comments:

Agreed success criteria / objective for implementation:

Objectives will reflect what is required as a result of the development activity. The objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant to the development activity, and time bound.

Agreed date for review of implementation/impact on work place:

Signed: Delegate.....Manager

Date

Workplace Review. *This review should be undertaken at the agreed time or as near to this as possible (unless otherwise agreed). The review may be undertaken jointly by the delegate and manager or by the manager alone and should focus on the achievement of the agreed objectives. This review may consider the achievement of the objectives, factors that may influence the achievement, the success and suitability of the development activity, the impact of the development activity on the individual, their team and the school.*

Comments:

Further actions (*if required*):

Signed: Delegate..... Manager

.....
Date

(This form should be passed to your representative member of staff serving on the Training and Development Group)

