



# Professional Development

Issue 1 - Summer 2010

## Training is not just for NQTs!

That is the message to all staff, who are being encouraged to sign up for training sessions, to refresh their skills and knowledge.

NQTs have benefitted from courses covering a wide range of issues, from classroom management to the role of the governors - many of which may also be relevant to more experienced staff.

Margaret Hawksworth, Director of Professional Development, said: "The training sessions we offer as part of the induction process are, of course, drawn up with NQTs in mind.

"But they are equally pertinent to all employees in the school. Anyone who feels they want to brush up on their skills is welcome to sign up."

Sessions on offer include:

- Pastoral Care – Sue Ridley (Director of Student Welfare) covers all aspects of pastoral care, including child abuse and bullying, rules and responsibilities affecting teachers, and data logging of students;
- Classroom Management – An opportunity to discuss concerns with Paddy O'Brien (Director of Key Stage 4) who will outline basic classroom management skills. This includes the classroom rules and the Awards procedure;
- Special Educational Needs – Linda Salt (SEN Co-ordinator) will lead a discussion of the SEN process and explain how the system works in practice at Ashby School;
- External Examinations Procedure – Examinations Officer Sue English talks about the rules and regulations governing external examinations, as set by the Examinations Boards and the School Board Rules;
- Boarding House – A tour of School House and details of its facilities;
- Governors – Governor Alison Bennett will explain the role of governors and the composition of the governing body;
- Curriculum Planning – Bill Piper gives a broad outline of the timetable options in Years 10 and 12.



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The NQTs featured on this page are coming to the end of a hectic year.

During that time, they have taken part in a residential induction, prepared courses and lessons for the first time, undergone 12 observations and met 41 induction standards, in line with national requirements.

This process would not be possible without the mentors who support each NQT throughout their time at the school.

## Introduction from the Director of Continued Professional Development (CPD)

### *A warm welcome from the CPD team: myself, Sheila Dennis and Ali Jackson.*

This newsletter covers some of the opportunities available to you. Since achieving Investors in People status 10 years ago, the school has come a long way.

Every year, all colleagues are given the opportunity to attend a course, based on individual needs and requests arising from Performance Management interviews. Remember – you need to be proactive, especially if you feel you're missing out. Just come and ask!

CPD is not just about going on external courses. We also:

- Undertake job shadowing;
- Observe colleagues outside their Faculty, any time you like;
- Run internal courses on ICT from Network Services and colleagues;
- Visit other schools, particularly high schools, during the summer;
- Cascade ideas down from colleagues who have been on courses;
- Discuss and give mock interviews (with great success):
- Give encouragement and advice for degree study;
- Run an induction programme for all new colleagues;
- Organise a Governor training programme.

If you are interested in any of these, please come and see me.

### Resident Experts

Our resident experts – Sheila Dennis on AFL and Ali Jackson on coaching – are both featured in this newsletter.

### Sharing

Knowledge is something that should be shared so, when you get that 'wow factor' from something you've done, please let us all know!



### Are You Willing...?

If you have skills or expertise in an area and are willing to share it, please let me know. You may be surprised how many people are interested.

### Future Study

Each year, we offer financial assistance towards further study. You must be employed by the school for more than two years and the course must benefit both yourself and the school. Please apply to me by 10 May, explaining the nature, cost and benefits of the course.

Remember – your future is in your hands. If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always got.

We all have goals so write them down. It is a proven fact that those who have clear, written goals are 10 times more likely to succeed.

Continued Professional Development is for everyone in the school – use it!

Contact me in Geography x 227, my office x 208 (with answerphone), B block staff room on Thursday lunchtime.

*Margaret Hawksworth*

### Coming up...

A training session on 'Sex and the Law' will be held for all staff after school on Tuesday 11 May.

During the summer term, there will also be lesson observation training for all teaching line managers.

The latest information on up-to-date, Ofsted standard observations will be delivered by a practising Ofsted adviser.

There will also be training for House Managers during the Summer term.

## Keeping in Step with INSET

Training days – known as insets - are held for both teaching and support staff.

An inset session, entitled **'Supporting Students in the Classroom'** was held for the SEN team during the Autumn term.

This session focussed at length on establishing an effective working relationship between teachers and support staff.

The SEN team drew up a list of criteria detailing what they could do in the classroom to work more effectively with teachers. They also formulated criteria to help teachers work effectively with support staff.

This inset led teaching staff from the Advisory Faculty to speak to other Faculties about these criteria, with a view to improving support and learning for SEN students.

The latest inset for teaching staff was on the subject of **differentiation**, led by external speaker, Robert Powell.

Sheila Dennis, Assistant Director of Professional Development, said: "Differentiation is about adapting the teaching and learning so that every student fulfils his or her potential. Since the inset, there has been really positive feedback from staff. It certainly engaged and motivated people."

Robert spoke to teachers about three key areas:



An example of the 'Shared' resources available to staff.

**Differentiation in Teaching**  
Classroom management, clear learning aims, key vocabulary, techniques for participation, questioning, involving groups, review and celebration of learning.

**Differentiation in Learning**  
Clarity and confidence, the importance of thinking and processing in effective learning tasks, differentiation in the planning of tasks.

**Differentiation in Assessment**  
Sharing assessment criteria, peer and self assessment, marking

and feedback, electronic feedback.

By working together, each department identified different differentiation techniques that could be incorporated into their schemes of learning, in order to meet the diverse needs of their learners.

A folder called 'Differentiation' has now been created, containing resources used in this session. These are available for staff to access in the 'Shared' area.

Sheila is also encouraging staff to send her any differentiation resources that may be useful to others across the curriculum. These can then be uploaded to help create a larger reservoir of resources to support teaching and learning throughout the school.

## Initial Teaching Training (ITT)

ITT students make a valuable contribution to school life.

While they learn a huge amount from school departments, they also introduce new ideas and enthusiasm.

This year, more than 20 students have visited the school from Loughborough, Leicester, Warwick and the Open Universities. They each spend about 10 weeks in school.

Other staff are welcome to attend ITT training events which cover seven main topics:

- Students with special needs and learning difficulties;
- Personal and social education (including child protection, anti-bullying, drugs and sex);
- Discipline and expectation of pupil behaviour and pastoral care (child abuse);

- Assessment, recording and reporting pupil progress; role of governing body, staff appraisal, OFSTED; teachers' legal responsibilities and rights;
- School and the community (work experience, Lockton House, Technology College status);
- Vocational curriculum/ key skills;
- Citizenship.

Natalie Rudd is undertaking her teacher training in the English Faculty at Ashby School, under the Graduate Teacher Scheme. She is also spending time in various parts of the school to enhance her learning.

## Top Tips : Assessment for Learning



*This issue's Top Tips come from Sheila Dennis. Sheila is Assistant Director of Professional Development at Ashby School and is in charge of Assessment for Learning (AFL).*

1. Learning journals. Each student has a book in which they reflect upon their learning; writing about things they find difficult, reflecting on successes, or drawing mind maps before new topics. Teachers ask permission to read these books.
2. Peer marking. This works best when pairs are of roughly the same ability, and are clear about their roles. Get students to give their work to a buddy who marks it against a checklist related to the learning objective. It is their responsibility to make sure everything is in order before giving it to the teacher.
3. Effective marking. Build slots in lessons to look at marked work while it is still fresh in students' minds, giving them the opportunity to absorb and respond to your feedback.
4. Grades. Don't always provide grades when marking work – students can find them dispiriting. To counter this, use the TTTS comments instead, showing them where and how they can improve.

5. No hands up. A 'no hands up' rule gives the whole class thinking time to prepare a response before the teacher chooses learners. This approach keeps students alert and on task, too.
6. EBI. This stands for 'Even Better If' – this is a fantastic way to focus teacher and student feedback. For example, "EBI... quotations from the poem had been used." In both written and oral feedback, it ensures everyone is thinking about the next steps. This technique could be used alongside the TTTS strategy.
7. Thumbs up. After posing an open question, insist that all hands are raised, with students putting their thumbs up, sideways or downwards, depending on how confident they feel about their understanding. The teacher receives a pretty accurate picture of where everyone is in their learning.
8. Modelling. Before starting a task, students find it helpful to see what a finished product might look like. It can also generate discussion about how examples could be improved.
9. Sharing good work. After you've done a pile of marking, why not begin the next lesson by sharing some examples with the class? It gives you the chance to dish out some public praise, and allows the class to see what good work looks like, and to evaluate it themselves. They really enjoy guessing whose work it is, too!
10. Randomisation. Maintain students' attention during whole class discussion by using the name randomizer ([www.classroomtools.net](http://www.classroomtools.net)) or lollipop sticks. I do have some spare lollipop sticks, if you need a set.

Sheila said: "AFL is ongoing assessment that takes place in the classroom. It is about things like peer assessing, students learning from each other, not just the teacher, and about self-assessment.

"When you have got 30 students, all at different stages of their learning, they all have different needs and expectations."

**Response Partners**

Paired or partnership oral marking. Pupils invite a partner or a group to discuss or comment on their work.

For it to be effective, students should be aware of learning objectives and success criteria. They should also appreciate the role of a response partner – to offer positive and constructive feedback around the learning goals.

Students could be given prompt questions to ask the person who has done the work.

**Self-assessment Targets**

Students give themselves targets based on their self-assessment.

These learning goals could be recorded somewhere and revisited (i.e. inside cover of workbook)

They could be compared to teacher targets and the two brought to consensus if different.

The diagram shows a cycle: Record Keeping → Analysis → Reporting → back to Record Keeping, with a central figure representing a student.

AFL materials – such as this information on student self-assessment and response partners – can be found in the AFL folder in 'Shared'

## Useful Publications for AFL

**Inside the Black Box**  
– Paul Black and Dylan William nfer Nelson

**Assessment for Learning: Beyond the Black Box** – Assessment Reform Group 1999 nfer Nelson

**Working Inside the Black Box** – Paul Black, Christine Harrison, Clare Lee, Bethan Marshall, Dylan William 2002 nfer Nelson

**Testing Motivation and Learning** – Assessment Reform Group 2002 nfer Nelson

**Assessment for Learning: Putting it into Practice** – Paul Black, Christine Harrison, Clare Lee, Bethan Marshall, Dylan William 2003 Open University Press ISBN 0-335-21297-2

**Science inside the Black Box** – Paul Black and Christine Harrison 2004 nfer Nelson ISBN 0-7087-1444-7

**English inside the Black Box** – Bethan Marshall and Dylan William 2006-09-07 nfer Nelson ISBN 0-7087-1686-5

**Maths inside the Black Box** – Jenny Hodgen and Dylan William nfer Nelson ISBN 0-7087-1687-3

**Formative Assessment in the Secondary Classroom** – Shirley Clarke 2003, Hodder and Stoughton ISBN 0-340-88766-4

**Questioning** – G Brown and E Wragg 1993 Routledge

## A Coach(ing) Trip to a Better Place

Coaching sessions are helping staff at Ashby School to manage their workplace stresses and strike a better work/life balance.

By working in pairs or groups, staff are encouraged to identify problem issues and come up with possible solutions.

The coaching programme is overseen by Ali Jackson, who has spent time in several other schools to see how the technique is used there.

She said: "The principle is to offer staff a positive structure in which they have the encouragement and support to achieve a better work/life balance.

"For some people, the problem might be a small one – such

as a difficulty with a particular class - that they can work through. For others, it can be a bigger problem which is really getting them down. In both cases, coaching can really help."

Successful coaching gives staff the skills to coach themselves and their colleagues, if similar issues arise in future.

Ali, who is an Advanced Skills Teacher in Teaching and Learning and Drama Methodology, added: "We are protecting the school and its relationships because, if a member of staff is stressed, then their relationships with colleagues and students are going to suffer."

Unlike mentoring, coaching encourages people to arrive at their own solutions.



At Ashby School, the aim is that every member of teaching and support staff will be coached over the next few years.

Anyone interested in finding out more about coaching should speak to Ali Jackson.

## Return to Learn

**Every issue, the newsletter will feature a member of staff who has decided to take on more studies.**

Year Tutor Angela Allen is studying for a Foundation Degree in Education.

Since beginning the Staffordshire University course at Burton College, mother-of-three Angela has had to slot in lectures and assignments around her full-time job at Ashby School and time spent with her family.

Now in the second year of the three year course, Angela emphasises that taking on study is a big commitment.

She said: "We have assignments and modules to complete, as well as three hours of lectures a week. You have to do your study on top of the time that you spend at college so you have to commit a lot of time to do it properly.

"With a lot of the modules, it is not just a case of writing them; we first have to go out and do our own research."

Angela's research involves reading journals and other publications, visiting websites, and looking for case studies in her working environment at Ashby School.

Many of the topics covered – such as 'Behaviour' and 'Underachievement' – have given Angela a new perspective on the work she does at Ashby School.

She said: "Doing this course has encouraged me to see the bigger picture. I have been surprised by how many of the topics have crossed over into my job.



"I have had lots of support from Ashby School. There is such a wealth of experienced people here. They have helped me to understand things that would have taken me hours on my own."

Angela, who began work at the school as a classroom assistant in 2000, hopes to convert her foundation degree to a full degree at the end of the course.

## Chinese Visitors Sit in on Lessons



Teachers from China have been sitting in on lessons at Ashby School to see successful learning at first hand.

The seven teachers spent two days at Ashby School as part of a three-week visit to the UK to find out more about the successes of the English educational system.

The visitors, who all teach Maths or Science at Nanjing International Language School, focused on 'active learning'.

Jacqueline Zhang praised the interactive elements of lessons at Ashby School. She said: "In our schools, it is very different. Chinese students tend to be quieter.

"Here, lessons are more interactive. Students ask and answer questions without being prompted. Teachers have good resources - the whiteboards, in particular, are very useful - and very organised teaching plans for every lesson. There is good communication between students and teachers."

Wei Dong was impressed by the amount of information covered in each lesson. He said: "It has surprised me how extensive lessons are, compared to those in China. A topic might take up four hours of lesson time in China; here the topic is covered in an hour."

Teacher Sheila Dennis said: "Our Chinese visitors were in school to see examples of 'active learning', as lessons in Chinese schools tend to be more passive. They have lots of ideas to take back to their own classrooms.

"It was also fascinating for teachers at Ashby School to find out more about how the education system works in China."

The seven teachers spent time in the Maths and Science Faculties, observed lessons and form registration, and visited the Sixth Form Centre.

The visit was organised by Warwick University, which has partnership links with Ashby School.

The visitors, who are all studying for a postgraduate award in teaching and learning, were in school in March. They also spent time at schools in Birmingham, Warwick and Coventry.

## Sarah is Cooking Up a Storm

Food Technology teacher Sarah Middleton does not only share her expertise in the classroom – she also addresses crowds of Food Technology teachers at venues including Wembley Stadium.

In 2008, Sarah was approached by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) to raise the standard of Food Technology teaching nationwide.

As Leader Practitioner Co-ordinator for the SSAT, she is in charge of Food Education across the UK – a role which involves talking to huge gatherings of Food Technology teachers at venues nationwide.

As part of her role, Sarah helps schools to improve their teaching techniques, their resources and ultimately their exam results in Food Technology.



Sarah said: "If there is a school that is under-achieving or a Food Technology teacher who is struggling to improve results, I go into the school and access what they are doing. I then try to find a solution to their problems."

She is in contact with many other schools by email, sending them examples of best practice, classroom resources and advice to boost performance.

Sarah also runs SSAT training events, to update Food Technology teachers on curriculum changes and new ideas in food, on hot topics such as molecular gastronomy and fusion food.

Ashby School's newly-refurbished kitchens – now among the best-equipped in the country - have become a focus for teachers from other schools, too.

Sarah added: "By 2011, it will be compulsory for every school in the country to teach Food Technology. Some schools will be starting from scratch so they want to visit Ashby School, to help plan their own kitchens."

Sarah works as an unpaid volunteer for the SSAT, where she also oversees Design and Technology leader teachers.

Sarah said: "I could not perform my SSAT roles without the support of Ashby School. What I have learnt from my SSAT work helps me to keep on top of the latest developments in Food Technology and to make sure that Ashby School's students get the best teaching and resources possible."

# Spotlight on... Teachers' TV

Each issue of 'Professional Development' will focus on one of the many resources available to teachers.

Teachers' TV contains a wealth of information that is widely regarded as being indispensable to teachers.

For anyone wanting lesson ideas, help with behaviour management, or simply an insight into best practice in other schools, Teachers' TV is a useful first port of call.

Margaret Hawksworth, Director of CPD, said: "Teachers' TV is a really valuable resource, covering all aspects of teaching. It provides a wealth of down-to-earth, genuine, useable materials."

Teachers at Ashby School are being encouraged to tap into the site's information on Behaviour and Assessment for Learning.

Miss Hawksworth added: "These topics are very relevant to the school's ethos. Under both headings, there are videos of real life situations.

"However new or experienced a teacher is, there is always something new for him or her to learn, largely because students are changing."

To help teachers with behavioural issues, the site features suggestions on how to deal with a range of universally recognised scenarios, such as 'unmotivated boys', 'chatty girls' and 'Friday afternoons'.

Teachers can also use the site's video request service, to ask for video material on specific issues. Teachers' TV will then try to source a video on the topic or consider it for a future video.

The latest videos cover topics such as climate change, what to do if you don't get on with your mentor, and tips for better digital photography.



## Who is on Course for Success?

Ashby School has no shortage of ambitious staff. Teaching and support staff are encouraged to continue their learning, in line with the school's aim 'to promote life-long learning within a technologically advanced society'.

The staff members listed below are working towards, or have completed, the following qualifications:

**Julie Holmes, Learning Support Assistant**

Studying for NVQ Level 2, Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools

**Sue Sibson, Maths Teacher**

Studying for B Tech in Floristry

**Charlotte Lauder, Biology Subject Manager**

Studying for SSAT Diploma for Middle Leaders

**Liz Keaveny, Teaching Assistant**

Studying for NVQ Level 2, Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools

**Jane Auton, Faculty Support**

Completed NVQ Level 2 Business and Administration in 2009

**Kate Chesworth, Faculty Support**

Completed NVQ Level 2 Business and Administration in 2009

**Luba Bonilla, Faculty Support**

Passed GCSE Spanish with A\* in 2009

**Judi Bancroft, Secretary to Senior Leadership Team**

Studying for Certificate in Business Office Information Systems

**Sue English, Examinations Officer**

Studying for Level 4 BTEC in Exams Management

**Janet Sketchley, Headteacher's PA**

Studying for Certificate in Business Office Information Systems  
Passed GCSE Spanish with A\* in 2009

**Rose Booth, Teaching Assistant, SSU**

Passed NVQ Level 3 in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools in 2009

**Natalie Thompson, Learning Support Assistant**

Studying for NVQ Level 3 in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools

**Heidi French, Chemistry Teacher**

Achieved Distinction in Open University Certificate in Astronomy and Planetary Science in 2009  
Studying for OU qualification in Oceanography

**Polly Sherriff, Teaching Assistant**

Passed Higher Level Teaching Assistant qualification in 2010

**Leigh-ann Harris, Teaching Assistant**

Passed Higher Level Teaching Assistant qualification in 2010

**Martin Willoughby, Year Tutor**

Studying for BA (Hons) in Education

**Pauline Cooper, Faculty Support**

Passed NVQ Level 3 in Business Administration in 2009

**Lyndsey Lane, Year Tutor**

Has become an accredited Smoking Cessation Adviser

**Carole Merry, Learning Support Assistant**

Studying for NVQ Level 2 in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools

**Tracy Price, Higher Level Teaching Assistant, SSU**

Passed Foundation degree for Teaching Assistants in 2009  
Studying for BA (Hons) in Education

**Peter Higgs, Alternative Curriculum Provider**

Passed Foundation degree for Teaching Assistants in 2009  
Studying for BA (Hons) in Education

**Matt Hall, Director of Guidance and Student Voice**

Studying National College for School Leaders 'Leadership Pathways' course

**Sara Tongue, Pastoral Assistant, Sixth Form**

Studying for NVQ Level 3 in Business Administration

**Peter Page, Network Services Technician**

Completed Semester 2 Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA)  
Studying for Semester 3 CCNA

**Brad Akrill, Senior Network Services Technician**

Completed Semester 2 CCNA  
Studying for Semester 3 CCNA

**Ash Karavadra, Network Services Manager**

Completed Semester 2 CCNA  
Studying for Semester 3 CCNA

**Roger Skervin, PE Teacher**

Studying for MA in Education

**Sheila Dennis, English Teacher**

Studying for an MA in Educational Studies

**Angela Allen, Year Tutor**

Studying for Foundation degree in Education

**Hugh Birtwistle, Learning Support Assistant**

Studying for Foundation degree in Education

**Alan Demetriou, Year Tutor**

Studying for Business Studies degree.

**Liz Smeaton, Learning Support Assistant**

Passed Double Science foundation GCSE at grades B and C.  
Studying for BA (Hons) in Education Studies.