

Case study

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School name: Herne Bay High Specialist School & Sports College (HBHS)
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Project title: Developing a more meaningful performance management approach for teachers
The aims of your project/work which relates clearly to Training School status
Herne Bay High School (HBHS) has a history of integrating a sound approach to Performance Management (PM), however it was felt that with our new Training School (TS) status and our clear focus on supporting and developing our staff that we needed to rethink our existing approach to PM in order that we established a firm foundation on which to build our TS.
How you identified the need for the training/activity/initiative you provided
<p>Prior to applying for TS status, HBHS carried out a thorough review of its existing process and structures relating to the recruitment, selection, development and support of its staff in order to establish whether we felt that the acquisition of TS status would be suitably meaningful and transformational with regard to where we were presently at – clearly through applying and receiving the status we, and the DCSF, felt that we indeed had the foundations on which to build an excellent TS that would benefit both ourselves and other schools and our partner organisations.</p> <p>However we did feel that elements of current practice required further development and PM was one of these areas. We believe that as we progress that our success as a TS needs to be based on firm practical and philosophical foundations and we feel that by getting PM right for teachers, and for our wider workforce, in our first year of our TS status we will ensure that we can build a sustainable, potentially replicable and highly supportive TS. A TS that will be clearly targeted at the development of our workforce and the improvement in our, and our partner organisations', students' experiences.</p>
What you did
We have established a PM approach that is less bureaucratic, more targeted to the individual developmental needs of teachers, more closely aligned to the Professional Standards for Teachers and more supportive of departmental and wider school priority areas. Furthermore we have better supported reviewers and reviewees through implementing an enhanced training and support programme and through redesigning all the PM documentation and processes to make them more 'user friendly'. We have cut the number of objectives down to two highly focussed areas, with a third objective being an optional CPD objective. We have established an approach to hold teachers accountable for their groups' results beyond integrating this within a PM objective and this has proved more meaningful for the school and has been extremely well received by teachers. We have developed an ICT approach to centrally record objectives and CPD requirements, and have thus been able to plan our CPD for the rest of the year based on the outcomes from our teachers' PM consultations, this has aided with resource allocation and has assisted with our financial planning. Through re-thinking our PM approach we have also

managed to be much more robust in our assessment of teachers when they apply to go through the Threshold or up the Upper Pay Spine.

Who was involved in the project (numbers and roles)

As a large secondary school we have approximately 100 teachers who are reviewed by 38 of their colleagues (a hierarchical model is implemented re. who reviews whom). A Vice Principal leads PM, with VP being ably supported by a member of the administration staff.

What impact did it have and how did you measure this impact/capture this impact?

In our designated two week PM window, all teachers were reviewed and within a further two weeks all PM documentation was written up and agreed by the reviewer and reviewee, with the objectives and CPD requirements entered into a central database. Following this our Principal worked with each of her five Vice Principals to quality assure the PM documentation pertaining to their Learning Zone. The Director of the Training School then received a depersonalised copy of all 250, or so, objectives and clustered these into key areas such as APP or AfL and devised a CPD approach that will be integrated throughout the remainder of the academic year (2009/10) to support reviewees in achieving their objectives.

The new PM approach has been extremely well received by teachers, their line managers and HBHS's Governors. Teachers have expressed the opinion that they perceive the new approach to be more meaningful and empowering. The fact that every deadline was hit with quality evidence is illustrative of a system that is well received and relevant.

The take up of the optional CPD events, that have been integrated to support teachers' PM, have been very well attended and the evaluations of these sessions have been highly complementary.

How did/will you disseminate what you have learned?

Through completing this case study for the DCSF and supporting partner schools.

Chris Harris
November 2009