



2022

# Wykham Park Academy CollectivED Working Papers

Supported by CollectivED;  
the Centre for Coaching,  
Mentoring and Professional  
Learning

A University Research and Practice Centre  
where collaborative conversations create powerful  
professional learning.



**Wykham Park**  
Academy  
Banbury

# CONTENTS

1	Jenny Irvine	Wykham Park Academy – A Contextual Introduction	2-5
2	Corinna Randall	Thinking Out Loud	6-7
3	Chris Colville	A Student-centred Approach to CPD	8-10
4	Rachel White	Review of Thinking Hard CPD	11-14
5	Paula Kenning	Thinking Out Loud	15-17
6	Sharon Dixon and Corinna Randall	GROW-ing Our Coaching Journey	18-22
7	Jan Hetherington	Thinking Out Loud	23-25
8	Rachel Lofthouse	About CollectivED and Co-enquiry	26

**To cite working papers from this issue please use the following format:**

Author surname, author initial (2022), Paper title, Wykham Park Academy CollectivED Working Papers, pages x-xx, Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University.

Please add the hyperlink if you have accessed this online.

**For more information regarding Wykham Park or to contact authors please email [jjirvine@wykhampark-aspirations.org](mailto:jjirvine@wykhampark-aspirations.org)**

## CPD at Wykham Park Academy – Contextual Introduction

### *Jenny Irvine*

I joined what was Banbury School as a trainee teacher back in 2007. During my time here, the school has gone through many changes, including how CPD is planned and delivered. With no disrespect to the leaders who delivered this in the past, it seemed (perhaps to my untrained eye), that it was often unconnected and relied on what was popular at the time (I certainly remember learning styles being a thing!). CPD was often also delivered in our lecture theatre, which meant collaboration was difficult or non-existent and messages were often delivered from the front with little follow-up which meant that, good as some ideas were, there was little embedding in lessons or changing of practice. We know that teachers are perennially busy, so while it's nice to listen to new ideas which might work in our lessons, unless there is time for shared planning and development as well as a thoughtful follow-up, we'll definitely find other things to spend that time on.

At the beginning of my career, I don't remember CPD being particularly prioritised.

There would definitely have been a slot in a September INSET where a new strategy or initiative would have been announced (this may or may not have been linked to school priorities), but I don't remember a planned cycle of regular CPD. (maybe subject-specific CPD).

Time moved on and things changed, not least the school joining a Trust. We certainly had regular and cyclical CPD from a Trust point of view and I began to see that things could be different. Shortly after this, the government introduced Standards for Teachers' Professional Development<sup>1</sup>. At the same time as we were prioritising teacher development locally in our school, the government was also stressing its importance by setting specific standards on professional development when previously all we had as a professional body was one short bullet point in a very generic teacher standard about fulfilling wider

1

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/govern>

[ment/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/537030/160712\\_-\\_PD\\_standard.pdf](ment/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/537030/160712_-_PD_standard.pdf)



**Wykham Park Academy Banbury**  
an Aspirations Academy



LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY  
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

responsibilities<sup>2</sup>. The new standards also came with an implementation guide which was generic enough that it wouldn't hinder schools who had been doing this important work effectively for some time, but allowed support for schools which may have needed more specific guidance, especially about how to choose effective development and how to make this stick in the general working of school life so that improved outcomes for students were prioritised.

In my school – now in 2017, Banbury Academy, almost Wykham Park – we now had a robust plan for CPD which focused on developing our areas of priority – these were part of our teaching and learning plan and we knew they were priority areas as they would be the elements which would directly impact on student outcomes as well areas that our learning walks around school told us we needed to work on. We met regularly as a staff body, had input on the area we were focusing on, then time to rehearse the strategy or discuss and plan collaboratively. Our CPD was always followed up with a learning walk or book look so that we knew where we needed to make adjustments to our

plan or delivery and to ensure that our chosen strategies were being implemented. This really had a transforming effect on our staff body – it wasn't something we had done or experienced before and so took some getting used to, but it really ensured that as a whole school that we did the things we'd talked about in CPD meetings – which was a massive transformation from my days as an early teacher. In the midst of this we had an Ofsted visit: they praised our plans and that we knew what was going on in school as well as where and how things needed to improve.

Questioning was one thing we'd worked really hard on as a school and even though we ourselves didn't feel we were quite there yet with all we wanted to achieve, Ofsted thought our questioning was 'now strong overall'<sup>3</sup>. This was a real boost to all of us, that our hard work had paid off.

However, our implementation had taken quite a top-down approach. Senior leaders led the CPD and did the learning walks and book looks. We had achieved compliance but this wasn't going to be sustainable in the long-term from a moral or wellbeing point of view. We wanted to empower our staff and

2

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data)

[a/file/665522/Teachers\\_standard\\_information.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665522/Teachers_standard_information.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/2778923>



**Wykham Park Academy Banbury**  
an Aspirations Academy



LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY  
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

couldn't do that if we were the ones at the front telling them what to do.

Our CPD was still as carefully thought out and planned – we still had that detailed knowledge of our staff body – but we wanted to distribute the leadership of this important work more widely. We also wanted to continue to develop more collaborative practices. We planned that staff would be able to choose the CPD they worked on, from a range of topics we knew to be priorities. They could choose to work on a carousel of topics throughout the year, or to focus on one element in-depth and become an expert in that topic, which also involved carrying out their own action research. The groups were led by members of staff not on the senior leadership team, who were strong practitioners and had coaching in order to develop them in their leadership of staff development. We also introduced peer coaching at this point – all staff took part in this and were coached in triads on an area of practice from their CPD training that they wanted to be developed. We encouraged staff to do peer drop-ins so their coaching would be more insightful.

As with many things in all aspects of our lives, Covid disrupted these plans but we were able to carry them out for part of the year and staff were very positive about their increased ownership over their own development: previously we had compliance, now we had an authentic professional development culture – staff were contributing to professional development discussions and plans in a meaningful and often insightful way.

At this point, we got in touch with Rachel Lofthouse to set up a co-enquiry group – we wanted to take our work further and have staff from many levels of expertise and from a variety of career stages think about and develop our work on professional development. This special edition is part of the culmination of that work. We're incredibly proud of what we managed to achieve in very trying circumstances: through Rachel's thoughtful questions, we all learnt something about our teaching practice and our approach to CPD and we will take those approaches forward as we continue to develop and prioritise staff development so that our teachers have the best possible professional experience and our students reap the benefits with the best possible outcomes.



**Wykham Park Academy Banbury**  
an Aspirations Academy



LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY  
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

I'd encourage anyone thinking about this approach to go for it, co-enquiry has been a great experience for us and has allowed us to

think about CPD in ways we hadn't considered before.



**Wykham Park Academy Banbury**  
an Aspirations Academy



LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY  
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

## Thinking Out Loud with Corinna Randall

*In this series of think pieces educators talk about their professional learning and educational values.*

**Please tell us who you are and what your current role in education is.**

Corinna Randall – Secondary Science teacher, ECT Induction Tutor.

**Please reflect on an episode or period in your career during which your own learning helped you to develop educational practices, which remain with you today. What was the context, how were you learning, and what was the impact?**

A couple of years ago we had an INSET session on “thinking hard”. I found this session to be of particular value and I still use now. The main take away from the session was that if students are not thinking hard then they are not learning. Prior to this I used to get students to take considerable notes in lesson and I believed this showed learning. I have since changed my perspective on this. To ensure that students are learning they do need to be thinking deeply and applying understanding. I have and continue to use several of the techniques shared during this session.

**What are your thoughts on giving teachers more ownership over their professional**

**development (as we have done in co-enquiry where staff have led research groups and developed tools based on this)?**

I think this approach is extremely beneficial. A lot of the time CPD and professional development is generalised and therefore does not meet the needs of all staff. For professional development to be personal and developmental it does need to be personalised. I thoroughly enjoyed my experience and involvement in co-enquiry also like the current whole school change to personal CPD development.

**What are your thoughts on involving students in discussions around teacher professional development? Do you see this as a fruitful development, or should teacher or staff learning be seen as something separate?**

I do believe it would be beneficial to have some shared language between students and teachers. If the language was shared, then students might be more self-aware of why they are learning in a particular way and could therefore share their opinions on the impact it has. I didn't personally work on this side of the co-enquiry group but I know that we did

have a group that investigated this and their results may be of interest for this particular question.

**Who has influenced your educational thinking, and in what ways has this allowed you to develop?**

So many people! Depends on what I am focusing on. From members of the school community to those on twitter.

**Do you feel part of any specific educational community, and if so who are they and why do they matter to you?**

My school community is where I feel the most part of. My recent NPQLTD has enabled me to part of a wider community.

**When someone you meet tells you they are thinking about becoming a teacher what advice do you give them?**

Do it!! Teaching is hard but so, so rewarding.

Advice:

1. Be organised and work smart!
2. Have self-awareness and reflect – it is okay to have a bad day. Reflect why something didn't go to plan, address it and move on!

**If you could change one thing which might enable more teachers to work and learn collaboratively in the future what would you do?**

Time. Teachers always need/want more time.





## A Student-centred Approach to CPD

*Chris Colville*

The point of any CPD work done in school is, at heart, around improving the experiences of the students we teach. The following interview was carried out with a year 11 student, VH, around their impressions of staff CPD and the impact it has had on learning

**So why do you think it's important for us as teachers to kind of develop ourselves and do developmental work?**

VH: I think I can really like a teacher who has really developed in their teaching style, and that could really have a positive influence on the students that they're teaching. ... if the teacher knows what they're doing, that it really helps the students learn and progress.

**When you see a [a member of staff who has developed their teaching] how do you think they have done that development?**

VH: ...I think it's good if they're actually asking their students what they want to do... Like, in science at the minute, we're being asked what topics we need to learn for the portfolio exam. And then we're going over that in the

lesson. And I think that that really helps. I think adaptability is a good skill to have.

**In our CPD we have staff meetings where we'll sit down, and we'll do a thing all together. And that might be some learning, or it might be practising of particular things. As individual teachers, we're probably doing things as well. That might be something in class or it might be wider reading.**

**So of those two things: an individual teacher working on something they are passionate about, or the whole school work, we're all doing this together. Which of those do you think has more of an impact?**

VH: I think they both have their benefits. If the whole school is doing something then we know that we're all in this together. We've got a sense of unity and togetherness, which really helps. Like in doing these exams, in that we've got support if we need it.

**Do you ever get the impression that we've done some whole staff training? Can go to different lessons, and the same thing keeps happening?**



VH: Yeah, a couple of months ago, [we did this] planning thing. We did it in maths. And then we had English next we did the same thing. It was, plan, monitor, evaluate [*part of the work we have been doing on metacognition*]. That's what it was. And we did that. But we just had the repetitiveness of doing it. And personally I didn't really like but I could see how it benefited people... I see why we're doing it.

**So what other development work have you noticed staff doing?**

VH: In maths the teachers used an ipad to record the teaching [*IRIS device used to record and share lessons*]. Then they said they're going to reflect on it.

**So what they reflected on it. Did you get any feedback on that?**

VH: Yeah, I think she just reflected on herself. You could see that in the next lesson, it did change a bit, that there were slight changes to it like she would ask questions to the same people sometimes. And then the next one, you'll see a variety of people being asked.

**How can students give feedback to staff in a way that would do the same thing?**

VH: ...like having a anonymous drop off box, or something like that. Because sometimes people are too scared to go up to the teacher and say, I don't like this.

**Would you feel happy to say: actually, if we tried this, it'd be better?**

VH: I think I felt like if we phrased it the right way.

**So have you done that?**

VH: Yeah, Miss actually asked a couple of us, if we liked [the revision we were doing].

**So you do, but do you think other people at the school would feel as happy? Would we have to help them to do that?**

VH: Yeah, somebody could give really useful feedback in a really bad way that won't help anybody.

**If somebody you knew wanted to be a teacher what advice would you give them on how to be a good teacher?**

VH: The main thing is, you've got to, you don't bore the children, like you don't be repetitive, you've just got to change. Change up your, like, the teaching style and be creative.



It was very eye opening to have an extended conversation with a student who had experienced the outcomes of the professional development work without being involved in the work that had gone on beforehand. The hard work of staff was recognised and appreciated. It was interesting to view the

work through the lens of a student who was not concerned about whether we implement a new technique or idea but has this change made my lessons and my learning better. It is an interesting measure of the effectiveness of our work and how well we have communicated what we are doing.



## Review of 'Thinking Hard'

*Rachel White*

Do you ever sit in a CPD and think 'yeah alright, I've heard this all before?'

We've all been there, another strategy or another way of thinking that was used 20 years ago cropping up again. I thought the same when it was announced we would have a CPD on Thinking Hard. I didn't even know what it meant but I dismissed it immediately, thinking that I already knew best.

I was wrong.

I admit that now and I wish I had approached all of my CPD the way I did on that day when we had a visit from PIXL to go through their strategies to allow our students to 'THINK HARD'.

Thinking hard is designed to move students outside of their comfort zones, allowing them to make deeper, more meaningful connections with what they are taught and the way they then process that information. Sounds complex? Once its broken down into its simplest forms it is one of the easiest and most effective strategies that I have introduced into my own teaching and learning, in fact it needs no new resources but a different approach to creating tasks for students.

Thinking hard is based upon three main strands. Knowledge and Understanding; Analysis and Application; Flexibility of thinking. Each strand then contains its own sub-strand.

Knowledge and understanding	Analysis and application	Flexibility of thinking
reduce	prioritise	Make connections
transform	categorise	compare
deconstruct	criticise	extend
derive	Trends and patterns	create
	practise	

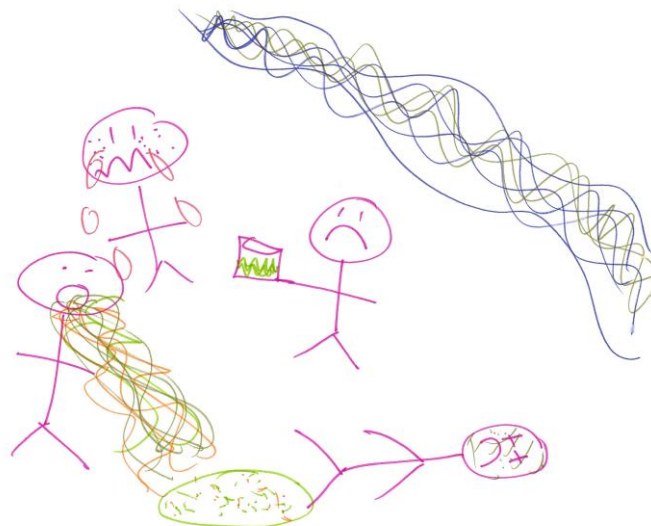


The key to this CPD working for me was seeing and experimenting with real life scenarios and then putting them into practice. One example from the day where we had to transform a piece of historical text into a picture. Not only

did we have to choose the most important element from that text, we also had to think about what we were going to draw. Instantly I was thinking harder about what to include and what to get rid of.

## Living conditions in 19<sup>th</sup> Century cities

- **Pollution:** coal was used to heat houses, cook food and heat water to produce steam to power machines in factories. The burning of coal created smoke, which led to terrible pollution in the cities.
- **Overcrowding:** due to large numbers of people moving to the cities, there were not enough houses for all these people to live in. Low wages and high rents caused families to live in as small a space as possible. Sometimes whole families lived in one room.
- **Disease:** typhus, typhoid, tuberculosis and cholera all existed in the cities of England. Cholera reached England for the first time in 1830, and there were further major epidemics in 1832 and 1848. Overcrowding, housing of a low standard and poor quality water supplies all helped spread disease.
- **Waste disposal:** gutters were filled with litter and the streets were covered in horse manure, collected by boys to sell to farmers. Human waste was discharged directly into the sewers, which flowed straight into rivers. In London, Parliament had to stop work because the smell from the Thames became too much.
- **Poor quality housing:** houses were built very close together so there was little light or fresh air inside them. They did not have running water and people found it difficult to keep clean. Houses often suffered from damp due to their thin walls and roofs made out of cheap materials. Many households had to share a single outside toilet that was little more than a hole in the ground.
- **Lack of fresh water:** people could get water from a variety of places, such as streams, wells and stand pipes, but this water was often polluted by human waste.



Clearly I am never going to be an Art teacher, but in practice this technique works to help students reduce down information and start to form their own ideas and analysis on the important features of a text.

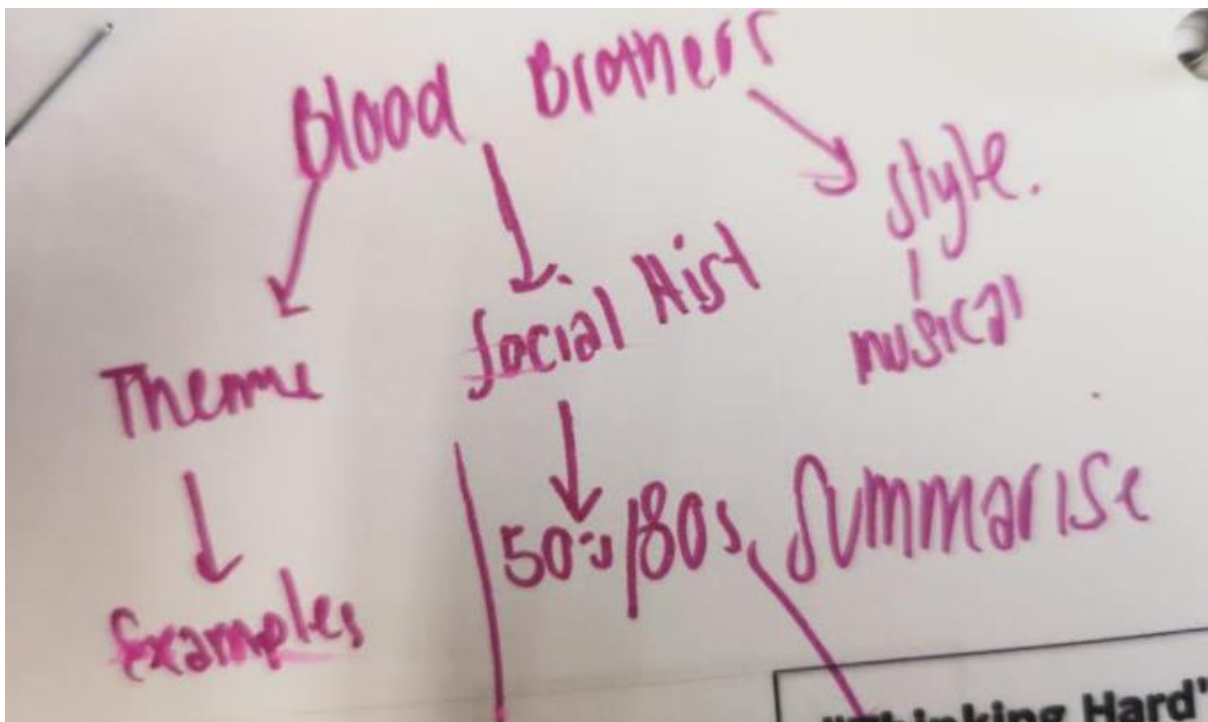
How can this be harnessed in the classroom?

Often students are met with blocks of text which can be terrifying for the adult in the class to read, let alone a student who may struggle with reading and writing. Breaking down the text into its key components and key words can be a starting point, then however asking students to represent each section with a sketch will allow students to pick apart the key moments that are

important to them and the sketch is a personalised reminder of what THEY thought was important. These visual clues avoid students copying out long words they do not necessarily understand and help to bring alive the text that previously were just black and white symbols on a page.

Another worked example from our training day was to deconstruct an area of our subject so that it was in its simplest form.

Being a Drama teacher I chose Blood Brothers and used the proforma they provided to deconstruct the play into the key components that I would have to teach



This allowed me to breakdown the most important sections of the play and really start to think about what was important and why.

How has this impacted my teaching?

As a staff team we made the decision to include thinking hard strategies into all of our SOLS and planned around ways they could be used to allow our students to get the best from the strategies. This whole school approach has meant that students are experiencing thinking hard skills across all subject areas. Having them embedded has

meant that they have become part of our every day practice and students already have the skills and knowledge of the different strategies in order to improve their own learning.

Thinking hard for me is an easy win, you need no resources other than the ones you have already planned and a positive outlook on experimenting with the different devices and strategies on offer. Thank you PIXL, it really has changed the way I approach my teaching and learning!



## Thinking Out Loud with Paula Kenning

*In this series of think pieces educators talk about their professional learning and educational values.*

**Please tell us who you are and what your current role in education is.**

Paula Kenning, Co-founder and Deputy Managing Director, Aspirations Academies Trust. Aspirations is a Multi-Academy Trust with 16 academies.

**Please reflect on an episode or period in your career during which your own learning helped you to develop educational practices, which remain with you today. What was the context, how were you learning, and what was the impact?**

The most significant professional learning I've undertaken in recent years hasn't been of the formal kind, but rather learning from professionals in sectors other than education. As educators we can become highly institutionalised and therefore, ironically, not the best people to advise students about their future careers or lives. As someone who believes the current school system is not relevant enough to the real world and, as such, doesn't prepare young people sufficiently for their future lives I undertook to work directly with several professionals from 'the real world' in sectors such as engineering

and software development, as well as entrepreneurs with their own start-ups. The impact has been that the curriculum across our schools is far more relevant to the real world and across year 12 all of our students spend 20% of their curriculum time working on real projects designed by employers.

**What are your thoughts on giving teachers more ownership over their professional development (as we have done in co-enquiry where staff have led research groups and developed tools based on this)?**

This is very important for professional development to be effective and impactful. Teachers need to be able to identify the purpose of their CPD and giving them ownership over it is critical in this endeavour. The Aspirations Teacher Roadmap allows teachers to plan their CPD journey from a range of opportunities and we are creating a digital portfolio for teachers to capture their learning.

**What are your thoughts on involving students in discussions around teacher professional development? Do you see this**





**as a fruitful development, or should teacher or staff learning be seen as something separate?**

I've seen students successfully lead professional development for teachers, never mind discuss it! Student voice is at the heart of the Aspirations philosophy. As such, students give us feedback about what is working well, and not so well, in our schools which informs school improvement and teacher development.

**When you work with colleagues or other professionals to support their development what are the key attributes that you bring with you, and what difference do these qualities make?**

As Colin Powell once said, trust is essential for great leadership. Therefore, in supporting colleagues to develop professionally it is important that they trust you. This is earned over time but once it is in place, time spent working with colleagues is highly effective and impactful.

**Do you feel part of any specific educational community, and if so who are they and why do they matter to you?**

As co-founder of Aspirations, this is the educational community that I'm part of. Aspirations employs 1000 staff and educates

9000 students. Our guiding principles are self-worth, engagement and purpose and our staff really buy in to these principles. We prize student voice and work actively to promote this. We run our own suite of leadership and development programmes and our principles are embedded across these too. As an organisation these principles help us to develop a common language around raising aspirations in young people and the whole school community.

**When someone you meet tells you they are thinking about becoming a teacher what advice do you give them?**

Go for it!

**If you could change one thing which might enable more teachers to work and learn collaboratively in the future what would you do?**

Co-planning is one of the most effective things that we do at Aspirations. Across Key Stages 2 and 3, we deliver our 'No Limits' curriculum which involves students working on assignments in a trans-disciplinary way. The curriculum is carefully mapped across the assignments and teachers from different subject disciplines plan these assignments collaboratively. This saves time, reduces



workload, improves creativity in the planning process and develops teachers' expertise.

**If you could turn back the clock and bring back a past educational practice or policy what would it be and why?**

We should be looking forward, not back, and innovating in education. We should be focussed on developing skills as well as knowledge so that young people are better prepared for their lives beyond school and education. Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, being able to articulate ideas – some of the many skills that we all need in the workplace and yet are not deliberately developing in schools

**What is the best advice or support you have been given in your career? Who offered it and why did it matter?**

One of the things that I learned from my NPQH has mattered frequently – as a Headteacher or leader in schools, unwarranted optimism is frequently critical! Schools are tricky organisations to lead and sometimes there are difficult days. Feeling relentlessly positive, sometimes when it's difficult to pin down reasons to be cheerful, is crucial to maintaining a healthy culture across the school.



## GROW-ing: Our Coaching Journey

### *A think piece working paper by Sharon Dixon and Corinna Randall*

Sharon: Our school has a tradition of responsive professional development. Teachers, without positional title, are encouraged to lead in this regard; and staff voice on our curriculum provision is considered and encouraged. It was not surprising, with our growth ethos, that the opportunity for teachers to join a co-enquiry working group (a partnership with Leeds-Beckett University, facilitated by Rachel Lofthouse), was taken up by many of us during the Autumn of 2020. Although covid-restrictions never allowed for in-person meetings, we made the most of our virtual sessions. It was there that we decided to divide our efforts in two: firstly, a focus on investigating if our professional development programme is equipping teachers to enhance their teaching; and, secondly, are the effects of our learning significantly impacting on our students. These refined foci lead to us forming the 'for the teacher' and 'for the student' sub-groups in the Spring of 2021. Corinna and I are in the 'for the teacher' team, so our paper focuses on the former objective.

Sharon: We had all tasted Whitmore's GROW model, both as coach and coachee, at a whole-school INSET workshop in September 2020. In brief, this model provides a

framework encompassing goal setting (G), reflecting on one's reality (R), considering options and obstacles (O) and formulating a way forward to realise this goal (W). At this session, although we mostly had no idea what we were doing, the coaching seed had been sown and was ready to germinate.

Sharon: The data gleaned from a staff voice questionnaire to assess how impactful our professional development programme had been in terms of implementing new knowledge and skills in our teaching practice was invaluable. The whole-school focus areas for this and the preceding two years had been on embedding metacognition, memorisation, challenge and collaboration in our practice. The most interesting finding was that fewer than a third of our teachers expressed that they had a deep understanding of how to embed the acquired knowledge from CLC (collaborative learning community) sessions in their practice and as a result deliberately included teaching these skills to their students. The majority acknowledged that they had some idea and sometimes wove this into their practice; however, this was primarily targeted at KS4 students. Specific suggestions from individuals alluded to a need to invest time in each of us working on how



we can apply our knowledge, whilst considering the uniqueness of each subject, the extraneous challenges we face in our classrooms, and the stages in our own development as teachers.

Sharon: During two subsequent CLC (collaborative learning community) workshops we were grouped into mixed-subject triads and tasked with using the GROW coaching model together with our developing coaching skills as a vehicle to reflect on the focus topic (metacognition, memorisation, challenge or collaboration) which we'd opted to work on for the year. Feedback from teachers on coaching as a vehicle in achieving this produced a mixed bag with some citing that the conversations were 'a bit awkward', others felt reassured in that the process was 'solution-focused', and others were enthusiastic about having an opportunity to refine their questioning and listening skills - someone mentioned the importance of having the 'space to think.' Maintaining the same triad allowed for some accountability as we invited our peer coaches to see a snippet of a lesson, followed up by a reflective session.

Sharon: Our co-enquiry team ('for the teacher') concluded that whilst the events to-date improved our overall coaching skills, provided for loads of constructive reflection and purposeful plans to move forward in

improving our teaching, there was a missing ingredient. As coach, how do we get that coaching conversation going? How do we make our discussions more solution-focused? Is starting with 'G' always the answer – what about 'R'? Could a series of open-ended prompts help? Or, would these make the conversation less authentic? Could we allow the GROW model to bloom into a conversation tool so that it could provide novice coaches (aka most of us) with a springboard?

Corinna: After scouring what was available online, Sharon put together a rudimentary draft of a possible map, made up of a series of questions which a coach could use to guide a colleague in reflecting on and setting a developmental goal.

Sharon: It was actually a shocking attempt to encapsulate all the possible questions one could ask. For me the challenge was to incorporate a comprehensive easily-retrievable resource of purposeful questions. No-one likes to wade through lists to source what might be relevant. Corinna's feedback on my map corroborated that the map was far from fit for purpose, and a more stream-lined version was born (see Figure 1).

Corinna: As our primary aim was to create a coaching conversation tool which allowed for authentic discussion – we decided that we



needed to incorporate a non-linear aspect to our map, given that in practice we often arrived as coachee with a description of our reality, not always sure of how to encapsulate these observations and experiences into a purposeful goal. For example, a coach might start by enquiring about a Goal and then jump to enquire about the contextual Reality, bouncing back to coax the establishment of a goal, discussing Options and a Way Forward.

Corinna: Our next step was to test-drive the map with two members of our co-enquiry group: Emma Hancocks and Georgia Pomfrett. They were provided with our map, and limited

instructions on how we intended it to work, deliberately omitting to share the rationale behind its design. The brief was to use the map to facilitate a coaching session between them, both as coach and coachee. After the trial we asked Emma and Georgia to give us honest feedback on the efficacy of the map. They felt that the questions on the map aided them in using open-ended questions, gave them starting points for their conversation, and forced accountability. Emma shared that “the conversation felt authentic and led to them setting goals that were realistic and genuine”. However, they highlighted

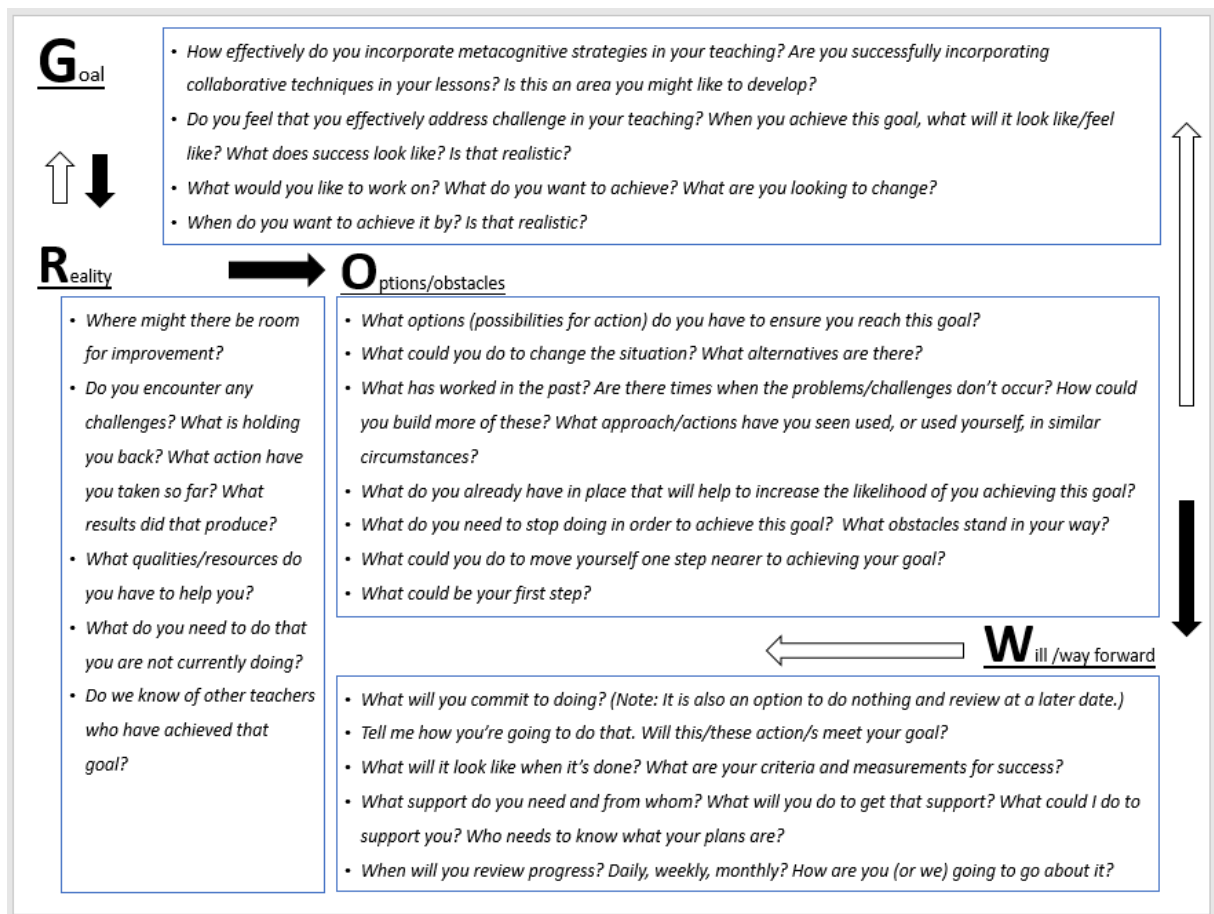


Figure 1 – Our first conversation map design.



some disadvantages; the map was difficult to follow as the layout was somewhat confusing, it wasn't visually appealing and it "felt very complicated". Sharon: We reflected on this feedback, discussed improvements and tasked Corinna with designing our new conversation map.

Corinna: The new tool (see Figure 2) is a hyperlinked PDF document by which a coach

can make use of the GROW icons at the bottom of the page to seamlessly change between sections. Each section contains a list of possible prompts to guide the conversation. This simplified homepage makes the map less complicated whilst still allowing for an "authentic and genuine" session. The coach could start with at any

## A Coaching Conversation Map

*Coaching is "a one-to-one conversation focused on the enhancement of learning and development through increasing self-awareness and a sense of personal responsibility, where the coach facilitates the self-directed learning of the coachee through questioning, active listening and appropriate challenge in a supportive and encouraging climate."*

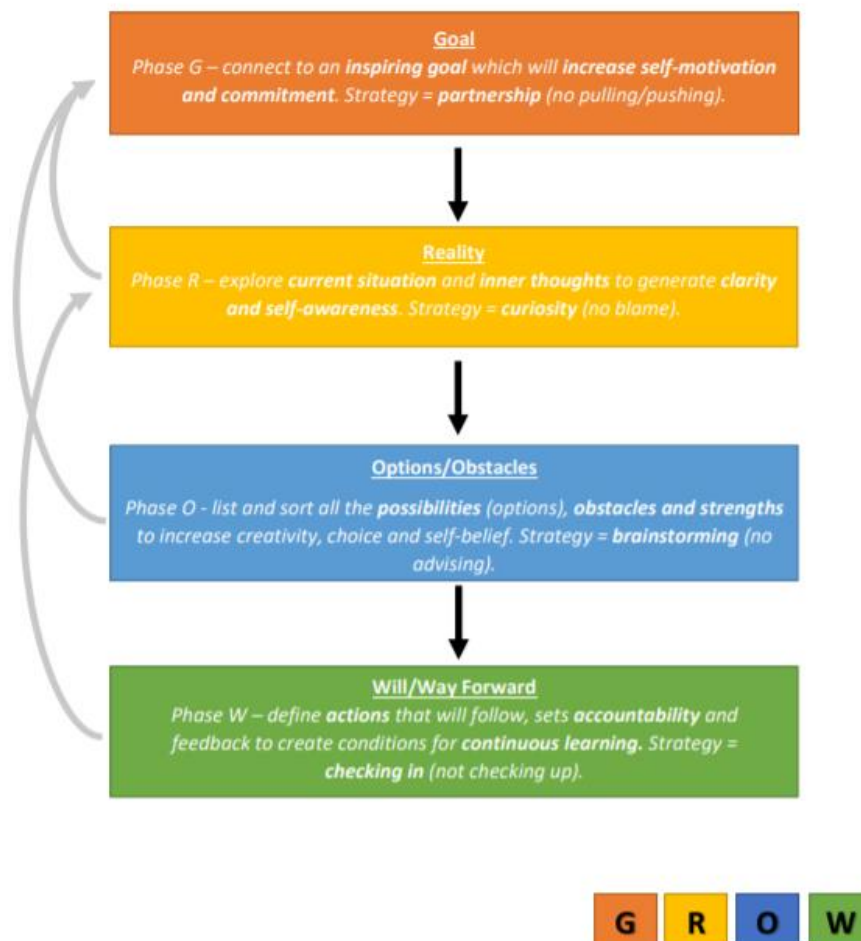


Figure 2 – The homepage of our improved conversation map.



place on the map, using the hyperlinks to switch between sections as the conversation progressed. The tool was again trialled by Emma and Georgia before being introduced to the staff body and uploaded to our internal Google Site for ease of access.

Sharon: Although our coaching culture is still emerging, peer coaching has taken root at our

school. At the start of the 2021/2022 academic year we formed a coaching team, under the direction of a Coaching Lead - we are all eager to develop our coaching skills (and be coached). Going forward, our conversation map is likely to be tweaked, possibly discarded by many, perhaps used by few. Regardless of outcome, our journey in creating it gave us the space to grow.



## Thinking Out Loud with Jan Hetherington

*In this series of think pieces educators talk about their professional learning and educational values.*

**Please tell us who you are and what your current role in education is.**

Jan Hetherington Vice Principal

**Please reflect on an episode or period in your career during which your own learning helped you to develop educational practices, which remain with you today. What was the context, how were you learning, and what was the impact?**

There were two periods, one was completing a Masters in Educational Improvement and Effectiveness which totally focused the way I thought about educational leadership which was important as a new leader and influenced how I practiced leadership and developed leadership in others through Lead Practitioners and Specialist Leaders of Education etc. Yet, then completing an EdD turned this on its head and reinvigorated my core beliefs about educational leadership. This again now has shifted how I facilitated leadership development opportunities in my thesis: I described this a somnolence to wakefulness.

**What are your thoughts on giving teachers more ownership over their professional development (as we have done in co-enquiry where staff have led research groups and developed tools based on this)?**

I think there is a need for co-construction and a realism about the neoliberal or post neoliberal context of education in which we work. We need to realise how amenable to external scrutiny that we need to be and therefore there are things that we need to attend to with open eyes, and still balance the needs of individuals to be creative individuals to take risks and develop new approaches stemmed from new opportunities and collaborative ventures.

**What are your thoughts on involving students in discussions around teacher professional development? Do you see this as a fruitful development, or should teacher or staff learning be seen as something separate?**

I think as the partners in learning that students can have a very important role in the development of teacher education in





feedback and in monitoring and evaluation of impact. They are the individuals who are impacted most by our practices. See Freire and the critical practices, written about in the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

**When you work with colleagues or other professionals to support their development what are the key attributes that you bring with you, and what difference do these qualities make?**

I try to be honest collaborative and challenging, it helps with credibility to take them with you.

**Who has influenced your educational thinking, and in what ways has this allowed you to develop?**

Bourdieu for illuminating the power struggles and the social reproduction inherent in education which can and should be overcome, as long as middle class values are challenged and the capital of those from a lower socio economic status are not continued to be misrecognised.

**Do you feel part of any specific educational community, and if so who are they and why do they matter to you?**

Now critical theorists in educational academia, they aren't prepared to accept that this system we are subjected to is the right way forward to be tinkered about with.

**If you could change one thing which might enable more teachers to work and learn collaboratively in the future what would you do?**

Authentic planning time for collaborative group planning to engage with the material that is delivered.

**If you could turn back the clock and bring back a past educational practice or policy what would it be and why?**

I did feel that the period of education policy during the last labour government before it lost its way was the best time to be in education a more authentic opportunity for gaps to be addressed and if not then at least there was a feeling of optimism for students and for education that Gove stamped on.

**What is the best advice or support you have been given in your career? Who offered it and why did it matter?**



It's about the young people and if you are not doing it for them you shouldn't be doing it, it matters because its true - you have one

experience of school and it can determine the rest of your life.



## About CollectivED and Co-enquiry

**CollectivED The Centre for Coaching, Mentoring and Professional Learning is a research and practice centre at Leeds Beckett University.** We now summarise our purpose as follows: ***to generate collaborative conversations which create powerful professional learning.*** These conversations happen during our CollectivED events, during our Carnegie School of Education mentor training, during our PGCert, during our research student supervision, and during our school-based enquiry groups (such as this one at Wykham Park Academy). Conversations also happen within and through our working papers, with frequent feedback that they are being used as the basis of professional and scholarly discussion in schools and universities. Conversations happen through engagement on our twitter feed and with our Carnegie School of Education blogpost, and they happen through our commitment to supporting external CPD, such as with Teaching Schools and during mentoring and coaching conferences.

### **The values of CollectivED translate into our practices.**

- Encouraging and enabling collaborative conversations which create powerful professional learning
- Building capacity in the work of educators and leaders to create contexts which support inclusive career-long and profession-wide learning
- Working to break down barriers to professional development through positive engagement with the education sector and allied practitioners
- Increasing the opportunities for educational change through enhanced professional agency and wellbeing

If you would like to contribute a research, practice insight or think piece working paper please see the guidance on our website <https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/research/collectived/>

Please follow us on twitter @CollectivED1 and Rachel Lofthouse at @DrRLothouse

Email: [CollectivED@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:CollectivED@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)



LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY

CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION