

Case study 4a: A quality vision for whole school learning

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Summary of the case study

The Sir Bernard Lovell School has adopted a systematic and comprehensive approach to quality assurance. The approach embodies whole-school self-evaluation, multilevel development planning and a belief in change and improvement using pedagogical innovation. It sees professional learning and school-based enquiry and research as the bedrock to improving the quality of education for its students.

Context

The Sir Bernard Lovell School has consistently improved standards over the last ten years. It has used data extensively to inform decision making and has developed a multilevel development and action planning approach to strategic development creating a culture of self-evaluation.

Vision

The school is committed to a process of continuous improvement. It believes that its work is best enhanced by combining careful detailed refinement and improvement in its processes for learning and organisation, with a more radical paradigm shift based upon school-based enquiry and research, and pedagogical and curriculum innovation. This innovation and creative approach to improvement helps to create a culture which challenges the accepted practices. These practices have failed to achieve the further substantial improvement moving the organisation from providing a very good standard of education to excellent or outstanding. It is our belief that quality assurance based upon a school improvement model, with graduated improvement, will not be sufficient for a further strong change in raising standards, unless it is based upon a framework for equality with a culture of innovation.

Strategies

- Design a self-evaluation framework focused upon improving teaching and learning.
- Develop a systematic development and action planning approach at individual, departmental and whole-school level.
- Develop systematic data and evidence collection at all levels of the school organisation in order to secure the triangulation of evidence to inform change.
- Develop a systematic professional learning programme which corresponds with the key priorities identified in the Plan for Continuous Improvement.
- Introduce e-learning approaches which encourage students ownership of learning and staff collaboration to develop and share practices.
- Develop a culture and climate which sees change as healthy and enriching for the individual and the organisation.
- Encourage distributed leadership, risk taking and creativity within a framework of evidence-based improvement.

The school understands that it is necessary to develop a holistic approach to quality assurance. Processes need to be transparent and systematic. People need to be engaged and encouraged to find solutions to problems. Creativity and innovation become the dominant culture. The climate is both supportive and intellectually challenging. Systems of review are common place. The vision is understood and enacted through everyday action and discourse.