Evaluation of Hayes School Lesson Study Pilot – June 2013

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| Describe your role in the Lesson Study pilot: |
| I was one of the two teachers whose lessons were studied. My lessons were two consecutive top-set Year 7 English lessons reinforcing knowledge of parts of speech and then moving students on to start using this knowledge in their analysis of texts. |
| How effective do you consider Lesson Study to be as a tool for the professional development of teachers? |
| 1 2 3 4 **5**  Not effective Extremely effective  Give reasons/evidence for your view:  The procedure made me analyse the impact of each stage of the lesson, thinking about how groups of students would respond to my teaching. Having the input of other teachers taught me new strategies such as using Quiz-Quiz-Share for an extremely effective starter.  What was most impactful on my teaching, however, was the way that the other teachers helped me to address a problem I’ve had for some time with this class: How can I make Year 7 students’ self-assessment more realistic and less contingent on individual personalities?  We collaborated to devise more evidence-based means of self-assessment and, as a result, there was a noticeable change in the way students self-assessed at the end. Whereas previously many students had self-assessed in the middle, more were self-assessing at the top end, indicating not only that they had felt as though they had succeeded in the lesson but also that they felt confident enough about their self-assessment ability not to sit on the fence. |
| How do you think lesson study can contribute to the development of subject-specific pedagogy and the subject knowledge of teachers? |
| There are a number of ways in which this can happen. Where departments are having to adapt to new curricula (or indeed want to invigorate old ones), this method could be incorporated into departmental planning for a certain number of key lessons to teach core skills. For instance, in English, the possible removal of speaking and listening from the GCSE criteria will mean that core writing skills will need to be taught even more effectively. A set of six lessons, developed through lesson study and focusing on these core skills, would share expertise among a department’s staff and ensure that students are given the best possible lessons that draw on the guild knowledge of a number of experts. This could be carried out with a focus on C/D borderline students to maximise impact.  Secondly, for teachers teaching a new topic for the first time, this approach could be used as part of the mentoring/line management process. Through lesson study, the teacher can be supported to feel more confident in their subject-specific pedagogy. For instance, for me, teaching a new topic e.g. the Year 13 English Lang/Lit course, can be daunting due to a lack of subject knowledge. To have support from more experienced colleagues in planning lessons that are right for my students, rather than merely ‘borrowing’ lessons those colleagues have previously made would engage me more with the topic and make me feel more confident in my own knowledge. While this would most likely happen within a department, there is no reason for it not to include collaboration between schools: with subject-specific pedagogy being developed and shared in a more ‘JPD’ way than usually happens when schools collaborate.  Another area to consider is how lesson study would help to develop subject-specific pedagogy for particular groups of students e.g. FSM6 or boys. We know that FSM6 students may face greater barriers with literacy/resilience etc. Lesson study could be used to consider how the subject-specific pedagogy of these students’ English and Maths teachers impacts on these students and how to improve this. For English, where we often find it challenging to engage boys, this process could be used to look at exactly what actions in the English classroom are most likely to help boys engage and make progress. This action research could change the way we teach English at secondary level but also feed down to our primary feeder schools and other partner primaries. |
| What did you learn from the lesson study experience? |
| 1. How to improve my teaching of the parts of speech to Year 7 students 2. How to support students to self-assess more rigorously and less emotionally 3. How to collaborate on planning one lesson in detail, rather than allocating separate lessons for individual teachers to plan for all others in a department (current practice in our English department) 4. Lots of information about my students as individuals that I don’t normally see when teaching 32 students |