



Teacher Learning
Academy

Teachers and pupils learning together: **Fryent Primary School, Brent**

The school

Fryent Primary School is a maintained primary school in the London Borough of Brent, taking pupils from 3-11 and it has just under 500 students.

www.fryent.brent.sch.uk

The rationale

“As a school we wanted to accelerate progress and we recognised that one of the important steps towards that would be helping teachers improve their own practice. We adopted the Teacher Learning Academy (TLA) as a key part of our development, because it not only encouraged staff to do their own research, but also offered a means of gaining recognition for research that some were already doing.”

Victoria Danvers, TLA leader,
Fryent Primary School

The approach

“Initially, we focused on TLA Stage 1 and 2 presentations and have achieved over 16 recognitions, 9 of which were at Stage 2. We’re encouraging more and more staff to work towards Stage 2 or even 3. As you progress through the stages, you’re required to reflect more on your practice and share your findings more widely – which means that as a school, we gain more from the research teachers undertake.”

“We allocate a day off in the timetable to all teachers who are working towards a TLA presentation, so they can write up their findings. But also we use INSET time to give teachers a chance to present their research to their peers. That way, the whole school can learn.”

The results

“For us, the TLA has been a real asset. Because it requires staff to be methodical about what they’ve learned in their practice, it means that the approaches introduced and tested can become part of general teaching, not only an individual skill set. Equally importantly, we’ve seen great results from our pupils. One example is the work a member of staff did on Singing Assemblies. They looked at different ways to present the songs, introduced movements and different instruments. As a result the Singing Assemblies became a lot more enjoyable, the range of songs increased and the children’s singing improved dramatically!

“Other projects have looked at Assessment for Learning and ways to engage children more in their education – even specifically asking for their feedback. That can be daunting, but giving them a voice is really important.”

The benefits

“I think the biggest benefits come in terms of the difference the TLA makes to the pupils. But underpinning those benefits is the fact that staff realise the research they’re doing has a value – not just in terms of the external accreditation, but also through the feedback they get from pupils and colleagues. When a fellow teacher asks you about a technique you’ve tried, and wants your advice on how to introduce it in their classes, it’s a real compliment. And when pupils tell you they like something – and through your reflection, you understand why they like it – that’s the most lovely compliment of all.”

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