

Hazlehead Academy, Aberdeen City

Case Study Focus: Supporting staff to develop their practice in developing literacy across learning

Hazlehead Academy in Aberdeen City has introduced literacy lunches to build on initial professional learning at whole staff meetings and ensure that all staff are supported in their responsibility for literacy across the curriculum.

The lunches are scheduled in the whole school calendar and are hosted by the faculty head of English and Literacy. Staff can opt in to all or some of the lunches, time and workloads permitting.

The meetings, held during the lunch break on a normal school day, explore strategies to enhance practice and address professional learning needs of staff in order to support the development of literacy skills in their curricular area. From this, shared priorities have been identified and staff have worked together to develop consistent approaches.

Focuses have included the development of a reading skills toolkit which consists of a variety of activities to improve reading for understanding and note-making skills. Members of the group trialled strategies in their classes and shared evaluations at the lunches. They then selected the most effective strategies which were rolled out to the whole school.

Staff who have attended have commented on how successful some of these strategies have already been and can see the direct impact on learners in their own subject. This consistent approach has enabled young people to transfer their skills across their learning.

The current focus at the lunches is the development of a consistent approach to writing. The group have looked at a range of resources and methodologies such the concept of PAL (Purpose, Audience, Language and Layout) and literacy mats. They will trial and develop approaches to enhance extended writing with the aim to share the most effective ones with the whole school.

The literacy lunches have been highly successful in providing support for staff and a forum for professional enquiry leading to improved practice. Literacy coordinators and head teachers from cluster schools also attend the literacy lunches to promote partnership working and shared development work.