Westlake Boys High School:
PD - From Late Starts to Middle Leadership training

- Context: our school
- 'Late Starts' in 2008
- 'Late Starts': 2009-2011
- PD in 2012
- Has it been 'successful'?

Context:

Traditional boys’ school
Context:

Rapidly changing boys' school
Westlake in 2012

- Large oversubscribed state boys’ school
- Academic focus: exam results plus...
- Sport and Music everywhere
- Multicultural in every sense
- Rapidly changing staff and leadership: young women!

Kindred schools: Cambridge and boys’ schools
Part of local networks of schools
A comprehensive school with the trimmings of a grammar school?

Professional Development:
Reflecting the new Westlake

Context: 2007

- Successful school
- Sporting strengths: performance and participation
- Good examination results
- Dual pathway: CIE & NCEA
- Long-serving staff
- Rapidly changing staff profile
- Grappling with NCEA
- Technology
- Little focus on teaching and learning
2008: Late Starts PD

- 12 Late Starts PD sessions
- 8 cross-curricular whole-school sessions
- 2 in faculties or departments
- 8.30 - 10.30 sessions
- 30 minutes sharing progress
- 1 hour 10 minutes learning
- 20 minutes reflection
- Consistent format

2008: Teaching and Learning

- This is an ongoing, developing programme aimed at improving teachers’ practice. It has a very clear philosophical bias: in keeping with the new National Curriculum, the international drive towards Personalising Learning, copious literature about raising boys’ achievement, and a belief that education should prepare boys to be independent learners capable of flourishing in the 21st century world, it encourages learning that is active, engaged, varied and driven by outcomes rather than inputs.

Principles

- Active – and Interesting
- Based on what we’re already doing
- Tailored to the needs of WBHS
- Aware of the 2010 Curriculum
- Uses staff expertise
- Encourages independent learning
- Develops leaders

2008: Teaching and Learning

- Assessment for Learning
- Peer and self-assessment
- Active reading strategies
- Questioning techniques
- Using the way the brain works
- Numeracy in your lessons
- Classroom student leaders
- Using Scholaris (2 sessions)
- Managing boys effectively
- Competitions in the classroom
- Writing Exams
- Strategies for EAL students
- Preparing for the 2010 Curriculum

Then to SLT, who added:

- How to lead a sport
- Tips for better sports coaching
- Enhancing Relationships through co-curricular and House programme
- CPR
The Westlake Template

- 8.30-9.00: Reflection on the impact of learning from the previous session.
- 9.00-10.10: Structured training session
- 10.10-10.30: Collaborative planning: how to use training in your classroom

Principles

- Training seeks to build on existing expertise and practice: trainees should therefore be asked to bring something to each session, and explicit links should be made between training and current practice.
- Effective training is interactive: sessions should therefore employ a 30/70 rule – around 30% of the time should be ‘teacher-led’.
- Teachers like to talk: there should be small group discussion work built in.
- Teachers need to know where they are heading: learning objectives should be clear and explicit.
- Structure is essential: there should be a mid-way ‘checkpoint’ in each session to help the progress of learning.
- Training is not limited to discrete ‘lessons’: supporting materials should be provided to enable trainees to continue to develop by themselves.
- Training should model good teaching: it needs to be lively, engaging and – occasionally – unpredictable.
2008: Leadership

"The Leadership Programme recognises that one of our jobs is to develop leaders, and that many of our staff will go on to become educational leaders in Auckland and beyond. It seeks to prepare staff for responsibility as well as to encourage them to become leaders in learning, helping teachers to develop their own practice....

Each Leadership session will include time for reflection and discussion of developing practice, and the exact structure will mirror that of the Teaching and Learning programme. The model of delivery will reflect the behaviours being encouraged."
Observations at Westlake

- All observations are focused on developing ourselves as teachers.
- Only appraisal observations are independently judgmental.
- The process is collaborative - professionals together.
- It must be rigorous.
- It must be focused on learning.
- It must be seen as part of a teacher's overall development and linked to their personal goals.
- It should be related in some way to the school-wide goals related to learning and teaching.
- It should celebrate our work as successful professionals.
- It should help us take risks.

Why use it?

Data tells...

- Tell you where a key can go.
- Tell you where a key can't do.
- Suggest what you can do next to help.
- Help you push students harder.
- Help see in your planning.
- Help you in running, doing, something really well.
- Tell you the Department is doing something well.
- Tell you that's something worth exploring.
- Be open to improvement.

Data can't...

- Show a complete person at a key.
- Do your planning for you.
- Tell you if teacher is 'good' teacher.
- Tell you if teacher is 'bad' teacher.
- Tell you if Department is 'good' Department.
- Tell you if Department is 'bad' Department.
- Be simple, clear or formal argument.

2008 Late Starts: Organisation
**Feedback: structure**

- Mornings are better than afternoons: keep the concept of the 'late start'
- The element of choice is popular: they like the 'personalised programme'
- There are too many sessions: their frequency takes away teaching time
- The Planning and Reflection sheets have been used inconsistently by trainers and aren't fully understood: are they feedback?
- Some confusion about the purposes of the 'Teaching and Learning' and 'leadership' categories: why not put both areas together?
- There's a desire for more departmental sessions
- The repetition of courses makes it difficult for trainers to be participants
- The 'once-a-year' nature of the planning makes it difficult to respond to new training needs

**Feedback: content**

- Teachers have really valued the opportunity to talk in cross-curricular groups: this has been the most popular element
- Most teachers have appreciated the 'we're not experts, but here's a good way to go about it' approach of all trainers.
- The consistency of approach by trainers has been noted and approved
- The materials used have been well-received
- Trainers have valued the opportunity to improve on their sessions
- Where critical comments have been made about sessions, the most common have been that there was too much material to cover in the time (it felt rushed), or that participants have been surprised at the content – it didn't do what it says on the tin
- More ESOL-related training came up a few times

**Feedback: summary**

- 87% of teachers rated the PD 'good' or better
- 100% felt they had benefited in some way
- 96% felt that the courses were largely relevant
- 77% felt that 2 hours was about right
- 68% felt that there were too many sessions

**2009: Late Starts PD v2**

- **8 'Late Starts':**
  - 5 cross-curricular [down 3]
  - 2 whole-school sessions [down 2]
  - 3 in faculties or departments [up 1]
- **8.30 - 10.30 sessions**
  - 30 minutes 'sharing progress'
  - 1 hour 10 minutes 'learning'
  - 20 minutes reflection
  - Principles and Template remain
2010: Late Starts PD v3

- 6 'Late Starts':
  - 3 cross-curricular [down 2]
  - 0 whole-school sessions
  - 3 in faculties or departments

- 8.30 - 10.30 session
  - 30 minutes sharing progress
  - 1 hour 10 minutes learning
  - 20 minutes reflection
  - Principles and Template remain

2011: Late Starts PD v4

- 6 'Late Starts':
  - 3 cross-curricular
  - 0 whole-school sessions

- 8.30 - 10.30 session
  - 30 minutes sharing progress
  - 1 hour 10 minutes learning
  - 20 minutes reflection
  - Principles and Template remain

PD session 3
[May 10th]
Moodle
Reflective Practice: Handling the RTCs
Making more use of KAMAR
Middle Leadership
Teenage Issues
Strategies for Maori students
Developing Pastoral Leaders
Working with Underachievers
For teacher aides: working with teachers

PD session 5
[18th August]
Moodle
Reflective Practice: Handling the RTCs
Making more use of KAMAR
Inter-Department Discussion Groups
Strategies for Maori students
Analysis of Student Performance
Productive Dialogue for Middle Leaders
Developing Pastoral Leaders

PD session 4
[June 10th]
Moodle
Reflective Practice: Handling the RTCs
Making more use of KAMAR
Cross Cultural Strategy for Middle Leaders
Analysis of Student Performance
Collaborative Writing
Working with Underachievers
For teachers: working with teacher aides

2008 Late Starts: Organisation
2008: Leadership

Late Starts wholly embedded in school culture
More than 30 teachers now trainers
Faculties regaining control
Focus on teaching and learning remains strong: 'key competencies'

2009-2011 PD

- 'Late Starts' model a diluted version of original model
- Late Starts wholly embedded in school culture
- More than 30 teachers now trainers
- Faculties regaining control
- Focus on teaching and learning remains strong: 'key competencies'

2009-2011 PD

- External PD budget remains at $40,000: no change, reflected by increased internal PD
- PD Committee stable
- Very little 'whole-school' PD
- Increasing split between strategic direction and PD offered in and out of school

Planning for 2012

Given the context described, how would you renew, change or even cancel the programme?
Late Starts Plus

- Completely changed the PD Committee in 2011
- Rebuilt Appraisal Process throughout 2011
- Talked and talked and talked
- Started planning the new PD programme

2012 Late Starts Plus

Internal PD: Late Starts

1. Retain the six Late Starts, and keep the two-hour structure, principles and template
2. Give two to faculties for exam analysis and to prepare for 2013. We should remind HoFs and HoDs that Thursday meeting time is also PD time and should be used as such.
3. Make the other four Late Starts whole staff sessions: all should be based on our Strategic Plan for 2012 - Maori and Pacific achievement; 21st Century Learning; Thinking and Learning; Building Relationships. A return to a teaching and learning focus. New internal trainers.
4. Ensure that these ‘whole staff’ sessions are well-structured, with time for group discussions, and ensure that they are well-publicised, well-contextualised and well-integrated into the life of the school. There should also be some kind of low-impact follow-up to them.
5. Also ensure that some of the ‘whole staff’ sessions are delivered to smaller groups, and that the groups are carefully organised to reflect the differing needs of teachers at different stages of their careers. Under the umbrella of the ‘whole school’ sessions, it may be that different groups are covering different elements of a single theme.

Middle Leadership Programme

- Two programmes: experienced middle leaders and new/aspirational middle leaders
- Internal and External trainers
- Training ‘sessions’ and Shadowing
- Two-year programme
- Inclusion by application
Middle Leadership Programme

- Training sessions include:
  - External Relationships [Cath Dunphy - AUT]
  - Social Leadership [Howard Youngs - AUT]
  - Managing Teachers [Alex/David]
  - Written Communication [Alex] / Public Speaking
  - Maintaining Excellent Teaching [Tina/Mike]
  - Data Analysis [Alex/Amy]

Middle Leadership Programme

- Shadowing includes:
  - SLT Meetings
  - Dealing with difficult parents and staff
  - Strategic planning meetings
  - Career planning discussions
  - Observing SLT dynamics and understanding the school

External PD

- Increased budget
- Relief / cover costs to come from budget
- Tied more closely to Appraisal process
- NCEA and CIE prioritised
- Subject conferences encouraged strongly
- Post-graduate qualifications supported
2013
Late Starts Plus

Has it Worked?
What measures would you use to decide whether the PD was having an impact?

How do we know?
- Have results across the school improved?
- Does observation evidence suggest that new teaching and learning strategies are being implemented?
- What did ERO think?
- Can we see students developing a wider range of learning strategies?

How do we know?
- How do staff react to PD? Has this changed?
- How willing are staff to be trainers?
- How are the PD Committee seen?
- Are there more interesting discussions taking place about teaching and learning and the curriculum?
What do we do now?

- Refine MLP: personalise it more effectively
- Be more precise about the learning strategies we’re interested in developing
- Be more precise about the strategic priorities we want to implement
- Retain our current PD Committee as far as is possible: they’re great

Work out a way for staff to reflect on their experiences, integrating new ideas more consistently into their teaching