## Project summary

The Leading in Learning programme is a cross-curricular approach to teaching and learning that focuses on improving pupils' thinking skills by stressing that learning is an active, social process; it builds independence through interaction, intervention, stimulation and collaboration. The programme involves three teachers from three separate departments who teach a series of three lessons to the same group, three times a year, using the same thinking skills. The aim of the programme is to meet the needs of individual learners and to maximise their achievement by engaging and motivating them.

At Parklands, the English, Science, Geography and Maths departments have been involved over a period of eighteen months, having completed their four cycles of cross curricular thinking skills with two year 7 classes. The plan for the future is to involve more departments as well as staff who are less kinaesthetic in their teaching. The provision would also continue with Year 8 and then roll into Year 9.

We have noticed that all pupils appear to enjoy these activities and are very focused during the lessons. We have also found that retention of information has improved, this having a positive impact on achievement.

### Specific aspect of practice to be accredited?

The Leading in Learning programme, which aims to raise achievement by creating a range of approaches and strategies, teaches pupils that learning can be improved by focusing on specific thinking abilities, and encourages systematic development of thinking skills and the transfer of learning across subjects.

### Aspect of Every Child Matters addressed:

- Be healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

### What were you hoping to achieve?

- To stimulate the enjoyment of lessons
- The transfer of skills across curriculum areas
- To develop cross-curricular co-operation
- Sharing of good practice
- Pupils to see the curriculum as a coherent body of study
- To encourage professional development e.g. coaching

**How did you identify the need for this practice?**

- The inspection report of 2002 encouraged the school to develop more creative teaching and learning opportunities in order to raise achievement, increase enjoyment and develop independence.
- Sharing Good Practice Group was set up in September 2002 to develop active teaching and learning strategies.
- The Teaching and Learning Forum was set up in January 2003. Part of the forum’s remit was to set up a lesson visit programme in order to share good practice. The analysis of lesson visit feedback showed that staff recognised that active teaching strategies observed in other lessons could be effectively employed in their own lessons. Staff were now willing to embark upon creative, less didactic lessons.
- A whole-school inset session was organised on Accelerated Learning led by Will Thomas.
- MP began to work with staff who taught a very difficult bottom set Year 9 group. This group required very structured, active learning activities to achieve successful learning and behaviour. After very positive results the members of staff involved led an inset session to share their experiences with all staff who could then easily use these ideas in their own lessons.
- 'Leading in Learning' was one of the four initiatives offered by the L.E.A. Our school explored the possibility of choosing Leading in Learning but decided on Assessment for Learning instead, as the former seem to be a logistically difficult initiative to put into practice. However a small-scale, successful pilot group was decided upon.

**What did you do?**

**June 2005**
- Deputy Head basically outlined the initiative and asked for three departments to volunteer to be involved in a pilot scheme.
- September 2005 - MP asked Curriculum Leaders to request a volunteer from each of the three departments. MP saw Head of Year Seven for her views on which Year 7 class would be most suitable for the pilot.

**Autumn Term 2005**
- Meetings were held between MP and subject teachers. The scheme of 3 x 3 lesson cycles was discussed and the area of *Reasoning* chosen as it was felt that Reasoning was a common area of study. A two week period was chosen for the Leading in Learning lessons to be delivered to 7LP. Staff met and shared lesson plans as well as strategies they would use to integrate reasoning into their lessons. Cover was arranged for these involved to be able to observe each other monitor enjoyment, behaviour and retention of information.
Spring Term
- Leading in Learning lessons were held, using **Collective Memory, Living Graphs, Mysteries.** MP observed all staff to evaluate the impact and enjoyment of Learning and Teaching
- Meetings were held with staff and pupils separately to evaluate the effectiveness of the lessons. All found the lessons' creativity beneficial to effective learning
- MP fed back to SLG Curriculum Leaders and the Teaching and Learning Forum
- Class teachers fed back to their departments
- This cycle was repeated twice more in the year
- Pilot's success meant that the Leading in Learning scheme has started again this year.

Which members of the establishment and/or wider community have been involved and what was their role?
- Led by HT and DHT
- Co-ordinated by AST
- Class teachers of English, Science, Geography, Maths and PSCHHE
- 7LP and 7 AF
- CL and members of the T & L Forum
- Departments involved through feedback

How has the practice been modified or improved during development?
- Form tutor involvement has been added
- Maths and PSCHHE have also been included in the pilot
- Different staff have been involved, extending the scope of the project
- Those staff involved have requested Leading in Learning to be on their departmental agenda after each of three sessions, in order to increase the profile of the initiative and to inform staff
- Within their department of new strategies to improve enjoyment and effectiveness.

What has been the impact of the project on pupils’ learning, achievement or enjoyment and how has this been measured?
- Pupils are eager to come to Leading in Learning lessons
- Enhanced opportunities for speaking and listening in all learning areas
- Kinaesthetic learners are well-catered for
- All pupils retain information for a much longer period
- Excellent collaborative experience
- Improved behaviour and concentration
- Positive feedback from pupils and staff

What are the next stages in the development process?
The next stages include:-
- Considerations for cover in the Summer term when Year 11 leave to enable more staff to be involved in Leading in Learning lesson visits.
- Instead of volunteer departments and staff, less creative teachers could be
targeted to be involved in the scheme, coached by those who have already successfully participated.
- Regular feedback to all staff at staff meetings etc to raise the profile of transferability of skills.

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<th>What aspects of this practice may be useful for other establishments to consider?</th>
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<td>None of this is unique to our school and could be implemented in any school</td>
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