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**Lancashire no.:** 13/018  
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**Award granted:** Innovative Practice  
**Project title:** ‘Creative Delivery of P.P.A.’

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### Project summary

As the school responded to the demands of workforce remodelling, it was noted that our Key Stage 2 P.P.A. cover was not robust in terms of sudden crisis nor was there a true sense of ownership of the learning by those tasked to deliver it.

A combination of circumstances and good planning allowed the school to develop a radical new approach to its P.P.A. cover which:

- Allowed year group partners to plan together;
- Allowed pupils to work in smaller groups than previously;
- Focused on creativity and enjoyment of pupil learning; and
- Made the best use of the staff/resources we had available.

The result of much thought and planning was ‘Diamond Day’: a special curriculum day once a fortnight for each of the Key Stage 2 year groups. The day would be delivered by a self-contained team led by a senior member of the teaching staff and three T.A.3s.

This team were to be completely responsible for planning and delivering all of the P.P.A. cover over the life of the project.

### Specific aspect of practice to be accredited?

Implementation of a robust Key Stage 2 P.P.A. system.

### Aspect of Every Child Matters addressed:

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

### What were you hoping to achieve?

Guaranteed PPA time for year group partners to plan together.  
Focused curriculum days which enhanced learning.  
Smaller teaching groups to nurture the emotional development of our pupils.  
Increased physical activity within the course of routines.
A real sense of enjoyment surrounding learning.

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

The school sits in one of the most deprived areas of the county and serves a community with both educational and emotional complex needs. Our value added is a good indicator of where we begin and the good work our staff do in raising standards. We identified a need for change because of:

- Government legislation.
- Staff feedback about P.P.A. provision.
- Every child matters agenda.
- Our core drive to raise pupil standards.

**What did you do?**

A key event in this development was the election of our KS 2 manager, Mr. Carvel Lonsdale, to the post of Branch Sec. for ATL the education union, which would leave him only in school for 2 days. This coincided with a drive to make our PPA cover more robust.

Initial discussion saw a way forward that would work on many levels:

- The initial stage was to take Mr. Lonsdale out of his KS manager role to ensure continuity of cover within the school. This opened up an opportunity for two long-serving teachers in the school to engage with real professional development by taking on this role of Key stage Manager.

- The next stage was to identify a team he could lead that would be able to deliver a PPA day that was exciting and contained quality learning. Three TA3 were approached and were assigned to the project, Mrs. Mullen, Mrs. Cozens and Mrs. Woods.

A timetable for the whole year was then drawn up allocating PPA cover and calculated on the premise of teachers teaching and planning for 90% of a two week period and receiving one complete day to plan every other week. Teachers had previously been used to half a day a week and needed this 'once a fortnight' concept explaining and putting in context of the workforce agreement. This was a real concern to staff.

Next came the initial planning stage of what our PPA day would look like. With some guidance from the Head, the PPA team were given time to plan the completely new structure. The name ‘Diamond Day’ was born in this stage as it linked closely to our school team point system. It gave the day grounding in the pupil’s familiar vocabulary and the implementing team an identity on which to move forward.

During this process the team worked on basic structures to the day. Each year group would be split into four groups; each group would rotate through four different activities led by each member of the team.

There would be a further session which would be divided into two which would focus
on raising pupil’s physical stamina - Power P.E. Pace was identified as a key element of this procedure.

Once a picture had been established we engaged with the content of the day at a curriculum level. Staff were consulted as to areas of the curriculum they would like to ‘offload’ to the team. Once these areas had been decided, the team looked at ways of using creative curriculum techniques to deliver these subjects. This proved a difficult time for the team and required close support from all members of the team to overcome initial nerves. The team grew in its confidence as the Diamond Day was introduced and people played to some of their natural strengths of art, creativity, ICT and drama.

Key to its growth was allowing for planning time for the Diamond Day team. This allowed them to adapt and really prepare for their delivery. A budget was also set for the team in order to enhance this independence and prevent a need of interfering with teaching staff time and resources.

Once the Autumn term 2007 had been planned for, implementation followed. It needed planning carefully to pupils who are not always emotionally ready for changes to routine. However, the planning and attention to detail paid dividends. Initial negative interactions were minimal and less than usual for those particular year groups. Pace, content and smaller learning groups paid dividends.

Which members of the establishment and/or wider community have been involved and what was their role?

The head teacher has been closely linked with this initiative in providing funding and empowering staff to find solutions to problems. Some note needs to be made of the positive impact on the career development of Mrs. Mahmood and Mr. Taj, the teachers who took on management responsibility in the absence of Mr Lonsdale. They grew professionally in this role and added to the structure of the school - Succession Planning in practice.

How has the practice been modified or improved during development?

The biggest single improvement was the development of the Diamond Day team identity and its confidence to deliver. This was a major scheme with staff and undertaking it involved a fostering of trust and good communication between all partners.

Administratively the single biggest issue to improve on was the plotting out of the PPA days over half term breaks to ensure an even spread of planning time and a simple recording of these dates in the school diary so it fed into the 'What's On' sheet. It was discovered that a list of dates given out was not sufficient in the busy lives of teachers and a weekly reminder was much more effective.

The spread of cover over half terms is significantly improved in year two of the project, ensuring that long gaps do not appear in the planning process.
### What are the next stages in the development process?

The pupil feedback told us we needed to expand the scheme into KS 1 as pupils wanted the experience shared. This led to the building of a new KS1 team.

### What aspects of this practice may be useful for other establishments to consider?

Implementing your own Diamond Day requires a team that has a passion for learning and is allowed to play to its strengths.