

The School as a Learning Community: Dene Magna School

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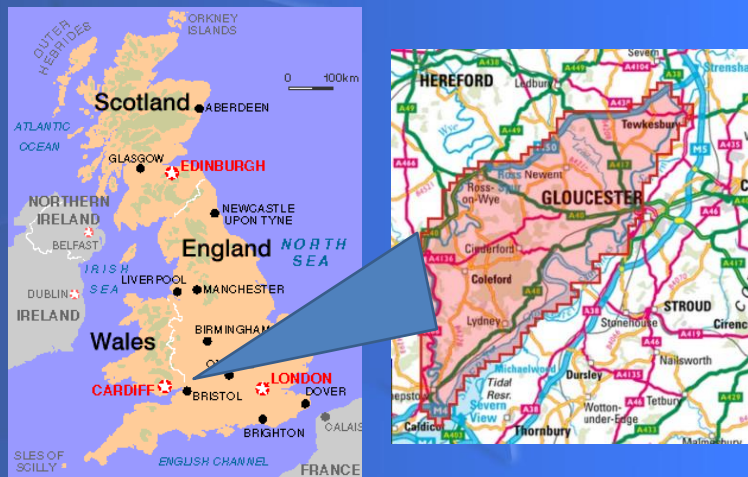
Dene Magna School

- Students aged 11-16
- Teaching School
- 803 Students
- 43 teachers, 68 support staff
- Students enter just below National Average

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The surrounding area



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Our aim:

The central aim of Dene Magna is that each and every learner shall achieve their maximum potential... and enjoy the process



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Does the quality, timing and method of asking great questions play a key role in delivering outstanding learning, teaching and assessment?

Discuss this with your partner. Do you agree?

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The quality, timing and method of asking great questions plays a key role in?

**Ask lots of questions
Don't be afraid of what
tell you!**

What do we mean by a learning community?



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Who are the learners?

Examples of learners at Dene Magna	
Students	Teachers
Support staff	Parents
Governors	

How are these different people learning?
How do we know?
What do we do to grow this?





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Where and when does learning take place?

- In class?
- Before and after school?
- Between lessons/lunch?
- At home?
- Weekends?
- With friends?
- With parents/family?


The journey from Good to Outstanding began in 2001...

Question: "How can we start this journey and get staff to buy into this?"

Answer: "Focus on the learning of the teachers and increase the responsibility and influence of students in their own education".

Knowing your learners





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Change from within...

- Staff meetings
- Keen to develop ownership of the process
- Staff developed the rationale and a set of shared beliefs
- Everyone buys in to the strategy!

The Reflective Practitioner Programme

The Reflective Practitioner Programme (RPP) 2001 - date :

all of us have a professional duty to help support the development and improvement of others

all of us have a professional duty to be the best that we can

the development of a collaborative culture is essential for effective school improvement



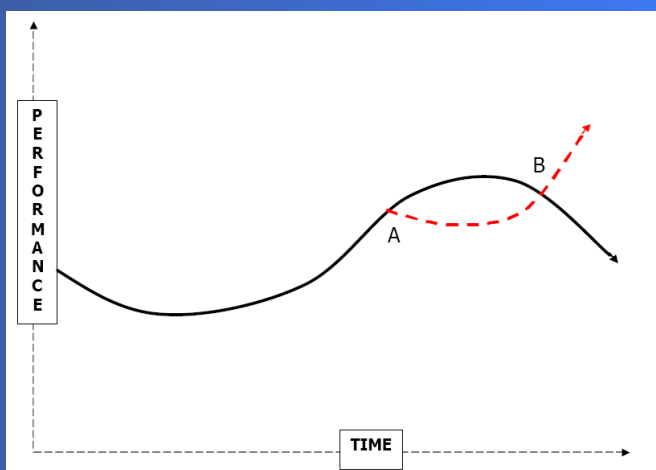
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How do we prompt reflection on teaching?

RAG Rating Practice	
ACCRDITE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING	
I successfully manage behaviour and give praise for good work	
Assessment for learning	
My WALTs and WILFs are shared with my students	
My WILFs break down the skills needed for the WALT clearly and explicitly, creating challenge	
My WALTs and WILFs underpin the learning throughout my lessons	
I make the success criteria for learning activities explicit	
I regularly share assessment criteria with my students	
All my students know their targets and what they need to do to reach it	
My students regularly assess their own and each other's work using success criteria	
My students are very familiar with models of different levels and learn from these models to make progress	
Learning Resources	
I use a range of resources, including ICT, to stimulate learning	
I use GCSE POD and other ICT to develop students' independent learning	
I harness the support of extra staff to extend and deepen students' learning	
Flexibility and Risk-Taking	
I adapt my teaching to enhance learning as much as possible	
I use interventions to aid student progress as required	
I regularly take risks in the classroom, trying out new teaching methods	
I manage the learning space flexibly to enable different forms of learning to take place	



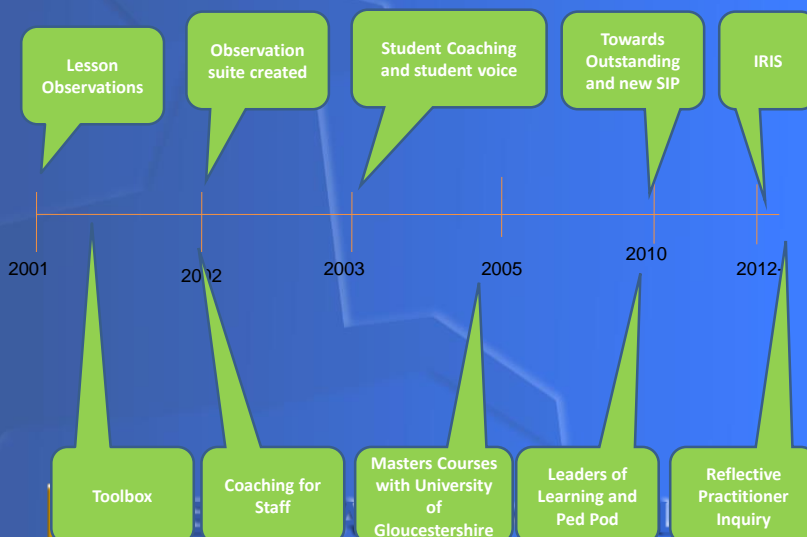
Sigmoid Curve

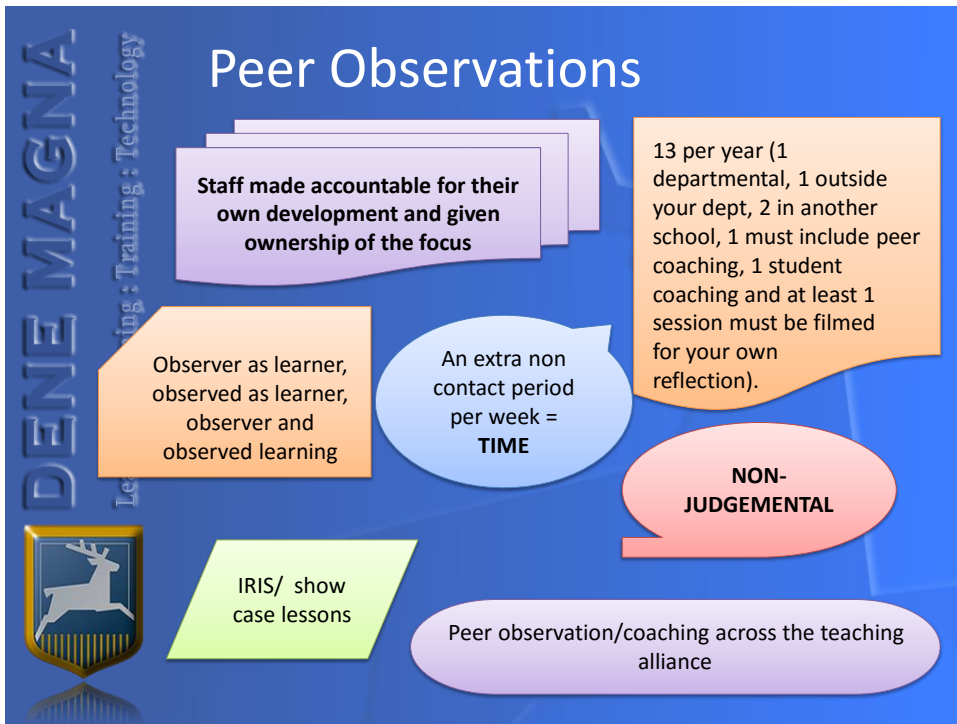


'The secret to constant growth is to start a new curve before the first one peters out'

Charles Handy – 'The Empty Raincoat : Making sense of the future' (1995)

A Timeline of RPP development.....





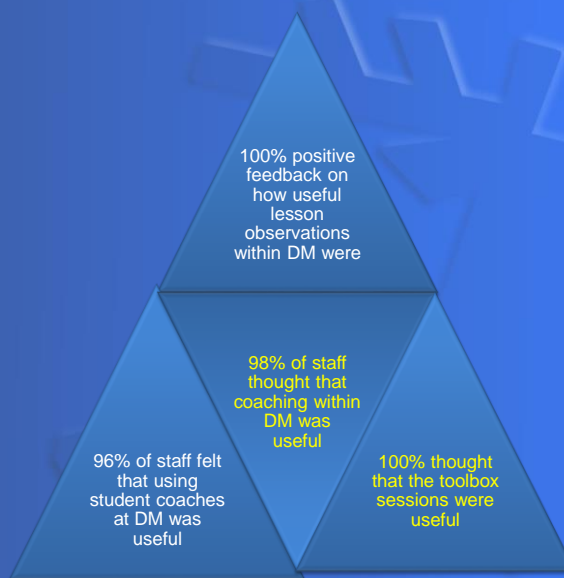
An important question

Are peer observations an expectation or an opportunity?

How would your staff view this?

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Summary of RPP evaluations:



**Question
everything,
Assume
nothing,
Learn the
truth.**



Barriers we faced

- Confidence/attitudes of some staff
- Time
- Structure of the day
- Money

How did we overcome this?

- Gave an extra non contact period on Timetable
- Reduced amount of external CPD for staff
- Focussed on the positives and the drip feed effect - communicate
- Got staff involved in the decisions



Why Collaborative planning?



(Lewis & Tsuchida, 1998; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999; Yoshida, 1999).

Collaborative planning

- 7 x 1 ½ hour sessions
- All teachers and TAs involved
- Foci change following observations/data analysis
- E.g. How do we differentiate for MP/MP+ Students (SEN)?
- Cross department/in department - varied

Additional Staff Learning

Type of learning	Number of staff	Length of learning
Aspiring Head teacher course/Leading from the Middle	9 teachers	6 months to one year
MEd: Full MEd	8	3 years
Dissertation stage of MEd	9	(year 3)
Diploma/Cert Stage	14	Year 1 & 2
RPI Bursary (paid) with Uni	14	1 year with support
RPI	44	1 year



What is Reflective Practitioner Inquiry (RPI)?

Practitioner Inquiry is

“a systematic intentional study by educators of their own practice”.

(Dana, Yendol-Hoppey, 2009)

In Dene Magna all teachers are expected to engage in the cycle of practitioner inquiry as a key part of their development.



How has this developed?

- A desire for staff to improve K&U around specific areas of interest.
- A desire to trial new things to improve results and areas of interest/issue.
- Through the RPP programme and a logical progression for self/collaborative progression.
- To share findings for help others.
- To build up the knowledge of the school and keep progressing





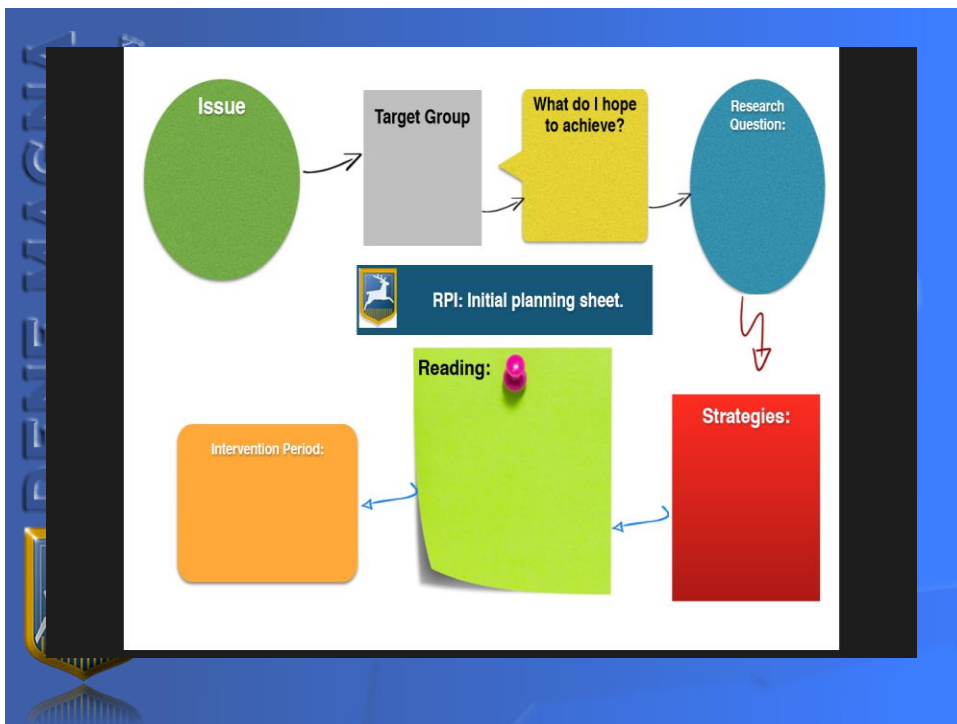
The process

- **Reading around the subject** – develop knowledge in the subject area for both sides of the question or topic. From books, journals, internet, blogs, newspapers, magazines etc. We have set up sharing sites for this on our websites to help staff.
- **Carrying out research** – From your research trial specific interventions to make a difference keeping evidence as you go.
- **Making conclusions** – what worked? What didn't work? Both are important. What are the implications/recommendations for future practice?



Research Structure

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Methodology
- Results
- Conclusion
- References



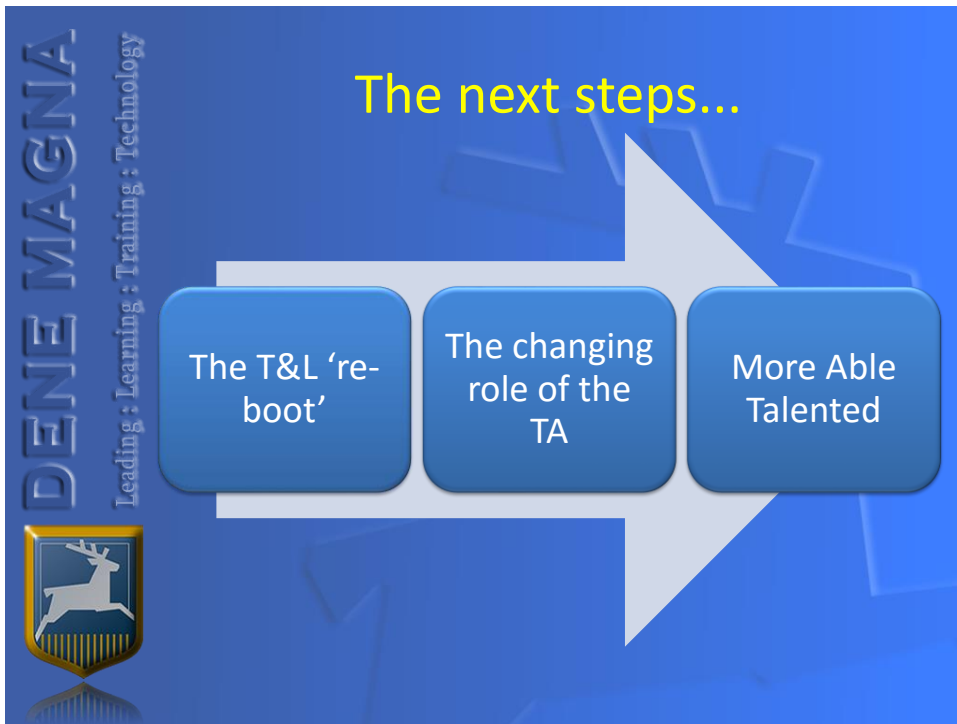
OFSTED

'The resolute efforts of the headteacher and senior staff to secure the best possible teaching have been successful in ensuring that teaching continues to be outstanding.'

"The headteacher provides clear, well-focused direction and leadership. He is very well supported by senior staff and leaders at all levels, so that their uncompromising vision for outstanding education is reflected across the entire school community." (Ofsted 2012)

There are high expectations of the staff's engagement in their own learning and there is a wide range of opportunities available, including post-graduate teaching degrees and leadership and development courses. Many staff have embarked on such courses, which reflects very positively on their high quality work in the classroom. (Ofsted 2012)





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