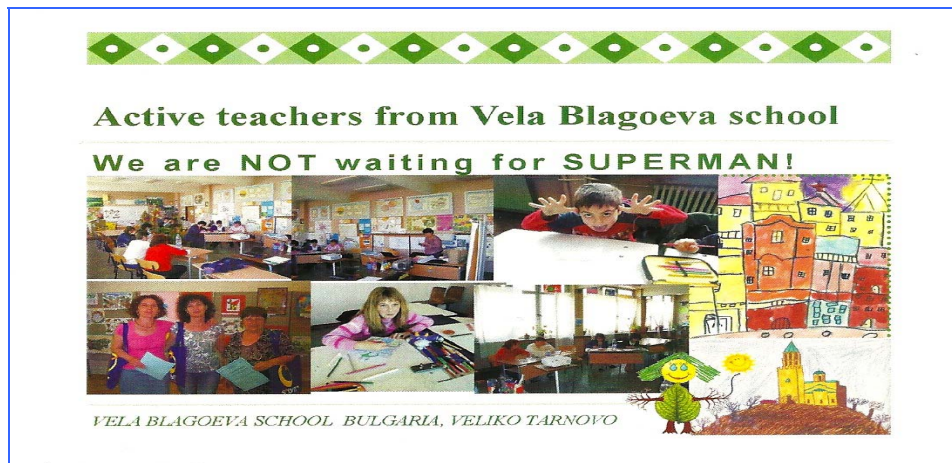


HertsCam 2012

Welcome to the 17th issue of HertsCam Voice.

Those of you who have become seriously disenchanted with the Big Mac – the quick fix approach to hunger – may have discovered the slow food movement. According to their website (www.slowfood.com), they are a grass roots association committed to such things as creativity, collaboration, sustainability and harmony. Is this ringing any bells for you? I think HertsCam embraces a similar set of values. When it all began in 1999, it was just 20 teachers wanting to extend their own professional knowledge. More than twelve years later many hundreds of teachers in Hertfordshire belong to a vibrant network whose members lead development projects in their schools. Currently we have over 150 members registered for either the TLDW programme or the MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning. We build our knowledge of teacher leadership and of how to improve what happens in classrooms by coming together at network events to share our experience. The professional knowledge we create together is tried and tested; it is practical, but infused with rigour and critical analysis. This year we have programme of five network events held at schools around the county and the Annual Conference at Robertson House on 12th March (see page 8 for details).



This postcard was designed by teachers and students at a school in Bulgaria which participated in the ITL

Last year Viv Wearing led an evaluation study which identified substantial evidence of the way teacher leadership impacts on classroom practice, school cultures and student learning outcomes. This will be available as a downloadable pdf file from various sites including CamTools. Also completed at the tail end of 2011 was a major report on the International Teacher Leadership project which is led by members of the HertsCam Tutor Team. This, together with an inForm bulletin devoted to the ITL project, can be downloaded now from www.leadershipforlearning.org.uk. In the ITL report we can see how the influence of the HertsCam approach to teacher leadership is making a difference across the world.

In October 2011 we also began a new venture - the EdD programme - which is enabling HertsCam members to pursue their endeavours through doctoral study. So far, three members of the Tutor Team have begun, with more to follow in 2012. If you want to know more you can come to one of the EdD Information Sessions which are on 12th & 19th January and 8th February (see <http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/courses/graduate/doctoral/edd/>).

I am looking forward to 2012 and know that HertsCam has the flexibility to respond to whatever challenges lay ahead.

David Frost

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The Registration Event: Heathcote School, October 2011

In October we welcomed new TLDW participants at the Registration Event Conference at Heathcote School. David Frost spoke about ‘Awakening the sleeping giant of teacher leadership’ and Helen Foy from Nobel School gave a presentation on her experience of being involved with HertsCam. She talked about her teaching experience and how her TLDW project ‘working in partnership to produce effective continual professional development for physical education’ had given her confidence to lead change and had supported her role in school. This had inspired her to embark on the MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning.

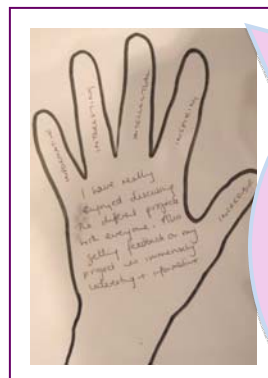


Network Event: Sir John Lawes School, November 2011

This was the first of five school based network events attended by around 70 people. Tom Murphy from Sir John Lawes welcomed everyone and spoke about the theme ‘Starting the journey’. The event began with a session for posters and there was a real buzz of discussion and sharing of ideas. Over the three sessions there were 20 workshop / discussion groups with a fantastic variety of topics being discussed and knowledge shared. Presentations from past members, showing the continuing impact of their development work were really helpful for new members.



Joe Carey with his display: ‘Developing a learning environment to inspire and motivate in design and technology’



I have been inspired by passionate teachers acting and thinking in ways to make a real difference to their students.

Participant

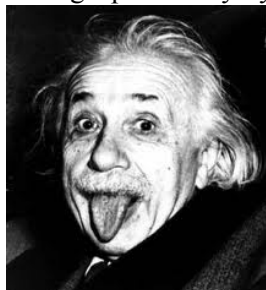
Teacher Led Development Projects 2010-2011

Key skills in Physics – bridging the gap between GCSE and A level - Mary Compton

I had previously worked to improve the uptake of AS level Physics with girls at our school and saw an increase in the number of Year 12 students. However, by the time they completed their summer examination many had decided to drop Physics; they felt negative because the jump between GCSE and A level was large and they could not cope with the more advanced skills required in a more context driven course with much more complex examination questions.

What I did

I questioned Year 12 students on the skills they felt they struggled with the most. I made a booklet of past papers from the year 2000 onwards and students completed one or two papers each week. I assessed their confidence using the 'thermo evaluator' tool. Using consultation with current Year 12's and the maths teachers I came up with a list of the mathematics skills, which they were most in need of support and devised a programme focusing on these skills. Other strategies included setting up a buddy system for the next cohort of students and organising a Physics lunch each half term so that students could discuss their issues. Year 12 students produced leaflets on the introduction to AS level Physics to share with new students.



An account of the development work

There has been a definite improvement in the level of the AS students' confidence in examination questions and results in exams. The systematic practice and focus on skills has improved students' approach to exams. The development work has been shared with teachers within the Science Faculty.

A useful source

Mendick, Heather (2008) Subtraction difference: troubling transitions from GCSE to AS level mathematics, *British Educational Research Journal* 34 (6) pp. 711-732.

For further details and an update please contact Mary.Compton@hertsandessex.herts.sch.uk

Extreme modeling – sitting the exam with my students - Eleanor Barnard

A number of students underachieved in AS Psychology in 2010. In order to raise attainment I introduced a competitive element that I hoped would improve students' motivation.

What I did

I sat the AS Psychology examination alongside my students. I created a forum for revision and discussion on the VLE, I set up a 'beat the teacher' challenge for the students to win vouchers if they scored a higher result than me and I ran extra revision classes and lessons on how to revise. Colleagues, students and parents were consulted and here are some comments I received.

The impact of my development work

'Awesome. I'm going to beat you!'

student

'I'm too terrified I wouldn't do well'

colleague

Attainment was significantly improved in the January examination in comparison to the previous year and the students reported that my strategies did motivate them. Whilst I achieved a top grade, on scrutinising the results, some of the students had not achieved their estimated grade. This project began to grow out of my control when I uncovered problems with marking by the exam board. Half my students' grades were increased following remarking by the board. I then decided to become an examiner to further investigate this problem.

Making a difference

I have shared my experiences with colleagues in school and at a HertsCam Network Event. A number of colleagues are considering sitting an exam alongside their students. My teaching has improved as a result of everything I have learned as has the dynamic in my classroom. Most importantly, the project has taken me on a journey which I never could have anticipated at the outset and the story will continue as I begin the process of becoming an examiner.

For further details and an update please contact EBarnard@johnhenrynewman.herts.sch.uk

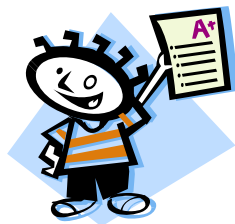
Teacher Led Development Project

Developing ways to improve assessment for learning in KS3 Food Technology - Simon Birch

I was concerned that, in Food Technology, my students were not receiving enough feedback on their performance in practical sessions. Written work was marked, but practical work was not. This was mainly due to the time pressures involved in getting 22 students to complete their products in less than an hour. Students did receive a lot of verbal feedback which was highlighted by students as something which really helped them.

What I did

My investigations left me concerned that the students did not understand what level they were at and how to improve. I was also concerned with the lack of assessment data available to me on students. I surveyed students and used a focus group to establish a grading system. I found that students found it easier to interpret an A-D grading system rather than a numeric one.



I then wrote a description of what students need to do in order to achieve each of the grades, and I made a grid where I can quickly mark students work at the end of the lesson. I then designed three work booklets for use with my classes which included all recipes and classwork activities. For each classwork activity I included a section on assessment for learning where students read several descriptors and can mark their work accordingly.

The impact of my development work

Students now have a far greater understanding of how they are performing in their practical work. One unexpected outcome is that there is a lot of competition

between students who strive for the highest grade.

The use of this marking system, together with other assessments has improved the accuracy of my student assessments.



I uploaded my resources onto the Times Educational Supplement website, where teachers can share resources. The three booklets I designed have now been downloaded 10327 times and have been recommended by the TES teaching panel www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resources/

For further details or an update please contact birchs505@broxbourne.herts.sch.uk

Further information about the HertsCam TLDW programme and details of teacher-led-development work projects produced as part of the network can be found in the Good Practice area of the HertsGrid for Learning website at www.thegrid.org.uk/goodpractice

Accounts of projects are also published as downloadable pdf files in the Teacher Leadership journal at www.teacherleadership.org.uk

HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning

A collaborative development project to secure sustainable staff wellbeing in an Infant and Nursery school - Pauline Hannibal

When I started the MEd, I had been in Headship for five years. My school had just received an 'Outstanding' grade from Ofsted and I was ready for a new challenge. For some reason I dithered and debated about the focus of my project; goodness knows why when my abiding interest since qualifying as a teacher has been staff wellbeing and its correlation with the social, emotional and academic development of pupils. But then sometimes when the obvious is staring one in the face one overlooks it.

Having taught in seven schools under eight headteachers I had been on the receiving end of both good and bad practice regarding staff wellbeing and as a headteacher I had been trying to get staff wellbeing right. The HertsCam MEd was the perfect opportunity for me to shine a light on past, present and future practice in securing staff wellbeing.

How could I not grab the opportunity with both hands? Working closely with school colleagues on my project created an openness and sharing that had a tangible and positive impact on staff wellbeing. I was also able to share my knowledge and experiences of creating the right environment for wellbeing with colleagues at HertsCam Network Meetings and at a Cambridge Leadership for Learning Conference. As the two years of the MEd progressed my project became aligned with the government's initiative to measure the UK's wellbeing. Without me predicting it at the outset, my focus on staff wellbeing was perfectly timed, and as government spending cuts began to bite, more vital than ever before.

Pauline's advice for others undertaking the MEd

1. Find a focus you are passionate about. Think long term – your project must maintain your interest over two years. Will your project lead teaching and learning? If not, question its worth.
2. Don't allow yourself to get side-tracked. Keep asking yourself, 'Does this support my project?' You won't have time to go off on lots of tangents, however interesting they appear.
3. Build in regular study time to invest in your own learning and development. Be curious and look at things with new eyes. Be meticulous in your note-taking. Back everything up **every time** you work on it.
4. Start your project as soon as you can in Year 2. If you're not careful you'll run out of time to put your principles into practice and then your development project won't have developed anything.
5. Take your colleagues with you on your voyage of discovery. Aim to be a creative leader: excite, engage and enthuse your colleagues. Inspire their trust.
6. Recognise and try to widen your circle of influence – find allies and advocates. You can't do it alone. But also 'let go' of those people outside your circle of influence.
7. Maintain your resilience through the ups and downs of balancing work, study and home life. It's a delicate balancing act. Looking after yourself is time well spent.
8. Allow more time than you think to write your thesis. Then allow some more time. And then allow even more time!

If you make the most of your two years you'll see yourself in a new light by the end of it. Get it right and it'll be a life-changing experience.

For further details of the project please contact head@merryhill.herts.sch.uk

Faculty of Education Library

Angela Cutts and Emma-Jane Batchelor manage the Library & Information Service for the Faculty of Education. They are supported by an excellent team of staff, which includes another two professional librarians with extensive experience in the field of education librarianship. All members of the team particularly understand the needs of part-time and distance students and offer an enquiry and support service by email, telephone or text as well as in person during Library opening hours. The physical library is a lovely environment to study in and is open for 8 Saturday mornings (10.00 am – 1.00 pm) during full Cambridge University Term, and on weekdays during school holidays. Please check Opening Hours before visiting - <http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/library/opening/>. There are also a wealth of online education resources available, either via the Library web pages which are freely accessible, or via the Library CamTools site which is password controlled.



Congratulations

Over 90 participants successfully completed the TLDW programme in 2011 and we congratulate Ase Welsh, Isobel Sharkey and Paul Andrew who went on to complete the Diploma.

MEd participants have recently received their results and we say well done to Rupinder Ahluwalia, Rebeka Aylwin, Rosie Coupe, Caroline Creaby, Jenny Fogarty, Pauline Hannibal, Martin Lee, Melanie Lester, Annabel Moore, Richard Moore, Philippa Noble, Cathy Payne, Jo Reed, Louise Reynard, Shantha Sharma, Jenny Sheppard, Michelle Solomon, Jackie Stephenson, Lesley Stevens, Viv Wearing, Jill Wilcox and Maria Zegallo-Tufnell. Graduation will take place either on 28th April or 19th May, to be decided.



Sharing good practice with other schools

A database of project titles and summaries is available on the CamTools site and is currently being updated on the Hertfordshire Grid for Learning www.thegrid.org.uk/goodpractice/hertscam/. Teachers are starting to share their practice more widely by giving presentations or delivering workshops at other schools and conferences. Schools have found this a cost effective and collaborative way to provide professional development opportunities for staff across schools. If you are interested in finding out more about sharing and developing HertsCam good practice please contact Viv Wearing vw223@cam.ac.uk.



Report on progress

The ITL project is alive and well and continues to make a difference in many parts of the world. Since the last issue of HertsCam Voice there has been a great deal of activity.

May 2011: Critical friendship visit to Bulgaria: David travelled to Sofia and Veliko Tarnovo for a 2 day visit. He had talks with two ministers of education followed by public lectures in 2 universities, TV and radio interviews and a network event. At the network event David was greeted by a student dressed in traditional costume who carried a loaf of bread. The ritual required David to break the bread, dip it in a dish of spices and eat it. She then sang a wonderful short song without any accompaniment. The teachers gave David the postcard shown on the front page.



May 2011: Network Event in Bucharest. This event was organised and led by Mona Chiriac from Barclay School in collaboration with Sorin Comon, a colleague in Bucharest. Teachers from Romania were joined by those from Moldova where they also speak the Romanian language. David joined them for a 2 day event. An official from the ministry came which led to other developments.

September 2011: Network Events in Montenegro. David flew to Podgorica, then was driven for an hour up into the hills to the second largest city – Nikšić – where two other members of the ITL team had organised a series of Network Events in 3 elementary schools.

September 2011: Network Event in Serbia. Clare Herbert from Woolenwick Primary and Paul Rose from John Henry Newman joined David for this network event organised by our colleague Jelena Vransjevic in Belgrade. Teachers had come from all over Serbia and were joined by a group from Bosnia & Herzegovina who had made the long trip up from Sarajevo in a mini-bus. Here David and Clare talked to Aleksandra Maksimovic who subsequently came to Cambridge to do some research about how primary teachers cope with the pressure of high stakes testing.

October 2011: ITL team meeting in Bulgaria. A full record of this 3 day meeting is available on CamTools. The workshops were led by Val Hill from Birchwood and Jo Mylles from Sir John Lawes. Paul Barnett, from Barnwell, managed the process as a whole. Caroline Creaby from Dame Alice Owens was part of the research team and Mona Chiriac worked with the Romanian team.

November 2011: The seminar to launch the report at the Faculty of Education in Cambridge. The presentation team consisted of: Paul Barnett (HertsCam), Ivana Cosic (Croatia), David Frost, Lyndsay Upex, Majda Josevska (Macedonia), Amanda Roberts (HertsCam), Mona Chiriac (Romania and HertsCam), Saska Maksimovic (Serbia), Viv Wearing (HertsCam) and James Underwood (Cambridge). The event marked the publication of a full report and a summary in the LfL 'inFORM' bulletin both of which can be downloaded from www.leadershipforlearning.org.uk.

A full progress report is available on CamTools.

DATES FOR THE CALENDAR 2012

HertsCam Network Events hosted by Hertfordshire schools

Twilight Network Events usually start at 4.30 pm and finish at 6.30 pm

23 rd January	Birchwood High School, Bishop's Stortford
20 th February	Abbots Langley Primary School, Abbots Langley
21 st May	Dame Alice Owen's School, Potters Bar
2 nd July	Heathcote School, Stevenage

HertsCam Annual Conference

12th March Robertson House, Stevenage 4.30 pm – 7.00 pm

Guest speaker: Gordana Miljevic Centre for Education Policy, Belgrade, Serbia. She will talk about the influence of HertsCam through the ITL project.

The conference will also feature networking activities and information provided from educational sponsors.

HertsCam Annual Dinner

14th September Wolfson College, Cambridge 7.15 pm

Make a date to come and join us with your colleagues at this dinner.

Past members

If you would like to continue to attend events and to receive the benefits of being a member of HertsCam why not take out an annual subscription.

Single membership £35 for one year or £85 for three years
Corporate membership £150 per year

Contact Lyndsay Upex lju20@cam.ac.uk for more information and a subscription form.

