



**REPORT ON THE 2014
RESIDENTIAL SUMMER SCHOOL**

**FOR TEACHERS OF
ART, ENGLISH, HISTORY AND MUSIC**

23 - 25 JUNE 2014

HELD AT HOMERTON COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

Contents

PRESENTATIONS BY SUBJECT LEADERS	2
PLENARY PANEL DISCUSSION IN RESPONSE TO SUBJECT PRESENTATIONS	5
PUPIL PANEL DISCUSSIONS	8
SELECTION OF QUOTES FROM DELEGATE EVALUATIONS	11

PRESENTATIONS BY SUBJECT LEADERS

WEDNESDAY 25TH JUNE

Brief presentations were made on the final day of the Summer School by subject leaders from Art, English, History and Music, summarising the outcomes of the teachers' group discussions. The main points they made consisted of reflections on issues currently facing the teaching of their subjects.

Teachers' perspectives on the key issues in the teaching of Art, English, History and Music

Art

The value of the PTI Summer School:

- The sharing of good practice has been a central feature of the conference and the value placed by teachers on such professional development cannot be understated. Delegates will exploit all opportunities that the PTI has to offer for future collaborations.

Assessment:

- Invited speakers and the pupil panel echoed the sentiment that assessment in the arts can be counterproductive, stifling creativity and ambition. Assessment models should rely more upon the connoisseurship of the experienced teacher and their better understanding of the whole pupil, rather than box ticking approaches that militate against holistic coherence.
- Teachers and pupil panellists stressed the importance of the Art department as a safe haven where creative risks could be taken and mistakes seen as building blocks for later success. Exam boards should strive to use a lighter touch, recognising that in the first year of post-16 study, pursuit is more important than outcome.
- Pupil panellists saw good Art teachers as 'half friends', so it would be beneficial for exam specifications to recognise the value of artist/teacher collaboration.

Subject matter:

- Part of a teacher's job was seen as 'bringing art to the people' and not shying away from difficult concepts. Teachers should find ways of convincing students that challenging subject matter is relevant to their lives.
- There has been a recent move in some exam boards towards moderation requirements that weight marks away from new media. The discussion flagged the need for exam specifications that acknowledge multidisciplinary approaches in contemporary art practice.

The importance of creative arts subjects:

- As a major contributor to the UK's economy, the arts should be a central plank of the curriculum.
- The requirement by some schools to run arts GCSEs in Year 9 without the opportunity for mature reflection is diminishing the pool of take up in higher education.
- It was seen as anomalous that discount codes dissuade students from studying a number of arts subjects, whereas STEM subjects are seen as complementary and desirable in combination.

English

Teaching literature:

- When teachers can capture the delight in learning, literature can be taught well. On the other hand, literature can be taught poorly when it is reduced as a means to an end – measurable outcomes – rather than viewed as an end in itself.
- Lectures at the Summer School demonstrated a variety of possible approaches to teaching English. Some showed how a thematic approach can inform formal analysis and vice versa, others gave superb models for literary discussion. Workshops demonstrated practical ways of introducing dramatic elements and allowed delegates to find new ways to explore creative writing in the classroom.

Professional development:

- There is a scarcity of good quality, subject-specific training, and there was a feeling that the inspection regime seems to regard the particular skills and knowledge of the specialist as of incidental worth.
- Delegates at this Summer School took inspiration from three days of lectures and seminars, and from one another. The PTI model of training by teachers, for teachers, is demonstrably both inspiring and effective, yet there is little infrastructure to support the delivery of similar programmes to all teachers.

History

Subject knowledge:

- Lectures demonstrated to delegates the importance of teachers updating their subject knowledge through academic contact. Academics challenged mainstream – and teachers’ – thinking on historical issues.
- The lectures exemplified the necessity to make links between the series of defining events that helped to shape our national history and encouraged teachers to help their students to do the same in their studies.
- Concerns were raised over the future of teacher training. Generic teacher training should be avoided and history-specific training, especially PGCE courses, should be expanded.

The importance of studying History:

- Delegates appreciate the increasing recognition of the importance of studying History. It is refreshing that the subject no longer needs to justify its own existence as an academic discipline.
- However, while recognising the importance of a challenging, broad and balanced curriculum, concerns were voiced about limited curriculum time and non-specialist teaching which is still apparent in many schools.

Assessment:

- The Summer School has shown that what was assumed to be ‘correct’ History last year may not remain accurate today. Delegates emphasised that assessment should avoid narrowing students’ horizons by recognising a variety of interpretations and asked whether exam boards were capable of showing flexibility and reducing scaffolding to guide students and teachers in ‘correct answers’?

New curriculum:

- Delegates spoke of how they are forging partnerships with feeder primary schools to share expertise and prepare for curriculum changes, but concerns were expressed over the readiness of primaries to deal with the changes.

Music

The value of the PTI Summer School:

- Delegates were inspired by speakers who spoke passionately about the importance of music, and about how their own journeys began at school. Delegates had the opportunity to consider the importance of *learning through doing* and how immersing oneself in music through performance allows a greater understanding of its meaning.

Music hubs:

- Delegates reported an inconsistency of provision throughout the country, with some provision not reaching rural areas.
- Teachers are unsure as to what service the hubs offer, especially their role in the classroom where subject-specific professional development is desperately needed.

Western notation:

- Delegates and the pupil panel agreed on the importance of notation, as a vital and essential tool and as a universal language. The skill of reading notation can best be embedded when it is introduced early and in conjunction with practical skills. Students and guest speakers emphasised the opportunity that reading notation provided.

Continuity of Music provision:

- The overriding message from guest speakers and delegates is the importance of music provision in the classroom from KS1 through to A Level.
- At present, many primary schools do not have a specialist Music teacher and therefore pupils can receive a patchy, inconsistent music education before KS3. Concerns were also raised that music courses at A Level are being withdrawn.
- Should any school be able to obtain a rating of Outstanding if it does not provide a Music education? It would be preferable if Ofsted took into account the quality of both curricular and extra-curricular Music provision in making its final assessment.

PLENARY PANEL DISCUSSION IN RESPONSE TO SUBJECT PRESENTATIONS

WEDNESDAY 25TH JUNE

Panel members:

Christopher Pope (Chair)	Co-Director, The Prince's Teaching Institute
Dr John Wm Stephens	Director, School Improvement and Teaching Schools, National College for Teaching and Leadership
Mark Dawe	Chief Executive, Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR)
Sean Harford	Director Delivery, Learning and Skills, Ofsted
Peter Shears	Subject Leader for English, Cardinal Newman Catholic School, Hove
Ian Cross	Deputy Director of Creative Arts and Technology, Mounts Bay Academy, Cornwall

Summary of the main points raised:

Following presentations by subject leaders in Art, English, History and Music, a plenary discussion debated the following topics:

1. Curriculum
2. Creativity
3. Inspection
4. Subjects

The main points raised are noted below:

Curriculum

Do you believe in a broad and balanced curriculum, and what do you think is the best way of ensuring that every child actually receives it?

- The curriculum consists of everything that children learn at school, their total experience. So there is no list of prescribed subjects, nor any 'hidden curriculum'.
- Assessment provides students with tickets for the journey through life, a first step on the ladder, but the quality of the journey is determined by the richness of the learning experience and by the breadth of the context in which it is placed.
- It is hard to justify a decision to rate a school Good or Outstanding if it does not provide anything by way of musical education, whether for lack of curriculum time or ideological reasons.
- The Ofsted framework specifies that the curriculum should be 'broad and balanced' but leaves the details to the school. Inspectors are not armed with a tick list but are expected to use their judgement on whether the provision is appropriate.
- 14% of Art courses have disappeared over the past eighteen months. Delegates at the PTI's first Music and Art Residential in Liverpool (November 2012) were assured that the Inspection regime would redress this trend.

- Extracurricular activities are regarded by Ofsted as an important part of the provision of a school, but inspectors could only take a very superficial view if they included it in their coverage; they are the responsibility of school management and there is a possible problem in the way that school leaders see their role, focusing only on short-term outcomes.
- The value of creative arts in the curriculum lies in providing a backbone of academic rigour (Howard Goodall spoke of how learning western musical notation released his creativity) together with an opportunity to develop skills and talents which may relate to what they acquire from other subjects; they should not be thought of as separate domains of learning.

Creativity

What is the best way of grading subjects in such a way as not to stifle creativity but to give proper recognition to the unconventional and enterprising response?

- Assessment isn't a science, it's an art. There are no definitive answers to this conundrum and it is a matter for continuing debate. For instance, History teachers often cannot agree what a 'right' answer would look like and there is a big challenge in trying to reflect this in a mark scheme.
- Higher education drives the content at A Level; GCSE content is determined by the national curriculum, and in the middle of it all comes the Regulator to see that everything is fair.
- With Music, OCR is the only board to allow for live performance (which arguably is at the core of what Music is about); other boards rely on recordings. Under pressures from school leadership, multiple recordings may be seen as the surest way to a good grade.
- Teachers felt that in balancing the taking of risks with conformity in the interests of consistency, the pendulum has been allowed to swing too far, discouraging pupils from trying out their own ideas. They asked what they could do to make pupils share their view that risking failure can be part of a rich learning experience?
- Ofsted are not intending to abolish the detailed levels (2A, 2B, 2C, etc.) even though they can be shown to be devoid of significance. Inspectors need to be able to demonstrate with quantifiable evidence how pupils are progressing.
- Teachers are sometimes encouraged to keep up their sleeve 'the Ofsted lesson'; but this is almost bound to be too didactic and lack spontaneity. Teachers should feel confident in challenging their leadership team in this regard.

Inspection

How can Ofsted ensure that there is consistent and rigorous inspection without suppressing the professional judgement of the inspectors?

- One person's consistency is another person's conformity. Being convinced by what is going on in the classroom and by what the leadership team are doing to improve things should carry more weight with inspectors than merely what is suggested by the raw data. If you cut out inspection and just put the Raise Online data into the hands of civil servants you would get consistency, but not a proper judgement on the work of individual schools.

- To counteract the impression that schools are 'being hit over the head with statistics the whole time', all contracts with individual inspectors are being centralised and a programme of retraining is under way. This will need time to work its way through.
- Parents want good exam results, but teaching to the test isn't the best way to achieve this. Approaching a subject in a broad and challenging way may engender the intellectual toughness and resilience needed to deal with difficult, unexpected questions.
- Good professional leadership is needed: an ability to describe well, and in an evidence-based way, what they are doing in their particular context and what they are planning to do next.
- This can be developed into system leadership, as by Alison Peacock at The Wroxham Teaching School, working with Tim Oates on 'assessment without levels' in a pedagogically and academically rigorous way and leading a network of Teaching Schools. In this way professionals are holding themselves to account, but with the reassurance of deep partnership.
- Good inspectors have not only the insight to make sound judgements but need also to possess a good 'bedside manner'. It should be possible to deliver the toughest of messages and still do a job that is developmental. Nevertheless this message isn't yet getting through (e.g. with young teachers who are asking how they raise their pupils' attainment from 5A to 6B rather than how they are to teach English better).

Subjects

Do you feel that that there is sufficient work being done to support subjects?

- The push towards school-led Initial Teacher Training (ITT) means that trainee teachers learn their craft in action alongside the best practitioners.
- If school-led ITT can provide an opportunity to articulate the values that the profession holds dear, trainee teachers learn from seeing those values in action and are encouraged to make them the basis for life-long professional development.
- Research shows that the impact of professional development received from another teacher is more sustained, because it encourages a sense of responsibility for one's own development.
- Becoming an examiner teaches you more than how to mark exam scripts; it also concerns itself with broader forms of assessment. We are in this together and the more people who see this as a joint enterprise, the better. It should be non-adversarial.
- Inspections carried out by subject experts could support subjects more.
- With the best will in the world, you will never get a system where inspectors coming in from the outside are actually welcomed (a system based on peer review may be more collegial, but it is not rigorous). This is not to say that inspection cannot be carried out in a way that makes it more acceptable, with the judgements being treated positively as a step forward to other things.

PUPIL PANEL DISCUSSIONS

MONDAY 23RD JUNE

The Summer School opened with two panel sessions. One was made up of pupils studying English and History, and the other Art and Music. The pupils were KS4 and KS5 students drawn from non-selective state schools.

English and History

Why do you enjoy studying English and History?

English:

- It connects with a wide range of other subjects.
- There are no right and wrong answers; so long as you can support your argument by evidence, it can accommodate widely divergent points of view.
- An attraction of the study of literature is that you are encouraged to work out your own ideas, as opposed to subjects where you are required to learn specific facts; the converse is the feeling of insecurity in some pupils when they are expected to rely on their own opinions and are happier feeling that they are armed with knowledge of facts.

History:

- A range of topics, presented in a lively and attractive way, captures the initial interest.
- It makes you aware of cultures very different from your own.
- It is important to be reminded of the past and how it influences our understanding of the present. Many contemporary issues can only be properly appreciated by knowing how they came about.

What do you think constitutes effective teaching?

- Teachers sharing and communicating their passion for the subject.
- Variety of approach; use of lectures and books to introduce more academic material, and subsequent informed discussion encouraging a range of opinions.
- Making pupils think for themselves rather than giving them the 'received' answers
- Encouraging independent research.
- Making connections with life and issues outside the classroom.
- Giving a sense of chronology and cause and effect over time.
- Technology widens the teacher's options and although it is no substitute for good teaching, it can enhance it.

What are your views on the curriculum at KS3?

- The usual approach is to use the years for laying the foundations in terms of techniques and to introduce subject matter across a wide range, which may not be appreciated at the time (e.g. Shakespeare, medieval History) but can be revisited at a later stage.
- An alternative would be to start from what is familiar and current and work back to what is unfamiliar and historic.

Do you have any messages for teachers?

- Energy, enthusiasm and passion in the teacher engenders the same feelings in pupils.
- Teachers who are responsive to the needs of individual pupils are most effective.
- Teachers who work at extending their own knowledge are most likely to engender in their pupils the spirit of intellectual curiosity.

Art and Music

What are your reasons for studying Art and Music?

Art:

- Passionate and inspiring teachers.
- The spiritual dimension; the ability to lose oneself in creative activity and explore transcendent concepts in a variety of media.

Music

- The importance of ensemble playing.
- The expression of feelings like in no other subject.
- (With Music Technology) fascination with the production of sound.

What aspects of creativity do you enjoy?

- The application of imagination to almost anything in your experience; music and art connect with all aspects of life.
- The wish to experiment with different sounds and media.

What is the role of the teacher?

- Happy for things to go wrong; learning through failure.
- Encouraging you to open up.
- Relating to the individual pupil, almost like a friend.
- Experience to help guide and to encourage realistic self-appraisal.

What is the role of school trips?

- Widening perspectives and broadening horizons.
- Awareness of your own shortcomings, e.g. in terms of musical performance.

What do you feel hinders learning?

- Competition.
- Assessment, unless it is 1:1.
- Compulsion to meet the examiner's requirements rather than satisfy your own.

What do you feel helps learning?

- Teachers being well organized.
- Mutual respect between teacher and pupil.
- Encouragement of independence and freedom of expression.
- Constructive criticism from peers.

- Serendipity: making the most of opportunities that present themselves.

What messages would you give to teachers?

- Encourage self-expression.
- There are dangers in being over-protective, but also in knocking self-esteem.
- If you're happy and enthusiastic, your pupils will be too.

SELECTION OF QUOTES FROM DELEGATE EVALUATIONS

"Thank you for making me feel like a professional. Thank you for making me feel valued. Thank you for giving me the time to think, to reflect, and to remind me why I teach. Why I came in to this profession in the first place, why I love my job, why I was ambitious as an NQT and why I want to teach the musicians of the future."

"My passion for my subject has been re-ignited. I am ready to go back into the classroom with renewed confidence."

"I found it interesting and valuable that the lectures were not based around how to teach but instead allowing us to make our own connections to the material being presented."

"All excellent! The sharing of good practice was wonderful and it was a great way to learn from others."

"I found the pupil panel inspiring - reminding me why we teach - to see them so 'lit up' and inspired."

"I feel that I will up the level of challenge and not be afraid of children not 'getting' a text or idea. I have decided to introduce a master class at KS4 after school to encourage higher critical thinking."

"I'll build on the areas that my teachers are passionate about and help them disseminate that passion."

"Inspirational! Loved the opportunity to be back in a 'learning environment' based on deepening subject and pedagogy. This is rare in a teaching career."

"Schemes of work will be re-written with a focus away from assessment and focus on content."

"Some fantastic speakers. This opportunity has re-invigorated my love of art and given me fantastic ideas. I think all teachers should do this!"

"A chance to reconnect with subject and generate ideas for extra teaching and enrichment opportunities. It has been a 'breathing space' from a busy school year."

"An enriching process that allows each attendee to grow and re-assess their own teaching while expanding their subject knowledge."

"I felt that this course gave me back my love for my subject."

"Being thrown together with a bunch of interesting and clever people, being bombarded with stimulation concepts and texts, throw in delicious food and excellent hospitality - I've felt challenged, enriched and inspired."

"A fantastic opportunity to hear exactly how the different panelists feel about the issues close to our hearts. This 'new' information will help me in my day to day planning and delivering now I understand their perspectives. I still challenge many of OFSTED's views but at least now I have a better understanding of how they've arrived at their views."