



## Newsletter – October 2011

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### Raising Standards – Glynis has a view do you?

There has been a lot said about standards in education over the past couple of weeks as OFQUAL launch a debate into how the qualification and exam system should operate. Many of the issues, OFQUAL acknowledge, are not new but they want to consider them in a 'new and more open light' prior to announcements about the curriculum review in early 2012. The issues to emerge so far are certainly not new and focus on three potentially contradictory themes

- 1) the clear and bald fact that employers remain unhappy that despite good GCSE passes young people lack the skills they need in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- 2) the Government relies on the exam results system as being integral to its school and FE reform programmes
- 3) we are falling behind in the global talent pool because our exam standards do not reflect the needs of learners in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

The contradiction as ever is based on the fact that the debate is about the product and not the process of learning and any discussion needs to involve the wider learning community both nationally and internationally to come up with a consensus about what learning and the outcomes of learning should look like in order that the end user, the employer is confident that the standards we use do ensure learners have the skills to work and become successful adults.

It has always and remains my conviction that we need to start early to help learners to develop a range of skills that will allow them to become independent problem solvers and risk takers, where creativity and the thrill of discovery is at the heart of the learning process. We can't measure this in an exam but what we can do is to create within our learners that love of learning that means they are ready to absorb and use the subject knowledge they need to achieve high grades at GCSE, A Level or their equivalents in the vocational world. The key to this is to develop in learners as early as possible a range of learning skills that in most cases they bring from their primary school and then build on them throughout their secondary journey and beyond.

The new OFSTED framework for 2012 seems to echo this view and includes in the schedule for Teaching and Learning the following criteria:-

- ❖ teaching enables pupils to develop skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics
- ❖ teachers use their expertise, including subject knowledge to develop pupils' skills and understanding across a range of subjects and areas of learning

It is all about how teachers, managers and other staff use active pedagogy and individuality to create outstanding learning opportunities that lead to progression, high standards and excellence in teaching and learning for all learners.

We look forward to working with you and hearing your thoughts about this debate,

Glynis Frater email [glynis@learningcultures.org](mailto:glynis@learningcultures.org)

## A Whole School Staff Development Perspective

The Learning Cultures team consists of a group of experts who have worked closely with the emergence of government policy, curriculum design and development and the science of teaching and learning. Our training and development offer is built on in-depth and high quality sector led research. We put coaching at the heart of everything we do so that delegates who attend our training can take back their learning and cascade it to others. Our programmes have been designed to support your staff from transition to GCSE and A Level, vocational learning, FE and beyond and we focus on learning and teaching and how to develop a whole school or college strategy that leads to a culture of reflective practice and professional dialogue.

Read on to see how we can support your staff in their quest for outstanding learning and teaching

Book now to attend one of our highly praised Transition events

[Crossing the Bridge](#)

[Key stage 2 to 3](#)

Research suggests that 39% of learners dip in performance at the end of their first year in secondary school. To address this stark statistic some schools have developed some innovative and practical approaches. We bring together some of the best practice and some original and inspirational solutions.

Following on from our very successful series of events focusing on the transition process from Key Stage 2 to 3 we are hosting a series of new events to bring together the wealth of ideas and good practice that exists. We hope to attract those who manage transition in year 7 and possibly their primary transition partners so that they have the opportunity to review teaching and learning in year 6 and year 7 and take away ideas to enhance and improve the process.

[22<sup>nd</sup> Nov London](#) [23<sup>rd</sup> November Warwick](#) [1<sup>st</sup> December Manchester](#)

[30<sup>th</sup> November Leeds](#) [2<sup>nd</sup> December Bristol](#)

Click on a date to book or go to our website [www.learningcultures.org](http://www.learningcultures.org)

email [info@learningcultures.org](mailto:info@learningcultures.org) and we will book it for you or telephone 01746 765076

Creating a cost effective sustainable CPD programme for your school

### [What Makes an Outstanding Teacher?](#)

Focusing on pedagogy, learner centred and applied learning and how to develop a range of skills that lead to outstanding practice and progression for all learners

[1st November London](#)

[7<sup>th</sup> November Birmingham](#)

[11<sup>th</sup> November Manchester](#)

[28<sup>th</sup> November Leeds](#)

[19<sup>th</sup> January Bristol](#)

[25<sup>th</sup> January Cardiff](#)

### [Cascading Excellence and Improvement through Coaching](#)

We train managers or teachers to coach so that they can promote high quality professional dialogue, reflection and the sharing of best practice and resources across the whole organisation

[1st November London](#)

[7<sup>th</sup> November Birmingham](#)

[11<sup>th</sup> November Manchester](#)

[28<sup>th</sup> November Leeds](#)

[19<sup>th</sup> January Bristol](#)

[25<sup>th</sup> January Cardiff](#)

These events stand alone or provide an excellent opportunity for two or more managers and teachers to work together to develop a range of complementary skills.

Click on a date to book or Book on line @ [www.learningcultures.org](http://www.learningcultures.org) email

[info@learningcultures.org](mailto:info@learningcultures.org) or telephone 01746 765076 / 07974 754241

## Creating Curriculum Connections – Maths, English and ICT across the Curriculum

We have experts who have been closely involved with creating highly innovative and exciting ways for how teachers engage with learners and colleagues to ensure a drive towards improved literacy, numeracy and ICT skills for all learners. We have three superb training opportunities that will support teachers of all subjects to focus on how to help learners use number in a context, develop excellent writing techniques, listening skills and competence in and a love of reading and be absolutely up to date with the latest technology and how it can enhance learning. These three events are the start of a journey towards improved performance across the curriculum where literacy, numeracy and ICT are critical components in higher level learning.

[Maths in Context – Making Connections across the Curriculum](#)

[Language, Literacy and Listening Across the Curriculum –Raising achievement in GCSE English](#)

[Effective use of ICT in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Curriculum](#)

For dates and venues click on the title of your choice

Book on line @ [www.learningcultures.org](http://www.learningcultures.org) email [info@learningcultures.org](mailto:info@learningcultures.org)

or telephone 01746 765076 / 07974 754241

### New for next term – visit the website for dates in the new year

- ❖ [Coaching the NQT – Going beyond Mentoring](#) – Newly qualified teachers are one of a schools best assets, they can be motivated, innovative and bring fresh new ideas. This event helps mentors to harness their enthusiasm and develop their potential
- ❖ [Developing Learner Voice](#) – We focus on learning and active pedagogy to ensure that teachers develop the skills to help learners be more aware of how they learn and how they can develop techniques that support their ability to progress and develop higher level learning skills
- ❖ [Coaching for Support Staff](#) – We are building on our very successful series Coaching for Cover Supervisors and offering a similar programme for all support staff. Creating opportunities for support staff and teachers to work closely together and develop a positive dialogue that supports seamless learning can and fosters unique opportunities for team and collaborative working
- ❖ [Transition from Key Stage 3 to 4](#) – Focusing on skills development so that learners are more equipped to develop the autonomous, independent and creative skills that lead to deep learning and the seamless ability to achieve a C or above at GCSE. We look at a range of strategies that can support a thematic approach to learning post options in year 9 or 8 that involves the learners in problem solving, creative thinking and partnership or team working

## Foundation Learning –creating pathways for learners achieving below a GCSE Grade A\* - C

Foundation Learning continues to be high on the policy agenda with a focus on achievement for all. The emphasis on ensuring those learners working below a C at GCSE or who are unable to achieve GCSEs and who are working at entry level can progress and achieve is still a very important part of Government policy. It is part of the plan to possibly merge the NQF and the QCF to make the whole process less complicated and ensuring that those planning the curriculum for these learners have the widest possible choice of curriculum options. We are running a further series of our Progressive Learning – Planning a Programme of Foundation Learning where SENCOs and others with responsibility for this group of learners can plan how to deliver a truly innovative and inspirational curriculum offer.

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## Let us plan your next inset

We can take the strain and put together an INSET package to support teaching and learning. We will work with you to develop a programme linked to your specific vision for your organisation. We use our SCOPE framework to ensure the training received is closely linked to strategies for whole school sustainable and continuous improvement. We have a repertoire of training and development opportunities that link to all key stages and focus on high quality teaching and learning, curriculum innovation and the management of change. We use coaching as a basis for ensuring your staff can take the skills and knowledge they gain and develop further training opportunities themselves thus cascading excellence and improvement across the whole organisation.

Contact us via the website [www.learningcultures.org](http://www.learningcultures.org) email [info@learningcultures.org](mailto:info@learningcultures.org) or telephone 01746 765076 / 07974 754241

## Resources

We know how difficult it is at the moment to fund staff development but we also know how important it is to train staff at a time when standards are so closely scrutinised. Why not buy our first CPD in a box which will give you a complete 'What Makes an Outstanding Teacher?' training module to deliver to your staff. There is no real substitute to having a face to face opportunity to work with experts but we are fully aware of the financial constraints and we are confident that our materials are so good that you will still achieve a great deal by using them. This retails at £199.00 and there is no limit to the amount of times you can use it to deliver dynamic training to groups of teachers within your school

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## Policy Watch

Read the report from the Sutton Trust – Improving the impact of teachers on pupil achievement in the UK – interim findings – September 2011. It reveals interesting insights into the impact of teacher effectiveness on outcomes for young people. The report has been commissioned to develop policy proposals for improving the effectiveness of teachers in England. The research evidence in the report suggests that improving the effectiveness of teachers would have a major impact on the performance of the country's schools. <http://www.suttontrust.com/research/improving-the-impact-of-teachers-on-pupil-achievement-in-the-uk/>

Find out more about the Standards Debate by visiting OFQUALs website via this link <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/news-and-announcements/130/757>



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