

**St. Benedict's College**  
**Policy on Staff Development**  
**March 2015-2016**

**Introduction - What is Staff Development?**

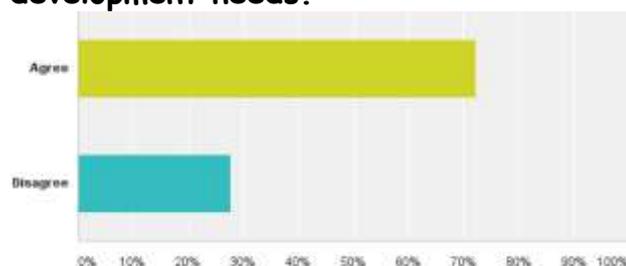
Staff Development is integral to the School Development Planning process. It provides all staff (staff incorporates teaching, administrative, ancillary and auxiliary staff) with the opportunity, to extend their fields of expertise through training and retraining in the context of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996. This will lead to an improvement in curriculum delivery and enhance pupil experience.

**91% of Non teaching Staff felt that their professional needs are being met through School development day training?**

**Staff Development Aims**

1. To develop staff expertise and knowledge in order to enable them to carry out their jobs more effectively.
2. To keep staff members up to date with changes in Education Order legislation, the Northern Ireland Curriculum and the implementation of the Entitlement Framework.
3. To ensure by school based inset that any teacher having attended a course will disseminate information to other relevant members of staff.
4. To enhance personal professional development.
5. To effectively implement school policies.
6. To provide links with the Performance Review and Staff Development Scheme and TCN (Trusted Colleague Network)

**72% of Staff surveyed said that the PRSD and TCN cycle is used to identify and to meet the individual staff development needs.**



Education is not a static concept and staff is expected to provide for each pupil an education that is appropriate to his/ her needs, abilities and aspirations and appropriate to the needs of our society.

Perceived changes in the needs of our society together with legislative and technological change would suggest that staff must at all times be as well placed as possible to deliver the curriculum appropriately. This being the case there is a clear need for staff to have the opportunity to enhance and/ or update their expertise in order that they may fulfil their responsibilities more effectively.

It is the view of the Principal, Board of Governors and staff of St. Benedict's College that all staff have the right to avail themselves of training which will help them develop in terms of their efficiency and in terms of their own personal development. It is also our view that training may be provided from a variety of sources which should include expertise already existent within the school.

In deciding to support staff development activities, requested or identified, senior management will take into account a number of needs-based criteria which may include financial, timetable and curriculum considerations. In order for a staff development initiative to be supported, it will be necessary for it to satisfy these criteria in whole or in part. The criteria to be considered are:

needs implied by the Education Order (Northern Ireland) 1996 and subsequent legislation;

needs arising from mandatory regulations or government directives;

needs arising from the aims of the school and the 'School Development Plan';

needs of the distinctive curricular, extra-curricular and pastoral provision of St.

Benedict's College;

needs arising from fluctuations in enrolment;

needs arising from the professional development of staff collectively and individually;

needs arising from the mismatch between curriculum and staffing;

needs arising from advances in technology;

needs arising from the education of pupils with special educational needs - including statemented pupils;

financial implications of the school budget;

curriculum and timetable implications in relation to the impact of the release of teachers from teaching duties;

needs arising from the PRSD initiative.

**NB** The rationale which underline the above criteria are detailed below and are intended to provide clarification of their purpose.

### **Needs implied by the Educational Order (Northern Ireland) 1996**

The implementation of the Educational Order has created in some areas needs for in-service provision. These areas are:

the training/ retraining of staff to provide a broad and balanced curriculum to all pupils; 86% of staff feel that the Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 Curricula provide a broad and balanced programme of learning which promotes continuity and progression in the pupils' learning? (StaffSurvey March 2016)

the training of staff at middle management and at senior management level to deal with 'Local Management of Schools';

the training of staff at middle management and senior management to manage change;

the training of staff in the techniques of assessment and assessment procedures;

the preparation of staff for the implementation of the Entitlement Framework and development of teaching materials for the delivery of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

### **Needs arising from mandatory regulations or government directives**

Where appropriate, participation in in-service provision which responds to the demands of mandatory regulations and/ or government directives will be encouraged, particularly in the following areas:

- (a) induction for pupils;
- (b) seminars on social issues of which staff awareness is needed;
- (c) seminars/ courses on health and safety issues;
- (d) preparation session for developing and implementing, whole school initiatives.

## **Needs arising from the aims of the School and the School Development Plan**

The aims of the school provide a context for the delivery of the curriculum. Where it is seen that there is an opportunity for an area of the curriculum to enhance the manner in which it addresses the aims of the school, it will be our intention to encourage staff with responsibility in that particular area to partake of training made available from whatever suitable source, in order that the school aims may be more comprehensively fulfilled.

## **Needs of the distinctive Curricular, Extra-Curricular and Pastoral provision of St. Benedict's College**

Staff will be encouraged to participate in INSET activities which may improve the development, delivery and evaluation of curricular and extra-curricular activities at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 taking account of the following:

- (a) the ability of the pupils;
- (b) the behaviour patterns of pupils;
- (c) the social background of pupils;
- (d) the needs of industry, commerce and the community.

## **Needs arising from fluctuations in enrolment and/ or mismatch between the curriculum and staffing**

Fluctuations in enrolment and changes resulting from the implementation of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, may affect the subject areas to be offered to the pupils of the school. Where there is a falling enrolment, and a shrinking staff, the loss of staff may not necessarily reflect the overall change in enrolment. Staff pre-empting redundancy may leave from shortage areas and a consequent imbalance may occur within the staff. In such circumstances it may be necessary to encourage teachers to retrain in another subject area to ensure that the school is able to offer a broad and balanced curriculum. To this end, where appropriate to the needs of the school, and where suitable training exists, suitable members of staff will be encouraged to avail themselves of certified courses which qualify them to teach additional alternative subjects. This will also provide opportunities for continuing personal professional development for such staff. Also and where appropriate, teaching staff may be encouraged to follow courses of a similarly extended nature which will allow them to raise their level of qualification for a secondary subject.

A growing enrolment will, eventually allow for the employment of additional staff. This may provide opportunities to redress any imbalance which might have existed in the composition of the school's staff. However it may, in this situation, be necessary for some teachers still to participate in training similar to that outlined above, to make them more

flexible in fulfilling teaching roles in areas of the curriculum where teacher shortage makes it difficult to fill posts.

**Needs arising from the professional development of staff collectively and individually - including the needs of Beginning Teachers**

The desire of teaching staff to enhance their professional development should be encouraged. Training undertaken will be of advantage to teachers and to the school for a variety of reasons:

- (a) it provides them with opportunities to keep abreast of educational developments;
- (b) it provides them with opportunities to demonstrate their commitment to their profession;
- (c) it provides them with opportunities to better place themselves for promotion prospects either in our own school or in others;
- (d) it provides them with opportunities to become more proficient in the teaching of their specialist Subject;
- (e) it provides them with opportunities to train into new subject areas;
- (f) it provides them with opportunities to develop their understanding of the ethos of St. Benedict's College;
- (g) it provides them with opportunities to take their place as members of the teaching profession.

A coherent programme for the induction of new teachers, including probationary teachers, should seek to ensure that staff are successfully integrated into the ethos and management arrangements of the school. It should involve aspects of induction to teaching and to the school itself and may be contributed to by the school, NEELB and DENI. Such a programme should, at a school level, ensure that new staff are provided with all relevant information and advice relating to the school's internal organisation for both staff and pupils. The induction programme should clarify for staff the relationship of the school to the community it serves. It should also seek to promote an approach to teaching and learning designed to support the values and traditions unique to the school.

A well informed and qualified teaching staff can provide a strong baseline in terms of staff morale and can provide the school with the collective expertise to cope with curriculum development and changes of a 'macro' nature which have implications for the conceptual framework of education itself.

Training contributing to the personal, professional development of staff may not necessarily take place during the school day. The commitment of staff to participate in such training outside directed time, should be praised by their colleagues and an active interest should be taken in their endeavours while support should be given to them to encourage them to 'see it through'.

To this end staff should be made aware of opportunities to enhance their professional development and requests to facilitate the uptake of training should be sympathetically considered.

To take into account the growing popularity of the 'Professional Qualification for Headship' it is intended that the Board of Governors and Senior Leadership Team would look sympathetically upon one application per year from staff for this course. It does demand considerable support from the Principal in particular.

### **Needs arising from advances in technology**

Technological advances are so rapid that teaching staff and support staff need to constantly update their knowledge and skills. All staff should be encouraged to participate in available training that will result in:

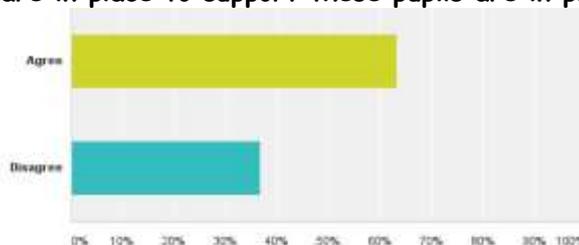
- (a) familiarisation with, and awareness of, developments in the C2K and other platforms;
- (b) familiarisation with, and awareness of software;
- (c) familiarisation with, and awareness of subject based applications of technology.

### **Needs arising from the education of children with special needs, including statemented pupils**

It is often considered that the greatest support for pupils with special needs is in relation to literacy and numeracy skills. This would seem to suggest that outside the realms of application of number and communication studies there is less need for expertise within staff to help identify areas of weakness within individual pupils. This is a point of view not shared by the staff of St. Benedict's College, indeed the requirements of the curriculum place a responsibility on all teachers to deliver the schemes for all subjects appropriately, and to all pupils, exemptions only being possibly in certain circumstances for those pupils having statements of special educational needs which mitigate against full participation.

This being the case it is obvious that it is in the interests of all teachers and support staff in St. Benedict's College to acquire the skills needed to assist them deliver their schemes at an appropriate level. As a consequence of this the following staff development process might be appropriate in relation to special needs INSET:

**63% of staff think that the current processes for (a) identifying pupils with special needs and (b) ensuring appropriate strategies are in place to support these pupils are in place?**



- (a) the identification, by departments of their training needs in relation to provision for special needs pupils;
- (b) appropriate liaison with special unit teachers to enlist their support in training teachers in appropriate skills;
- (c) through contact with advisers, to encourage the NEELB to provide appropriate courses in allsubject areas to assist teachers to develop skills in providing for special needs pupils;
- (d) to identify our own specific needs, either at departmental or whole school level, and to devise our own programme of training to be delivered within the school by staff already possessing relevant experience or by experts provided by, or sourced by, appropriate NEELB advisors.

### **Needs arising from the PRSD TCN initiative**

The Board of Governors has a legal responsibility to ensure that the professional development and performance of teachers employed within their school is reviewed annually in accordance with the PRSD TCN scheme and within the context of the School Development Plan. The PRSD TCN scheme shall be used in connection with any matter relating to the professional development programme for teachers.

The relevant aims of the scheme are to:

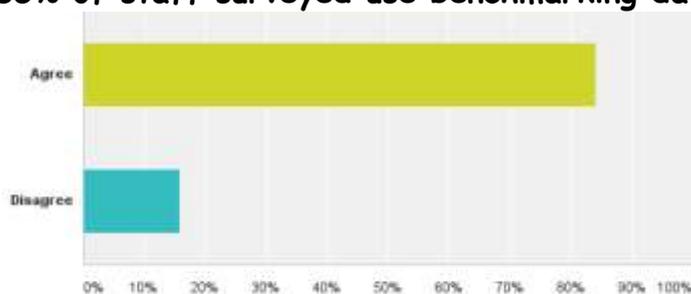
- (a) recognise the contribution of teachers to achieving the aims of the school development plan and help them to identify ways of enhancing their skills and performance;

- (b) identify the professional needs and necessary resources to support teachers, in their professional development and career progression;
- (c) increase teachers' participation in decision-making and career planning and develop a greater sense of control over their work;
- (d) enhance the quality of education;
- (e) inform the management of school;
- (f) improve teacher motivation and morale;
- (g) be seen by staff as enabling.

### **Departments Reflections Arising From Pupil and Self Evaluation**

Over the past few Years our Quality Assurance Team have surveyed our stakeholders extensively this provides evidence of how well Staff are delivering the curriculum. We will continue to develop our Staff focusing on self-evaluation, Trusted Colleague Network and Pupil evaluation of a subject and the teaching. This will further embed the culture of reflective practitioners amongst Staff leading to greater self-development and improved high quality Teaching and Learning.

#### **85% of staff surveyed use benchmarking data effectively for improvement?**



### **Guiding Principles**

#### **Identification and Prioritisation of Needs**

In the context of staff development, priority will be given to those needs directly related to the priority issues identified in the school's development plan, which tend to be whole-school in nature, and to the priority issues identified in departmental development plans which will be more directly related to the delivery of the schemes of work. All subject leaders should, therefore, communicate the staff development needs related to these priority issues to the Assistant-principal. An attempt will then be made to meet the

priority needs at both whole school and departmental levels in accordance with the resources available for staff development.

### Co-ordination and Planning of Staff Development Days

A broad plan will be established at the beginning of each school year which outlines in broad terms, the intended use which is to be made of Staff Development Days and other exceptional closure days. The specific purpose to which these days will be put will be established by the Senior Leadership Team but it is expected that the programmes of support on offer on these days will reflect the priority needs identified through development plans, at both whole school and departmental level. Flexibility will, however, be built into this procedure so that other priority issues which may arise, can be addressed, as appropriate.

### Procedures for Attendance at Courses:

- a. Teachers should fill in a course application form and present it to the principal;
- b. The Principal will assess the request on its merits;
- c. The Principal will communicate the decision to the Assistant-Principal who will communicate the decision to the member of staff;
- d. If the application is successful the member of staff will attend and upon his/ her return to school will complete a Course Evaluation Form stating how he/s he intends to disseminate the information gained.