

WESTON
EDUCATION
PARTNERSHIP

UPDATE

A Bulletin for Weston Federation Staff

It is only seven months since we officially became a Federation but what a fantastic amount we have all achieved since then! There are lots of exciting developments in the pipeline and we look forward to working with you next term.

Julaine Baldan, Director of the Weston Education Partnership

Federation Students hit National Record!

Since purchasing SAM Learning as part of our attainment and achievement strategy, Federation students have stacked up impressive user rates. An evaluation looking at the impact of SAM Learning on KS3 and KS4 performance will take place later in the year. We are currently investigating how SAM Learning can be integrated into the curriculum to further support learning and teaching in the next academic year.

Student Parliament Speaks out on “Vision for Weston”

Members of the Student Parliament met with Councillor Alan Hockeridge at their last Parliament meeting in May. They were given the opportunity to share their views on how Weston can best meet the needs of young people in the future.



Students and their schools see benefits of Horticulture Pathfinder Project

Following the successful implementation of phase one of this exciting and innovative Federation project, members of the 6 schools led by Colin Riddington (Worle) have submitted a bid to the DfES for funding to support phase 2. The project involves students in planning and implementing improvements to school sites in a way that promotes life skills, self esteem and a sense of ownership for the local environment. A significant part of this scheme will involve the formation of mini enterprise projects at the schools.



Joint Twilight Curriculum gives Students even Greater Choice!

From September 2004 over 40 Year 10 students will be studying courses in Spanish, German, ICT and Technology (Textiles) in twilight time in a Federation School — and it may not necessarily be their own! A programme of enrichment activities ranging from Martial Arts to Latin is also in preparation and will be open to students across the Federation. Federation working at its best!

Partnership Working with Weston Hospital

Our links with Weston Hospital are growing stronger and we can look forward to real gains by working together. Already Priory's 'School to Work' programme has input from trainee nurses and Broadoak's ICT double award is looking to have its 'ICT in the workplace' module significantly supported by the Hospital's Management Information Systems team.

The Weston Area Health Trust is currently establishing an Academy on its main site. As a state of the art training centre, its vision of 'Out of the Building' encapsulates an intention to reach out into the community as a resource. A future is envisaged where Federation Schools make use of the expertise available, both on the new site, in our classrooms and via a new virtual learning community. They are looking to us for support and guidance on what young people want and need from their Healthcare Trusts, both in educational and career terms.

Strand Co-ordinator Appointments

We would like to offer the following staff our congratulations following their appointment to the role of Strand Co-ordinator within the Federation.

Learning & Teaching Strand — Jane Barry (Worle)

CPD Strand — Pete Binding (Worle)

Organisation Strand — Chris Hunt (Priory)

Information and Communication Technology — appointment pending

Graduate Research Placements.

From September our schools could benefit from the support of two enthusiastic graduates who we are hoping to appoint as Aim Higher Researchers. The researchers based in either Broadoak/Wyvern or Worle/Priory will carry out action research for approximately 40% of their time. They will also provide additional mentoring support to Aim Higher students and work with Co-ordinators to deliver and evaluate Aim Higher activities. These are exciting developments that will impact powerfully upon our schools.

New Initiative to Boost Teacher Recruitment

The Federation now subscribes to E-Teach following the negotiation of a special deal for the partnership. E-Teach, an on-line recruitment package, hosts adverts for teaching and non-teaching posts at low cost for indefinite periods of time.

The site provides information to prospective candidates about individual schools and the benefits of working as part of the Weston Education Partnership.

The package also provides an overview of staffing vacancies across the Federation allowing us to point surplus candidates in the direction of vacancies in partner schools.

PORTAL Plays Host to Federation Communities

The South West Grid for Learning PORTAL is being introduced to Schools in North Somerset. The PORTAL has a wide range of functions one of which is to host groups of people or 'communities' who wish to share good practice and exchange views and ideas. A Science network already exists and we are in the process of setting up communities for the Student Parliament and Aim Higher cohort.

Federation Schools Pilot New Virtual Learning Environment

During the last six months schools in the Federation have been working together in subject pairs to pilot the development of a Virtual Learning Environment for students. As the project develops, students will increasingly be able to access on-line learning activities at school, home or elsewhere by connection through the internet. The provision of on-line high quality educational content will contribute to the raising of standards of learning and teaching.

Does the Idea of Undertaking Educational Research Appeal to you? If so, read on.

An Innovation Research fund has been set up to support small scale research activity in our schools. Research themes will be established by negotiation, backed by our partner HEIs who are keen to offer professional research and academic support. It may be possible to have your research accredited as units towards a further professional qualification. Funding is available to cover travel, supply, reprographics and any HEI costs . More information can be gained from your CPD Co-ordinator or Nigel Cromey-Hawke at the WEP office.

Federation In-service Day October 20th 2004.

The Federation In-service Day is now scheduled to coincide with the North Somerset day on October 20th. Subject departments, centralised in schools around the LEA, will get to grips with the Assessment for Learning agenda. Lead input from consultants and ASTs will be followed by Federation-based seminars and workshops. The chance to subject network and plan real impact upon classroom practice is the intention . Lunch provided as well!

Disaggregated Days and In-service Training.

Three twilight sessions have been agreed and will pursue Federation training priorities. Sessions will make use of a combination of disaggregated in-service day and directed time to create three training slots running from 3-30 until 5-30pm . The first session will encompass mentor training for all staff, to include lesson observation, feedback skills, target setting etc. This will be run in conjunction with our HEI partners. The second session will be a follow up on the Assessment for Learning day, with in-school , practical, subject-based working. The final session will be on PORTAL / VLE developments.

Federation Task Groups and Networks

A number of groups have already been formed to explore different ways of working to support learners across the partnership.

- Attainment & Achievement
- Resources and Facilities
- PR, Communications and Marketing
- Recruitment
- Learning Support Units
- Business Managers

If you would like to join one of these task groups, or are thinking of setting up one of your own, please call the WEP office.

National Professional Qualification for Headship

Three of the Federation's senior managers have this month gained their NPQH awards and will be attending their graduations in the summer. George Croxford (Wyvern), Pete Binding (Worle) and Nigel Cromey-Hawke (WEP) were all successful. Well done!

ITT Targets smashed!

The involvement of Federation Schools in Initial Teacher Training has grown significantly since 2003. From a baseline of 30 ITT students, schools have already committed to 62 places for 2004/5. This means we have exceeded our 2004/5 and 2005/6 targets for the Teacher Training Agency. The trainees will be in Federation Schools across nearly all subject areas, bringing new ideas and energy, sharing practice and developing our own capacity. With one teacher's training being another's CPD, we look forward to even higher quality learning and teaching in our schools as a result. Federation and HEI funding has been utilised to enhance the roles of Professional and Associate Tutors to manage the training programmes. Professional development opportunities are being made available in some schools to support existing post holders.

The Federation is also offering Fast Track and Graduate Teacher Programme routes towards QTS in 2004/5. Links with Weston College are strong and we are looking at 16+ experiences for our trainees to give them the fullest programme possible. Many thanks to all colleagues in the ITT Strand who have made this possible. Could Federation Training School status be next?

Westhaven ITT Placements

In our last newsletter, we reported how ITT trainees had visited Special Schools to gain insights into how they work. For the first time a complete practice placement was undertaken by two 2nd Year trainees in Westhaven School, a tremendous experience for all. Thanks especially to Headteacher Jenny Moss for making this possible.

Paired Placements for Trainees

The Federation is one of a few organisations around the country taking up the TTA Cumbria pilot of paired ITT placements in schools. The pilot involves two trainees taking responsibility, together with the class teacher, for one class. Joint planning results in one trainee delivering a part of the agreed lesson whilst being observed by the others. Feedback is powerful and almost immediate and the knowledge transfer between all significant. Federation Schools are running this model together with Bath Spa University in the subject areas of ICT, PE and Art.

**Priory School Pioneers PPVP Course
(Perspectives on Professional Values
and Practice)**

Priory School is pioneering the Bath Spa University PPVP course. This programme will take some 20 or more ITT trainees through a programme of seminars and lesson observations, supported by other schools across the Federation. Trainees will see first hand the professional expectations and practice elements of Qualified Teacher Status.

Staff Social Events –date for your diary

Many thanks to Sarah Penn (Worle school) for her energy and enthusiasm which has already resulted in a highly successful pub quiz for Federation staff last term.

Sarah is planning another social quiz on September 10th at the Pavilion pub. So make this a diary date and get yourselves a killer team together for this next event. Poster with further details to follow.

Have a great Summer from all of us at the WEP office!