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talk2learn highlights

Inspiring leaders;
improving children's lives

Issue 10b

In case you missed it...

Recent highlights from NCSL in Dialogue, talk2learn's
online community for national education debate

Also available as a podcast

Up close and personal

Issues arising from the personalised learning debate were tackled in a recent Leadership Network Online event in talk2learn.

Much discussion centred on how leaders could ensure progress and attainment by all learners in their schools.

Michael O'Brien, a deputy head in Preston, said upholding the basics of monitoring, discussion, feedback and review was paramount:

"Use a marking policy that is child-friendly so that the pupil voice is valued and allow them to feed back to the teacher on what went well," he said.

"If they need help, they can ask privately; conversely, as my year 5 class does if something is too easy, they jot things like 'got this now, getting easy, what next?'"

Soheila Mathison, principal of an international school in Modena, Italy, described how parents are told the learning objectives at the beginning of each unit of enquiry.

"At the end, parents are invited to the school and children explain what they have done, what they have learnt and give suggestions on how they could improve on different aspects of their learning.

"This format has been a tool to motivate the less-motivated while the teachers, the leadership team and *all the stakeholders have a very good understanding of the progress being made.*"

Peter Rattu, an assistant head in Bedfordshire, said his school's tracking methods feature half-termly assessments, enabling staff to identify with ease under-achieving students as well as those making good progress.

"It leads to tutors becoming learning mentors to allow academic tutorials to take place where progress, or lack of it, can be discussed and appropriate targets set," he added.



"It has its flaws. Getting accurate data, particularly on boys, is a nightmare!"

Vanessa Stevens, an acting head in Hampshire, reported her pupils making 'huge leaps' with 'water-tight' assessment and planning shared with the pupils.

"Marking and feedback then focuses on the next steps and the whole cycle starts again," she said. "We are just beginning to distribute our monitoring roles to our middle managers, allowing the Senior Leadership Team to focus on strategic issues arising from this cycle."

If you are not yet a member of talk2learn and would like to join, more information is available at www.ncsl.org.uk/onlinecommunities