



Researching Practice for improved Learning

Following on from three successful years of engaging teachers from the Royal Greenwich Teaching School Alliance (RG TSA) in action research for change, the Alliance is proposing a further cycle of action research opportunities. This document describes the mechanism for making this a reality in your school.

The classic work by Carr and Kemmis (1986) describe action research as being about:

- the improvement of practice;
- the improvement of the understanding of practice;
- the improvement of the situation in which the practice takes place.

Research has informed us that the most effective forms of continuing professional development (CPD) (BERA/RSA 2014) involve:

- the use of specialist advisors and external experts
- collaborative enquiry and structured peer support
- the opportunity to explore why things do and don't 'work'
- the exploration and challenging of teachers own beliefs and assumptions (p.25 – 27).

'All the research indicates that enquiry-orientated learning is not a quick-fix, but needs to be a sustained over time to ensure that learning (for both teachers and pupils) actually takes place'. (BERA/RCA 2014: 26)

The RG TSA wants to continue to make this form of teacher-led inquiry part of the practice in our schools. Professor Andrew Lambirth from the University of Greenwich has over twenty years' experience of working alongside teachers on dynamic action research projects designed to investigate and enrich teaching and learning. Andrew and his team want to inspire teachers to investigate their practice in ways which will have long-term, sustainable outcomes.

The Mechanism

Schools will have the opportunity to send teachers to participate in action research with the RG TSA in a programme across the academic year. The projects begin in October 2017.

October 2017 - July 2018

Choices about who will participate will be influenced by school strategic development plans, individual targets and priorities for individual members of staff or year groups or phases. The focus of the action research projects can be curriculum development, pedagogy, behaviour management or any other area that requires improvement or greater understanding.

Support will be provided by experienced researchers from the University of Greenwich in the following ways:

- One afternoon (1.30 – 4.30) introduction to action research methods
- Six 90 minute twilight meetings per cycle to plan and implement their study at a venue convenient to participants
- Extra individual consultation and support meetings
- Access to relevant and useful research literature to inform the study
- Training in relevant methodology and data collection techniques (including ethical considerations)
- Support with the analysis of research data
- Support with planning, action, evaluation and reflection
- Support with the dissemination and publication of results – international/national conference attendance, journal articles etc.
- Opportunities to gain University Masters credits.

Transforming Practice

The impact of the individual studies will be measured by the evaluation stage of the action research cycle. Data will be collected from a number of relevant sources and from data collection techniques built into the design of the projects.

As in the best traditions of action research, at all stages of the cycle the work of colleagues will be open to challenge and debate from all the teachers directly involved in the studies and from colleagues in the participating schools.

The 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 cohorts of RG TSA teacher-researchers have disseminated their work by presenting their findings by writing for publication in professional journals and publications of reports on the RG TSA website.

Meeting Schedule

Session Outlines

An introduction to action research; selecting the focus; planning the action research cycle (1.30 – 4.30)

Reading the literature in the field

Session 1: Interrogating the literature; seeking further information; considering ethics (twilight sessions)

Collecting data

Session 2: Interrogating the data; drafting plans for action

Completing plans

Session 3: Implementation of plans and creating evaluation tools (twilight sessions)

Collecting data for evaluation

Session 4: Monitoring the action and evaluation (twilight sessions)

Evaluation

Session 5: Learning from the action and evaluation/dissemination (twilight sessions)

Session 6: Planning dissemination (twilight sessions)

If you would like to be involved please contact: Professor Andrew Lambirth
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