

Showing You're Working Project

Interim Meeting Minutes

Present Jackie; Ed; Garrod

Garrod: thanked both Ed and Jackie for their efforts in advancing the project so far, especially considering they are both full time teachers of mathematics. Garrod also stressed that there is a grant from the NCETM which is specifically designed to help teachers conduct project business, especially if cover was required for aspects of the project.

Action: *Garrod will design an expenses claim form for the project and circulate for use by members.*

Then during the informal meeting teachers spoke openly about their experiences;

Garrod: "Second generation" project spin off activities, photocopies of the assembly associated with maths day, and Oliver Lawn were handed out. Also he discussed the floor tile project, and chatted about the initiative at a national level.

Ed & Jackie: chatted about their experiences since January. Ed sent a slightly amended general template to former pupils and parents using the schools old boys' network; this provoked a chat about ways of advertising/raising the profile of such a project and Jackie and Ed came up with the following list;

school website;

school magazine/newsletter;

electronic school mailing;

parents evening

Contacting Former Pupils and Parents

Both Jackie and Ed have had success with this aspect of the project. In a comparatively short space of time both have received feedback from interested parties; Jackie and Ed have also sent out the template of questions to a number of parents and/or former pupils, and received completed replies. (a sample of these were passed on to Garrod during the meeting). Garrod mentioned his experience and how he had to "encourage" former pupils to respond and complete their template questions, in some cases a mail shot was sent out three or four times asking for completed entries. Jackie also highlighted her school's 50th anniversary celebrations as an ideal way of raising the profile of the project. Jackie also is now going to try some less formal methods of contacting students, by targeting several ex pupils who she is in contact with, who then might be able to cascade the information to their peers.

Generally the project has been well received by departments and SMT in both schools; interestingly HoD's have been keen to implement the attitudinal testing questionnaire.

Attitudinal data collection and analysis

Using the attitudinal pupil questionnaire, both schools have now collected data, and the next step is analysis of data. After some discussion it was decided that probably spreadsheets would be a useful way to at least collate the information. Garrod also encouraged staff to use some of the grant

funding for supply cover to free up time for analysis of the whole school data generated – especially if there is more than one set of data – ie. analysis 1 Jan; analysis 2 June for example.

Jackie did raise a potential issue with the wording of the “relevancy” questions as some of her pupils had left those blank. Garrod will go back and look carefully at those – as he came up with the wording all by himself!!!

Action: Garrod send out the template he used for recording the individual responses using excel, and think about the best way to design the data recording sheet, which should become one of the generic documents for future schools.

Action: Garrod will contact Jim Ridgeway at Durham University – who designed the questionnaire to ask how best they analysed and interpreted the data they collected.

It was felt that there were a number of positives with using such a survey, and that the students could give feedback regarding mathematics at school. Particular comments of note were; A low maintenance questionnaire was very good to provide an initial snapshot at the beginning of the academic year or possibly each term. A suggested addition to the survey might be to provide an option which enables students to suggest possible questions which are not included but which might be important in the individual school context– although this requires some caution, for obvious reasons! A baseline survey could also be used as a teaching tool as a snapshot, but using their data as a longitudinal study over time it could also provide evidence to illustrate how practice has changed.

Chatting about helpful ideas for the project provoked a response regarding the Archival system that needed to be in place to respond efficiently to any parental and student replies during a busy term. Both Ed and Jackie described ways in which they had managed their responses. It was decided that before a school embarked on the project and began sending out e-mails to former pupils they should ideally have a method for organising and filing e-mails in place. This would enable staff members to reply and file the responses quickly and efficiently.

Next Steps

Ed has a “headstart” with the alumni network already set up, and has received a good number of responses already. He is keen to incorporate the information gleaned from parents and former students into classroom teaching ASAP;

Action; Ed to try to incorporate some examples where appropriate into teaching next term – if possible! With one eye on the presentation in London in June and the article for the NCETM website; this could be a very important aspect of the feedback that we give – illustrating how the project has influenced teaching practices in schools.

Please note for information I thought you both might like the following links, you have probably seen them, but just in case – each of these might supplement any examples you receive. Also if you come across any other links which show similar information do let me know and I will compile a list which again we can give out to schools.

The Plus Maths careers info <http://plus.maths.org/interview.html>

Maths Careers info <http://www.mathscareers.org.uk/>

IMA School Speaker Scheme http://www.ima.org.uk/Education/school_speaker_scheme.html

Jackie discussed her experiences trying to set up an alumni network, and how Face book might be a good way of trying to reach a large target audience. She is currently working with a sixth form student to attempt to set up a site for this purpose. Garrod also talked about the letter that the IMA has sent to the commercial manager at Friends Reunited on our behalf, and we await their response.

Action; Jackie to document her experiences with setting up of an alumni site to eventually become a guidelines document for schools in a similar position

Action: Garrod will chat with IMA contacts regarding uses of Face book for commercial purposes.

Parental talks were discussed as both Jackie and Ed have several parents who are keen to be involved. Potential issues with regards bullying of students by peers if a parent came to talk about maths in their workplace. This was discussed, and Garrod suggested contacting Steve Humble who has some experience of schools doing something similar in the North East. Steve responded in a very supportive way, and suggested that the NE. schools have not had much of an issue with this as the perception of the students was this is an integral part of the way maths is now being taught in schools. It will be interesting to see your experience of this?

Issues with regards to copyright and permission for publication were raised, especially videoing talks, or using case study material in publicity for schools or indeed project purposes.

Action: any document that is received from a former pupil – when responding to thank them, include a statement that asks for such permission to be given.

The issue of the presentation in London was discussed on June 28th. Jackie expressed some reservation as this was the time that Universities normally have their away days, and therefore there will be issues with cover. Note as we speak I have just opened a letter from Alison Hooper of UWE inviting students to their open day on the 25th of June.

Action: Garrod to approach NCETM to see if some of the grant money could be used for the purpose of travel expenses to the conference.

Finally the issue of work experience placements were discussed. Year 10 students were highlighted by both schools. Garrod suggested contacting Adam Elgar from Conexions in Bristol who is working in partnership with NCETM to provide opportunities for teachers to visit the workplace to see maths in action and then to video examples which can then be unpicked and used as teaching and learning material in schools. Follow the link below for details;

<http://www.ncetm.org.uk/Default.aspx?page=41&module=research&researchid=7969>

Action: Garrod will meet Adam and suggest possible collaboration ideas; also Garrod might contact the IMA to formulate this idea more formally?

To give you an idea of other research ideas through NCETM involving workplace initiatives please see below;

<http://www.ncetm.org.uk/Default.aspx?page=14&module=search&mode=101&searchsection=5&searchsortorder=0&searchtopicids=10184>

To conclude the meeting we discussed the need to potentially recruit other likeminded teachers who might like to have an opportunity to pilot the project in their schools, and staff/schools were identified.

Action: Ed and Jackie provide Garrod with contact details for these individuals; then Garrod will approach them in turn.