



Professional Development

Rational and Expectations 2021-22

MAXIMISING POTENTIAL



Coaching

“Coaching is the art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of another” Myles Downey (2003)

“Coaching is unlocking a person’s potential to maximise their own performance.” John Whitmore (1996)

Key Principles

People and their potential drive school improvement. In order to maximise school improvement within our family of schools, we strive to attend to the people within our organisation through the development of a coaching culture across the Trust. It is through the medium of coaching that we seek to work with human potential rather than human frailties and deficiencies.

Through a coaching culture we aim to develop professionals who:

- are self – aware and emotionally intelligent
- show humility and learn from their mistakes
- are able to engage with others and create positive working relationships
- are able to lead teams effectively
- can handle their responsibilities and accept accountability
- can positively influence and foster commitment in others
- show resilience

School improvement and the development of a coaching culture.

Sustained school improvement and the long-term success of an organisation is reliant on the people within that organisation. Therefore, it follows that it is vital to nurture a strong, resilient and effective workforce within all the schools in the Rowan Learning Trust. The development of a strong coaching culture across the Trust and within individual school is fundamental to the ongoing improvement and success of our schools.

‘Organisational problems are fundamentally problems involving human interactions and processes.

No matter what technical, financial or other matters may be involved, there will always be humans in the design and implementation.

A thorough understanding of the human processes and the ability to improve such processes are therefore fundamental to organisational improvement’

Whilst acknowledging that a strong coaching culture can bring about school improvement, a strong coaching culture can specifically impact upon the organisation in the following ways:

Coaching:

- Can accelerate the personal and professional development of staff
- Can help retain staff
- Help staff adapt to new roles and tasks
- Enhance team morale
- Generate responsibility on the part of the learner
- Underpin and help the implementation of organisational change
- Support senior managers in their sometimes lonely role. Offering a combination of challenge and support.

Tolhurst (2010)

The Rowan Learning Trust seeks to support schools in the development of a coaching culture through:

- The promotion of a common, shared understanding of an effective coaching model and methodology (The Three Circle Model – Based on Egan’s Skilled Helper Model)
- Providing Trust approved coaching training for headteacher’s and senior leaders within schools
- Providing high quality coaching for headteachers, senior staff and where necessary middle leaders. (This may be sourced externally to the Trust when deemed appropriate)
- Supporting headteachers and senior teams in the development of the coaching culture within the school
- Providing peer support coaching networks for headteachers and senior teams across the Trust

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Education is forever evolving. Not only does this bring exciting opportunities but it also creates challenges. We challenge our staff to be forward thinking and have the ability to differentiate themselves from their peers in terms of growth mind-set, knowledge and skills. The Rowan Learning Trust has a visionary ethos regarding continuous professional development (CPD). The belief is that to truly create a culture that embodies continuous learning and a thirst for continually developing a CPD programme that promotes strength of character in our staff and students, then we must take advantage of the depth of talented classroom practitioners and Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs) that exist within the Trust.

We believe that our CPD offer should:

- Refine personal skills and intellect
- Keep educational knowledge relevant
- Open pathways for career progression
- Enhance the frequency of opportunities to learn
- Provide expert resources and content
- Promote independence

The Rowan Learning Trust boasts its own facilitator hub. The hub is a group of talented classroom practitioners drawn from across the whole Trust who are responsible for designing and delivering quality CPD. They meet to discuss and collaborate on the training packages and share best practice to enhance the experience of all staff in the Trust. There is now a fully developed programme for Newly and Recently Qualified Teachers (NQTs/RQTs) and a programme to middle leadership is being developed

Each academy within the RLT is responsible for producing a CPD calendar that meets the needs of its staff and students. The Trust itself also designs a CPD calendar that runs alongside key themes from the secondary schools' development

plans. The courses are designed and delivered by staff, SLEs and external facilitators.

The Rowan Learning Trust also has its own central resource library. All quality literature and resources can be found on the RLT Portal. Each school in the academy has assisted in providing resources that can be accessed and the site also aims to develop inquiry-based and independent learning. We also want each member of staff in each academy to have the opportunity to see what is happening across each school. We recognise that gaps in peoples' individual repertoires may be being catered for in another Trust academy at a different time in the academic year, therefore, we have a termly calendar for Trust training events on the Portal. Staff can use the portal to access training events at any of other academies in the Trust.

Structured CPD includes:

- Online training courses and webinars
- Learning-oriented conferences and meetings.
- Collaborative Trust events
- Trust networks

Self-directed CPD includes:

- Studying online
- Reading articles and case studies
- Listening to and making notes on podcasts
- Following industry-specific news feeds

Collaboration

What *is* collaboration?

The Rowan Learning Trust feel that an ingrained collaborative ethos has the potential to grow people at all levels of the organisation. If one element of our organisation stands us apart from other multi-academy trusts is that we come together to overcome hurdles and support each and every colleague regardless of status or issue. Collaboration is NOT seen as a last resort in our Trust but more of common practice and a powerful mechanism to develop people and processes.

Why is collaboration so important to the RLT?

It helps us problem-solve

- When a group of people pool their knowledge, skills, and expertise, then talk problems out and debate potential solutions then, not only time can be saved but there is strength in the outcome.

Collaboration brings people closer together

- No academy has a greater voice than any other. The Trust values the voice of an academy in special measures as much as one that is graded outstanding. There is an expectation of all colleagues being treated equally. The aim is to build a very strong professional community where everyone can contribute and also benefit from peer support. Collaborating with subject colleagues from other academies is thought of as a learning experience and colleagues are encouraged to make the most of it.

It opens up new channels for communication

- Working with new people from different academies opens up channels that would otherwise remain closed. Finding new ways to communicate and share information is hugely important to the success of our Trust, which is why collaboration should be utilized whenever possible to form bonds between departments.

Collaboration boosts morale across your organization

- As connections are made between teams and departments, people will naturally trust each other more which can gradually boost the morale of your entire academy and organisation. Regularly working together with people outside of your own academy is one of the most effective ways to build trust.

It leads to higher retention rates

- We want to make the RLT appealing for future and current employees. Because collaboration lays the foundation for a more open, connected, and engaged MAT it'll go a long way toward retaining staff. Connection matters to people, especially in the workplace. We want to work with people we trust, who understand and respect our points of view, and who work well with others, especially those who come from different backgrounds and areas of expertise.

Collaboration makes us more efficient workers

- When the project is complex and demanding, we have to be able to admit to ourselves that we'll need help. It'll have to be a group effort. And that's where collaboration comes in. It helps us divide up a heavy issue, find creative solutions to tough problems, and wrap our heads around the big picture.