
Thinking Differently for Disadvantaged Learners©

Ambition: For as many staff in as many schools as possible to access quality training in order to ultimately help all disadvantaged learners to attain as highly as their non-disadvantaged peers.

Challenges: One-off training courses are expensive and often involve cover of classes back in school (which of course most impacts on the disadvantaged learners). The stand-alone nature of a traditional course attended by limited numbers of staff means the impact can be diluted. Part-time staff and non-teaching staff are not often able to access the same training. Small schools do not have the budget for one-off training courses. There are very limited training sessions that focus on the needs of disadvantaged learners.

Solution: A Professional Learning Programme (PLP) based around six recorded training modules released half termly throughout the academic year and available to all staff to access at their convenience. Access to a secure forum and additional Q&A session for the lead professional learner (LPL) in each school. Sessions will be delivered by expert trainers (and experienced school leaders) who have a wealth of knowledge on leadership and teaching of disadvantaged youngsters built up over more than six years of supporting schools across all phases in Raising the Attainment of Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY).

Details of the Professional Learning Programme

- Following payment, the school is issued with a licence number and log in details for the secure server where training modules can be streamed as they become available.
- These log in details can be used by any member of staff in the school at any time convenient to themselves.
- The modules will be released on a half termly basis and will consist of 90 minutes of training delivered by expert trainers. Once a module is released, they remain available for the rest of the academic year. Each module will be divided into short sections and may be accompanied by downloadable worksheets/support materials.
- Each 90-minute training module will cover a wide range of areas pertinent to the needs of disadvantaged learners and across the six modules this will include (but not be limited to):
 - What it is like to be poor in school
 - The impact of the curriculum
 - Adapting teaching and effectively using metacognitive strategies
 - Addressing the difficulties of participation in all aspects of school life
 - Teaching appropriate learning behaviours
 - Thinking about career-related learning from the earliest age
- The modules will always include a section that outlines ways in which staff can utilise the key messages from the training and encourages them to reflect on their own practice.

Additional support for the Lead Professional Learner

- Throughout the academic year, the LPL will have access to a secure forum where all matters relating to meeting the needs of disadvantaged learners can be discussed with colleagues in other schools; and questions can be raised about the training modules.
- The LPL will be able to submit questions relating to the training modules following the release of each training module. These will be answered by the trainers during a follow-up recorded Q&A session each half term. The recordings will then be made available to all LPLs to assist them in getting the most from each training module.
- The trainers will set reflective questions relating to each training module to encourage deeper reflection and engagement by LPLs.