
THINKING DIFFERENTLY FOR DISADVANTAGED LEARNERS

The Professional Learning Programme “Thinking Differently for Disadvantaged Learners” is based around six recorded training modules available to all staff (and governors) to access at their own convenience and/or for schools to incorporate into their whole school professional development plan. It contains over 12 hours of materials presented in bite-sized sessions, designed and produced by leading experts who have a wealth of experience in leading school improvement for disadvantaged youngsters.

How a school might use “Thinking Differently...”

Schools have chosen to utilise the training modules in a huge variety of ways, and we would encourage you to discover what works best for your school and current circumstances. Here’s some ideas to get you started:

Integrated into professional learning sessions: You might already have your training programme mapped out for the academic year. Videos from within the Professional Learning Programme (PLP) can be integrated in to those training sessions because each is no longer than around 15 minutes and leaves plenty of time to complete bespoke training activities. For example, you may have a training session planned to launch a new behaviour policy. Using the video from Module 2 on an equitable behaviour policy as a starter would help all staff to understand the extra lengths they would need to go to in order to ensure a disadvantaged learner can successfully meet the expectations of the new policy.

Whole staff training: Schools select those sessions and videos that match the current school improvement priorities and dedicate whole staff training sessions to watching carefully selected sessions and completing the accompanying activities. These schools often follow up in a few weeks with opportunities for staff to share what they have trialled in their classrooms and the difference it has made to disadvantaged learners.

Phase and department development: Teams of staff who work together choose a session they are particularly interested in and fits with phase or subject priorities. They use the videos during phase meeting time and provide opportunities for individual staff to outline what they want to do differently to try and help disadvantaged pupils. As for whole staff training, this would be followed up at later meetings with discussion around impact and next steps.

Professional development for your lead on disadvantaged pupils: A newly appointed middle or senior leader in charge of the achievement and wellbeing of vulnerable learners would benefit hugely from being able to follow each module and complete case study activities. Most importantly, the pupils would benefit too.

Governor training: There are videos in each module that are highly appropriate for those responsible for governance in your school to watch. This will empower governors to ask questions about provision and also give them even better understanding of why your school is doing extra for disadvantaged pupils.

New staff training: Schools are incorporating key videos from the modules that are pertinent to the ethos and vision of their setting into induction programmes for staff as well as ongoing professional learning for newly qualified and trainee teachers.

And what you don’t need to do

Don’t try and watch everything in one go: There is no expectation that the modules are followed in any particular order, and no need for everyone to watch each video. The modules start with an overview and suggestions of the target audience for each video, we would encourage you to think about your staff and their interests as well as the time they have available before deciding what to focus on. We believe there is more impact if the sessions are drip-fed over a long term to allow time for important messages to be digested, changes to be made in the classroom and impact to be discussed and evaluated.

The support materials: We’ve worked hard to produce a range of meaningful activities, further reading and references to our modules. However, we also appreciate that not everyone has the time for this and that’s why these are additional, not essential.

Pricing structure (excluding VAT)

Affordable for all: We are committed to ensuring all schools can access the resource, so we use a per-pupil pricing structure with NO minimum cost. If you are a school of 70 pupils, access for 1 year will be just £42 and permanent access only £63.

One-year access: If you would like all staff to access this for 12 months, then the price is just 60p per pupil (and any pupils over 1,250 are just 40p). The access starts when the school returns their licence agreement and finishes 12 calendar months later.

Long-term access: We believe to get best use from “Thinking Differently for Disadvantaged Learners” it should be used as part of a long-term approach and we encourage schools to purchase long-term access to the resource. New schools would be charged just 90p per pupil with discounts for numbers over 1,250.

