

Case study: Use of the additional professional learning grant in 2018/19

Context and background

The school

Broughton Primary school is an English-medium school in Flintshire and is part of GwE consortium. The school has 558 learners on roll; 15.8 per cent are eligible for free school meals (FSM); 13 per cent have additional learning needs (ALN) and 6.4 per cent have English as an additional language (EAL). The gender split in the school is 54 per cent boys and 46 per cent girls.

Designated leaders and members of teaching staff

The leadership team has nine members of staff. There are 21 teachers in Broughton Primary as well as 24 teaching assistants.

Additional professional learning grant allocation

The school received £14,992 for the period 2018/2019.

How the additional grant was used

Broughton Primary school used the additional grant to identify whole-school priorities and professional learning (PL) needs.

The school identified the need to support the training and development of teachers and teaching assistants to engage in activities at a local and regional level. This included developing new curriculum approaches and continuing professional development of all teaching and support staff to embed excellent practice of the school's core strategies (cooperative learning, Mathematics Mastery, high-order reading skills and assessment for learning).

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) also identified the need for additional leadership roles to support the school's priorities and to co-ordinate PL activities across the school. A number of roles were appointed such as:

- A Foundation Phase and a Key Stage 2 lead. All staff received numeracy workshop training and excellent practice was shared with consortia schools.
- A digital lead teacher to upskill staff through audit identified needs (workshops for databases, spreadsheets, Scratch, Google Classroom, Techno camps, Minecraft, Barefoot and Flipgrid). Further to this learners have been trained as

- digital leaders, and workshops held to support whole-school online safety, including parental workshops. The school has also continued collaborating within their digital triad.
- A Welsh lead teacher to upskill teaching and support staff through audit identified needs, continuing to support professional development of staff and learners with regard to everyday Welsh.

The school also used the additional funding to give staff the opportunity to attend middle leadership courses and training for teacher assistants. Staff at Broughton Primary attended professional development courses to support teaching and learning approaches through the implementation of the school's core strategies.

The additional grant has also facilitated the opportunity for a range of external providers to deliver high quality, specialised PL for all staff, learners and parents/carers. This has been successful in supporting the consistency of learning and teaching strategies deployed throughout the school. Learners and parents/carers have had the opportunity to access high quality training by attending after school workshops and information evenings led by experts, lead teachers and learners.

Impact of the grant on colleagues across the school

The development of whole-school initiatives have created a collegiate culture which has promoted a strong sense of shared responsibility and commitment to PL. Staff have been able to increasingly recognise the connection between their own PL needs, undertaking the training opportunities provided and transforming their approaches in their classroom practice. This has had a direct impact on the success of learning taking place in their classrooms.

An important aspect is how the planned PL has been inclusive of all staff. Teaching assistants, pastoral support staff, midday supervisors and apprentices have had the opportunity to participate in high quality PL, raising their confidence and profile within the school environment.

Impact of the grant on learners

By embedding the school's core strategies, such as cooperative learning, learners have been given the opportunity to become leaders and coaches within the school environment and in their school council roles. The positive collaboration of mixed ability learners within small groups has enabled all learners to share the responsibility to become ambitious, creative and capable learners. Learners have been equipped with lifelong skills which enable them to challenge themselves, be healthy, be confident and thrive in an increasingly complex world.

Parental and learner engagement has impacted the learner in many ways, raising awareness, increasing knowledge, developing skills such as digital and internet safety, and has developed parental skills to enhance learning and well-being at home as well as in the school environment.

Lessons learned about professional learning for application to the school

Broughton Primary recognises the importance of embedding successful practice, and building on firm foundations. The need to identify future high quality training is essential. The school found that in order to achieve a consistent approach and success in raising standards for every learner, it is important to ensure that the SLT are mindful that the provision of PL is a priority for newly appointed staff. This ensures all staff are fully trained in established practices and that there is whole-school consistency from class to class and from year to year.

Whole-school engagement in the self-evaluation process has been key to identifying whole-school priorities and PL needs. Once priorities and needs are identified, the vision is shared to ensure that all stakeholders have ownership and an understanding of how their role contributes to the success of moving the school forward. Doing this has raised standards of learning throughout the school.

Lessons learned about professional learning to share with other schools

The school value the importance of ensuring that all PL undertaken has undergone the process of shared identification through the school's self-evaluation processes, pupil voice and performance management. This process provides an audit trail and a value for money indicator. The explicit monitoring of areas that have been prioritised contributes to an evaluation and review process, providing detailed reports and indicators regarding the impact of whole-school developments and PL that has taken place.

Next steps

In regards to next steps, Broughton Primary school will evaluate and review the impact of the professional learning that has taken place, generating a cost benefit analysis. This will provide the information to identify whether professional learning has contributed to the raising of standards for all groups of learners in the school community e.g. EAL, FSM and vulnerable learners.