

## **Roots and Wings Task**

### **Learning gained from participation in the Roots and Wings programme:-**

#### **Personal**

The programme has given me a personal insight into my own strengths and weaknesses via the Hermann Profile particularly in terms of leadership. I am now more aware of my “blind spots”. I am even more aware than before that I need my Senior Management team around me to cover my blind spots.

Much of the value of the course lay in re-inforcing or making explicit what I already knew about myself.

After the programme in Tuscany I felt re-energised by the whole experience to the extent that my two deputies commented on my newfound energy and enthusiasm !

My behaviour has been influenced in that I think I am probably more direct with individuals in terms of accountability and “professionalism”. I have also realised that I don’t listen enough and that listening carefully and asking the right questions is an useful skill which, used in the right way can have a powerful effect on others.

It has reinforced my view that the Head of a school has to step back from immediate problems and look at the broad picture.

#### **Professional**

Coaching is a very interesting and powerful tool to effect individual change and improved performance given the time to do it properly.

The sections on the leadership vision were re-invigorating in that it reminded me that we need to re-visit this as a staff and that all the accountability pressures we face musn’t divert us from our vision of what education really means. It isn’t just the percentages of 5A\*- C’s ! It was good to engage in “blue skies” thinking free of practical constraints !

The international visits allow us to question the basis of our school systems, some aspects of which we take for granted and do not question. Much is rooted in the cultural values of individual countries.

The sections on Hay’s 6 dimensions of school climate were thought provoking and the section on leadership styles was also interesting. I have made a conscious effort to adopt a more participative and listening style of management than before.

An international league table of pupils’ attitudes towards school referred to on the course shows that in most countries “25% of pupils don’t want to be in school”. This was a powerful and striking message.

## **Organisational**

Our trio's "leadership question" focussed on how we could seek to engage and commit staff to the shared aims, values and vision of the school. The discussions with my partner Heads have led to discussions with senior staff about "where do we go from here?" We have all agreed that the school has improved greatly from a few years ago due to top down initiatives which were Senior Team led. These initiatives have become a little stale. We seem to have reached a plateau in terms of school development."

We believe that we need to engage more with staff particularly a number of new and younger staff and give them the opportunities and platform to tap into their energies and ideas in order to introduce changes into the school. We have therefore re-organised the meetings structure for September 2003 and established a Teaching and Learning group, a Community School group and a Staff Consultation Group each with their particular brief.

We intend to engage more with stakeholders particularly the pupils and survey their attitudes to aspects of the school. We would also like to move more and more to participative methods of monitoring our professional work.

I am keen that other teachers get involved in international staff development programmes and get the same benefits as I have. We have another international meeting of French and Danish pupils, teachers and Heads at Gwendraeth next month because another teacher has taken the International Dimension agenda further.

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