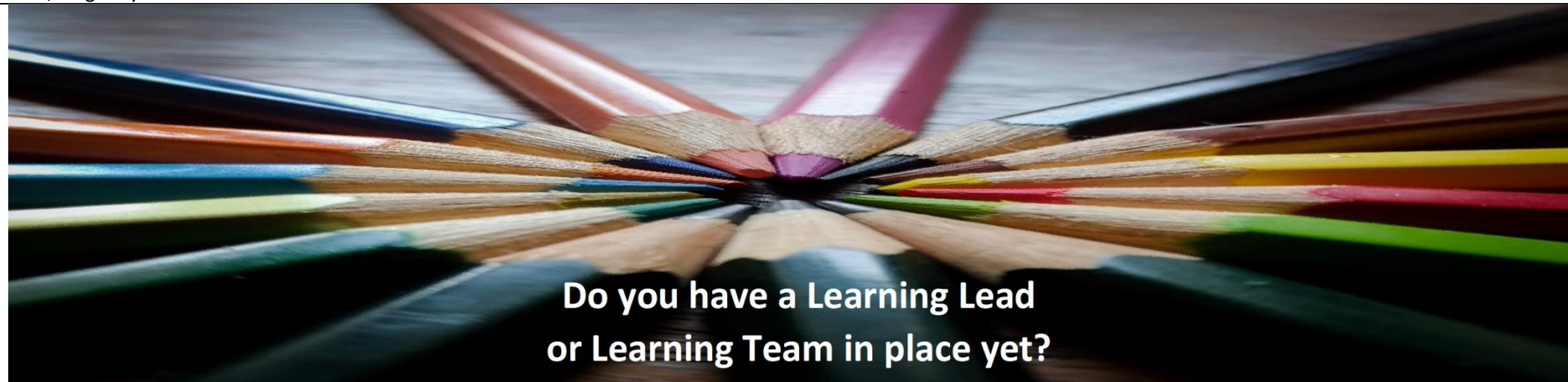


Post/Blog May 2020



## Do you have a Learning Lead or Learning Team in place yet?

### Learning rapidly during changes in Education to maximise the value of the Learning.

Whilst schools and academies try and unravel the implications of the PMs announcements last week and look at what plans they need to be considering this month in readiness for June and beyond, and what is realistically feasible; it's worth taking a little time to consider what has been learnt so far from the myriad of changes and adaptations that have been implemented and how this learning can inform and support the 'next stage of school working'.

The changes that have been put in place have been rapid and far reaching, and whilst being driven by the same initial driver, covid-19 regulations, the approaches taken and the outcomes being achieved will be unique to each school and academy in its context; suggesting that whilst whole sector learning and sharing is useful, individual school and academy learning will also be key to its future success.

Taking this a step further; the changes will have been across all phases of education and subjects as well as across the support teams; and their implementation approach and outcomes may, rightly so, have been different for different age groups, curriculum subjects, groups of students and support functions. Learning from these changes and their impact will support the future planning.



#### ***“There is clear value in a reflective approach, but is this the only way?”***

The traditional way to evaluate learning from a change, project or incident in most organisations is through the 'post implementation review' (PIR) activity; a process that takes place after the change/incident has completed and looks historically at what changes were made, the impact they had and how this can inform future practice.

There is clear value in a post incident/change reflective approach in informing learning and future practice. However, rapid, if not frequent, changes seem to be a likely feature of the future landscape for everyone including schools and academies. As such, whilst learning from the

changes so far is important, learning as you go forward and adapting effectively will be critical. Trying to ensure that our children achieve the best education possible during this time of crisis and change; despite how long that may be.

As eloquently explained in this blog by [WhatsThePoint](#), by only using a retrospective lens to evaluate the impact of change, this can lead to a retrofitting of views to meet the expectation and a 'blurring' of what actually took place. Meaning true learning and value can get lost.

### ***"Be ready to capture the future learning"***

The key therefore now, for school and academy leaders is to not only consider the retrospective learning of the past two months and how this can help plan for June and the summer; but for them to also look at how they can effectively capture the future learning that will undoubtedly take place over the next few weeks and months. And because of the likelihood of rapid and evolving change as we go forward, such learning needs to happen as quickly and as accurately as possible so as to enable school leaders to react and evolve and gain the most value from the ongoing changes that will be necessary to continue to provide education and support.



### ***"Establish a Lead / Team for Learning"***

One way to do this is to establish a 'learning lead' or 'learning team' who are tasked with capturing and evaluating learning from across the whole school/academy. The learning lead or team should be given a clear remit on expectations without constraining their approach, and effective governance established for them to report into to enable decisions to be made. Their scope should cover the phases of (1) immediate learning so-far, (2) the forward learning during these imminent interim stages of recovery, and (3) the shaping of the future 'new normal' model.



Once the key changes have been identified, each change can be evaluated using simple criteria and supporting evidence such as a description of the change, lessons from its implementation and impact, what could have been done differently, and how this can inform future ways of working.

There are a range of approaches that can be used for capturing learning such as: team discussions, questionnaires, virtual workshops, catch-ups over coffee where social distancing allows, and 1:1 conversations/interviews. Using outside observers who can ask inquisitive questions helps draw out information that those 'on the inside' may assume or not have thought relevant. And discussions between different players can elicit much greater insight to the change and its value, than a mere written summary or top-down review can achieve.

It is also important that views are captured from all teaching and support staff teams across the school/academy, and views sought from parents, pupils and partners, as well as governors and trustees so that all learning is captured and staff, students and parents are engaged and heard.

Establishing a Learning Team that includes staff representatives from across the school or academy trust is likely to enable you to see the learning from various angles. **The more variable the methods and the broader the engagement in as real-time as possible, then the greater and richer the learning information will be that can inform future practice.**

The ultimate goal being to understand and use the most valuable outcomes to help develop the best future practice to support students and families to keep their learning going.

***“the long game”***

And once established as a learning process within your school or academy, the learning lead / learning team can help you to take the learning and understanding and consider and shape how the changes and forward design of practice can align into the school’s/trust’s strategic objectives for the 2020/21 academic year and sit alongside any new national and regional policy and direction and local situations. It will be important to consider and re-set where appropriate, a new long-term strategy for the school / academy trust, for when life and education can begin to look forward to the ‘new normal’; what ever that may be.

If you or your school or academy trust would like more information please do not hesitate to contact us at [Lock House Consulting](#) ‘opening possibilities in education’

