

# A new CPD strategy for embedding English, ESOL and maths through active learning

## Regent College, Leicester



### Active learning by staff to deliver active learning for learners

Regent College, Leicester is proud to be an inclusive college in the centre of Leicester. Over three quarters of learners are of minority ethnic heritage, in comparison with the corresponding ratio of half for the entire city. We specialise in supporting young people to study at an advanced level, with a majority progressing from here to university.

Our inspection, although satisfactory overall, had highlighted science and maths provision as inadequate and whilst a re-inspection concluded that reasonable progress had been made in all areas, a concern remained that learners were inactive in too many lessons. We had already made good progress in embedding English and maths by introducing a skills strategy, raising awareness with teachers and introducing a universal diagnostic assessment of maths and English. We wanted to maintain momentum, our overall aim being to increase levels of effective embedding leading to higher achievement, better teaching and learning grades and raised levels of active learning stemming from well-planned and embedded lessons. Our route for this was the College's continuous professional development (CPD) programme, which we re-evaluated with help from our improvement partner.

#### Supported provider

Regent College, Leicester:

- Nick Mackey, Head of Skills and ESOL

#### Improvement partner

East Midlands Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (EMCETT):

- Ian Grayling, Executive Director

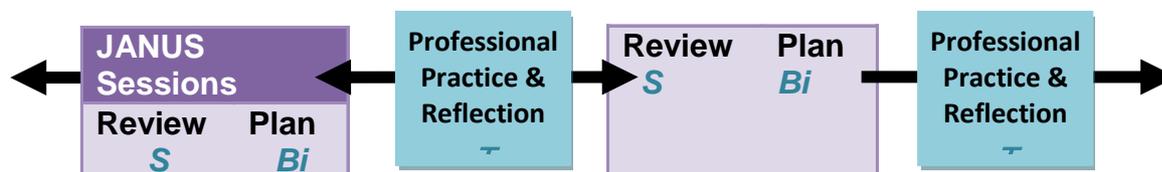
### Engaged learning

Our priorities were developing active learning and a more comprehensive embedding of English, maths and ESOL into subject teachers' practice. With our improvement partner we agreed that this could best be achieved through the observation process (peer and quality observations); team development (maths upskilling and active learning pedagogies) delivered through blended learning; EMCETT's CPD-BiTS model of situated professional development and the fuller use of MOODLE to aid independent, active learning.

East Midlands Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training has recognised that both teachers and their employers often struggle to find the time for engagement in meaningful

professional development. Their programme, CPD-BiTS, is a process for implementing and reviewing professional development in bite-sized chunks, from within existing regular meeting frameworks (as a standing agenda item of 30 to 45 minutes) either side of a short period of practical implementation and critical reflection.

**CPD-BiTS** (*Bi= broach idea; T=try out/trial; S=second look*)



The variety of engaged learning strategies applied in the College’s CPD-BiTS process is focusing strongly on the LSIS [Ten Pedagogies](#), in particular “Co-operative Learning”. This programme enables our staff to experience professional development in immediate contexts of positive change and perceivable impact on learners.

A second element of CPD we are offering is EMCETT’s blended learning Level 3 bridging programme in personal numeracy skills. This is to help staff delivering science and improve the integration of maths as a functional skill across a number of curriculum areas.

### Actively continuing

The Functional Skills staff involved in trialling this method of CPD were quite sceptical to start with as they are used to the more conventional approach to CPD involving longer (often full-day) sessions, followed by a period when nothing more was expected from them in terms of reflection or input. However, after the first session when teachers were invited to choose a more interactive teaching methodology, trial it in class, send themselves an e-mail immediately after the lesson to evaluate it and then bring this e-mail to the follow-up session, they began to see the power of this approach. There was increased enthusiasms at the follow-up meeting when the team exchanged briefly (one-minute feedback only was allowed!) what they did and how successful it had been. The aim then was to upload any or all of these activities on the college MIPLACE (staff on-line network).

We now intend to extend this approach across all the Skills Teaching Team, including Functional English, ICT and Employability. This should lead to an increase in the spreading of good practice, sharing of ideas and populating of MIPLACE.