

Introduction to the Course

Objectives:

- To explain the rationale behind the course
- To explain the role of the Subject Leader Mentor
- To clarify the expectations placed on them
- To establish ways of working throughout the course including the use of the learning log.

Organisation:

The module will involve whole group input, individual reading tasks, individual tasks, partner discussions and whole group feedback.

You will need:

| | | | |
|--------------|---|--|---------------------|
| Activity 1.1 | Ice Breaker | Handout 1.1A | 15 Mins |
| Activity 1.2 | The Role, Function and Skills of the Subject Leader Mentors | OHT 1.2.1 + 1.2.2 Handout 1.2A | 60 Mins |
| Activity 1.3 | Departmental Improvement | OHT 1.31, 1.3.2, 1.3.3, 1.3.4, 1.3.5 1.3.6, 1.3.7, 1.3.8 1.3.9, 1.3.10, Handout 1.3A, 1.3B 1.3C, 1.3D, 1.3E | 75 Mins +15 Mins |
| Activity 1.4 | Personal Learning | Personal Learning Logs Flip chart and pens | 75 Mins |

Activity 1.1:

15 mins

Ice Breaker

Trainer Notes:

- Having introduced the trainers to the participants:
Working in pairs – introduce yourselves to each other
 - name
 - school
 - role
 - expectations from the course

Partner reports back information to the group

- Deal with domestic arrangements

Activity 1.2:

60 mins

The role, function and skills of the Subject Leader Mentors

- Trainer led input to explain the methods of training, the use of the Learning Log, the accreditation opportunities.
- Using OHT 1.2.1;

Take participants through the reasons for the course.

OHT 1.2.1

The Rationale Behind the Course

To establish a skilled, prepared group of staff who can become mentors to other subject leaders in departments within schools working in challenging circumstances. The mentors will be used to support departments judged to need help in raising attainment. The mentor needs to be equipped with the skills required to support the implementation of planned change and improvement.

Using Handout 1.2A [7 sheets in total]

1.2A HANDOUT

Personal Assessment

LOW HIGH

| ADMINISTRATIVE: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Problem Analysis: ■ Ability to seek out relevant data and analyse the information to determine the important elements of a situation. | | | | | |
| Judgement: ■ Ability to reach logical conclusions and make high quality decisions based on available information; to set priorities; to show caution where necessary. | | | | | |
| Organisational Ability and Decisiveness: ■ Ability to plan and schedule effectively; to delegate appropriately; to recognise when a decision is required and to act upon it. | | | | | |

HANDOUT 1.2A (cont/d)

Personal Assessment

LOW HIGH

| INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCIES: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Leadership: ■ Ability to motivate others and involve them in the accomplishment of tasks; ■ To secure general acceptance of ideas, willingness to engage in proactive behaviour | | | | | |
| Sensitivity: ■ Ability to perceive needs, concerns and problems from differing viewpoints and to act accordingly; ■ To value the contribution of others | | | | | |
| Stress Tolerance: ■ Ability to perform under pressure | | | | | |

HANDOUT 1.2A (cont/d)

Personal Assessment

LOW HIGH

| PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Political Acumen: ■ Ability to 'read' the politics and act appropriately, sensitivity to interest groups | | | | | |
| Creativity: ■ Ability to generate alternatives, imagination and brainstorming strengths | | | | | |
| Taking Risks: ■ Tendency to gamble, take chances, back hunches and risk being wrong – interpersonal and task-based risks | | | | | |
| Ability to do a Deal: ■ Willingness to give in order to receive, horse-trading, wheeler-dealing | | | | | |
| Selling Skills: ■ Ability to 'front up' issues, presentation skills, ability to sell self as well as ideas | | | | | |
| Communicative Ability: ■ Ability to present a logical, sensible argument verbally or in writing; ■ Ability to read the need of the audience | | | | | |

1.2A (cont/d) HANDOUT

Personal Assessment

LOW HIGH

| MANAGING ONESELF: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Confidence: ■ Personal emotional strength, happiness maintenance, ability to avoid depression | | | | | |
| Tolerance to Ambiguity: ■ Tendency to jump to conclusions, need for certainty; ■ Need for closure on diagnosis | | | | | |
| Openness to Feelings: ■ Awareness of emotionality; ■ Personal insight into aggression/ hostility/ warmth and the things which block their expression | | | | | |
| Stick-to-it-iveness: ■ Perseverance, ability to get the job done, ability to 'push through' to conclusion | | | | | |
| Anxiety and Stress: ■ Ability to perform effectively in spite of anxieties; ■ Stage management of performance | | | | | |
| Contracting: ■ Setting realistic goals for self and the colleague | | | | | |
| Implementing: ■ Admitting errors and mistakes | | | | | |

Personal Assessment

| | LOW HIGH | | | | |
|--|----------|---|---|---|---|
| COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCIES: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Oral Communication: ■ Ability to make clear oral presentation of facts or ideas | | | | | |
| Written Communication: ■ Ability to express ideas clearly in writing; to write appropriately for different audiences | | | | | |

Personal Assessment

| | LOW HIGH | | | | |
|---|----------|---|---|---|---|
| RELATIONSHIPS: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Awareness of Client Feelings: ■ Ability to listen with understanding, empathy, ability to identify with colleague situation | | | | | |
| Control: ■ Need to control the relationship, tendency to lead or direct | | | | | |
| Developing different reactions to conflict: ■ Tendencies to avoid or be attracted to conflict situations, tendency to fight or run away | | | | | |
| Openness with Client: ■ Extent to which feelings and ideas are shared with colleagues, consultant self-disclosure | | | | | |
| Sensing and Diagnosing: ■ Helping colleagues to discover their own problems | | | | | |
| Contracting: ■ Talking about money and fees without embarrassment | | | | | |
| Evaluating: ■ Feeling comfortable with colleagues reviewing my work | | | | | |

Personal Assessment

| | LOW HIGH | | | | |
|--|----------|---|---|---|---|
| PERSONAL BREADTH COMPETENCIES: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Interests and Motivation: ■ Desire to participate and to achieve in activities both on and off the job; ■ Work is important to personal satisfaction; ■ Continuing action to improve personal capability; ■ Ability to be self-evaluating | | | | | |
| Educational Values: ■ Possession and demonstration of a well-reasoned educational philosophy | | | | | |

Personal Assessment

| | LOW HIGH | | | | |
|--|----------|---|---|---|---|
| BUSINESS SKILLS: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Managing Finance: ■ Understanding budgets, spending, value for money, writing a plan, marketing strategy, strategic planning | | | | | |
| Managing Operations: ■ Defining/ producing outcomes, lead-times, technology, research and development and TQM/PM systems | | | | | |
| Managing People: ■ Recruitment, retention, development, appraisal systems, redundancy procedures, job satisfaction, motivation, leadership style, management competencies | | | | | |
| Understanding Organisations: ■ Organisational culture in various settings – bureaucracies, hierarchies, networks, organisation's capacity to 'learn' and change, system theory | | | | | |

Give out Handout 1.2A and give subject leader mentors an opportunity to “mark up” their own skills assessment.

Take them through some of the sections pointing out the key aspects of the role e.g. “Problem Solving” within “Administration” section; “Leadership” within “Interpersonal” section and that within this role the mentor will need to develop “high order” skills, attitudes and knowledge.

Ask mentors to identify those attributes that they see as essential for the success of this role.

Remind participants that we will return to this at the end of the course and use it to assess the strategy.

Use OHT 1.2.2 to summarise the outcomes of activity 1.2 (10 mins)

Describe and give participants an opportunity to reflect on the personal characteristics of a successful mentor.

OHT 1.2.2

Characteristics of the Subject Leader Mentor Skills & Competencies

This process should help to inform your personal and professional development. The competencies are grouped in the following way:

- Administrative:**
 - Problem Analysis
 - Judgement
 - Organisational Ability and Decisiveness
- Interpersonal:**
 - Leadership
 - Sensitivity
 - Stress Tolerance
- Communication:**
 - Oral Communication
 - Written Communication
- Personal Breadth:**
 - Motivation
 - Educational Values and Principles
- Personal Characteristics:**
 - Political Acumen
 - Creativity
 - Taking Risks
 - Ability to complete tasks
 - Selling Skills
 - Communication Ability
- Managing Oneself:**
 - Confidence
 - Tolerance of Ambiguity
 - Openness to Feeling
 - Resilience
 - Anxiety and Stress
 - Contracting
 - Implementing
- Relationships:**
 - Awareness of Others Feelings
 - Control
 - Developing Different Reactions to Conflict
 - Openness with Colleagues
 - Sensing and Diagnosing
 - Contracting
 - Evaluating
- Organisational**
 - Managing Operations
 - Managing People
 - Understanding Organisations

Activity 1.3:

**75 mins
+ 15 mins reading time**

Departmental Improvement

Trainer notes: (45 minutes up to the end of 1.3E)

Provide the participants with Handout 1.3A “Effective Leadership and Departmental Improvement” as background reading and as a reference document for future use.

Trainer: needs to guide the participants to “Leading from the Middle” and “Improving Departmental Performance” and allow 15 minutes for reading.

Trainer notes: Lead input using OHTs to structure time input.

N.B: Source of OHTs “Effective Leadership and Departmental Improvement”, Harris 2000

1.3.1 OHT

Leading from the Middle Aspects of Effective Subject Leadership Bridging and Brokerage Function

- The role of the head of department essentially involves working with and through others in pursuit of particular goals. Heads of department are agents who work on behalf of the whole staff in the interests of students, parents and other stakeholders.
- Bridging and brokerage is a Key responsibility of successful subject leaders.
- It implies a transactional leadership role for the subject leader. In this role, heads of department make use of power – usually ‘power over’ others – to attempt to secure working agreements with departmental colleagues about how to achieve school and departmental goals and practices.
- Part of this role is the managing and allocating of resources available to the department

OHT 1.3.2

Leading from the Middle Aspects of Effective Subject Leadership Fostering Collegiality

- Heads of departments need to encourage a group of staff to cohere and develop a group identity. The subject knowledge that the department shares usually defines the boundaries of the group. An important role for the head of department, therefore, is to foster collegiality within the group by shaping and establishing a shared vision.
- This implies a leadership style that empowers others and that involves subject leaders using ‘power with’ or ‘power through’ other people to generate such collaborative departmental cultures.
- This style of leadership is people-oriented and requires a leadership approach that helps other people to transform their feelings, attitudes and beliefs.
- Transformational leaders not only manage structure but they purposefully impact upon the culture in order to change it.
- Hence, an important dimension of the head of department’s work is to shape and manage departmental culture.

Leading from the Middle Aspects of Effective Subject Leadership Improvement of Staff and Student Performance

- This aspect of leadership implies a transactional role for the head of department in monitoring the attainment of school goals, and meeting particular prescribed levels of curriculum performance.
- This means effective leaders have an important mentoring or supervisory leadership role in supporting colleagues' development and the development of students academically and socially.
- This mode of leadership draws on the expert knowledge of heads of department and that of their ascribed power as sources of influence bring about improvement in practice.

Leading from the Middle Aspects of Effective Subject Leadership Liaison or Representative Role

- This requires the subject leader to be in touch with a variety of stakeholders and sources of information in the external environment of the school and to negotiate, where necessary, on behalf of the other members of the department such as.
- helping departmental colleagues keep in touch with the views of other professional workers in their subject area;
- helping colleagues to stay in touch with the views and needs of colleagues in other departments within the school;
- representing the views of departmental colleagues to the senior staff and to other middle managers within the school.

Leading from the Middle Aspects of Effective Subject Leadership Summary

- These four dimensions of the leadership role of heads of department are both complementary and potentially competing in their demands. They reflect the complexity of a management role within the middle of a hierarchy and reveal the tensions facing leaders in a middle management position.
- For individual heads of department, this role is made even more challenging because of the different ways departments are configured and perform.
- Both these aspects directly affect the leadership capacity of heads of department.
- The realm of the academic department in secondary schools presents a considerable range of organisational differentiation. Departments in secondary schools in England range from multidisciplinary with many staff in them (e.g. Design and technology departments), to departments with many staff in them (e.g. English) to departments staffed by one or two and several part-time staff (e.g. a Music department or a History department).
- This means that heads of department have widely differing arenas in which to exercise their power and face competing leadership demands.
- And most importantly, that the task of departmental improvement is primarily dependent upon the 'growth state' of the department and the 'type' of department in question.

Trainer notes: Having taken the participants through the 4 types using OHTs 1.3, – 1.3.5 it will be important to provide them with a view of “The Effective Department”. Continue using OHT 1.3.6 to explore the criteria used by OFSTED inspection to judge managerial effectiveness.

OHT
1.3.6

Evaluation Criteria for School Management

Management is to be judged in terms of the extent to which:

- An ethos and sense of purpose have been established which promote the quality of learning, standards of achievement, and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- Leadership, and delegated leadership, promotes quality of learning and standards of achievement.
- Planning is carried out effectively and appropriate priorities and targets are set.
- There is effective implementation of plans.
- The routine administration and organisation of the school are carried out effectively and efficiently.
- Effective working relationships are established.
- Communications promote effective operations.
- The school's own evaluation of its performance is used to bring about the realisation of its aims.

Trainer note: Give out Handout 1.3B. Move on to discuss Handout 1.3B – ask participants to * star 4 key attributes that they think are essential in developing effective improving departments.

1.3B
HANDOUT

Where a Department is Well Managed:

- Staff have a long term view of where the school should be heading
- Systematic approach to analysis of school's current and future situation
- Expectations are high
- Shared values and norms about learning, behaviour and relationships
- Staff understand the roles they are encouraged to play in school development
- Staff know that their contribution is appreciated
- Pupils learn effectively and efficiently:
- Clear objectives and policies, focused on pupil's needs
- Objectives and policies understood and implemented
- Development plan as effective management tool
- Finance efficiently managed; clear priorities for provision of resources
- Administrative procedures and daily routines are well established
- Day-to-day decisions are considered fair and consistent
- Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined; appropriate delegation
- Clear communication routes which operate effectively
- Managers are accessible and approachable
- Firm arrangements for periodic reviews
- Performance indicators (success criteria) are used
- Lessons learned are fed in to school development planning process
- Goals are re-evaluated

Source: Handbook for the Inspection of Schools: Guidance OFSTED

The trainer then needs to talk through how important it will be for “Successful” mentors to have a clear and well formed view of what it is that makes a difference and how these characteristics can be developed in their colleagues/departments.

It will be important for Subject Mentors to know and understand the part that Subject Leaders need to play in both school and departmental improvement. Give out the DfES teachers standard framework and make reference to the ten dimensions of the subject leaders role; also give out the Derbyshire LEA/University of Nottingham handout (Handout 1–3c).

HANDOUT 1.3C

Departmental Improvement

THE ROLE OF THE SUBJECT LEADER

The Staff

- Seeing that staff work effectively
- Advising the staff on the level and experience of staff required
- Assisting in the appointment of new staff
- Devising appropriate help and support for new staff and for existing team
- Ensuring that all staff are informed as to school policy and are able to implement
- Allocating responsibilities according to needs
- Ensuring the necessary staff development for responsibilities to be effectively met
- Organising effective meetings
- Ensuring that school administrative procedures are carried out
- Overseeing staff development in the broadest sense
- Writing references

The Subject/Curriculum Area

- Devising, in conjunction with colleagues, and keeping under review, schemes of work
- Devising and keeping up to date a curriculum area handbook
- Being informed and informing on all aspects of curriculum development
- Promoting curriculum development
- Ensuring the highest quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum area.

The Pupils

- Overseeing the work, development and behaviour, of pupils within the area
- Arranging appropriate teaching groups
- Maintaining adequate pupil records
- Advising in matters of option choices and careers

The Timetable

- Liaising with the school timetable to ensure the correct allocation of timetable space

Parents

- Informing parents of curriculum area aims and objectives
- Overseeing the writing of reports and other communications with parents

1.3C (cont/d) HANDOUT

Resources

- Ensuring that equipment of all kinds is provided, maintained and kept secure
- Determining, with others, the priorities for allocating the area's monies
- Liaising with the school library co-ordinator or resources co-ordinator
- Advising the head on the need of equipment
- Ensuring that all staff are informed about and can use resources to the best effect

Students and Teachers in Training

- Planning students' timetables and programmes of work
- Liaising with training establishments and providing supervision
- Preparing reports and references

Assessment and Examinations

- Ensuring that pupils' achievements are assessed by teachers as appropriate
- Ensuring that all internal examinations are set, marked and evaluated
- Ensuring external syllabuses are studied and that pupils are entered appropriately
- See that information from exam boards is shared with appropriate staff

Records

- Keeping appropriate records of all pupils
- Keeping staff records
- Minuting staff meetings and circulating minutes

Finance

- Maintaining accurate financial monitoring systems
- Ensuring cost effective expenditure

Extra-curricular Activities

- Overseeing an extra-curricular activity programme

Links

- Maintaining links with bodies such as LEA personnel, OFSTED, tertiary colleges, subject teacher associations and professional associations, etc

Planning, Review, Monitoring and Evaluation

With regard to all aspects of the role listed above:

- Devising, in collaboration with others, an area development plan to reflect and inform the school development plan
- Identifying development priorities, timescales, responsibilities, and success criteria
- Reviewing and monitoring performance and the achievement of targets

HANDOUT 1.3C (cont/d)

THE ROLE OF THE PASTORAL MANAGER

- Lead, build and organise a team of tutors, drawing on tutor's strengths
- Develop and provide training, staff development, and support for tutors
- Monitor and evaluate all aspects of the work of the Year/House/ section
- Identify areas for improvement and promote development
- Know about and understand the experiences and 'critical incidents' of the pupils
- Know and understand the familial, social, cultural and ethnic experience of pupils
- Communicate effectively and work with parents
- Organise parents' meetings
- Develop and co-ordinate pastoral aspects of the curriculum and tutorial programmes
- Monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in pastoral curriculum lessons
- Offer guidance and counselling to individuals and groups as appropriate
- Work with others to develop pastoral policies and monitor their implementation
- Contribute to policy making in all aspects of the school and curriculum
- Contribute, develop, manage systems for profiling
- Mobilise the school's resources and wider networks in the interests of the students
- Monitor, understand, and communicate patterns in student attendance
- Maintain an overview of pupils' overall performance and development
- Develop an understanding of the local community and use its resources
- Liaise with outside agencies

The Role of the Year/Key Stage Curriculum Co-Ordinator

- Promote the co-ordination of the whole curriculum for the Year/Key stage, including the cross-curricular dimensions
- Co-ordinate the support and guidance to students in the year
- Liaise with tutors and subject teachers to gain a holistic curriculum overview
- Lead and develop a team of academic and pastoral staff
- Monitor and evaluate the coherence and quality of the Year/Key Stage curriculum
- Identify areas of development need

1.3C (cont/d) HANDOUT

- Devise, working with others, a development and action plan for improvement
- Facilitate co-ordination meetings
- Facilitate structured communication between Year/Key Stage staff on curriculum plans, pupil guidance and pupil performance
- Arrange and conduct reviews of individual pupils' performance and progress
- Co-ordinate individual and group target setting
- Ensure that appropriate curriculum guidance is provided for pupils as appropriate
- Contribute the Year/Key Stage's perspective to whole school forums

Trainer continues

Subject leader mentors need to have established a view of the effective department informed by recent research. This will enable subject leader mentors to call upon illustrations to build a case for change when seeking to influence colleagues.

Trainer note:

Trainer uses Handout 1.3D to discuss the general features of effective departments.

Give out Handout 1.3D and discuss each section with the group.

HANDOUT 1.3D

Characteristics of Effective Departments

- **A climate for change.** Effective departments tend to have a 'climate for change' or 'a climate for improvement'; i.e. the department is committed to improvement and is prepared to change existing practices. Developing this climate has been found to be a necessary prerequisite of effective departmental change. Without this climate departments will continue to modify, rather than change, existing practices.
- **A clear and shared sense of vision.** The departmental vision is shaped by the head of department and can influence how teaching and learning is organised within the department. One of the most striking findings from the various research studies into departmental effectiveness has been the collegiate vision adopted by effective departments. Effective departments have been found to be 'talking' departments, marked by a constant interchange of professional information at both a formal and informal level. With effective departments meetings tend to be frequent with all departmental members involved in the shaping of departmental policy.
- **A leading professional.** Effective departments are both collegiate and co-operative. This way of working is often a product of the style of management adopted by the head of department. The most typical management approach within an effective department is that of the 'leading professional'. This is where the head of department is considered by other departmental members as a model to follow. In short, he or she is viewed as an expert practitioner and is viewed by members of the department as a source of good practice.
- **Management and organisation.** Effective departments are those with the ability to organise key elements of teaching and learning in an optimum way. Effective departments are highly organised and generate detailed and collectively agreed schemes of work.

1.3D (cont/d) HANDOUT

- **Management of resources.** Effective departments manage their resources to the mutual advantage of the whole department and, where possible, to the advantage of all pupils. Effective departments are concerned with improving teaching and learning for all pupils. This is often achieved through an equitable allocation of departmental resources.
- **Monitoring and evaluation.** Effective departments have mechanisms for monitoring pupil progress. Information about the progress of individual students is systematically collected through a variety of means and is shared within and across departments/faculties. Effective departments keep detailed profiles of pupils to chart individual progress. Effective departments are departments which 'self-evaluate'. The effective department places a high premium on both the process and outcomes of self-evaluation. Effective departments know their own strengths and weaknesses and collect systematic evidence of their progress towards set departmental goals.
- **Organisation of teaching and learning.** At the heart of any effective department is the effective organisation of teaching and learning. It is clear from the research findings that effective departments have certain set protocols in relation to teaching and learning. For example, the opportunities to offer pupils regular feedback on their progress has been shown to be a central aspect of effective departmental working.

From the research findings concerning effective departments a number of key features emerge:

- First, effective departments collaborate and share a strong vision of their subject;
- Second, effective departments are well organised in terms of assessment, record keeping, homework etc., and employ good resource management;
- Third, effective departments have efficient systems for monitoring and evaluating pupil progress which enables them to provide structured and regular feedback;
- Fourth, effective departments operate very clear teaching routines and practices within lessons;
- Finally, effective departments have a strong pupil-centred ethos that systematically rewards pupils and provides every opportunity for autonomous pupil learning. In short, effective departments are centrally concerned with teaching and learning.

Trainer note

NB it is important to acknowledge

- The complexity and uniqueness of each subject context, however research evidence shows some general features of effective departments.

Trainer continues

It will also be important for subject leader mentors to understand and recognise those characteristics, which build a view of practice in less effective departments.

Give out Handout 1.3E and discuss each section with the group.

HANDOUT 1.3E

Characteristics of Less Effective Departments

On the issue of less effective departments, not surprisingly, even fewer research studies exist. While it might be assumed that less effective departments possess the reverse set of characteristics of effective departments, a recent study has shown that this is only partly accurate (Harris 1998a). It would appear that ineffective departments have a particular combination of characteristics that collectively result in a dysfunctional departmental culture. These characteristics are as follows:

- **Lack of vision.** Less effective departments do not possess a clear, or shared, sense of vision about their work. The absence of a vision for the departments propagated by the head of the department is common among less effective departments. Meetings tend to focus upon routine maintenance issues such as book ordering or exam arrangements rather than pedagogical issues or development tasks.
- **Weak leadership.** The leadership approach in less effective departments could be categorised at two extremes. At the first, heads of department could be characterised as having an authoritarian style, controlling all aspects of departmental work. At the opposite extreme, they could be characterised as having a laissez-faire style, delegating all departmental responsibilities. Neither of these leadership styles was found to be conducive to effective departmental working.
- **Poor communication.** The less effective departments were not talking departments, and were marked by the lack of constant interchange of professional information at both a formal and informal level. For personal and practical reasons there was little formal communication between members of the departments in the study.

1.3E (cont/d) HANDOUT

- **Poor Organisation.** In managerial terms a real weakness of the less effective departments lay in an ability to organise key elements of the teaching and learning process in an effective way. Only a few of the less effective departments had detailed and agreed schemes of work that had been collectively approved. Where the schemes of work did exist, they had evolved in a rather ad hoc way, often worked upon by two or three members of the department at different times. As a result the schemes were inconsistent in approach and content, lacked clear guidance, were regarded as relatively unimportant documents, and were not easily accessible in the department.
- **Poor resource management.** In terms of the management of resources, the less effective departments did not allocate resources optimally. While most of the departments were not particularly well resourced, this situation was made worse by the poor and inequitable deployment of resources within the various departments.
- **Poor record keeping and assessment.** Another aspect of poor management in the less effective departments was their lack of emphasis on pupil record keeping. Each of the departments kept pupil records, but these varied in content and style from teacher to teacher. In most cases, the pupil records simply charted the pupils' progress with a minimum of information. There were no detailed assessments of the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils. This meant that monitoring pupil performance over time was rarely done and that the recording and reviewing procedures that were in place was inadequate for the identification of potential pupil underachievement.
- **Teacher isolation.** Within each of the less effective departments the major problem was that the teachers taught in relative isolation from each other and did not function as a teaching team. There was generally little opportunity to build and extend upon the good practice within the department. Consequently there were no opportunities for any type of pedagogic partnership among teachers. Although the teaching approaches adopted by each department in the study varied, there was little discussion of approaches, methodologies or practices. Similarly, there was little evidence of sharing classroom practice through observation, discussion or demonstration. In this respect there was an absence of trust and of positive, professional relationships between teachers.

Activity 1.3: cont.

Departmental Improvement and the Role of the Mentor

- Boardroom style, trainer led input setting out the educational rationale for departmental improvement and the factors likely to lead to successful change.

[NB Trainer Use judgements as to whether appropriate to include this OHT]

- Why do it?
- Using OHT 1.3.7
- Trainer explains origin of letter. Written by ex pupil of a school in Special Measures who felt the need to share her perceptions with a much-changed school one-year after she had left. She explained in her letter how let down she had felt as a pupil.

OHT 1.3.7

Letter from Student

This was written in xxxxx lesson (30.4.99)

You make me want to leave; you make me feel I have nothing to live for and nothing to offer the world. I hate the way we pull each other down and hate one another and how it's become so easy to argue and fight.

I hate the way no one tries and the way we've all lost hope and how were all satisfied with the way things are. I'm not satisfied, I have everything to live for, I try and I give as much as I can. How are we expected to excel in this hole? How can we even try to better ourselves in this situation? What chance or opportunities of a bright future are we entitled to this is where we begin?

I can't even see through the windows for the dirt so please don't even try to accuse me of daydreaming. Our books are burnt so we'll settle for chairs and desks instead.

We don't do national curriculum because our teachers don't turn up, and no, Miss xxxxx I will not make you another cup of tea.

We have no respect for anyone or anything because respect is something your supposed to be taught. We'll steal anything that's not bolted down without a second thought.

This is the end of my complaint. I'm now leaving my lesson a half-hour early and I'm going to have a cigarette on the tennis courts. Why, I hear you ask. Because I need an education, I'm scared of failing my GCSE's and because of my teacher has given up on us.

Trainer note: Discuss reactions. Reinforce entitlement of students.

Introduce OHT 1.3.8. Clarifying Expectations, OHT 1.3.9 What's in it for you and OHT 1.3.10. Ways of Working/Raising Awareness. Start to focus on the state of the mentor in Departmental Improvement.

Discuss reaction to each OHT in turn (10 mins approx.) with the group. Attempt to make clear expectations likely to be placed on subject leader mentors, motivational factors and to start the process of making them aware of the challenges facing them.

OHT

1.3.9

What's in it for you?

- Challenge
- Professional development
- Accreditation
- Possible career enhancement
- Benefit to your school – enhancing your school with your heightened skills
- Personal satisfaction – sense of achievement

1.3.8

OHT

Clarifying Expectations

To make a difference to the learning experiences of the students by:

- being passionate about young people's entitlement to a good education;
- being energetic;
- having a single minded focus;
- being realistic;
- having a sense of humanity;
- being able to model professionalism;
- providing a positive role model.

1.3.10

OHT

Ways of Working/Raising Awareness

- Make no assumptions about the practice of others.
- Confidentiality
- Contracting with each other that views will be respected.
- Be prepared to be shocked and challenged.
- The pace needed to effect change will be modelled by the trainers.
- Your personal competencies will be extended and tested.

Activity 1.4:

75 mins

Personal Learning

Objectives:

- To reflect on the role of mentor during the course
- To identify and share good 'mentoring' practice.

Resources:

Flipchart

Access to quiet rooms for participants to have one-to-one discussions.

Trainers notes:

The mentoring role is a critical aspect of this new way of working.

The strategy the course has adopted to help participants develop their mentoring skills is to link each participant with a fellow participant. The purpose being is to meet at the end of each day's training and help each other to identify areas of strengths and areas for further development. These discussions should take no longer than 30 minutes and will be based on the Learning Log that each participant will have completed at the end of the days training.

- Brief the Participants
- Review the key points
- Participants commit to complete their own learning log

Trainer notes: Part 1 Whole Group

Ask the group to identify and share good practice in being a mentor from their own professional experience. (30 mins) Ideas are collated on a flipchart and will act as guidance principles for being an effective mentor. Stress the power of collective wisdom over individual thoughts. This session relies both on trainer input and whole group participation to emphasise key points.

Trainer notes: Part 2

The skills the participants are developing through this approach are those of giving clear, effective and constructive feedback.

Today's session is for each pair to reflect on the mentoring role that they had explained.

Each participant will need to reflect on the following questions with their link partner.

- What observations would you make on the role of mentor?
- What personal challenges will you face in the role?
- Were there any surprises in the skills audit?
- How do you feel about giving difficult messages?
- What strategies will you adopt in giving effective feedback?