

Module 2 Partners in Communication – Staff – Silver

'The teachers and students are a family. That is what makes the school so special' Ofsted 09

The staff have a shared vision at St Monica's and work together to strive towards agreed goals and targets. The school considers and recognises the views of all staff and supports all staff through a clear understanding of policies and procedures and strong clear management of the school.

The Mission statement is a very real underlying vision for both pupils and staff which is a summary of everything that the school aims for as a Catholic school; St. Monica's is a Catholic community working in partnership with families, schools and parishes to teach the Catholic faith as a way of life. We provide a caring, supportive environment where everyone is of equal worth.

The schools self-evaluationactively involves students, parents, staff and governors.' Ofsted 09

'The strong moral and spiritual ethos gives the school a sense of community that is shared by whole staff and students' Ofsted 09

All of the staff at St Monica's are involved in writing the school SIP which will then feed into the SEF; the whole community have ownership and a shared vision. The whole staff set themselves ambitious goals and targets and strive towards them as a team in order to maintain the highest standards.

Staff meet regularly in order to discuss appropriate issues with each other and with the management team of the school providing opportunity to discuss issues arising and for staff to be supported and encouraged appropriately. Staff are given the opportunity to raise concerns or make comments regarding major changes within school such as the timing of the school day or changing of engagement grade or merit criteria in whole staff meetings or in meetings with departments or year teams one of each every half term (see school calendar).

All teachers also meet individually with the headteacher to discuss any issues arising, examination results or CPD, staff also meet with senior management where appropriate to discuss Gifted and Talented Provision, Teaching and Learning or Internationalism in order to share ideas or access support. There is a weekly staff briefing for all school staff.

The network of support in St Monica's for all staff is second to none, there is a culture of sharing good practice and positive lesson observation feedback and support; the staff agreed amongst themselves criteria for a good lesson (See evidence) and appropriate feedback protocol.

There have been two recent appointments in order to support, mentor and coach all staff in particular NQTs and student teachers. The staff appointed are instrumental to the shared vision of the school to maximise teaching and learning through good relationships and effective communication and support. There are regular meetings between members of departments to share good practice and departments throughout the school are always willing to share their ideas at given times particularly with regard to the ever improving access that the school has to new technology.

Staff who are new to the school on any level will have a named mentor, including new heads of departments for support. Staff who are newly appointed to St Monica's also are invited to spend a day in their new place of work in the Summer term (see invite/ evidence). The day will enable all new staff to become familiar with the school, with staff with whom they will be working and they will be able to access resources or schemes of work. On this day new staff will meet various members of the senior management team in order to become familiar with the policies and expectations of St Monica's.

All staff in school have access to whole school policies and receive regular training and in house twilight sessions.

All staff are aware of procedure regarding dealing with incidents, parents or complaints. There are a number of standard letters within school which are common to all staff regarding a wide range of both positive and negative situations.

Supply teachers to the school also are provided with an overview of how St Monica's will work on a day to day basis. (See attached).

Communication between staff has improved over the last two years due to the introduction of staff email in only 2007; this has proven to enable staff to communicate relevant information more effectively and safely and quickly, staff, parents and pupils also receive weekly newsletters by email. Introduction of pupil email within the school system this year has enabled pupils and staff to communicate more effectively and use the system to send work or share concerns.

Senior Management... 'they foster leadership throughout the school..... This encourages the whole staff to seek continuous improvement. Middle managers express much respect for the way in which their leaders and managers listen to their views while being prepared to take difficult decisions where necessary'.

Ofsted 09

There is a culture of empowerment at St Monica's, the staff are given every possible opportunity to develop professionally and personally; the school has a high quality CPD programme (SEF 1d, 6d).

INSET is provided by school staff and staff are encouraged to share during twilight sessions, also within school management courses have been run for both middle and aspiring middle leaders.

There is strong leadership throughout the school and staff are given the opportunity to take risks, have ownership and make decisions while being supported by the senior management of the school.

Staff have responsibility in areas including pastoral, curriculum, teaching and learning, healthy schools, student voice and internationalism to name a few!

Opportunities to develop outside of school are also numerous; there are currently 7 staff working towards a masters degree outside of school and 17 working towards their Catholic Teachers Certificate which has been facilitated by the school. Staff are involved with meeting staff from other schools and visiting other centres on every level from teachers to support assistants and learning mentors in order to observe good practice. The school recognises expertise and specialism in all areas and the staff at St Monica's are undoubtedly a team.

There is also an ongoing INSET programme for all staff on all levels attending courses which are led by other companies and exam boards; staff attending these courses will share what they have learnt.

The school is a healthy school and is mindful of the importance of a healthy work life balance the staff are very social and within healthy schools activities such as Tai Chi or aerobics have been provided.

Staff retention as a result is high and turnover very low.

Evidence;

Coaching documents (JP)

Letter new staff (PW)

SEF

INSET Log?

Ofsted report

Staff Info (Supply Teachers)