

Bedford Primary Butterflies

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My favourite pastime – collecting ‘butterflies’ of interesting school practice – derives from ‘chaos theory’ which is best illustrated by an example: that if sufficient butterflies whirr their wings in the Amazonian rain forests, then it *can* set off a chain of climate change that eventually can cause a tornado in the United States.

Put another way, butterflies are small actions which can have huge impact.

David Hargreaves the educational researcher summed it up as a choice for schools among four sorts of interventions:

- ***Low Effort with High Impact;***
- *High Effort with High Impact;*
- *Low Effort with Low Impact;*
- *High Effort with Low Impact.*

Clearly most of teaching activity is in the second category, although within it there may be some of the first sort when some small innovation really works. That would be a ‘butterfly’ – something that requires little effort but has great impact. The same principle applies to schools as a whole: there are some school practices which require little effort but have disproportionately beneficial effects.

So, in order to start a new Bedford Primary Schools Collection of Butterflies, I set out below some examples collected from schools elsewhere and which I spoke about at the launch. I think we left it that you might want to extend and improve this collection as a result of your partnership work: **indeed it might be that each primary based associate comes up with an example during the year as a result of discussion with colleagues in school?**

So here is a ‘Starter Collection’ incorporating many ideas so that you can translate it into some sort of electronic/digital site so it becomes the base for sharing ideas that work in Bedford both within individual schools and across the partnership.

Two more preliminary points. ***First it is important to stress that butterflies can have a short life, but more than one life cycle: so something will work for a while but then loses its magic.*** It may need to be revived after a period of hibernation! Secondly the best thing ever written about school improvement came from Judith Little, an American researcher who said ‘You know you are in a good school when the following can be said:

Teachers **talk** about teaching
 Teachers **observe** each other's practice
 Teacher plan, organise, and evaluate **together**
 Teachers teach each other '

So the really helpful butterflies which deserve a long life are those which support any of the above happening.

Thank you for making me so welcome at the launch.

Butterfly	Impacting on	Description	Impact
1	Staff Parents	<p>TEA WITH THE HEAD A primary school head decided that she wanted to encourage writing and to really get to know all her children. She first of all shared the idea with her staff and confirmed that they liked the idea. Then came the implementation of the idea. It involved her writing cards inviting three pupils to have tea and biscuits with her at break times on Tuesdays and Thursdays from September to Easter. That way she got through 120 pupils having 'tea and biscuits' with her. She follows up, as a result of skilful questioning and listening, with notes to the class teachers and a note home letting the parent or carer know of the occasion and how good it had been to talk with their child and what she had learned about their progress.</p>	<p>It turned out to be an easy way to build parental confidence, trust and involvement. She said that since the class teacher knew in advance who was attending, it enabled them to have a discussion about each child so there was less chance of any child being so quiet that they are missed – the sort of children we sometimes call 'invisible'. She soon asked invitees to bring their best piece of work at the end of the day when she had had tea and to tell her quietly as well what they found most difficult so that she and the class teacher could help.</p>
2	Staff	<p>HOSTING A STAFF MEETING Staff meetings are rotated round the classrooms and whoever's classroom it is, acts as host. The first item on every staff agenda is the host explaining how she likes to arrange the room and the intention behind the display she has on the walls. She is required</p>	<p>This is a widely used 'butterfly' and in most cases leads to a much greater awareness of the potential of display as a subliminal educator as well as re-enforcing the practice of pupils having tasks to do as part of developing their sense of responsibility. Certainly the school involved in reports that it</p>

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		to say what she thinks is the next step in improving the display and how she intends to involve the pupils in carrying out some of the tasks towards improvement.	has ensured that the tone of the staff meeting was set in the sense that staff were talking about teaching and learning from the word go. <i>We agreed there are variations to this theme, all designed to make sure meetings are an opportunity to discuss teaching, learning and assessment. So the variations of the same butterfly include butterflies four five and six below. Another might be all choosing to mark the same piece of children's work and discussing the relative merits of each marker's approach. Interestingly one head deliberately doesn't 'chair' these meetings as she seeks to extend leadership skill by asking the host to be chairs.</i>
3	Staff Pupils	IMPROVING TRANSITION FOR YEAR GROUP TO YEAR GROUP Each autumn, in November, teachers spend a day with their former year group. For example the Year 2 teacher spends the day in the classroom of the Year 3 teacher who is teaching the children she taught the year before. The purpose is that the Year 2 teacher goes round and looks at the work and talks to the youngster she taught the year before in order to improve continuity of learning and to try to make sure that the new teacher is aware of say three children whose progress is pleasantly surprising her and three children whose progress might not be all she had hoped.	The school claims that this practice has various outcomes. First it causes teachers to talk more to each other about 'levels of progress' and spotting those children for whom the transition from one year to the next has coincided or caused a 'pause' in learning. It has also led to teachers getting children to take work to 'show' to their former teacher and to increase dialogue both about rates of progress and those children who may be most at risk of falling behind. <i>A variant on this might involve the released teacher simply observing two or three children in somebody else's class, making notes and discussing it with the class teacher at the end of the day. ('Observing Learning')</i>
4	Staff	IMPROVING STAFF KNOWLEDGE OF 'NEW' CHILDREN'S LITERATURE: AN AGENDA ITEM AT STAFF MEETINGS	The school claims that over the course of the year staff more easily keep up with what has been published and that the

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		<p>One of the phenomena of today's age is the burgeoning of children's books. It is immensely difficult for the teachers to keep up with what is available.</p> <p>One school helps crack that issue by having as a standing item on staff meeting agendas 'New Books'. At each meeting teachers take it in turns to describe a 'new' book they have used with their class and give it a rating. The deal is that another teacher either in the year above or the year below then commits to use it at some point in the year and report back.</p>	<p>impact towards discussion being about 'teaching and learning' rather than transactional business is significant.</p>
5	Staff	<p>SHARING GOOD PRACTICE</p> <p>A school firmly believed in the maxim that 'the biggest and most underused resource teachers have is each other'. But they also realised that they had to do something more than merely exhort colleagues to share good ideas. So they formally introduced, as a matter of policy, 'Sharing good practice' as the first item on the agenda of every staff meeting.</p> <p>In rotation one teacher at each staff meeting presents on some aspect of 'better' practice they have tried. The slots are short; a maximum of 10 minutes and the presenter is encouraged to be as interactive with their peers as they would be with their children. Many of the presentations were subsequently published in the staff bulletin and put on the CPD section of the e-learning platform.</p>	<p>The impact is very powerful indeed. Staff come away from meetings with practical ideas they can use in their lessons the next day and it has proved an excellent way of initiating collaborative working arrangements.</p> <p>It is particularly high leverage in terms of staff development and the improvement of learning and teaching.</p>
6	Staff	<p>STAFF GRADE THE SCHOOL</p> <p>The first ten minutes of each staff meeting is spent looking at an aspect of the school self-evaluation. It is discussed in pairs and</p>	<p>The school reports that this is great for renewing vision and re-enforcing culture and 'singing from the same song sheet'. It is also good for establishing an understanding of what the</p>

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		each pair agrees a grade for the school. On re-forming as a whole group they discuss and agree a collective grade and what collective action could make it even better.	practice is that leads to a particular grade. <i>Further variations of these themes and ideas for staff meetings include one that requires the staff in turns to bring something from TESpro (e.g. 'My left field lesson') or even a discussion of their favourite butterfly.</i>
7	Pupil - learning	THE BOOK WIZARD A primary head anxious to promote reading and children having a burning enthusiasm, established that there was a character in the school called the 'Book Wizard'. To see the displays at the school leaves you in no doubt about how the 'Book Wizard' must have been established in their imagination. The school also was at pains to try to find out or to stimulate every child by year 4 or 5 having an 'enthusiasm' or burning interest in their lives. Then they would buy a book and make sure it was a really good one, create a message from the 'Book Wizard' personal to the child, then take it and wrap it in brown paper and send it through the post to the child's home.	One can imagine the thrill at home when the parcel arrives. It's an interesting and appealing butterfly but perhaps less influential on the whole school than some of the others?
8	Pupil - learning	Among one of the most interesting practice we came across was a Junior school where it had what was a 'Head Teacher for a Day' scheme as part of 'Children's Day' each year. It involved six pupil candidates from year 6 putting themselves up for election two weeks before local council elections. Each had to publish manifestos and attend a kind of 'hustings' for questions and answers in front of staff and pupils. Voting takes place on local-election day: every member of staff is eligible to vote along with all the pupils, other than those who are late. The winner is	From such a story, it's possible to imagine all sorts of new usage of involving pupils. It might even be a topic for the School Improvement Group to discuss?

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		announced and becomes 'Head Teacher for the Day'. Aided by a cabinet of fellow pupils, he/she sets out proposals for the day for consultation with staff and pupils. The 'Head Teacher for the Day' must take the 'praise assembly', when he or she gives out 'Achievement of the Week' awards. The 'Head Teacher for the Day' and the cabinet have tea with their favourite members of staff and prepare a newsletter for parents about their experience as head teacher. The day usually ends with a talent session.	
9	Pupil - behaviour Parent	<p>WINNING A FAMILY MEAL</p> <p>Many schools have reward systems whereby children gain awards by good behaviour/work etc. (Some schools of course take a different view on principle). One school decided that the best award for their families would be a voucher for the whole family at a local restaurant – an experience rarely or ever enjoyed by most of the school's financially challenged families.</p>	Involving parents is one of the great puzzles for most schools and this unusual way was apparently deeply appreciated and of course promoted a good feeling between child and parent(s).
10	Parent	<p>POSTCARDS POSTED HOME</p> <p>Sometimes letters home get lost and while certificates proudly taken home have huge impact, a postcard, carefully designed and sent through the post to the home address seemed to carry a greater personal impact and was regarded as special by the recipients. The school reported that they were deeply appreciated and often drew unsolicited thanks from proud parents.</p>	<p>Again, as with butterfly nine, any unusual way to involve parents positively is to be treasured. The fact that this appeared a random act of thoughtfulness added to the impact – as did the relative rareness of getting personal mail in these electronic days!</p> <p><i>A variant on this from another school involves phone calls home, another unusual experience It so often signifies trouble, so a phone call providing good news is such a welcome experience for parents.</i></p>
11	Pupil - learning	<p>THE BLOGGING SCHOOL DOG</p> <p>Many schools have animals and I come across some which have</p>	This example raises two interesting issues. The first is one which primary schools have always been good at and is

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		<p>decided to acquire a puppy and bring it up involving the pupils in training. One school has reported how their dog, Winston, has started a 'blog' and seems to have all sorts of adventures to which Year 6 pupils respond as part of an effort to develop creative and extended writing.</p>	<p>illustrated by the practice of sending 'Teddy Bears' home for adventures with children in Key Stage 1. In doing so the school establishes another 'personality' – albeit 'make-believe', but one, nevertheless, with whom children are perfectly willing to engage. Another illustration is the Key Stage 2 teachers who create a fictional person whom they telephone to ask advice during lessons.</p> <p>But the second is the traditional difficulty often encountered by teachers in securing higher level writing skills in Year 6. Now we all know how teachers themselves modelling creative writing and involving children in ways to improve it has a big impact, but the 'blogging school dog' seems to take it to a new level of ingenuity. Somebody even suggested that a school with many animals could have them all blogging!</p>
12	Pupil - behaviour	<p>THE SECRET PUPIL A visit to a year five classroom at the end of a school day was instructive. The teacher was identifying a pupil to go to a beaker with lollipop sticks each with the name of a member of the class. Without looking the chosen pupil drew out a lollipop stick and read the name of the 'secret pupil' There then followed a thoughtful discussion of five key elements of the class rules such as 'listening' 'volunteering questions and answers when asked' etc. – clearly the watch words will vary. There then followed a class discussion about the number of marbles, one or two for each element, to add to a jar with the expectation of a whole class treat at the end of the process.</p>	<p>Classes determining class rules at the beginning of a year need constant renewal. The teacher said that for her it was a 'fun way' of keeping the class working as a team and ensuring the highest common factor rather than the 'lowest common denominator' dominated behaviour.</p>

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13	Staff	<p>BUYING AT A LOCAL SHOP</p> <p>In a socially challenged area the head on an estate school asked that every member of staff once a week called at the local school to buy something. Her argument was that the parents used the shop and although teachers didn't live locally it was important that they were seen as part of the local community.</p>	<p>It is easy to forget that teachers can be seen as remote from the life of the community in which a school is located and this simple device complemented the efforts of the head to make sure the school was seen as an integral part of the estate and its life.</p>
14	Parent Pupil - behaviour	<p>'INTEGRITY IN THE COMMUNITY'</p> <p>Cards are given to shopkeepers, hairdressers and police – everyone external to the school you can think of. They send them to the school saying children have been caught 'doing the right thing'. It has a huge impact not just on parents and children but on the wider community's view of the school.</p>	<p>The impact on interactions between school and community are obvious. It is a part of school improvement easy to overlook and is a simple way of helping just marginally but probably with very large subliminal impact.</p>
15	Staff	<p>RESPECTING AND RAISING THE STATUS OF DINNER LADIES</p> <p>When the dinner lady arrives, teacher downs tools and greet each other very publicly while the children do a formal greeting. Quick very positive chat between staff follows about how wonderful the children are etc.</p>	<p>It is very easy to fall into the old habit of talking about non-teaching staff rather than support staff. So any device that emphasises the vital role that each and every member of staff plays in school life, whether teachers or in a support role such as dinner ladies, is to be treasured.</p>
16	Staff	<p>COFFEE AND BUTTERED TOAST IN THE MORNING</p> <p>Every morning, or if pushed for cash one morning a week, start the day with plates of buttered toast tea and coffee in staff room. Head serves and washes up!!!</p>	<p>There are variations on this theme- some people run to bacon sandwiches and not all heads wash up! The point is twofold. First how a day starts makes a difference to energy levels and of course how children learn so staff themselves need to be in the best possible mood. Secondly it is easy to overlook the subtleties of social gestures to different groups in the school community. I confess I am not sure that the head should do the washing up <i>every</i></p>

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			morning – once a week would be enough!
17	Staff	<p>TEACHERS OBSERVING CHILDREN</p> <p>Teachers are freed to spend time in pairs observing children in a class for a whole morning and then discussing each child's development with the class teacher in order to improve the likelihood of each child's successful learning. The school has extended this to involvement of 'TAs' and in doing so improved both the TAs knowledge but also their ability in 'one to one' work.</p>	<p>This is an interesting variation on the 'You know you are in a good school whenteachers observe each other teach etc' mentioned at the beginning. Observing children closely has always been the watchword of successful teaching and this simple idea ensures it takes place while at the same time promoting staff development.</p>
18	Pupil - learning	<p>PROTECTING STORY-TIME</p> <p>A school found that 'story-time' was being pushed off the edge in their rather busy time-table. So they modified their 'paired reading' sessions. These sessions involved a partner from another class spending supervised time together in an allocated class base with different age groups. At the end of each of these time-tabled sessions the last ten minutes is taken up in the teacher reading a story suitable for the vertically organised group.</p>	<p>We know from the research literature that peer group tutoring and mentoring is one of the very best ways of primary aged children making progress and that 'one to one' reading is a common feature of good use of TAs etc. So it is easy to imagine how with training the building block of this initiative is well worth doing. All generations of primary teachers have seen story-time as an essential part of the school day so the concern that it was being squeezed was understandable.</p>
19	Staff	<p>THE TEACHERS' GOLDEN TICKETS</p> <p>Each Wednesday the SLT of a school would put two golden tickets in two teacher's pigeon holes. SLT were going to teach their classes that day. They are released as a pair – and the choice of who goes with whom is vital – to spend the day together going round the school and taking part and observing all that goes on. Each is expected to do at least one private note of thanks and to put up on staff room accounts of good things that are going on.</p>	<p>This ticks off so many desirable features...observing teachers, staff development, talking about teaching and learning – there are clear focused ground rules for the observation, SLT seeing at close hand the work of children as they teach... <i>Another school reported a variant on this by saying that the purpose of the teachers' visits was to find good and interesting practice and then display on the staff notice board thus building a CPD record.</i></p>

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20	Parent	<p>RAFFLE TICKETS TO BOOST ATTENDANCE AT PARENTS' EVENINGS</p> <p>A school decided to boost attendance by showing the children the prizes and then sending raffle tickets home asking them to tell their parents. (They also put it on the school web site) The prizes were drawn at the parents' evening.</p>	<p>The school reported that it has had an impact on attendance. They also realised that there were other ways to boost parental support and involvement. They are planning to organise one with a fish and chips supper.</p>
21	Parent	<p>MATHS AND ENGLISH CAFÉ SESSIONS FOR PARENTS</p> <p>Starting in the autumn term when optimism is high – and energy levels ! – organise a whole class parents and children session in the hall with coffee and biscuits provided. In the independent activity part of the lesson parents and children join together to complete task provided.</p> <p>Follow-up with thank you postcard home and lots of family activity tasks if families choose.</p>	<p>It is notoriously difficult to get parents, particularly those from challenged families into school. In our busy world where the internet and fast and frequent communication is so easy, it is all too easy for parents not to give the face-to-face time that is so valuable in child development. So one can easily see why the school was keen to find ways to encourage productive family time.</p>
22	Parent staff	<p>PHONE CALLS HOME IN THE FIRST WEEK OF THE AUTUMN TERM</p> <p>A class teacher decided to try out this idea. She phoned each child's parents to introduce herself and ask about the child's likes and interests, in a fairly open-ended conversation. She also outlined what the class would be doing during the year.</p>	<p>Unsurprisingly the parents were incredibly grateful and impressed and inclined to view partnership with the teacher in a positive light. The teacher reported that attendance at parents' evenings improved and relationships over subsequent issues both good and bad were easier. The school has subsequently encouraged new teachers to adopt that practice.</p>
23	Parent	<p>PARENTS SEE HOMEWORK OF THE WEEK</p> <p>A school organises a display in the entrance lobby or a window or the Hall of 'Homeworks of the Week'...that is to say examples from each class in Key Stage 2 of pieces of completed tasks so that parents can see them.</p>	<p>This idea cropped up more than once. But there were different variations on motives! One said that they displayed it in a very visible display window which can be seen outside the school, while another had it in the Assembly Hall so that when parents came in for 'Celebration assemblies' where</p>

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			their children might receive a certificate, they could see children's work. One head said she had the best piece of work for the week in her office and always drew attention to it.
24	Staff	<p>MUTUAL THANKS AMONG STAFF</p> <p>There is a 'Thank You' board in the staff room. Staff – all staff teachers and support staff - write on a compliments slip to thank other staff for a particular action which has helped. For example, thanking welfare person for 'cleaning the microwave, or teaching colleague for swapping timetable slot, or cook for covering sickness absence of kitchen manager.</p>	<p>It is very difficult to make and sustain a culture of mutual support, particularly in large schools. It can be the thing that gets forgotten. Yet we know that it underpins the energy and attitudes in schools to it is vital to think of ways of achieving such a culture.</p> <p>This sounds a good way to ensure it happens, although I guess that if it could over time lose its effect. Acts of unexpected kindness are vital in all organisations especially schools where we provide examples to the next generation. So remembering birthdays, private acts of thoughtfulness and celebrating rites of passage are crucial.</p>
25	Pupil - learning	<p>ACTIVITY AFTERNOON</p> <p>A school devotes one afternoon to 'skill development and sharing'. These are planned sessions run by all staff, including TAs and others (e.g. the cook). The purpose is to have carefully constructed workshops where mixed age groups practise a skill which depends on the enthusiasm of all staff. They call it 'Club afternoon'. It is an attempt to extend pupils' experiences and skills and inject creativity into the curriculum. They run it for six weeks three times a year.</p>	<p>There are at least three benefits to this practice. First it is an attempt to bring some creativity to the curriculum and extend the range of life-enhancing skills and interest which pupils experience. Secondly it involves all the staff – and some from the community – in the process of 'learning'. Thirdly it may lead to invaluable leaps in confidence in pupils who are in danger of 'learning to fail' and from that confidence they grow the capacity to apply themselves to other parts of learning where they are failing.</p>
26	Family	<p>POSTCARDS/LETTERS TO UNCLES/AUNTS/GRANDPARENTS</p> <p>Children have a task to write and explain some aspect of school</p>	<p>The school, which serves a fairly well-off community, reports that the teacher who tried this with Y5, was confident that it</p>

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		life to a 'significant other' who is important in their life – usually a grandparent. It is sent through the post and is intended to give pleasure to them and help children practise their handwriting skills.	had impact and extended the practice to writing to others for different purposes – including people in the local community, especially the elderly population. In the first task she had one child looked after and preceded the session by conversations that established that the child had a significant other. Subsequent discussions of this butterfly with other very differently placed schools uncovered one who made it a beneficial feature for children whose families originated in another country and whose letter might be in that country's language.
27	Staff Family	MAKING A VIRTUE OF VOLUNTEERING It started with a school trying to 'think outside the box' on the issue of volunteering and those parents or families who lacked self-esteem or had low aspirations for themselves and their children. So the school identified issues where they could help and asked for 'time limited' volunteering as learning/classroom volunteers leading to a massive lift in confidence.	Most schools will recognise the phenomenon of the parents/families described here. The school in question argues that time limiting the task helped overcome the predictable resistance and that it worked in some cases.
28	Pupil - emotional	A FOIL BALLOON FOR NEW PUPILS On their preliminary 'visit' day, new 'starter' pupils are given a 'foil balloon' to take home.	This, at first sight, needs no explanation – and it is simple. Perhaps though, it is an illustration of a wider issue of how we welcome pupils new to our school so that they settle in and take advantage of their learning as soon as they can. So the need for and careful choice of 'buddies' with a clear expectation of what it means to be a 'buddy' is another simple thing schools do. So also the practice of having two maps, one of the world and one of the immediate locality which one school has on the wall of the hall so that pins and

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			the names of children map their 'origins'. As one school said it can be a starting point for 'history' geography' and 'maths' – and a lot of other learning.
29	Pupil - emotional	<p>THE JOB SQUAD</p> <p>Children in years 5 and 6 are involved in discussing and agreeing the job-descriptions and tasks (both in the classroom and around the school) which are available each term. They are then involved in applying for and watching applicants presentations for each job.</p>	<p>In one sense this is a 'time honoured' practice in primary schools, though I admired the involvement of pupils themselves not just in the sorts of jobs, which ranged over the obvious day to day tasks in a classroom to 'buddying' and 'peace-making' in the school but also in the job descriptions and the appointing process. I admired too the 'performance management' interviews at the end of the period of office. Those interested in the greater involvement of pupils might find learningtolead.org.uk a useful site to visit.</p>
30	Pupil - learning	<p>CHILDREN CHOOSING THE CURRICULUM THEMES (HARRY POTTER FROM FOUNDATION TO YEAR 6)</p> <p>Presumably – and this was all that was provided in the description!- the school has 'themes' (Sometimes called 'topics' or 'research', though in this case more wide-ranging and free to be interpreted by different teachers in the school) and involves pupils in voting for a short-list and the final choice.</p>	<p>Clearly, as I am going on the simple description in the title, I can't be sure of the impact. But one can speculate about it as an attempt to involve children more in their learning.</p>
31	Staff	<p>THE ASSISTANT HEAD'S USE OF A TIMETABLED MORNING OFF CLASS TEACHING.</p> <p>A head, recognising the outstanding skills of an AH both as a coach and as a widely trusted colleague, programmed so that she is off-timetable on Wednesday mornings when she uses her times as follows:</p>	<p>The head says that the AH in question is widely trusted and respected as a teacher; she also has an uncanny knack of feeding back in a helpful and accurate way which strengthens others.</p> <p>It is not unlike Butterflies three and nineteen in the sense that it uses senior team time to free staff to observe each other's</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying out a 'learning walk' • Team teaching with NQTs or less confident teachers to extend their skills • Teaching in a class other than her own thus freeing up the teacher to a specific 'observational task' in a classroom other than her own. <p>She has a clearly defined feed-back task for the various roles involved and through her the school is extending its knowledge of learning and teaching.</p>	practice. All require careful planning and some thought of how to obtain optimum benefit from the exercise.
32	Staff	<p>LEARNING PARTNERS Two teachers work collaboratively on an issue where they want to improve their teaching. The area of focus (e.g. questions) is chosen by themselves. The SLT then enables cover so each can observe the other. They can choose to report to colleagues at staff meetings if they wish, though not compulsory</p>	The school reports considerable enthusiasm for the scheme. It is a variant of butterflies three, nineteen and thirty one in the sense that it allows SLT to enable teachers' observation of each other.
33	Parent Pupil - emotional	<p>HANDS FREE PHONE CALLS HOME The head has a habit of ringing a parent whenever a child appears sent by a teacher to show their good work. She then uses the 'hands free' button so that the parent can hear the child telling the head about the child's achievement.</p>	The head reports that it is a surprise since it only happens rarely and that the parents love it.
34	Pupil - learning	<p>THE POET LAUREATES IN SCHOOL The school appoints a Poet Laureate from the children (or adults – sometimes they have both!) for a term and the Poet Laureate's task is to write a poem to celebrate certain occasions and then</p>	The school says it acts as a boost to creativity and to literacy. Clearly you could extend the idea to Poet Laureates for each key stage or each class?

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		have the poem displayed and made much of in an assembly and through newsletters.	
35	Pupil - behaviour	<p>TRAFFIC LIGHTS WITH A DIFFERENCE FOR BEHAVIOUR</p> <p>A school invented a new traffic light system for good behaviour. They decided to add God and silver beyond green because in their view red yellow and green was too heavily weighted to the negative. They noticed that its impact was to shift the atmosphere from an emphasis on the negative to children competing to win silver and gold citations.</p>	It can so often be the case that schools despite their best intentions find themselves caught in measuring the negatives. This simple change had a powerful effect on changing the culture.
36	Pupil - learning	<p>CALL THE KENNEL CLUB</p> <p>A school as a treat for a class has a link with the Kennel club who are happy to loan a dog to the school from time to time so that a class can read it a story. They follow up with writing stories and letters to the dog which does a follow-up visit.</p>	Clearly children like animals and one can imagine how in the hands of good teacher this idea could stimulate all sorts of activity and follow-up.
37	Parent	<p>PARENTS READING IN THE MORNING AS THEY DROP THEIR CHILDREN OFF</p> <p>The head with some volunteer staff who were willing to try it out, encouraged parents to accompany their child into the classroom every Friday so that they could sit alongside and either read or listen to their children reading.</p>	Of course not all parents took part but a fair number did and appreciated the relaxed atmosphere they encountered. Of course the school opened early so that this could happen.
38	Pupil - learning	<p>CHILDREN'S WRITING ON SCHOOL'S FACEBOOK PAGE</p> <p>The school decided to encourage writing by posting examples of children's writing on the school's Facebook and on their website so that the public and especially the parents could see the work</p>	It is one way of emphasising the pride the school takes in children's finished work and can clearly incorporate celebration across the curriculum.

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		being achieved.	
39	Pupil – emotional	<p>THE “HEADIES’ HAT”</p> <p>We took up the idea of the person taking assembly wearing a hat. We had a variety. One very grand hat (Top Hat) became known as the “Headies’ Hat”.</p> <p>When children want to speak to the whole school – share news/success – they put on the Headies Hat and share news with 500 children.</p> <p>The boost to confidence has been amazing surprising children and staff alike and very popular with parents.</p>	A simple if slightly whacky idea which had a huge impact. The school commented that after a while it was dropped and then revived – bearing out the theory that butterflies are time-limited.
40	Staff	<p>POSTCARDS FOR STAFF</p> <p>Ahead commented that she took the idea of postcards further and regularly sent postcards to staff thanking them for some ‘beyond the call of duty’ contribution. She said they were much appreciated.</p>	The head’s comment touches on a really important point, namely the need to respect and recognise staff in any way that seems natural and appropriate. A leader’s duty, at any level, is to consider how to best achieve acts of unexpected and private appreciation and kindness.
41	Staff	<p>STANDING AT THE SCHOOL GATE</p> <p>The Head describes how she has a ritual of standing at the school gate to welcome pupils and staff at the beginning of the day and at the end to greet and bid farewell.</p>	This is a time honoured practice, which as she explained has the added advantage that it breathes life into her ‘open door’ policy because it has become the habit that people know they can quickly ask her for time later to discuss a particular issue.
42	Pupil - behaviour	<p>ROGUES INTO ANGELS THROUGH LEARNING</p> <p>A group of six ten-year old boys were increasingly a behaviour problem, but, as the head said, the saving grace was that they could read, not a lot and not brilliantly but well enough to become ‘Reading Champions’ for working a peer tutors with younger boys aged 5 and 6. They rose to the challenge and took pride in giving</p>	If you look at the research evidence, for example from the Sutton Trust or John Hattie you are struck by the success – above other interventions – of peer tutoring and there are other examples like this of the beneficial effect of older pupils with some difficulties of their own succeeding in the role.

Butterfly	Impacting on	Description	Impact
		advice to their younger colleagues about the value and importance of learning! It transformed their behaviour and they are now in secondary school and thriving.	
43	Staff	FRIDAY AFTER SCHOOL COLLAPSE TIME The head found a small group of staff at the end of a week fell into the habit of collapsing around a table to drink tea and compare notes. She 'fed' them 'goodies' and soon everybody looked forward to the 'after school on Friday' informal sociable group ideas meeting.	The head says it's the best thing that ever happened in her school and really was 'planned/managed serendipity' which is probably a good description of how many butterflies start.
44	Pupils - emotional	OSCAR THE PUPPET The school created a puppet, Oscar who visits P1 P2 and P3 classes. Oscar visits each class – encourages discussion – children love talking to him and finding solutions to problems.	Children look forward to the visits and it has stimulated their appetite for writing and story. In a sense this is a brilliant example of a variation on a theme. I have called it the 'alter ego' of teachers, namely their creation of another character with whom children will be more willing to converse. So sending teddy bears home in P1 would be an example – as is the blogging dog in an earlier example. But this is brilliant.
45	Pupil - behaviour	HELPING HANDS We have helping hands – a dot goes on each finger as kindness, achievement, anything which is shown towards others. It is particularly effective with younger children.	One can just imagine the impact of this on behaviour among early primary children.
46	Pupil - behaviour	AWESOME ACHIEVEMENT ARCADE Children are encouraged to share achievements they have experienced in and out of school. However, this has evolved and	One can imagine how this idea would impact on children in and around transfer from primary to secondary and it sows the seeds of variations on the theme.

Butterfly	Impacting on	Description	Impact
		teachers send little cards to different classes when they have observed something 'positive' the child has done. The look on a child's face when they receive a card unexpectedly is priceless!	
47	Staff	DRESSING UP Teacher who dresses up as main character for writing lesson. Mrs Discovery teacher dresses as a character for Science lessons.	Yet another example of the 'alter ego' technique of creating more characters in an attempt to unlock the minds of children.
48	Pupil - learning	POST-IT RELAY Using post it notes to allow pupils to relay information on what they have learned about in class. Displaying them in class and allowing the class teacher to identify areas for development. Post-it notes given to pupils to write down their thoughts on lessons.	The person who reported this as school practice confirmed the pupils' 'Very positive / critical / insightful comments which supported professional reflection for teachers. Pupils feel involved in their own learning.' It is also worth adding that research suggests that, in terms of marking and assessment, pupils writing down what they think they have learned is a very powerful way of consolidating their understanding.

CONCLUSION

This is necessarily a starter and it is over to you to take it on.

If you decide to extend this collection please keep me posted. I promised to come back to see how you are getting on.

Tim Brighouse October 2014