

10th November 2016

St Christopher's is the largest Special Needs School and are delighted to be a pioneer school.

Since becoming a pioneer school we have had the opportunity to support and work with other schools throughout Wales both Pioneer and Non Pioneer. We have met many academic educationalists from Universities who have also supported us.

The experiences we have been many and varied. We have had the opportunity to lead on particular areas and well as work with co colleagues to develop the concepts of pioneering further.

As a school we have held a number of conferences both for special schools and mainstream school staff. We have had real pioneers presenting sessions including the renowned polar explorer Antony Jinman who is most widely recognised for being the twelfth Britain to have skied to the Geographic North Pole and ski solo to the Geographic South Pole, he inspired staff to be real pioneers.

The two day events held by Welsh Government have been professionally run. During these events staff have had opportunities to work together and challenge and develop the new curriculum work we have been involved in.

At school we have been involved with :-

- *New Curriculum development*
- *Non teacher training*
 - a) *Feedback*
 - b) *Metor Cognition*
- *Teacher standards*
- *Non Teachers standards*
- *Aspirational Leadership*
- *What Makes a School a Learning Organisation*
- *Professional Learning*
- *Assessment for learning*
- *Tracking Literacy and Numeracy and Digital Framework*
- *Developing an effective Performance management system*

- *Developing Effective Behaviour management within the classroom*
- *Pupil voice learners as leaders*
- *Effective use of National testing in a Special School*
- *Enrichment / Entitlement College links development*
- *Feedback to learners*

Feedback on how the design and development of the new curriculum is progressing has been delivered at the Pioneer meetings were we have met the team responsible for working with Professor Donaldson regarding new curriculum design.

Pioneer school leaders have expressed frustration at times that things are not moving fast enough for them, however Donaldson believes to develop a bottom up curriculum you must give people time to experiment and try new concepts.

At St Christopher's we believe this is the way forward. We believe that this framework will only be successful if legislation gives people time to be innovative and to develop without the restrictions of a legal framework that may have consequences and not truly encompass the needs of all learners.

I have been so impressed with this initiative and the view that practitioners have been valued that I have agreed to join the Welsh Government to implement the Donaldson reforms as a member of the Assessment and Curriculum group. I have been totally involved in the curriculum development and assessment process.

Yours sincerely,

Maxine Pittaway

*Maxine Pittaway MBE
Headteacher*