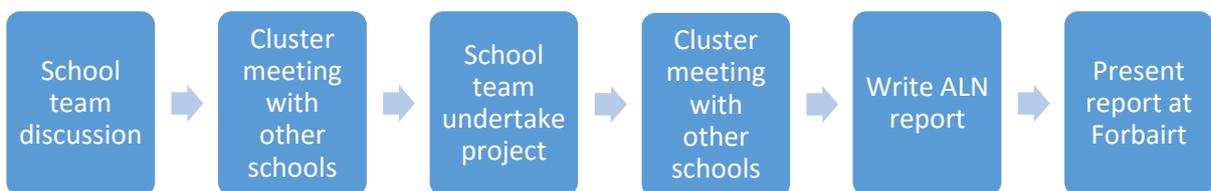


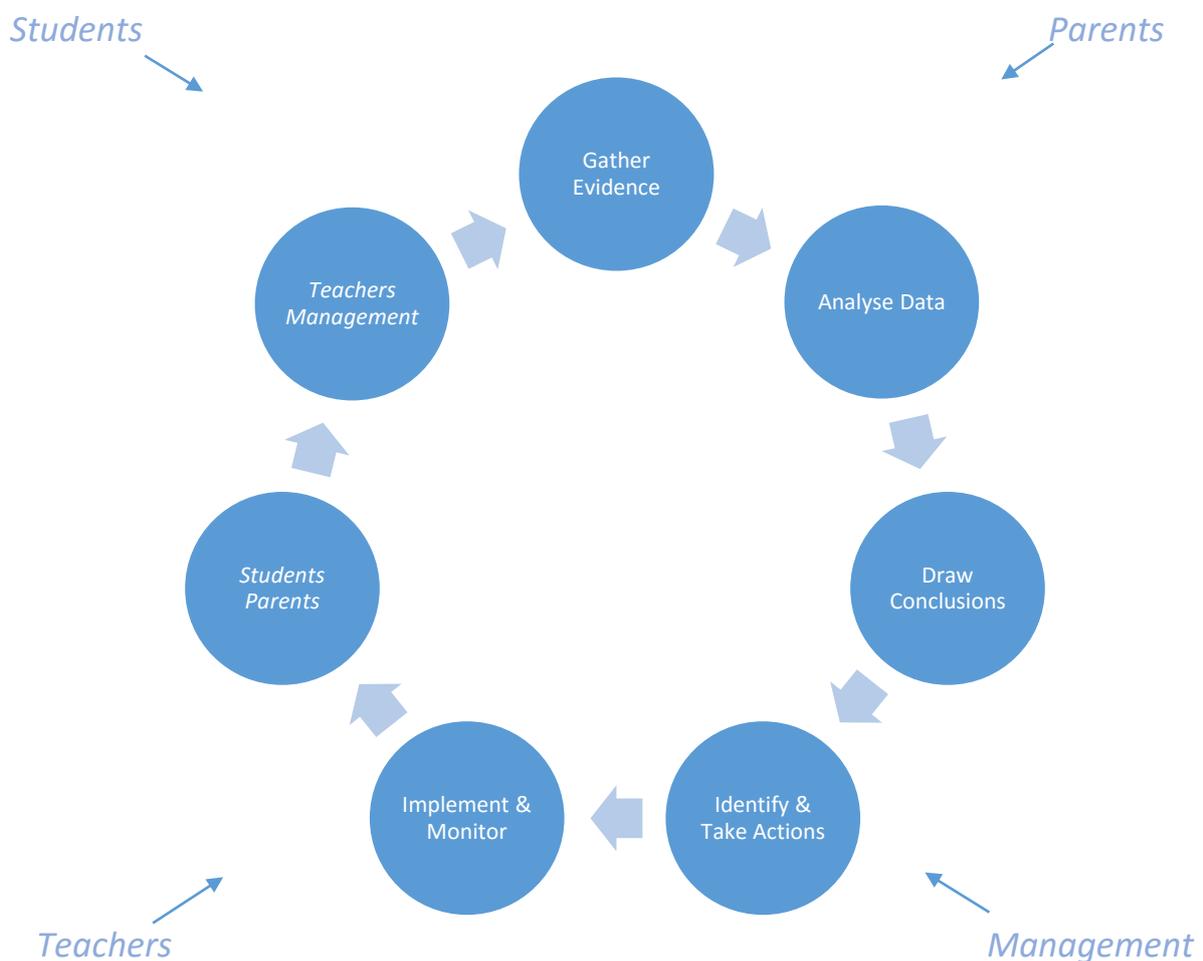
ALN project – Implementation of AfL strategies with a specific class group

Conducting an ALN

General



Specific

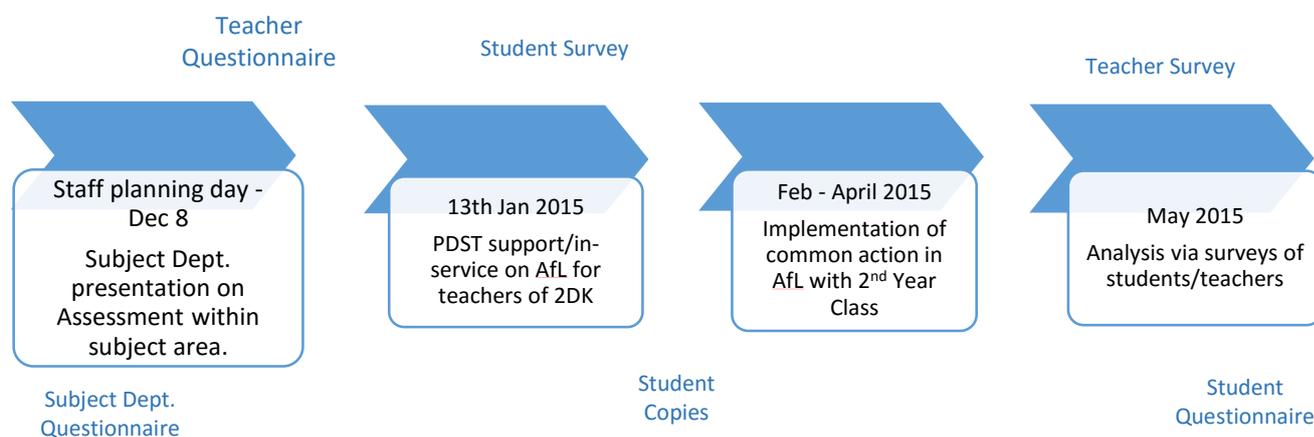


Brief Description

Our project centered around the use of AfL techniques with a specific 2nd year class. The process involved project team meetings to identify a focus followed by a delivery to the whole staff on ALN and our involvement. As a reflective exercise on how we conduct and use assessment, each subject department was invited to outline to the teaching staff practices which they employed and found useful. Subsequently a 2nd year class were chosen as a target group - inservice in AfL was provided for the teachers of this group, surveys of said teachers and of students in the group were carried out.

Identifying target area and area of need

We were agreed from the outset that we wanted to do something in the general area of assessment but as we discussed the matter it became apparent that we needed a much sharper focus. We were guided by the question - 'how do our assessment strategies inform and improve the quality of student learning?' Initially we were thinking in terms of house exams, class tests, homework, etc, with feedback in mind. It was this focus on feedback that led us to anchor the project in Assessment for Learning. We chose to focus on a specific group, a 2nd year class, and the teachers who taught them.



Data Gathering

- Surveys
- Student Cluster group and student copies
- Subject department meetings feedback

Analysis of Data

* a member of the project team facilitated subject dept feedback session with responses collated and categorised.

* Data from teacher questionnaire was collated and presented in bar/pie charts with results used to inform decisions re in service and focus of project.

* Student survey and analysis of student copies was used to establish the current position re student view of feedback, the extent and nature of feedback and value placed on it.

* Data from post implementation questionnaire for teachers and students analysed to establish change in practice, strategies used and perceived effect.

Supports and Resources used

- * cluster meetings
- * on line google questionnaires
- * targeted survey
- * PDST in service from Anne O'Brien
- * NCCA website and information on AfL

Main challenges addressed

In a time of possible initiative overload we were anxious to progress this initiative without adding to teacher workload. We wanted to establish the potential in the project and to foster a positive attitude.

When first suggested, the issue of collecting student work with a view to analysing frequency and nature of feedback caused some concern. This was readily resolved.

Concerns of teachers in relation to whether our focus on Assessment was related to new Junior cycle and the issue of teacher assessment of their own students.

Alleviating subject specific concerns regarding the forms of assessment they use versus that of other subject areas. Reassuring teachers that the nature, quality and frequency of the

forms of assessment they use was not being scrutinised but that student learning was the ongoing focus.

Engagement in the process has helped in moving towards a new understanding of teaching and learning as recognised by NCCa and others as central to the future of our education model.

Success of project in bringing about change

We wanted to reflect on how and with what effect we provide feedback to students on an ongoing basis. The data collected indicated that in many cases feedback was not provided and/or it was predominantly summative in nature.

Discussion at subject dept. level was effective in raising awareness of AfL. Anecdotal feedback on the session was overwhelmingly positive.

Teachers of the 2nd year cohort reported positively on their experiences in implementing AfL strategies. Students were less clear on noticing change in teaching style and/or use of feedback.

We feel there is scope to roll out further

