The creation and implementation of a new Sixth Form Boarding Co-Curricular Programme.

by

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1.0 - Introduction and Context

“Saint Felix School in Southwold, Suffolk, which charges up to £26,000 a year, has said it will offer at least two free places to teenage refugees from the war-torn country” - (Daily Mail, Sept 9th 2015)

“Not everybody wants to board, but the alternative of moving school with every change of posting seriously disrupts continuity of education. In contrast a boarding school can offer the prospect of longer term continuity and a stable environment providing more opportunities to develop all round potential” - Service Parent’s Guide to Boarding Schools

“There is a wide range of co-curricular activities at Caterham School. We hope that all pupils will take advantage of as many activities as possible. We expect all pupils to involve themselves in at least one co-curricular activity each term. Here is a list of just SOME of the activities normally on offer.” - Caterham School website.

Why consider a new Boarding Co-Curricular Programme at Anon College? – because more and more, we see the rise of the phrase ‘The Offer’ in respect of Boarding schools promoting themselves, or their services, against other Boarding schools or other forms of education¹ and the CCP sits at the heart of that ‘Offer’.

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¹ The term itself seems to encompass so much (sports, facilities open to the community, academics, pastoral programmes, careers advice, trips, volunteering etc.) that sometimes the word becomes vapid because schools have attempted to pack it with so much activity and so much meaning. On one level, it reminds us of the arms race that occurred at the height of the Cold War between enemy states when, eventually, they reached a ‘zero sum’ position of equal arsenals and the prospect of war receded only on the basis of mutually assured destruction! On another level, it seems to also be increasingly a PR case of my Offer is bigger than yours!
In this state of stasis and one-up-manship, it can be challenge (for a parent, student, school or Action report writer) to identify what a good Offer is and around what principles a school should construct their own ‘Offer’ and CCP. In the worst cases, a school Offer is ‘synthetic’ because it is imposed for the sake of Marketing rather than ‘organic’ and one that has been developed from the roots up in a student-centred way that reflects the best traditions of individual schools. As way of illustrating what a ‘better’ Offer may resemble, here is Jonathan Taylor, Headmaster of Wymondham, writing recently in the Jubilee edition of the BSA Magazine:

“….Our programme offers more than 60 different weekly activities, regular visiting speakers, weekend and evening trips and over 650 sporting fixtures a year. Our Duke of Edinburgh Award, CCF and community services programmes are all hugely popular. In a typical week activities include music theory, jazz band, brass group, flute choir, full orchestra, drama club, horse riding, volleyball, cooking for fun, film club, tennis, swimming, squash, rugby, football, debating and numerous house activities (including Take Me Out and other game-show-based activities!). It is this variety and the endless opportunities modern boarding offers which adds so much value to students who board and plays such a significant role in developing character traits so important in life....”

All I can say is wow! Here is an ‘Offer’ with range, scope and expansiveness across the disciplines. Here is a Head who understands his market and the market forces afoot. Here is a programme that allows any child, with any talent or interest, to find an access-point.

Also at the core of this notion of ‘The Offer’ is the question of the quality, breadth and relevance of the CCP that a school can pitch and tender to prospective students and prospective parents. Those who work in the sector know that parents will, of course, be drawn to exam results, accommodation quality and reputational name as key decision making factors when it comes to placing their child in one Boarding school over another. Ami Sedghi (2015) and Lucy Higginson (2015) remind us that parents are also increasingly acutely attentive to how schools spend their money and also how schools are now viewing their students as a client base that must be listened to in respect of service delivery and service design. Tristram Hunt, writing in the New Statesman (2015) and referencing Tony Little’s recent study, An Intelligent Person’s Guide to Education, states:

“Little regards boarding schools, with their co-curricular activity, social capital and peer group development, as by far the best tool for marshalling the teenage mind.....For Little, there are two “fundamental truths” to school life – that young people learn at least as much outside the classroom as in it; and that young people learn more from each other than they do from adults.”

This analysis cuts straight to the core of why the CCP in schools is taking on greater pre-eminence and primacy of design and resourcing. The central idea expressed by Hunt and Little is that what happens ‘outside’ or ‘alongside’ the classroom experience is just as valuable, if not more valuable for future life and work needs, as what occurs inside the classroom.

With all of this in mind, the focus of my Action Research report is/was then the refreshment and realigning of the Boarding CCP in Anon College

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2 This work attempts to build on the work of my previous assignment which focused around the development of Sixth Boarding and the inherent challenges, opportunities or pitfalls that existed in that evolution. Although
Of course, every Action Report needs a catalyst. Therefore, in my Action report, I would draw attention to the fact that I have been very much guided by the work of two key change theorists. I say this as feel their suggested interpretations of change have provided me with metrics which best describe and illustrate my own encounters with change. Very simply, these theorists have provided me with a mental map, or reference points for triangulation in my thinking, that I personally grasp and understand and this has allowed me not to get lost in the ‘fog’ of war that can arise on the battlefield or ‘dust’ of change that can be kicked up from the ‘change’ combat arena.

The first of these is the work of Knoster, Villa and Thousand (2005). For the sake of succinctness, their Managing Complex Change model can be best comprehended and summarised by the Figure One below.

![Managing Complex Change Model](image)

**Figure One** - Managing Complex Change Model - Knoster et al (2005) - extracted from A Framework for Thinking about System Change – see References.

My consideration of Knoster et al is contained within Table One in Appendices.

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many of the recommendations I advanced in that report have not being accepted or implemented to date by SLT or Governors, one aspect of it (the development of more CCP opportunities for Senior Boarders) was achievable within the remit of the Boarding team without excessive need for external referral or discussion. Therefore, as with Assignment Two (which centred on the development of Sixth Form Boarding at Anon College), my Action research project is focused around another specialist area of change. However, on this occasion, I have very much taken to heart the Course Handbook recommendation to find a task that is “appropriate in scale and relevance to your role and interests”. This is not because Assignment Two was over-ambitious. Rather, I had seriously over-estimated the Head’s, Deputy Head’s, Bursar’s and Governor’s appetite for change and comprehension of the need to change. This ARR is then more modest in aim.

3 My comprehension of change management was greatly increased by the lessons gained through Assignment Two, it was further enhanced by our Day Three session on Strategic Development Planning and Managing Change by Chris Seal (2015). Seal’s focus on the metrics of change and identifying a metric (or metrics) that best describe the change ‘journey’ you are attempting to make, made a significant impact on my thinking.
The second theorist who assisted my approach to the project was Kübler-Ross (1969). Again, for the sake of succinctness, Kübler-Ross’s Transition Change model can be best comprehended and summarised by Figure two below.

![The Kübler-Ross change curve](http://changemanagementsuccess.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/The-Change-Curve.png)

**Figure Two** - The Kübler-Ross Change Curve - extracted from http://changemanagementsuccess.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/The-Change-Curve.png

Much of Kübler-Ross’s work grew out of an analysis of grief. It may be strange to connect my project to the topic of loss and bereavement. However, I have learned that change is, in many ways, about the loss or surrendering of the past, finding ways to heal from that loss and looking to new ways of moving forward under a new set of conditions. Change is also about shock to the status-quo, anger and frustration at this new disruption, then some exploration and acceptance of this altered reality and hopefully some re-building and commitment to the future as it stands.

Drawing inspiration from Knoster, I found it useful to inject into my work a series of self-guiding questions that would captain my own approach. These are detailed in Table Two in Appendices.

Further to this, I have also been guided by the recommendations of Phillips and Carr (2014) in my choice of Action Report structure and some of the nomenclature I choose to use (an example is below in my choice of par-labelling my literature review - *What I have learned*).

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4 I plan to follow Phillips and Carr’s advice by having no intention of using my Appendices as the form of informational ‘dumping ground’ that it resembled in Assignment Two. Within the Appendix you will find no lengthy print-outs of Survey Monkey questionnaires to stakeholders; only tables, the CCP brochure I produced in my previous school to substantiate the legitimacy of my experience in CCP work, the Anon College CCP programme samples as they stood in 2014/15 and a copy of the Ignite programme as it stands now in 2015/6. I cannot include a commendation of the programme by Inspectors in our recent Inspection report, as the document is still pending.
from distant colleagues). Philips and Carr encourage the educator to employ ‘storytelling’ in a way to enliven their material and I will strive to do this as a way to make my data less turgid or unnecessarily dense or obtuse. Phillips and Carr also encourage educators to view themselves as individuals who sit at the rather gainful intersection of “service teaching within the process of action research”. By this they mean, Boarding Practitioners (hereafter BPs) are ideally placed to take advantage of their involvement in a Boarding service to be able to implement Action based research. The section then that follows is a step in that direction and seeks to give a broader perspective for the reader on the AR topic under consideration in this report.

2.0 - Brief Wider Literature or What I have learned from Distant Colleagues

The Glossary of Education Reform (2013) states that a CCP is:

“Activities, programmes, and learning experiences that complement, in some way, what students are learning in school—i.e., experiences that are connected to or mirror the academic curriculum”.

The GER suggests that Co-curricular activities are defined by qualities which I examine in Table Three in Appendices.

Interestingly, the glossary does suggest that such ‘boundary line’ definitions are ‘eroding’, especially as students partake in their own extracurricular activities which are self-driven and self-devised and off-campus. They suggest, in fact, the boundaries between Co and Extracurricular are becoming increasingly ‘fuzzy’ and ‘interchangeable’. This is especially true for schools that are prepared to open their campuses to the wider community of their locale in exchange for the community bringing Co-Curricular opportunities to their own students.

Andrews (2013), contextualising CCPs in respect of movement towards University and gaining experience before going to University, suggests that CCPs should give students the ‘right tools’ to ‘take charge of their own development’. She suggests that educational organisations should see CCPs as a key contributor within the notion of the ‘student journey’ and that educators should see CCPs as a key ‘development strand’. She suggests CCPs should be ‘embedded’ rather than ‘added on’. She reminds us that CCPs are of value to employers because such programmes, if designed well, can “relate to effective study practices, and personal, professional and career development”.

Stephenson (2010) draws our attention to the social capital gain and social mobility boost that can come about from CCPs. Seeking, like Andrews, to draw the link for Senior students transitioning between school and university, Stephenson states:

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5 In this section, following Phillip and Carr’s recommendation, I shall attempt to broaden “my readers' understanding of the major issues surrounding my research” and attempt to “further solidify the credibility and trustworthiness” of my work. I shall also try to ground my discussions in a critical evaluation of the broader literature on CCPs.

6 A good example of this I have encountered is the Sidcot School Community Arts Centre - were the school opens the Centre to artists to use in return for those artists helping and assisting their own Sidcot Students. See [http://www.sidcot.org.uk/arts#.Vqx2gX2LTC0](http://www.sidcot.org.uk/arts#.Vqx2gX2LTC0)
that students should be given, curricular opportunities to develop critical thinking skills and the ability to work with others.....co-curricular involvements..... were found to be positively related to at least one dimension of civic engagement”.

This suggests that good CCP design and implementation should also comprehend the civic, social and social mobility value and ‘boosts’ that can come from Co-curricular activities.

Dash and Dash (2008) remind us that CCPs should attend to the ‘whole personality’ of the child and they identify a number of “needs, importances and values” that should underpin a good CCP. These are outlined in Table Four in Appendices.

Dash and Dash also prompt us to realise there are a number of pitfalls, obstacles or disincentives to the development of CCPs. Such factors are summarized in Table Five in Appendices.

At this point, it is appropriate to draw consideration to the work of Munger (2011) in his belief that a strong CCP benefits the whole school and the success of all the students. His work reminds the reader than there is a substantial correlation between the success of a CCP and the success of a school. Referencing the work of Reginald Clarke, he states that students who participated in CCPs have higher ‘school satisfaction’ and a sense of ‘self-concept’. He states that participation in a CCP also raises the sense of a student's ‘school connectedness’. It is then appropriate to bond this to the work of Cox (2007) in her discussion of the emotional needs of Boarders as Cox would most likely agree that a good CCP is another forum in which the ‘self-esteem’ of a student can be raised and maintained.

Finally, Hogan (2016) instructs us from a marketing perspective and also with the realisation in mind that UK Boarding Schools are, gradually, not only feeling the pressure to differentiate themselves from their local and national competitors, but also from the growing International Boarding sector. She states:

“Just being a British school in the UK is not enough. Parents will want to learn about (and see) good, new facilities. They will want the detail of academic results year on year as well as the specifics of university destinations. They will be interested in the mix and proportion of international pupils and will want some idea of the calibre of teachers. Many families like the notion of tradition (uniform, buildings, rituals etc.) but not at the cost of contemporary investment in accommodation, technology and facilities”.

Hogan’s comment above is, in many ways, a reiteration of the main argument of my introduction to this report. However, she goes on to say that as:

“the market becomes more diverse and sophisticated, then our approach.....should be tailor-made”

The phrase ‘tailor-made’ is worth extracting. It is was this mind-set of attempting to produce a ‘tailor-made’ CCP that fulfilled the needs of the Anon College Sixth Form students and also the School’s need (whether it accepted it or not by Senior Managers) for an improvement in its Offer, that guided me in my approach to stakeholders, in my methodology, in my findings and in my further actions.
3.0 - Approach to Stakeholders, Methodology, Findings, Actions

Armed with the clarifying questions contained in Table Six within Appendices, the desire to implement change (invigorated in me by the BSA Diploma course and my Action Focus as detailed in Table Seven) and accoutered with the results of my wider reading and also my own experience as a Head of Co-Curricular in my previous school (see Appendix and my creation and the implementation of the Enigma Programme), I began by approaching stakeholders to identify what elements of the Knoster grid were available to me or beyond my immediate grasp. Knowing Action research and qualitative methods to also be prone to personal bias, I also applied my Kubler-Ross change curve as a way to make my findings more concrete, utilitarian, actionable and uncontaminated by my own fervour for change!

In terms of justifying my methodology for such approaches, I adopted advice advocated by Orridge (2009). In respect of change management and leadership, Orridge recommends that change agents conduct a number of “mini-exercises” as a means to discover were opportunity or adversity exists. This gave rise to a range of qualitative data in the first instance. Madrigal and McClain (2012) suggests that we:

“use qualitative research to identify the factors that affect the areas under investigation, then use that information to devise quantitative research that assesses how these factors would affect user preferences”

Following this guidance, it then seemed apt to allow qualitative data (from my mini-exercises and application of Knoster et al and Kubler Ross) to dictate what pre-existing quantitative data I would seek out or seek to generate (if permitted by Senior managers).

Following Orridge, my “vision exercise” was then an approach to my Headmaster, Deputy, the House team, Marketing and Admissions and Sixth form parents and students to discuss the matter. The format of my approach was based around a short proposal and also allied with e-mails, direct question interviews and Survey Monkey questionnaires. I asked questions of CCP content as well as purpose.

In terms of feedback, I would suggest the most positive response was from the House team. Senior managers, who briefly took the issue under attention, seemed at best neutral in attitude or disregardful, neither advocating nor arguing on the basis of need, design or requirement. The general message was that the one page descriptions we already hand in place for Senior students were sufficient (see Appendices – Summer Clubs 2015).

There was receptiveness on the part of Marketing and Admissions in terms of them understanding the need to match the Offer elements being offered by other local schools and beyond. There was also receptiveness in terms of the House Team (especially as they were anxious about how Senior students would spend their free-time). There was some receptiveness from parents and students within Boarding but these conversations were swamped with

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7 As the development of Sixth Form at Anon College (around May 2015) was ambiguous and imprecise in its entirety of planning (the school had no idea of how many students would commit to Sixth Form and what subjects they would commit to and where and by who they would be taught), I think Senior managers then struggled to comprehend the need for a Sixth Form CCP as part of a wider Offer. This may have been because the ‘higher up’ architecture of the Offer (subjects/teachers/study space/uniform/freedoms and restrictions) had yet to be resolved, therefore, they struggled to understand the ‘lower down’ abstraction of a CCP.
alternative questions about the pragmatics of Sixth (asking questions about subjects, study space etc. alongside questions about UCAS preparation and work experience). Senior Managers were conversing about these matters at the time between themselves but not percolating this information across to Boarding, so we had little defence for such questions and little room to move the conversation forwards and towards the look, design and elements of a CCP.  

So in terms of ‘vision’ my House team ‘got it’, the Bursar ‘got it’, Marketing ‘got it’ but Senior Managers didn’t want to ‘get it’ or wouldn’t allow me into the forum that would let me help then ‘get it’. Parents and students couldn’t ‘get it’ because their minds were preoccupied with more basic questions of practicality.

In terms of a gathering ‘skills’ exercise, it was clear from my general encounters with stakeholders that I would have to rely on my own previous CCP design experience and that I would also have to employ what existing resources were at hand, as no new resources were available. In fact, the general message was that if I wanted to do this, no-one would stand in my way but at the same time, no would be willing to assist outside the House team!

Therefore, in my resource exercise, I went hunting for that which was already close by and obtainable to me, for example - access to the Boarding Skills Award\(^9\) and our Asdan Training registration\(^10\) which was allied to the BSA skills course. Without entering into a lengthy description of this choice, I essentially decided to ‘piggy back’ on the low-cost BSA Skills Award and Asdan registration as a way of giving a new CCP programme some depth and clout, without extra (and unforthcoming) investment in whole-sale CCP redesign. The BSA award would allow me to give Sixth Form students’ freedom of action in their self-devised projects and the Asdan registration would allow me to encourage Sixth Form students to hunt down their own courses/personal tastes through the range of Asdan programmes that existed. This choice would also mean that I could keep any Anon College Sixth Form Boarding CCP within Boarding and, therefore, beyond any conflict with staff in respect of time, space, school timetable clashes.

Yet, where was the incentive for students, especially if they could not be rewarded for involvement with grades linked to ‘pure’ academic progress? The answer to this came with the work of Dweck (2006).

Dweck’s work, and her promotion of the ‘growth-mindset’, has been exponentially successful in the last few years, especially as more schools seek a framework to understand supposedly recalcitrant students. I was also drawn to this, as it is also one of the paradigms that I have found, in my short fifteen years of teaching, that students really ‘get’ and approve of. I

8 In my Assignment Two, I referred to how the HOB role within my school was ‘exited’ from the SMT team when I gave up my Head of Arts Faculty role. I assumed I had embedded the ‘voice’ of Boarding into SMT so clearly, the priorities of Boarding would continue to be heard and discussed. I was wrong. I am currently in on-going conversation with my Head about the HOB securing regular contact time with the new SLT (Head, Deputy and Bursar) to address the on-going strategy and governance needs of Boarding. My Head has yet to give me a clear response, even though the new Bursar (in post since Sept 2015) sees this as a clear and immediate strategic need also and is somewhat baffled by the situation. Very simply it is now a serious challenge to implement even small change, without the information flow or face time required with Senior managers to sanction such changes.

9 See - http://www.boarding.org.uk/414/training/boarding-skills-award

10 See - http://www.asdan.org.uk/courses
think the reason for this is, not only is the model one in which the student is seen as a ‘work in progress’ but there is a non-judgemental tone that students find encouraging, especially as they are also drawn to the model’s manner of addressing them as an individual who is ‘advancing’ in ability or outlook rather than ‘fixed’.

Rallied by this insight, I injected into the CCP design (and new proposals to students) a ‘growth-mindset’ phraseology that I hope is apparent in the final ‘pilot’ product (see Appendices). The creation of four thematic strands (Improving your Home, Improving Yourself, Looking After yourself, Helping Others) is also very much linked to the forms of feedback I received from the students themselves in terms of what they were seeking from a new CCP.

For example, students said:

1. “It would be good if we could do things outside the House, for others.”
2. “What about spending some time on making the place prettier?”
3. “I would like to be able to go to the gym more often.”
4. “I would like to do something that isn’t schoolwork all the time.”
5. “Sometimes I make trouble because I’m bored - nothing really sparks my interest.”

It was from the last comment that the ‘Ignite’ name was born! The solidification of the programme around these themes also came from the understanding that, progressively, the most successful school projects are those that develop on a ‘co-production’ basis. Wybron (2016) states that:

“Co-production seeks to involve users in the service delivery process, by making them ‘active partners’ in service design and delivery”

Therefore, it made clear sense to me to extract from the student’s comments not just those phrases that could be attached to a ‘growth-mindset’ but also those implicit utterances that could be used to organise, headline and drive any new CCP forward with an attitude of co-production.

It was then at this stage I devised my ‘action’ exercise - which was essentially designing the programme and offering this for consideration to stake-holders once more. I shall use the Kubler-Ross Curve parlance to chart their responses and my own.

My Senior managers (Head/Deputy), although informed by me of my desire to reinvigorate the CCP for Sixth Form, responded with an emotion that was less helpful than shock - they responded with apathy. They were certainly surprised by the structure of the programme and impressed by its design but not particularly interested in advocating for its take-up or to ambassador the programme in wider Staff meetings or SLT/SMT meetings. Granted, the programme was designed to be ‘internal’ to Boarding and to minimise the effect of any external negativity - but if anyone experienced ‘shock’ it was I rather than my colleagues; the ‘shock’ of people not really caring about what you care about. McCarthy, Douglas and Garets (2010) reminds any change-leader that, “people don’t care about the solution until they
understand that you care about their problem”. They didn’t seem to care about the problem or the solution!

Following this the denial, frustration and depression stages came on in a rapid and compounded way. Once more these were, in an unanticipated way, felt by me! Yet against that, Boarding staff, students and Boarding parents responded well to the suggested programme (with one useful suggestion of extending the programme down to the earliest Years of Year 11 and 12 - hurrah, I had my first follower!). This emboled me to launch the programme ‘internally’ to Boarding and I am glad to report in the Winter 2015 we have already had uptake and involvement.

3.0 - Reflection and Continuing Questions about My Action Research Journey

In this section, I would hope to bring my themes together and begin the process of conclusion. In respect of gathering conclusions to an Action Report, Phillips and Carr (2014) suggest a researcher should consider a number of key questions. These questions are summarised in Table Seven in Appendices.

For the first question on lessons gained I would say, over the period of time in which I have taken the Diploma, I have probably considered and pondered the nature of change more than any time in my Boarding career. What then are my conclusions or realisations? Well, the first is that change is hard! At the beginning of the course, I believed change was a challenge in the Boarding arena, often because BPs had to work with, collaborate with and strategize with those within their team or higher than them in the hierarchy who didn’t understand the ‘language’ of Boarding. Now I see that theory must always be shown to be linked to practise and vice versa - you must make sure someone really gets the problem, before you offer the solution, and during that time you still have to keep explaining and re-explaining the problem to them because they may forget or may decide to go off and try to solve the problem themselves in an attempt to garner credit but without having the actual tools (the tools you have as a BP and they take for granted) to solve the problem.

In terms of the second question and if I was to do something differently, I would get the students to speak to Senior managers directly, face to face, and without filter or interference through my interpretations. McCarthy, Douglas and Garets (2010) tell us that “people can more easily understand and accept that which they can see”. I should have made sure that Senior managers saw the desire for change and improvement from the students directly and not thought it was my role to protect Senior managers from student criticism or to protect students from seeing indifference in the eyes of those who profess leadership.

In terms of Question Three, an additional question is the question of the divide between Day staff and Boarding staff. I have learned, however much any BP tries to explain that it is often Boarding fees that keep a school and its salaries afloat , many colleagues outside boarding do not ‘get’ the selfless impulse of wanting to work in or to improve Boarding. In fact, they rarely see the altruism of Boarding at all, mainly because they flee the campus well before a BP! For them (often your audience for change or the change soldiers you are trying to recruit) to work in Boarding is akin the actions of a mercenary and their sense of you as a BP is based on the belief that all a BP cares about is getting a rent-free house and that most BPs must hate their actual biological family for inflicting such bizarre living circumstances upon them. This is why it is crucial, if you wish to implement change that a BP should attempt to break down the
barriers of place and time and perception that can existing between those who ‘get’ Boarding and those who don’t.

This then links to Question 4 and is a reflection on the action research journey itself

As BPs we are obsessed with making people ‘see and understand’ Boarding. All BPs, even though hopefully driven by a passion for pastoral care, can allow that sense of calling and commission bring its own form of ‘silo thinking’ or retreat into smug gratification that their work is more needed and superior than the work of any other! In the process of the Diploma and my own attempts at implementing Sixth Form change (Assignment One) and helping to create and implement the Ignite programme (Assignment Three), I have clearly understood the temptation to sit back and, when change has been tough to get going, curse a plague on all of those who didn’t wish to share my enthusiasm or their own resources of time, mental space or even money. Any yet, in tandem to this, I have learned that unless you as a BP find a way to make everyone feel that they can share in the benefits of change and the long-term upside to change, it is unlikely you will achieve your aims. I suppose this has been the main way my own perspective as a teacher and BP have been altered, confirmed, challenged and, dare I say it, changed.

Finally then, to Question Five, what have I learned about action research and myself for the future?

To conclude, in the course of this Assignment, I am pleased to say that I have learned about the importance of the Co-Curricular programme as a key strut in the wider experience of our Sixth Form students and also as a personal recourse and asset in terms of their own-wellbeing/time away from the classroom and their view of themselves as young people who are prepared for future challenges and the challenge of the future in the world of tertiary study and work beyond.

However, I knew that before I began the project. In fact, these were the reasons I did it.

Yet, what I did not anticipate coming to understand was that change may be hard, but what makes it harder is having a wrong-headed or wrong-hearted approach to change. I have been in post for the last four years and much of my time has been taken up with picking battles of a size and scale and timescale that required patience and an understanding my boss’s agenda, and emotions and energy levels as much as my own. One key form of wisdom I have gained in terms of my own career, and my own capacities as a leader and manager, is that in the modern workplace it is no longer sage to attempt to work through what Hefferman (2015) calls the ‘command and control’ approach of hierarchies. I have certainly be prone to this - attempting to convince the top, middle and bottom of the need for change and, in the process, losing something of the collaborative, co-productive approach advocated by Wybron (2016).

This leads the final lesson I have gained in my progress through this Action report - whatever progress you make or setbacks occur - if you focus on the needs of the young people in your care, you don’t need luck or access or standing as good things always flow from this principle. Monbiot (2012) says that often Boarding schools are “an institution (that) cannot rebuild itself around one child. Instead, the child must adapt to the system”. I believe the opposite. A good boarding school must be able to adapt to the needs of one child and that good fortune follows from that, and usually that alone. This, to return to my first sentence, is why Anon College needs a strong CCP. A CCP is one of those areas that can best respond to the
changing needs of our students and therefore, is a measure of how much we listen to and how much we truly care about our Boarding students.

Word Count (excluding Abstract, Footnotes, Substantial Quotations) - 5157

References


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List of Acronyms

ARR – Action Research Report
CCP – Co-Curricular Programme
BP – Boarding Practitioner

List of Figures

Figure Two - The Kubler-Ross Change Curve - extracted from http://changemanagementsuccess.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/The-Change-Curve.png

Figure One - Managing Complex Change Model - Knoster et al (2005) - extracted from A Framework for Thinking about System Change – see References.

List of Tables

Table One – Applying the Managing Complex Change Model to the task of developing a CCP for Sixth at Anon College

Table Two - Applying the Kubler-Ross Change Curve to the anticipated change of the Anon College Sixth Form CCP.

Table Three – The Qualities of a CCP programme as described by the GER (2013)

Table Four – Key Needs/Importances/Values of a good CCP as outlined by Dash and Dash (2008)

Table Five – Pitfalls/obstacles/disincentives as outlined by Dash and Dash (2008)

Table Six - Clarifying My ARR by employing questions devised by Phillips and Carr (2014)

Table Seven – Key Questions for Gathering Conclusions via Phillips and Carr (2014)
Appendices

**Table One** – Applying the Managing Complex Change Model to the task of developing a CCP for Sixth at Anon College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change Element</th>
<th>Absence? Presence?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Is my plan for a better CCP easy to explain (even if it is complex), or is the picture blurry and nebulous? How do I explain it in a sentence everyone will ‘get’?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Do I or my team have the necessary skills needed to execute this plan? Do my Senior managers (who sign off such projects) have the skills to recognise the need for CCP change?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Do I have access to resources, training, or materials needed to train the team to adopt the change? Do I have the money, time or gaps in the school schedule to make a better CCP programme happen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentive</td>
<td>What behaviours are being incentivized? And are those incentives worth it to your team members? What do the students, staff and parents get that is ‘extra’ without excessive extra cost in terms of money or in terms of cost to their time if we alter the CCP?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Plan</td>
<td>How exactly can my lofty goals be achieved? What are the time lines, directives, and predetermined landmarks in my definition of success? Is Sept 2015 a realistic deadline in terms of introducing this change to its participants and the audience who will either praise it or damn it?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table Two - Applying the Kubler-Ross Change Curve to the anticipated change of the Anon College Sixth Form CCP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages in Response to Change (+/-)</th>
<th>Possible Responses to that Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shock</strong></td>
<td>Who would react with the greatest surprise by this suggestion of change? Who would it most upset - the Head or Deputy Head in case he/she took it as implicit criticism of what was already on offer. The Head of Activities if they thought I was trying to dilute or usurp their role?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Denial</strong></td>
<td>Who would actively work against my proposals and plans or attempt to stymie them? Would it be the Bursar based on issues of cost? The students who already believed they didn’t have enough time to dedicate to a programme that took them away from studies or other free time? The already too busy staff?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frustration</strong></td>
<td>How would I handle my own frustration? Would I give up at some point? Who would I turn to for help, or mentoring or ongoing encouragement? Who would be my ally or my first ‘follower’ (Sivers 2010)? How would I safeguard against my own bias towards the project (Ary, Jacobs and Chris Sorensen -2009) this blinding me to the reservations and recommendations of others who I may be tempted to just view as ‘frustrators’?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Depression</strong></td>
<td>How would I safeguard my own passion, sanity and health in terms of my own mood or those of my team/students dipping in the face of resistance to change?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiment</strong></td>
<td>How would I experiment in a small-scale way before the creation of large-scale change? What would my test-bed events be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decision</strong></td>
<td>How would I know when to make the ‘leap’ into starting a new CCP programme - the start of a new term? Would it be when all parts of the plan were in place, or a sufficient number to feel confident to take the ‘risk’ of starting?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration</strong></td>
<td>How would I help, with others, to create a programme that fitted with existing forms of activity provision - that supplemented and enhanced rather than sought to supplant or denigrate by comparison?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualities</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality One</td>
<td>• separation from academic courses,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Two</td>
<td>• they are ungraded, they do not allow students to earn academic credit,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Three</td>
<td>• they may take place outside of school or after regular school hours,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Four</td>
<td>• they may be operated by outside organizations,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Five</td>
<td>• A few examples of common educational opportunities that may be considered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Co-curricular include sports, DOE, student newspapers, musical performances,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>art shows, mock trials, debate competitions, and mathematics, robotics,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and engineering teams and contests.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table Four – Key Needs/Importances/Values of a good CCP as outlined by Dash and Dash (2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Needs/Importances/Values of a CCP</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical development</td>
<td>a focus on fitness, alertness, drive and stamina.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction of Adolescent needs</td>
<td>a focus on purging pent up energy and emotion, feeling part of a group and limiting feelings of social isolation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction of Individual needs</td>
<td>a focus on a young person wanting to achieve, share, win, participate or learn from failure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementing Theoretical knowledge</td>
<td>a focus on getting ‘real life’ experience of values and concepts that can be esoteric in only class-based discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition of Social Values</td>
<td>a focus on mutual understanding, mutual assistance, co-operation and ‘fellow-feeling’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Aesthetic value</td>
<td>a focus on the appreciation of beauty and play for play’s sake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper Utilization of Leisure Time</td>
<td>a focus on not keeping students busy just to keep them ‘out of trouble’ but making leisure time meaningful in the context of their lives and future lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil training and a development of civil sense</td>
<td>a focus on citizenship, rights, duties, responsibility to self, others, school and society.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table Five – Pitfalls/obstacles/disincentives as outlined by Dash and Dash (2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pitfalls/obstacles/disincentives</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Facilities</td>
<td>It can be a challenge to grow a CCP if it has no space to grow and no equipment to growth with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-emphasis on the Academic</td>
<td>It can be a challenge to grow a CCP within a school if the general belief is that, in the words of Dash and Dash, “anything that is non-examinable is viewed as unimportant and lacks emphasis”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of adequate time</td>
<td>It is a challenge if the timetable is over-loaded. No time can equal no potential room for growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of student involvement</td>
<td>It is a challenge if students feel forced into a CCP. It is a challenge if participation carries no visible prize, trophy or certificate. It is a challenge if they see anything other than study as a waste of time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-enthusiasm for Activities</td>
<td>It is a challenge if students already has a jammed schedule (perhaps due to hot-housing, extra-tutoring or helicopter parenting). There is no time for CCP because they are too busy already!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Adequate Funds</td>
<td>It is a challenge if schools with small rolls cannot develop a CCP due to low funds. The willingness may be there but if there is no money, what can be achieved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of interest from the teacher</td>
<td>If there is no concession in time for the Activity teacher will they not perceive a CCP as an extra burden? What if the staff lacks the training or ability to deliver an aspect of a CCP? Will the deterioration in standards afflict the whole programme?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table Six - Clarifying My ARR by employing questions devised by Phillips and Carr (2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Questions for approaching Stakeholders and for Methodology</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>who</em> is involved in the project;</td>
<td>Boarding students/parents/Boarding staff, Head, Deputy/Bursar and Senior Managers – but unfortunately not past or future Boarding students projected to come to us – especially International Boarders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <em>what</em> the critical question is and what was implemented or analysed;</td>
<td>Do we need a Sixth Form CCP and if yes – what will it look like – if no – what is being provided in a CCP sense?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <em>where</em> the project took place (description of setting);</td>
<td>Anon College – an independent IAPS/Round Square, Boarding School in the UK that has just implemented A Level from Sept 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <em>when</em> the data collection occurred (dates of implementation and/or data collection, length of study);</td>
<td>Dec 2015-Sept 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <em>how</em> data collection was completed,</td>
<td>Through formal interviews, e-mails, questionnaires and informal discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <em>why</em> you conducted the study;</td>
<td>To discover if a CCP change was required and, if so, what that requirement would be.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table Seven** – Key Questions for Gathering Conclusions via Phillips and Carr (2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question One</td>
<td>• What are some of the most important lessons you will take into your teaching career?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Two</td>
<td>• What will you do differently next time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Three</td>
<td>• What additional questions did this research project pose for you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Four</td>
<td>• What was your action research journey like? How has this journey transformed your image of teacher, teaching, students, schools, learning? How have your paradigms been altered, confirmed, and/or challenged?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Five</td>
<td>• What have you learned about action research? How has your definition of AR changed? How do you see yourself using this process in the future?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>