



Wednesday, 13th November 2013
1.00 - 2.00
MR 317

Birna María Svanbjörnsdóttir

Views of learning and a sense of community among students, paraprofessionals and parents - in a new compulsory school that is developing its culture towards a PLC.

The importance of the involvement and participation of students, parents and all staff in pedagogic questions in schools is now a significant issue because it has been shown that it is an improving factor in developing ownership of the professional learning community as well as improving student performance.

Here I mainly focus on what happens to students, parents, and paraprofessionals concerning learning and community when the school leaders try to develop a PLC in a new school. The findings are drawn from a study in one compulsory school in Iceland. It used an action research approach for 3^{1/2} years. Data were acquired through interviews, observations, reflections and questionnaires and results from national assessments in order to investigate the effect on students, parents and paraprofessionals of the support given to the school leadership by me with regard to reflection and leadership support for the staff.

The study shows signs of involvement of students, parents and paraprofessionals in the practice of the school though teachers and leaders dominate the community and do not give clear enough messages about cooperation and reflection to others. Students talk about diverse teaching methods and the positive attitude of staff. They also seem to be able to decide how and when they learn while teachers take decisions about what they learn. Paraprofessionals do not feel informed enough about methods used and they are stuck in a culture where teachers take responsibility and do not consult with others in the classroom such as teacher aides.



For further information please contact: elizabeth.robertson@abdn.ac.uk