



International School

Taipei European School, Taiwan



Improved efficiencies provide a documented personal professional journey for staff

Having everything in one place helps leaders to maintain dialogue, provide feedback, and set priorities

About the school

The school integrated three schools - Taipei British School, Ecole Francaise de Taipei and Deutche Schule Taipei - to become the Taipei European School in 2003. It continues to operate three European language sections in one school for students aged 3 - 18. The school, and each section, is fully accredited through national or international accreditation bodies.

What were the challenges?

Everything was on excel or handwritten, stored in different places which made it quite unwieldy and difficult to keep on top of. There was no way of maintaining professional dialogue regularly with individuals. Then Aidan Stallwood, Deputy Head of the British Primary School, met other school leaders at a FOBISIA (Federation of British International Schools in Asia) conference, who spoke highly of BlueSky and the impact it had in their schools.

"I spoke with a colleague in another international school in Kuala Lumpur and he showed me the platform. I immediately said 'we need to be doing this' and I got in touch with BlueSky," says Aidan.

Christopher Bellamy, Deputy Head of the British Secondary and High School, said "When it was suggested we consider BlueSky to support our processes, I was very keen, I had used it at my previous school in the UK and we had made good use of BlueSky."

“ It has been revolutionary! It has helped enormously with showing staff how to cherish their own professional development. ”

Aidan Stallwood, Deputy Head, British Primary School at Taipei European School in Taiwan.

“Aidan and I are both doing our NPQH, and BlueSky is going to give us some really good data that we will need to evidence project aims - it's fantastic!”

Christopher Bellamy, Deputy Head, British Secondary and High School at Taipei European School in Taiwan.



How is BlueSky supporting the Taipei European School?

Taipei European School uses BlueSky to support their staff with appraisals, CPD provision and quality assurance.

“We don't have any recommendations to follow for appraisal so we redesigned our process this year, using BlueSky. We did a lot of work at the beginning of the academic year about writing appraisals and setting quality goals, and we set time aside to review last year's goals. The response has been fantastic, teachers and heads of departments have written really accurate and honest appraisals which we then use as the foundation for setting goals for the new academic year. Staff are feeling really, really proud of what they have achieved, and being able to show evidence towards their progress through relevant CPD feels really connected,” says Christopher.

Aidan says “BlueSky has provided us with a good platform for us to restructure our CPD programme as a whole. It has given us a solid foundation to work from. It has provided enhanced efficiencies for both individual staff members and line managers. Staff can individually source their own professional development through the Training area, and the ability to reflect on CPD, reminders of short and long term impact from their training and maintaining that dialogue has been very valuable. Line managers are aware where their team are at and how they can best support them as well. It has definitely enhanced efficiency for line manager meetings.”

“I second that,” says Christopher, “it has been much easier for us to quality assure appraisals and support staff with line management responsibilities. We had an inset day recently and part of the day was an opportunity for staff to review their progress towards their goals. It was so straightforward for them to add notes in BlueSky so we knew that they had had conversations with their line managers.”

The set up and implementation of BlueSky was very smooth, there is no issue with the time difference - we are eight hours ahead. The team are so responsive, very helpful going through detail and offering support calls wherever needed. They have been exceptional!” says Aidan. “The support we receive from BlueSky is fantastic!” adds Christopher.

What is the impact?

“We use the observation feedback qualitatively - we've done analysis and presentations to middle leaders, we've used it to determine CPD priorities for the coming year. Having all of it there in one place and so easily accessible has really had a huge impact. We have been able to do this year what we've never done before which is to talk meaningfully about observation feedback and set priorities for the future,” says Christopher.

Aidan says “With the peer learning and peer observations we have been able to generate a report to see where staff are at, any trends that are coming through and work as a team on how best to support them.”

“I now sign off and approve all CPD requests through BlueSky so it's helped me to manage the CPD budget better. It is also good to be able to quality assure the CPD staff have undertaken and to see their evaluation feedback.”

Christopher Bellamy, Deputy Head, British Secondary and High School at Taipei European School in Taiwan.



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Aidan Stallwood, Deputy Head, British Primary School at Taipei European School in Taiwan.

Christopher continues “Our quality assurance and analysing feedback is far more efficient by having it all in one place. Our approach to observations and the work we know we need to do now to improve the quality of feedback and identify priorities for the coming year has been made so much easier with BlueSky. We can present to staff and be more confident about what we are saying using a real evidence base that we have collected in BlueSky. The same for CPD. It’s fantastic to look at what teachers have done and be able to see it all in a way we couldn’t before. Similarly with goal setting,” says Christopher.

Reflecting upon the impact for individual staff members, Aidan says “We’ve noticed two things. The majority of staff joining our school already have BlueSky accounts, so they can port their portfolios across to us and equally those who left last year were able to take their accounts with them. Staff are recognising that their individual accounts are their personal journeys in terms of professional development and other activities, that they can take it with them wherever they go in the future, and that’s really powerful. It has been revolutionary! It has helped enormously with showing staff how to cherish their own professional development.”

“I also really like the Projects area for collaboration. We have a few projects at the moment. We set the project up where we can work on specific aspects in a concentrated place where everyone can return to it and make comments and provide feedback which also contributes to professional learning,” says Aidan.

What’s next?

Aidan says, “Something we have talked about recently is in relation to our teaching standards and our leadership standards. This is something we are going to explore more going forward with the support of BlueSky.”



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