

Using teams of teachers with middle years classes

Contemporary research shows that middle years students benefit from working with fewer teachers. When these teachers work together to plan, deliver and assess the curriculum, educational outcomes for middle years students can be significantly improved.



Do a PMI (plus/minus/interesting) analysis about using teaching teams in our school.

Here is an example of how teaching teams operated in Stage 4 at a metropolitan high school.

- All teachers of Year 7 and Year 8 students became members of teaching teams. Each team corresponded to a discrete group of learners.
- Timetabling of Stage 4 classes was given priority so that, wherever possible, subjects were not split between teachers.
- Teachers were encouraged to teach more than one subject. In this way, the number of teachers for each class was significantly reduced, and pedagogical consistency and the potential for curriculum integration was increased.
- Each teaching team met weekly as a timetabled event. The meeting agenda provided opportunities to sequentially discuss, for example, literacy and numeracy, quality teaching, cooperative learning, curriculum integration, core concepts and skills, learning support issues and student welfare issues. (Note the focus on pedagogy in this agenda.)
- Each year group had a teaching teams coordinator, who provided oversight of all teaching teams and who attended each teaching team meeting. Teams documented decisions and progress related to their teaching team and students. These reports were disseminated as appropriate; as 'official records', they were used in evaluating and revising the school's teaching team strategy.
- Extensive professional development was available to staff, both to prepare teachers for the implementation of teaching teams and to support teachers once teams were established. Issues addressed included cooperative learning, conflict resolution and flexible, creative strategies for programming.



How might we implement teaching teams in the middle years at our school?