The Challenge

Chifley College, Mt Druitt Campus is located in Western suburbs of Sydney. It is a Year 7-10 Campus in a collegiate. The Senior College provides a wide array of academic and vocational courses and co-locates the TAFE site. The school is committed to developing an environment that will provide students with the skills and opportunities to develop their talents, secure their basic skills and promote self-disciplined, lifelong learners. It values academic, creative and sporting excellence while ensuring that student leadership and student welfare underpins all structures and programs. The environment, learning programs and welfare structures accommodate the needs and developmental requirements of students in Years 7-10.

The school is also a National Partnership School with a strong focus on enhancing teaching and learning. It generally has a number of new scheme teachers who require mentoring from more experienced staff.

The Solution

The implementation of IRIS Connect to capture and reflect on classroom practice.

The Result

Teachers reflecting on their own practice are able to immediately introduce improvements and exemplary practice is being disseminated within the Shared Library facility.
The Principal Cathy Anderson and her Deputy for Teaching and Learning Donna Loughran were keen to find a way to undertake classroom observations which would demonstrate a realistic picture of what was occurring in the classroom. Cathy says, “the arrival of the principal in a classroom changes the dynamic of the classroom environment”. For new scheme teachers it is important to observe if they have classroom management skills which are less observable when an authority figure is present in the room.

Donna Loughran undertook the research regarding what was available to achieve their vision and found IRIS Connect, a 21st century professional development system from the UK and proposed that the school purchase the system for their staff. Together Cathy and Donna planned their whole school implementation strategy. Firstly they discussed the concept of IRIS with the whole staff, engaged their union representative and their IT support. They created a staff development team to lead the implementation whose first role was to create the protocols for use within the school.

Cathy requested that every staff member record themselves teach and reflect on their practice at least once throughout the year. As each staff member owns the video recording of their practice it would be their decision whether to share the video with another member of staff or simply reflect on their own practice in the privacy of their home.

Key whole school initiatives such as “literacy” began to use IRIS regularly. Literacy Team leaders captured examples of practice to demonstrate to staff how a particular strategy should be implemented with their students. The videos were then stored in the ‘shared library’ facility of IRIS so that new scheme teachers, and teachers new to a particular literacy strategy were able to view the videos and enhance their own practice. Other faculties created critical friends groups, with early career teachers and experienced teachers working side by side on particular elements of their teaching.

The Solution

Teachers found that having viewed themselves teaching and the reflected on their practice, they were able to introduce improvements immediately. The implementation of IRIS is in line with the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership, National Professional Standards for Teachers particularly, 2.6 which states that highly accomplished teachers “model high-level teaching knowledge and skills and work with colleagues to use current ICT to improve their teaching practice”.

The Result

Students interact and collaborate with content shared from the screen.