



KAA Online at the British International School, Cairo.

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CPD – A NEW SET OF CHALLENGES

Aside from their devastating impact on human life, pandemics have historically tended to have other long-term knock-on affects on societies, whether culturally or technologically. The Black Death was a factor that hastened the end of feudal society across Europe, pushing the move towards industrialisation. Widespread cholera outbreaks have led to changes to urban planning around the world and brought innovation to how city infrastructure

is built. The Spanish flu of 1918 helped to drive the wide-spread adoption of telephones in North America, a better alternative in the circumstances to face-to-face dialogue, as well as prompted changes to how public transport is organised.

Covid-19 has, unsurprisingly, had a dramatic effect by accelerating a number of trends towards digitalisation that were already in train, such as the move away from linear broadcasting to streaming; an increase in digital, rather than bricks-and-mortar, retail; and a greater reliance on online platforms for communication and content-sharing. As teachers, we have all been aware that good online learning platforms have been the key tool in ensuring consistency of learning for students. We have each trodden our own path through frustrating disconnections, font incompatibilities and the new-found bane of teaching life that is “Zoom-bombing”. And at the end of it all, we will have found tools and approaches that will serve us even once the pandemic is over.

Much the same can be said of professional learning development (PLD) for staff. In these difficult times, being able to give staff access to quality training that is flexible and can be accessed at times convenient for them has been crucial. And Karen Ardley Associates Online has been a godsend for these reasons. The modules are as good as they can be in replicating the experience of working with Karen or one of her associates in person. They combine reflective questioning, educational theory and practical implications with stimulating video links and always encourage participants to apply what they're learning to their everyday practice.

The staff at my school have really responded to the range of courses we have been able to offer through KAA Online. Some of the most experienced teachers have commented that they have found the online modules really interesting and thought-provoking and have signed up for more as a result. We have been able to engage all staff at the school with certain courses and recently had school receptionists, exam officers and school counsellors joining teachers to complete the coaching module together. Using the platform has helped to bring our school community together during this period where staff are often working in isolated bubbles.

However, what has excited me most has been the opportunities that KAA Online can provide for the future. And now that I have seen what it can do, my plan is to use KAA Online as the major part of our school's professional learning and development provision long after we have binned our masks, put away the industrial-sized bottles of hand sanitiser and resumed more normal teaching practices.

My approach in introducing the online platform to staff has been to release courses in blocks rather than just signing up staff for the whole lot in one go. This allows us to form communities of people who are completing the courses at the same time and to plan to allow them to apply their learning strategically in the school afterwards. It also means that word-of-mouth has generated excitement and motivated others to sign up. In the future, I plan to do the same; we can offer new staff the courses from prior years and arrange networks between new staff and old to support one another.

Most of all though, we will be using the online resources as part of a blended learning approach to PLD. We're going to make good use of the facilitated courses to run in-house training which we can personalise specifically for the staff we are working with. At the same time, this will allow us to professionally develop staff who are interested in delivering courses and improve their communication and facilitation skills.

And we will still be making use of Karen and her team in person. During the recent coaching course, we gave participants four weeks to complete the online modules and then followed this up with a one-day online workshop with Karen. As you would expect from Karen, the one-day course was a masterclass in staff training but it was also a fantastic example of how to use distance learning effectively with expert-led learning and then regular intervals of practice for staff to apply their learning in small groups.

This is the way forward for us: flexible online modules that staff can engage with at times that are best for them combined with school-led facilitated sessions and expert-led sessions from Karen and her associates.

For once the pandemic has ended (with a whimper rather than a bang, I suspect) and scientists and epidemiologists are taking stock of lessons learned, we teachers should look to see what tools and approaches we have developed can equip us well going forward. Necessity may be the mother of invention, and for this reason Covid-19 has brought substantial change to the classroom and our pedagogy practice. But it's our responsibility to think about how we can incorporate these new inventions usefully and creatively once the necessity is no longer bearing down on us.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Kathryn Nutbeem is the Deputy Head - Teaching and Professional Development, at the British International School in Cairo (BISC).

The British International School, Cairo was established in 1976 to serve the educational needs of expatriate children in Cairo. Over time it has built its reputation on the basis of its academic

record and the breadth of its educational programmes.

BISC is an IB World School having been accredited to teach the IB Diploma since 1989. It is registered with the Department for Education (DFE) in the United Kingdom, licensed to run its own GCSE examinations and accredited as a BTEC Centre. It is inspected by The Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI), the organisation that inspects most UK independent schools.

BISC is one of the few schools in the world and the only school in Egypt, inspected under the British Schools Overseas scheme, to have been judged as excellent in all aspects.



KAA ONLINE – SELF STUDY

KAA Online offers three key ways for schools to ensure their offer ongoing professional development for all their staff.

The first part of the KAA Online offer is a wide range of online, interactive self-study modules designed to engage individual members of staff in the professional learning process. There are modules for teachers, teaching assistants, business and admin personnel, middle and senior leaders and governors. Topics include:

- ➡ Designing the culture of your organisation
- ➡ Metacognition
- ➡ Differentiation
- ➡ Supporting EAL Learners
- ➡ Managing difficult conversations
- ➡ Developing a worklife balance
- ➡ Governance
- ➡ Coaching and Mentoring skills

And many more - with many more topics planned and being developed.

All modules are linked to evidence from research, with videos, downloadable resources, links to other websites and the unique KAA brand of high quality.

Any of these modules can be purchased from the KAA Online Store and accessed immediately by any individual on any device.



KAA ONLINE – SCHOOL SUBSCRIPTION

The second key part of the KAA Online offer is for schools to join the KAA Online community through a subscription.

Once a school joins the community, all members of staff can access any of the modules available in the KAA Online store.

In addition, there are Facilitator versions of each module.

In these modules, leaders in a school (at any level) are taken step by step through the background reading and research, the preparation of resources required (card sorts, team tools, strategic matrices etc) and the presentation slide notes, to

enable them to facilitate a high-quality CPD session for their team or even for the whole school staff.

There are clear guidance notes, booklets for participants and for the facilitator and a Handbook of Facilitator Techniques.



KAA ONLINE – FACILITATED LEARNING

Thirdly, the KAA Team have become skilled at the whole process of remote learning and facilitation.

Just as teachers have extended their pedagogical understanding of remote learning, so the KAA Associates have been on a learning curve.

We have enjoyed working remotely with groups of teachers, leaders and support staff in England, Scotland, Egypt, UAE, China, Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Netherlands and other countries.

We have delivered some of our key programmes eg Leading Learning from the Middle for groups of participants in different locations, different countries.

All our feedback has been excellent proving that teachers and leaders gain so much from facilitated collaboration.

KAA ONLINE – EARLY FEEDBACK

The KAA Online Platform offers a complete and sustainable solution to your CPD requirements enabling you to offer high-quality CPD as part of your recruitment and retention and to help ensure outstanding teaching and learning is impacting positively on student outcomes, as well as supporting succession and futures planning.

These are some of the comments and feedback from the recent trial of the new platform:

- ➡ “Amazing to have all this information and resources in one spot” *Teacher from BSA, Netherlands*
- ➡ Easily accessible, presentation good, easy to navigate and the facilitator versions offer a huge safety net – you can't go wrong” *Leader from CFAT, England*
- ➡ “In a time where meeting physically is difficult, it is great that an online platform still captures the uniqueness of a leader” *BSB Brussels, Trial Team*
- ➡ “The KAA brand is evident. In all of the leadership modules I have followed I have felt the same personal characteristics of KAA come through: knowledgeable, high-expectations, insightful questioning, a high level of facilitation” *BSB Brussels Trial Team*
- ➡ “It is amazing to have this timely resource which is a really professional definition of KAA. We struggled to find good

online CPD during lockdown. This platform provides good CPD and much much more." *CEO, CFAT England*

- ➡ "We loved the opportunity for teachers and leaders to use the community forum for each category" *Leaders and Teachers, Florimont, Switzerland*
- ➡ "We loved the videos and bite-sized chunks, it held our attention, very engaging, the Notes function was useful, we could easily link it to our PD Review meetings." *Leaders and teachers, BBIS, Hungary*
- ➡ "This platform provides a mechanism for sustainable professional growth. I wish that as a School Principal I had had access to this wonderful platform." *Managing Director, RITE Education, Malaysia*



KAA ONLINE – NEXT STEPS

If you are an individual working in a school, have a look at the KAA Online store and choose a module to help you continue your professional growth.

If you are a Principal/ Headteacher or a Leader of Professional Learning you may like to contact us to have a look at the platform and arrange access for your whole school staff through our subscription process.

If you would like to discuss the possibilities of the KAA Online platform contact: kate.beetlestone@karenardley.com