



16 CASE STUDIES

2019/20

everyone succeeds





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An Unusual Year

Steve Margetts, Principal

Rationale

This has, unquestionably, been a year of unique challenges. We could not have possibly imagined what we would face during this academic year when we were undertaking the strategic planning prior to 2019-20. This set of case studies outlines that leaders within Torquay Academy had stuck to the strategic direction that they had in place, but also that the COVID-19 pandemic led to inevitable changes.

On Wednesday 18 March I was sat in my office watching Boris Johnson's press conference as there was speculation that an announcement would be made about schools. The prime minister announced that all schools would shut for an indefinite period at the end of that Friday in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19. We were told that the summer's exams would not take place and students would get the qualifications they need.

The first thing the following morning I met with our Year 11 and 13 students to explain to them what I knew about the cancellation of their examinations. There was a great deal of upset as they had all worked so hard for so many years and they felt they would not get the opportunity to demonstrate this in their exams. We managed to arrange a great Fun Friday for these students to celebrate what would be their last day of school. Assemblies, activities and lunches were all part of this day that we rapidly put together.

Opening for children of key workers and vulnerable children

In order to support the children and families of these groups, the school not only remained open, it extended the hours and days of our provision. We opened the school over the weekend, holidays and bank holidays for these children. The take-up in all year groups was very high. In addition to having a large number of children who were designated vulnerable, the school has a high portion of parents who are deemed to be key workers.

Initially the provision was based on our online learning, however we were able to move to formal teaching within school as each day we had hundreds of children attending this provision.





Online learning

We were able to immediately move to online learning for students who were not able to attend school. Each morning an email was sent to every student containing their work for the day. This was based upon a Google form that contained all of the links, videos and documents that students would require.

The home learning curriculum was modelled upon what students would be learning within school. The curriculum was embellished to include wider world learning tasks and enrichment activities to support the children at home.

To ensure all children were able to access learning at home we purchased many 4G routers and lent hundreds of laptops.



HOME LEARNING

Tuesday

every second counts

Year 7, 8 and 9 - Tuesday 14th April

Good morning everyone and welcome to the Summer Term!

Remember you can always contact us via email: keystage3@tqacademy.co.uk or year9staff@tqacademy.co.uk

Further information about homework is available at <http://www.tqacademy.co.uk/coronavirus/year-7/> or <http://www.tqacademy.co.uk/coronavirus/year-8/> or <http://www.tqacademy.co.uk/coronavirus/year-9/>



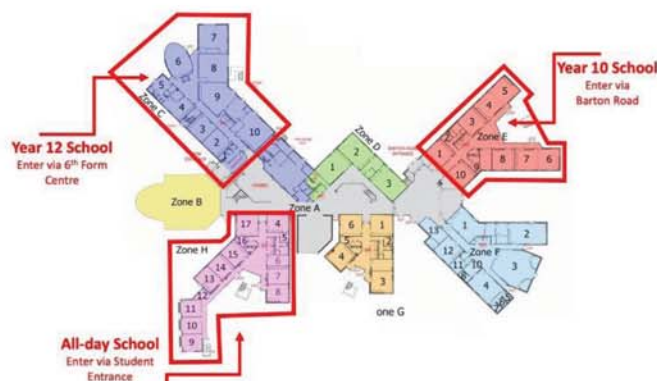
Wider reopening for Years 10 and 12

After May half term we were able to have a wider reopening of the school. The plans were based around us being able to open three separate schools from 1 June on the site, the three schools were:

- Year 10 school
- Year 12 school
- All-day school (for children in Years 7-9 who are either defined as vulnerable or whose parents are key workers).

Each of these three schools were:

- separately staffed
- located in different parts of the school
- accessed from separate entrances
- operated at different times ensuring pupils don't cross



The Year 10 Full Time School (for children whose parents are critical workers and vulnerable children) had students in school all day every day.

Students who were not eligible to attend the Year 10 Full Time School (for children whose parents are critical workers and vulnerable children) attended our rota school from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Students were assigned

to one of three groups and they were on a three-week rota of being in school two days a week for two weeks and then in one day for the final week.



The Year 12s attended Year 12 School. We chose to provide the face-to-face support in those subjects where there is a critical volume of knowledge that must be taught; for students in these subjects, each day missed is inevitably going to have a negative impact on their final result. It ran between 9.00am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

For the A level subjects where face-to-face support did not take place and the BTECs, we continued to build upon the exemplary home learning support that had been in place.



Touching base meetings

For those students who were not able to attend any of the provisions, we held a number of touching base meetings for them. I welcomed all of the students back into school and they spent time with the Heads of Academic Progress as well as the subject leads for the core subjects.



Staff focus

On 19 March we held a full staff Twilight to ensure that we would be in a strong position to work on our whole school priorities during any period of shutdown. We had spent considerable time putting together our curriculum aspirations and we knew that staff were in a very good place to develop the curriculum during any time and they would not be in front of students. The teaching staff worked so incredibly hard during this time and re-wrote the entire curriculum with associated workbooks and tens of thousands of questions written to support the curriculum via online learning and homework books.

We also had to adapt to new ways of meeting. We became very adept at using Google Meet for all meetings within school and with our amazing governors.



Supporting the community

You will read about our efforts to ensure our students were fed in Claire Beckett's case study.

When we closed we delivered over 500 pairs of safety glasses and plastic funnels to Torbay Hospital to provide PPE and equipment that was in short supply. During the Easter period, I had a number of discussions with the NHS about how we could support them further. In order to fight the Covid-19, they had ordered millions of pounds of new equipment to be used in hospitals, surgeries and pharmacies across South Devon. We agreed that the NHS could use our Sports Hall as a distribution hub where new equipment can be delivered, commissioned and tested prior to being sent out across the area.

Keeping in touch with our students

We are used to seeing students every single day. Every family received a phone call from the school throughout the lockdown period. We carried on with fun Fridays every single week. We shared a mixture of videos, fun quizzes and other activities to ensure we stay connected with all of our boys and girls.

I delivered certificates and bars of chocolate to students who were doing exceptionally well with their home learning. This was, unquestionably for me, the highlight of this time as I got to meet students and their families on their doorsteps.

We shared hundreds of pictures of students completing enriching activities on my blog and we continued to award all the certificates that we would normally do during term time.



Conclusion

I could not be more proud of how Torquay Academy responded to this unprecedented situation. Every member of staff ensured that our children got the very best education they could've done in the circumstances. In addition to that we ensured that the quality of the curriculum was improved even further so that we could provide our boys and girls with the very best education on their return. We even managed to give the whole site a spring clean!





Improving Outcomes – 6th Form

Mark Bindon, Vice Principal

Objectives & Rationale

This case study focuses on initiatives that have been introduced to increase positive outcomes for our 6th form students. There are three areas that I have focused on, these are; Curriculum, Data & Intervention (which all interweave). In 2019 our Alps score rose to a 4 from a 7 and our value added score moved up into the 'average bracket'. The items referred to in this study are not an exhaustive list but are some key aspects that we believe have made a significant difference to outcomes for our students

Curriculum, Data & Intervention

The 6th form curriculum over the past couple of years has made huge strides forward ensuring our students are the best prepared they can possibly be for their examinations and assessments. Several of our staff are examiners and therefore, fully understand the course specifications, this in turn supports the planning of what needs to be taught. 6th form staff have worked tirelessly over the previous two years ensuring that planning and assessments came into line with the rest of the school. This has had great benefits for us as a school; firstly, we retain a number of our students who are already immersed into this way of being taught and assessed. Secondly, it has enabled subjects to have a root and branch review, consolidating and improving identified areas where necessary.

A concept developed by the Science department last year for KS5 Physics, Biology and Chemistry was to have a pre-printed exercise book that our students would work in (they called these their 'Beast Books'). This 'workbook strategy' has been adopted by the whole school and is being implemented now (June 20). This strategy ensures that the students are exposed to the correct materials/information at the correct time. It also ensures a consistency and expectation of delivery from the teaching staff and therefore a consistency of learning for our students (below Physics 'Beast Books').



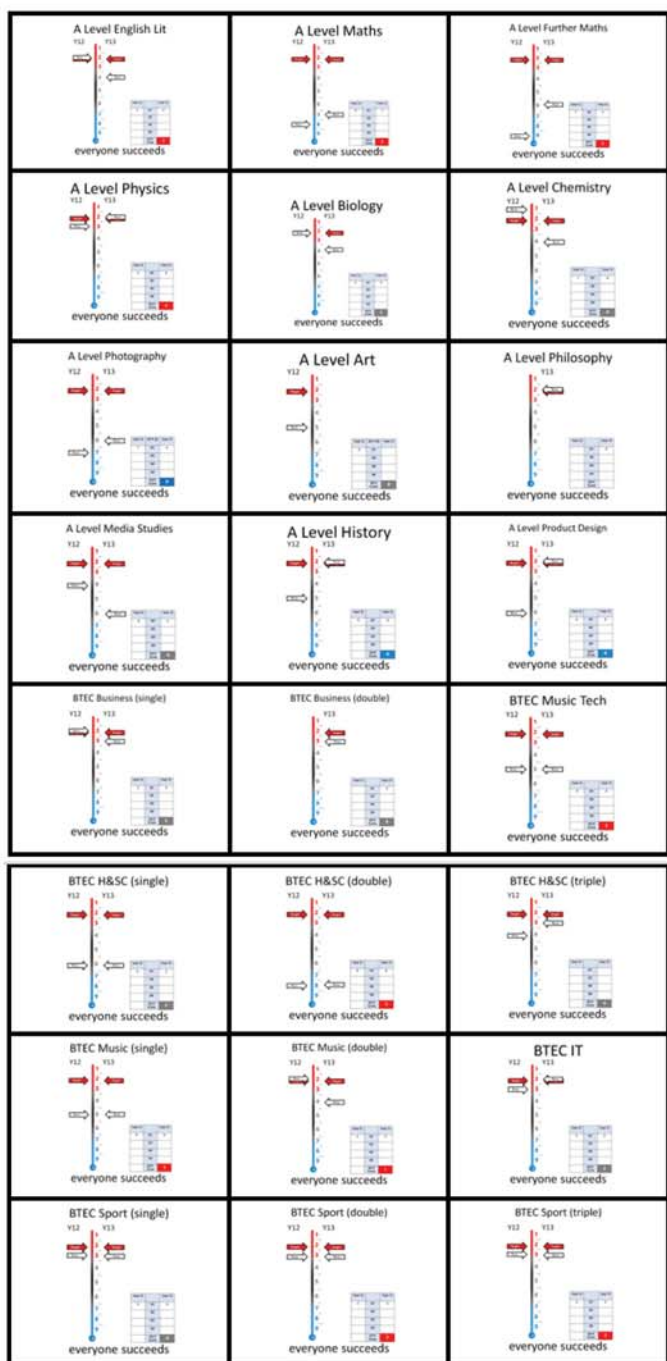
Part of my timetable has been scheduled to meet bi-weekly with each KS5 leader. Using quarterly Alps data, we forensically go through each student's performance. ALPS (A-level Performance System) is a system that allows schools to get a measure of the value they add to a pupil's A level/Btec performance compared to what might be expected of them following their previous academic performance at GCSE/Btec. ALPS takes a pupil's average GCSE/Btec score and predicts the grades a pupil should be expected to achieve in their chosen A level subjects/Btecs.

The focus of this meeting is to ascertain if there are any barriers to the individual students making progress and if so what are the actions that follow.

The table below (names removed) shows students who were currently on or above their minimum expected grade (red) and those who are not (blue). It also indicates where the department is regarding their subject Alps grade, in this case a grey 6. It also indicates how many students need to move and by how many grades to improve. This allows us to target individual students not only to improve them but also holistically as a department.

Gray 6		5 students will need to improve by 2 grades and 11 students will need to improve by 1 grade to reach an Alps grade 1				
Name	Teaching Set	Gender	Prior Attainment	Min. Exp. Grade	Personalised Target	Grade
	13B/Ms1	F	6.44 B	B	B	A
	13B/Ms1	M	6.44 B	B	B	B
	13B/Ms1	M	3.6 C/D	C	C	C
	13B/Ms1	M	4.78 C	C	C	C
	13B/Ms1	M	4 C/D	C	C	U
	13B/Ms1	F	5.13 C	C	C	C
	13B/Ms1	M	4.38 C	C	C	C
	13B/Ms1	M	5.39 B/C	B	C	C
	13B/Ms1	F	3.89 C/D	C	C	D
	13B/Ms1	F	5 C	C	C	A
	13B/Ms1	M	3.43 C/D	C	C	C
	13B/Ms1	F	6.61 B	B	B	A*
	13B/Ms1	M	4.44 C	C	C	D
	13B/Ms1	M	5.39 B/C	B	B	B
	13B/Ms1	F	5.22 B/C	B	B	B
	13B/Ms1	M	5.11 C	C	C	E

From this we have generated individual department Alps thermometers. This provides a target for subjects to attain. The thermometer gives last year's grade, where they are now (graph below - end of quarter 1) and where they should be at the end of the year - this is for both Y12 and 13. This is a strong visual which is then displayed on a poster in the individual subject workrooms.



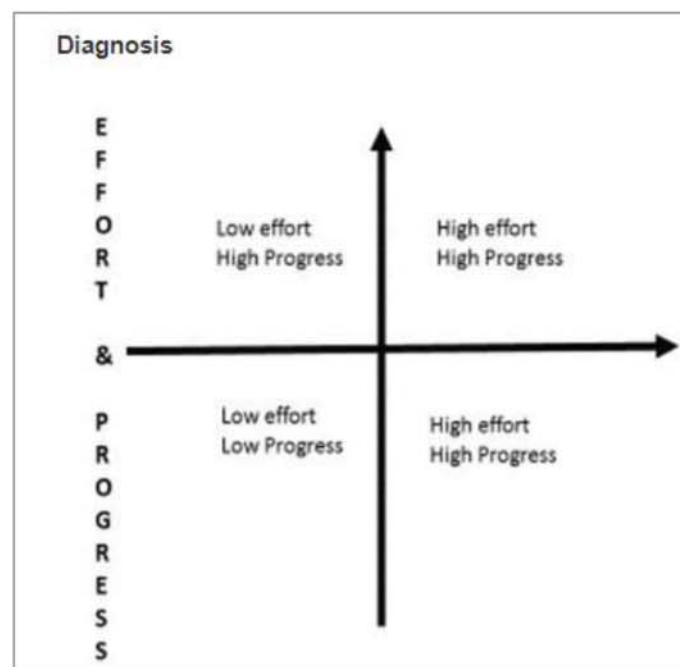
These face-face meetings have been an invaluable way of ensuring that expectations are met by both students and staff. A simplistic spreadsheet was then used to keep track of the main actions to ensure improvements.

	Discussed	Any Actions	Who	Date	Completion
Last years result	E Lit 2				
Current groups	Yes - enthusiastic				
HMK	Yes				
Study Centre Work	Yes				
Students - Contact Home		Y13 student on an Action Plan due to poor performance in test. XXX to contact home to ensure parents know as well and can support also - strategies/resources given	XXX	20/11/19	Y
	Working well, one below target but target grade unrealistic, coursework draft finished but needs a lot of work.	will work with XXX after half term to improve coursework	XXX	27/11/19	Y
	Working well, above target, coursework draft finished and working on final draft, no issues	Coursework by half term - part completed. Assign member of staff to support	XXX	27/11/19	Y

Horsforth Quadrant

We have used the Horsforth Quadrant this year to identify where students may be in need of some kind of intervention. The strategy looks at the students' attitude to learning as well as their academic scores. This is in the form of a graph which plots attitude to learning against progress scores to view each student's position in relation to the rest of the year group and their own targets. Depending on which quadrant the student is in, we can identify individual students and support them using whatever resources would be beneficial.

This was developed at Horsforth School and further developed by Pixl. This forms part of the DTT strategy from Pixl - diagnose, therapy and test. The diagnosis part uses the graph to identify, therapy follows in the actions that we administer and then the test stage, as to ascertain what has been the impact of the actions.



Rather than just having a photo of the student on the Horsforth Quadrant it was decided to have their name and other relevant information. This enabled staff to identify where students were on the Horsforth Quadrant including academic scores and interventions to follow. Thus moving beyond the diagnosis model, by having a model that diagnosed and subsequent therapy combined.

Individual Student Card:

Surname		First Name			
Reg	% Present	Bursary	PP	SEN Status	More Able
Subject 1	Alps MEG	Grade	Intervention: <input type="checkbox"/> Tutor Group <input type="checkbox"/> Increased PS <input type="checkbox"/> Mentor <input type="checkbox"/> 121 Support <input type="checkbox"/> Parental Contact <input type="checkbox"/> Check-in		
Subject 2	Alps MEG	Grade			
Subject 3	Alps MEG	Grade			

Y12 Board:



Y13 Board:



Mentoring

This year we decided that some of the student population needed weekly one to one mentoring sessions. Once a week in tutor time we provided support for the students to help improve their academic understanding in a climate of trust and support. Mentors (designated staff) would listen and offer appropriate advice, guidance and constructive feedback. This could be in the guise of; managing their time, plan and

prioritise work, set goals and action plans. Mentors then, when necessary would liaise with other key staff members such as teachers, brokering the best way forward and next steps for the student to achieve and overcome any barriers (even if presumed). Mentors would also look forward to any future events and possible pressure points which their students might be facing; this included any external exams, controlled assessments, submission dates, homework etc.

The form below was used to collate information when the meeting took place and then transferred on to a simple spreadsheet to create an overview.

Student Mentoring Report: Weekly Review		
Name: «Forename» «Surname» Tutor Group: «Year» «Reg»		
subject	MEG	Current Grade
«subject_1»	«Alps_MEG1»	«Grade1»
«subject_2»	«Alps_MEG1»	«Grade1»
«subject_3»	«Alps_MEG2»	«Grade2»
«subject_4»	«Alps_MEG3»	«Grade3»
Effort	1	«Effort»
Comments on attendance and punctuality:		
Notes on Mentor's contact with class teachers and concerns raised / praise given - What subjects are going well, what subjects do we need to focus on?:		
What are the student's main priorities, this week, for work / assessments / revision etc?		
Other topics discussed		
Goals / Targets to be met before next meeting (no more than 2) Remember to be SMART!		
1.		
2.		

Other interventions to mention that we believe have had an impact are:

1. Tutor time

Each student is tutored each morning by their main Y12 teacher. We have been in a fortunate position that on the whole their teacher is also the KS5 leader of the subject. For 3 days a week the tutor focus will be on material to improve their students' understanding and exam technique in that subject. This equates to an extra hour a week of face to face teaching/learning for our students, which over the year can make a significant difference.

2. Study Centre/Private Study

It has been mandatory on the student's timetable to attend the Study Centre. Again, subject staff have not just created an in depth and thorough curriculum but have gone beyond that to provide planned Study Centre work that supports the students in gaining the best possible outcomes. These sessions have been well attended and support students in their further understanding and interpreting their subject areas.

Impact & Outcomes

- Science KS5 workbooks ('Beast Books') have been successful in students achieving positive results. This resource has been invaluable also as a student revision tool. With other subjects now producing these for their 6th form students, time will tell if these have the same impact, we hope and believe so!
- Bi-weekly meetings with KS5 leaders who are also the teacher has been an excellent use of time. This student centred meeting focussing on individual students and tackling barriers to their attainment has definitely improved student understanding/achievement. Using simplistic and uncomplicated Alps data has enabled and informed conversations to be had, founded on accurate assessments born out of a well planned sequenced curriculum. Knowing the data was accurate ensured that meetings were meaningful with fit for purpose actions.
- The use of Horsforth Quadrant used in conjunction with our own effort boards has been a focused strategy to identify students who need intervention. Our one to one mentoring process had only been running this year and therefore hard to draw any concrete conclusions from it. However, it is something that we believe has merit and will therefore continue to use in the future.

Reflections & Next Steps

For students to achieve and surpass their potential is what we strive towards continually. I have purposefully not mentioned social issues but acknowledge that they go hand in hand with their academic studies.

There are three key facets for our students;

- being in school and happy
- engaging in a well planned sequenced world class curriculum delivered by skilled professional teachers
- bespoke interventions that have an impact.

There is no doubt, as a school that never stands still, that we are always continually trying to improve (tempered with the understanding to embed). The development of our curriculum through the subject workbooks at all key stages will be interesting to see (which we believe will be hugely beneficial). Our mentoring programme which is in

its infancy will be further explored and developed. There are several questions to debate around this to ensure the model is fit for our current cohort of students; capacity to deliver, time, staff, layers of process, recording, actions, measuring impact, parental engagement just to name a few.

Exciting times for the 6th form as we collectively move forward striving for excellence in all that we do!





Homework

Evan Pugh, Vice Principal

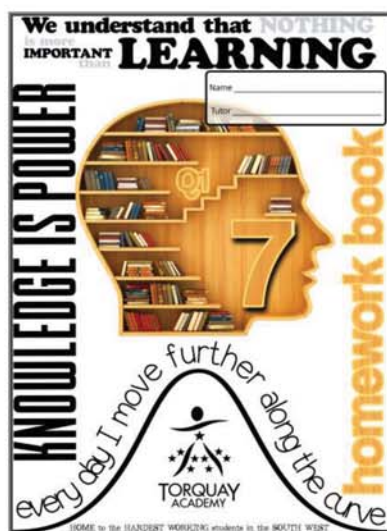
My case study for the past 3 years has been on homework and I thought I would be writing about something different this year. However, we have, again, made major developments to our homework.

Our homework system is designed to support our knowledge based curriculum. Students are given knowledge organisers for each subject. These include the essential knowledge for each quarter. Students are expected to learn this and are tested on it at the end of each cycle.

Typical knowledge organiser:

HISTORY: Y7C1 Knowledge organiser: How did the Norman Conquest impact life in England?			
Key historical concept: causation			
Analysing why William won the Battle of Hastings			
Week	Key topics	Event	Key words and concepts
1, 2, 3	Anglo-Saxons	After the last Roman soldiers left Britain in 430 AD, the Anglo-Saxons arrived from Scandinavia and Germany. The Anglo-Saxons ruled until 1066 when King Harold II died at the Battle of Hastings.	Conquest- The invasion of a territory by force.
	Edward the Confessor	King Edward died in January 1066 without children leaving England without a king. This began a succession crisis.	Succession- The process of inheriting a title. Claimant- A person who made a claim to the throne.
	Harold Godwinson	Earl of Wessex, he was Edward's brother-in-law and advisor. He claimed Edward promised him the throne on his deathbed. The Witan supported his claim.	Earl- A nobleman, their title was inherited from birth and gave them a high social status.
	Edgar Atheling	Edward's nephew who had the most direct bloodline to the throne. He was only 15 years old and he grew up in Hungary as his father was exiled so he had little support from the English.	Exiled- Having been expelled from a country.
	Harald Hardrade	King of Norway and a Viking warrior, he had experience of ruling a country and had a strong army. He claimed he had a right to the throne as previous Norwegian kings had ruled England.	Viking- Scandinavian seafaring pirates and traders who settled and raided north-western Europe.
	William, Duke of Normandy	Duke of Normandy, he had experience of ruling a country and had a strong Norman army. He stated Edward promised him the throne in 1035.	Norman- People from Normandy (Northern France).
Why did William win the battle of Hastings?			
4	Leadership	In October 1066 at the Battle of Hastings William used a tactic called the feigned retreat , where his men pretended to flee which led the English to break their shield wall.	Cause- Someone or something that leads to an effect.
	Preparation	When William landed in the South he built defences and gathered supplies.	Consequence- A result or effect.
	Luck	The wind across the English Channel was blowing in the wrong direction so William couldn't reach England until September 1066. Harold Godwinson had already fought two battles at Fulford and Stamford Bridge in September 1066 which tired his men.	Significance- The quality of being important.
How did William maintain control over England?			
5, 6, 7	Feudal system	William created a hierarchy that offered something in return for their loyalty to the king. People offered services in return for land.	Hierarchy- A system in which society is ranked according to status.
	Domesday Book	William commissioned a survey of England's wealth called the Domesday Book in 1086. It allowed him to take more tax increasing his wealth.	Tax- A compulsory contribution of money for services.
	The Harrying of the North	William sent his men to destroy villages, burn crops, kill animals and people and to salt the earth. The harrying lasted from 1069-1070 and over 100,000 people died. It was intended to stop resistance.	Resistance- The use of force or violence to oppose someone or something.
	Castles	Castles were built across England to prevent rebellion and protect the people. The Normans built motte and bailey castles.	Fortification- A reinforcement built to strengthen a place against attack.

Students have a homework book, each page is titled with a day, date and subject. Students have to write a quiz based on a section of the knowledge organiser and test themselves for each set of homework.



In addition to the knowledge based quizzes, students in the lower school have Maths homework each evening,

they use the Sparx online system. They are also expected to read for 20 minutes.

In the upper school they have, in addition to the knowledge based quizzes, a subject exam based homework, online Science homework using Tassomai and Sparx online for maths.

The checking of the homework is completed in several ways, firstly the knowledge quizzes are checked each morning by tutors, secondly the online homework is automatically monitored and thirdly the subject teachers check the subject homework.

There are the usual issues with all homework; what are the consequences for non-completion? We have a system of central detentions for KO homework and subjects using online homework have their own system of lunchtime and after school detentions.

One of the issues that our homework has raised is the narrow range of learning techniques we use and whether this is preparing them adequately for them being able to become independent learners and have a variety of methods to enable them to learn the vast array of knowledge they need to be successful in examinations.

One of the issues with the knowledge organiser homework was that a lot of student time was taken up making their own questions, many of which were of poor quality and repetitive, e.g. what is Also their time is taken making questions not learning the knowledge.

So we looked at how we could make this homework more effective and we decided:

- to write all of the questions for the students
- to chunk the testing sessions
- to utilise online quizzing so it is more interactive (Tassomai has algorithms that knows the questions the students are finding difficult and will keep presenting them with those questions until the student masters them)
- for upper school to introduce chunking which will force them to read text, isolate the key information, memorise the information and rewrite a paragraph from memory.

New Knowledge Organiser homework

By and large the knowledge organisers have remained the same with minor alterations, though the format may have changed.

Each department has created two quizzes per week for each year group. Each quiz consists of 9 questions. This has been a monumental task, 10,800 questions per quarter and 43,200 per year.

Students will be asked to use the knowledge organiser to find the answer to the questions. Once complete, they will memorise the answers to questions in chunks of 3 questions so they master the answer to every question. (For upper school students this mirrors the methodology for the chunking homework explained later)

Each set of homework should take 10 minutes - this is a 50% reduction in time to previously. Each set of homework will be more focussed and hopefully more engaging.

This is an example page from the new knowledge organisers:

History	
Week 1	
Q1 In what year did the Romans leave Britain?	
Q2 Who arrived in Britain after the Romans left?	
Q3 When did Edward the Confessor die?	
Q4 The Anglo-Saxon period in Britain was between which years?	
Q5 Why was it easy for the Anglo Saxons to invade Britain after 410 AD?	
Q6 Where did the Anglo-Saxons come from?	
Q7 Where did the Vikings come from?	
Q8 What was an earl?	
Q9 What three activities did the Vikings engage in?	

Tassomai for all

We have used Tassomai in the upper school for Science; Tassomai science is an off the shelf solution. We have worked with Tassomai so we can use our questions but have the additionality of the Tassomai algorithms to support students learning the knowledge for all subjects. Again staff have undertaken a massive undertaking in creating a bank of questions in the Tassomai programme.

Each evening students will have Tassomai homework to complement the knowledge organiser homework. This twin approach develops both the students' ability to interrogate text, find the answers and put to memory and the use of the computer algorithms to hone in on the weaknesses within the students' knowledge. The Tassomai sessions are 10 minutes long.

Chunking

In addition to the knowledge organisers we are introducing chunking homework for the upper school. This is in response to students' requests for additional techniques to revise for tests and examinations. We have decided to introduce this for English, Science, History and Geography which all students study to GCSE and are knowledge rich subjects.

Each week students will have a chunking homework in each of these subjects, the first will be reading text, isolating the important information, memorising the information and then writing a paragraph of information.

Example of Science chunking homework:

Students are asked to read this through to begin with. They then have 6 minutes to isolate the 9 most important pieces of information. At the end of 6 minutes they take 3 pieces of information at a time - read them for a minute and then write down what they have memorised (in the same way they complete their knowledge organiser memorisation).

Physics Y9 Q4 – Waves (Week 1 Task)

Waves Key Information

Waves occur throughout nature. Waves are **vibrations in the environment** around them and they **transfer energy** from one point to another. Another word for vibrate is **oscillate**.

There are two types of wave – **transverse** and **longitudinal**. Transverse waves oscillate **perpendicular** to the direction of energy transfer. Longitudinal waves oscillate **parallel** to the direction of energy transfer.

Perpendicular means “**at a 90° angle**”. Parallel means “**in the same direction as**”.

Examples of transverse waves are **light waves, ocean waves and microwaves**. An example of longitudinal waves is **sound waves**.

Transverse Wave in a Rope

The up-and-down motion of the rope is perpendicular to the direction of the wave.

Longitudinal Wave in a Spring

The back-and-forth motion of the coils of the spring is in the same direction that the wave travels.

Word	How to say it
oscillate	Oss-i-late
longitudinal	Long-i-chood-unal
perpendicular	Purr-pen-dik-u-lar

Topic **Animal and plant cells** Date **21st March**

Important Point 01
Inside all cells – sub cellular structures

Important Point 02
Animal Nucleus controls activity contains genetic material

Important Point 03
Cytoplasm – chemical reactions take place

Important Point 04
Cell membrane controls substances in/out cells

Important Point 05
Mitochondria – aerobic respiration takes place

Important Point 06
Ribosomes where proteins are synthesised

Important Point 07
Plant cell wall cellulose strenghtens cell

Important Point 08
Vacuole filled cell sap supports plant

Important Point 09
Chloroplasts absorb light make food glucose photosynthesis

Students then write a paragraph explaining to a younger student what they have learnt. This whole process takes 15 minutes. So not only is the information chunked in smaller pieces, within this process there are 4 different activities to hold the student's attention. Later in the week they have a quiz, this acts as spaced practice and as a confirmation they have memorised the knowledge.

Answer these questions without looking at any of your notes
Once you have tried your, best check your answers, tick those you got correct, add missing information in purple pnc

Question	Answer
1 What do waves transfer?	
2 Define a transverse wave	
3 Define a longitudinal wave	
4 Give 2 examples of transverse waves.	
5 Give an example of a longitudinal wave?	
6 What does perpendicular mean?	
7 What does oscillate mean?	
8 Sketch the shape of a transverse wave.	
9 Sketch the shape of a longitudinal wave.	

A Year 10 homework time table looks like this:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekend
Homework book 20 mins English	Homework book 20 mins Geography	Homework book 20 mins Maths	Homework book 20 mins PE Google form	Homework book 20 mins French	Homework book 20 mins RS
KO 10 mins RS Music Tech Sports Media Business Dance	KO 10 mins Science French Geography History	KO 10 mins English Geography History Food Construction Automotive Health & Social Child Play Product Design	KO 10 mins RS Science French	KO 10 mins Music Tech Sports Media Business Dance Food Construction Automotive Health & Social Child Play Product Design	KO 10 mins English Science
Chunking 15 mins Geography History	Chunking 15 mins English	Chunking 15 mins Science	Chunking 10 mins English Geography History	Chunking 10 mins Science	
Tassomai 10 mins RS Music Tech Sports Media Business Dance	Tassomai 10 mins Science French Geography History This is language French	Tassomai 10 mins English Geography History Food Construction Automotive Health & Social Child Play Product Design	Tassomai 10 mins English Science French This is language French	Tassomai 10 mins Music Tech Sports Media Business Dance Food Construction Automotive Health & Social Child Play Product Design	Tassomai 10 mins English Science
Sparx 20 mins			Sparx 20 mins	Sparx 20 mins	

A year 7 and 8 timetable:

Year 7 Homework Timetable					
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekend
English KO 10mins	Geography KO 10mins	Science KO 10 mins	Geography KO 10 minutes	Design & Technology KO 10 minutes	Reading 2x 20 min
Sparx Maths 15 mins	Maths foundation 15 mins	Sparx Maths 15 mins	Sparx Maths 15 minutes	Sparx Maths 15 minutes	
Science KO 10 mins	History KO 10- mins	RS KO 10 mins	English KO 10 minutes	PE KO 10 mins	
MFL KO 15 mins	Design & Technology KO 10 mins	MFL KO 10 mins	RS KO 10 minutes	History KO 10 minutes	
RS Tassomai 10 minutes	Geography Tassomai 10 mins	Science Tassomai 10 mins	PE KO 10 mins	Design and technology Tassomai 10 mins	
English Tassomai 10 mins	History Tassomai 10 mins	RS Tassomai 10 mins	Geography Tassomai 10 minutes	History Tassomai 10 mins	
Science Tassomai 10 min	Design and Technology Tassomai 10 mins	MFL Tassomai 10 mins	English Tassomai 10 mins	science Tassomai 10 mins	
MFL Tassomai 10 mins	Reading 15 mins	Vocabulary Tassomai 10 mins	Reading 15 mins	Reading 15 mins	
time 1 hr 20	time 1hr 20	time 1 hr 25	time 1 hr 30	time 1 hr 20	

Checking homework

Tutors will continue to check knowledge organiser homework, in addition upper school tutors will check chunking homework.

Online homework completion will be monitored by subjects, non-completion of online homework across subjects will be an indicator that they are not completing their homework and will be a trigger for pastoral intervention.

Each Vice Principal is a Head of House and we are formulating how they can play a key role in monitoring the homework completion within their house. There will be a component of checking, recognition of excellence and supporting students struggling with homework. This will work in tandem with the normal consequence routines for non-completion.

VP checklist for Homework

✓	Tasks	ADDITIONAL INFO
<input type="checkbox"/>	Receive Tassomai subject completion rates	Automatically compiled into a spreadsheet
<input type="checkbox"/>	Receive Tassomai individuals not engaging report from subjects	Automatically compiled into a spreadsheet
<input type="checkbox"/>	Receive Homework tutor DT weekly report from Classcharts	Automatically compiled into a spreadsheet
<input type="checkbox"/>	Receive Homework subject DT weekly report from Classcharts	Automatically compiled into a spreadsheet
<input type="checkbox"/>	At line up check students without homework folders/books	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spot check 10 student KO homework	All years
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spot check 10 students subject homework booklets	Years 9-11
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spot check 10 students chunking homework	Years 9-11
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact 3 parents ref excellent homework from spotchecks	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact 3 parents ref non-completion or sub-standard homework	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitor persistent non-completion or substandard homework students	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer students struggling to do homework correctly for a homework 'bootcamp'	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Email tutors of year group for recommendations for homework certificates (replaces house certificates)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact Hols where you identify issues with subject homework	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Talk to Tutors where checking homework is not up to standard.	
<input type="checkbox"/>		



Seeking clarity and consistency in professional development for teachers

What does this look like in the classroom?

Harrison Littler, Vice Principal

What does high quality feedback look like?

In the teaching profession we are increasingly conscious of the quality of feedback we give to students. We've done a great deal of thinking at Torquay Academy to ensure that our assessment and feedback is carefully crafted to reflect precisely the knowledge and skills we are looking to assess. In feedback lessons, we give time to modelling, explicit re-teaching, deliberate practice and redrafting. Critically, rather than simply asking students to *improve a piece of work*, we look to *improve the student*, so that they are better equipped to deal with similar challenges in the future.

When I think of how far this conversation has moved on in recent years, I'm often reminded of this quote from Dylan Wiliam:

*'I remember talking to a middle school student who was looking at the feedback his teacher had given him on a science assignment. The teacher had written, "You need to be more systematic in planning your scientific inquiries." I asked the student what that meant to him, and he said, "I don't know. If I knew how to be more systematic, I would have been more systematic the first time." This kind of feedback is accurate — it is describing what needs to happen — but it is not helpful because the learner does not know how to use the feedback to improve. It is rather like telling an unsuccessful comedian to be funnier — accurate, but not particularly helpful, advice.'*¹

Our thinking is very much influenced by this, and our determination to ensure students know *how* to improve. Our starting point is a knowledge-rich curriculum which acts as a foundation and reference guide. On this we build comprehensive modelling, with extensive use of visualisers in the classroom, which creates a strong sense for our students of what 'good' work looks like in our classrooms.

Obviously, this increasing focus on the quality of assessment and feedback is not unique to Torquay Academy. It's ironic therefore, that most teachers will have experienced the same frustrations of the student Dylan Wiliam references when receiving feedback to

improve their own performance in the classroom. For example, they may have been repeatedly asked to improve an area of their practice like, 'questioning', without ever being able to discuss how, or what this would look and sound like. Such vague and unhelpful feedback can be a source of real angst and self-doubt for training and experienced teachers alike. It goes without saying that it doesn't help them to become better teachers.

Establishing a framework for teacher development at Torquay Academy

Any environment in which teacher feedback is vague and lacking clarity is likely to be sustained by a more strategic lack of clarity about what effective teaching looks like. Poor leadership in establishing these parameters and spelling out precisely what an improvement in teacher practice would entail, passes the responsibility to all coaches, mentors and observers to fill the vacuum created. They will do so in large part in good faith, but they will nevertheless fill it with their own biases, habits, pet peeves and favoured strategies.

Establishing a framework for effective teaching is at the heart of achieving clarity and consistency in our professional development of teachers, so that it leads to genuine improvement. This is an area in which our profession lags behind others. We can learn a lot from sports coaching for instance, where every manoeuvre is scripted and drilled, and there is a strong focus on pre-agreed key performance indicators.

I would like to share the ways in which we have sought to establish a development framework to support our teaching, coaching and CPD and how this is being implemented in practice. There are five main strands of this at Torquay Academy:

1. Teaching and learning model
2. Principles of teaching
3. Whole school and subject CPD
4. Performance analysis (video coaching)
5. Coaching playbook

¹ Wiliam, Dylan. Embedded formative assessment. *Indiana: Solution Tree Press, 2002, p.120.*

Does being explicit about effective practice hold teachers back?

Some may argue that the approach taken here is overly restrictive. That it dampens teachers' freedom to express themselves and be creative. Others may apply the caricature of teachers as robots, mechanically following a set of processes. It is important to recognise the spirit of this endeavour. It is a framework to support continuous improvement, not simply a checklist, and teachers have enormous scope to operate independently on top of this foundation.

Further, it isn't used to judge or grade teaching in the school, but to provide perennial answers to the question: 'how could this be even better?' Finally, it's important to stress that our framework is derived from a single-minded focus on the impact on our students and their outcomes. If any single piece of the puzzle does not contribute to improved student outcomes, it simply does not belong here. Removing or diluting parts of our model in the name of variation or creativity would therefore only diminish our efforts to improve the life chances of the students in our care.

1. Teaching and learning model

The first strand of our framework is our teaching and learning model. It captures at a high level the parameters within which we operate. It indicates the non-negotiable elements that will be in the mix when we plan our curriculum, as well as how this is delivered and how it is to be assessed in the classroom.



2. Principles of teaching

Our principles of teaching then help us to dive a little deeper into some of the core components of an effective lesson. This is not a comprehensive list of what a planned lesson might consist of, but a summary of the most important features.

*The design and delivery of our curriculum rests on **four core principles** of how students learn best. Students should learn from **a clearly defined body of knowledge***

*and be required to **practice the retrieval of this knowledge**. Teachers are the **expert in the room** and should **explicitly teach key concepts and vocabulary**. Teachers should **model what is expected of students**, guiding them to be able to achieve the same things **independently**. Teachers should continually **check for student understanding** and **adapt their teaching appropriately**.²*

This is then supported by a description of what teachers can do to deliver these elements effectively. Importantly, we also describe what students themselves can do to engage more effectively with these different phases of a lesson. This informs our 'Learn Like a Champion' programme of developing students' understanding of how they learn best and the techniques which we employ as teachers.

Principles of Teaching			
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1. Retrieval Practice: Do News		2. Modelling and Deliberate Practice: I do, We do, You do	
Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write retrieval practice questions derived from a well-structured and sequenced curriculum which is central to a subject's core knowledge and is successful within their subject. Use a range of questions based around the range of learning and understanding that students are required to know for the current cycle, and explicitly teach knowledge from prior cycles and years. Set expectations for a student to answer with Do News within a predetermined time for the first activity. Ensure clear 'right or right' responses are provided from students during whole-class feedback. Encourage students to reflect on their areas of strength in their knowledge and what they need to focus on. 		Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer the highest levels of success and understanding in their subject at the top of the cycle. Engage with the learning process through writing, drawing, vocabulary, problem solving or practical aspects. Model the steps of success, and teaching explicit processes and providing feedback. Ensure the link in comparing answers with Do News and Give News and ensuring correction that day. Gradually increase the level of independent practice with substantial time given for student individual work. For most subjects this is a minimum of 10 minutes of extended writing. 	
3. Hear from an Expert: Teacher Exposition		4. Progress check: Demonstrate Knowledge and Skills	
Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present new material in small steps. Make connections with prior learning, for example common misconceptions and misconceptions. Use 'Can Do' and 'Can't Do' to check for understanding. Use 'Can Do' to ensure students are returning back to previously taught concepts and knowledge in their own words. Model the learning process through extended writing, drawing, and problem solving. Use 'Can Do' to check for understanding. Explicitly teach key concepts and vocabulary. Explicitly teach key concepts and vocabulary. 		Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the time in a lesson to 'show off' what they can do. Ask for clarification and support from the teacher when needed. Be prepared to respond to 'Can Do' and 'Can't Do' questions. Understand that 'Can Do' and 'Can't Do' are not a judgement on their ability, but a way to engage in the learning process. Ensure that answers are in full sentences, use academic vocabulary and are concise. Ask for the work of other students which is being shared. 	

3. Whole school and subject CPD

Continuing professional development for teachers is often plagued by the same variability and lack of direction I described earlier in the case of poor feedback on classroom teaching. Professional development opportunities available to teachers are often haphazard. Selecting from these opportunities can feel like choosing pick and mix sweets. The aim of the game appears to be to offer teachers shiny new strategies and ideas that they can magpie and take back to their schools, and ultimately therefore say that they 'came away with something'.

In an ideal world, CPD would be much more focussed and precise. There would again be a defined framework for teacher development. CPD would look more like a rigorous exploration what we know works and how this can be effectively deployed and adapted in different school contexts. Our school-wide CPD is bedded into our teaching and learning and coaching framework, but it's worth mentioning the role played by subject CPD and the framework that sits around it.

² Torquay Academy Principles of Teaching 2020-2021



We give 37 hours across the year to subject CPD, delivered within departments; the equivalent of a working week. The aim is twofold: to improve the quality of our centrally planned curriculum; and to support staff to be able to deliver the planned curriculum as consistently and effectively as possible. Our curriculum maps provide the framework for these meetings. They ask the key questions which we need to always have in mind to be improving curriculum development and delivery.

Every member of staff has a bespoke curriculum planner which contains the curriculum maps for their subject as well as space for guided reflection on key questions. Curriculum planners are annotated during the CPD for the upcoming week, and curriculum maps are updated on Google Drive during the meeting. Key questions include:

Evaluating the delivery of last series of lessons:

- What was successful / had the most impact?
- What needs work / had less impact?
- What did students find challenging?
- What did teachers find most challenging to deliver?

Looking ahead to the next series of lessons:

- Teachers to have a go at a question or task chosen from the lesson series.
- Discuss reflections on the experience and implications for pedagogy.
- Discuss strategies for effective delivery of concepts / skills from lesson series.
- Discuss key misconceptions from lesson series.
- Discuss key links to previous and future learning.
- Discuss key vocabulary and explicit teaching of it.

4. Performance analysis (video coaching)³

Over the last few years, we have been working to incorporate video and performance analysis into our coaching model. This project was an explicit attempt to capture and evaluate specific episodes in the classroom

for close analysis in order to support teacher development. However, all the risks around lack of a clear framework were evident as we rolled it out. Indeed, it was in identifying and attempting to resolve these issues that much of the thinking in this case study evolved.

In brief, the process is that we capture video from a lesson while 'tagging' it with various descriptors while we are filming. These descriptors are largely derived from the Teach Like a Champion (TLAC) techniques which sit within our framework. In the pilot phase of the project, our descriptors consisted of a list of TLAC techniques e.g. 'Cold Call'.



While this model added value to the coaching process, on reflection the framework we were using was too high level and provided only a binary output: whether the technique was in evidence or not. It was then down to the coach to provide the further analysis and interpretation of the teaching episode in their discussions with the teacher.

In seeking to resolve this, we again looked to the sporting world, where specific key performance indicators are identified, measured and improved over time. In the second iteration of our video coaching programme, we had developed our descriptors so that they identified more acutely what we might see in the classroom if a technique was being deployed effectively. For example, therefore, rather than simply tagging an episode with the binary tag of 'Cold Call', we began to tag with any one of four key elements of 'Cold Call' i.e.:

- Building a culture for Cold Call (predictable)
- Making Cold Call systematic (universal and planned)
- Making Cold Call positive (smiling, no examples of catching students out)
- Unbundling questions (shorter questions, asked to more students)

As a result, conversations became shaper and revolved around these four KPIs, which were explored in greater

³ For more information see <https://www.analysispro.com/blog/coaching-teachers-with-video-analysis-a-case-study-by-harrison-littler>

depth than before. This move to a more granular analysis of what was taking place in the classroom has led to something of a paradigm shift in our thinking around the consistency of our teacher coaching. It has provided a model for our newly developed 'coaching playbook'.

5. Coaching Playbook

We are currently developing a 'coaching playbook' which will take our explicit framework for teacher development to the next level. In part, this relates to a wider strategy of supporting coaches to do their work more efficiently and consistently across the school. It does this by providing an utterly comprehensive suite of possible areas for development relating to any given teaching technique. It is also in itself a valuable process of describing for teachers what excellent practice in a particular area might look like.

Further, the granular approach outlined above provides a range of highly specific 'action steps' that coaches and teachers can choose from as the priority for that teacher's development. For instance, our current coaching playbook lists a total of 27 possible action steps to support teachers in improving their use of 'Cold Call' – many more than the four sub-categories identified in our video coaching programme.

Conclusion

There has been something of a revolution in the way schools approach feeding back to students and developing their abilities over the last few years. It is now unthinkable for instance that we wouldn't share with students the success criteria we will be measuring them by, or show them a good example of the kind of work we expect.

At Torquay Academy, we have identified a missed opportunity to apply some of that thinking to the development of teachers. Fundamentally, the need to spell out very explicitly what something looks like in the classroom when it is done well, to model this and to practise it, is paramount. There can be no room for vaguely identified areas for development. The whims and biases of coaches cannot be allowed to fill the gap where a solid development framework should be. We have developed a strong framework for teacher development which spans our curriculum planning, our CPD and our coaching. This gives certainty and direction to our staff and coaches and ensures that we make the most of our high levels of investment in developing our staff.



Wellbeing and Mindfulness at Torquay Academy

Stop, .B and a new world you will see

Ben Chadwick, Vice Principal

"Mindfulness is a way of befriending ourselves and our experience". John Kabat Zinn - Founder of the Centre for Mindfulness.

In today's ever increasing world of social media, it has become apparent that children are exposed to many things that can cause them to react in a negative way, sometimes with a 'knee jerk' reaction i.e. comments made on social media platforms, images shared of themselves or celebrities etc. and the pressure to 'conform' can be quite overwhelming.

"When we get too caught up in the busyness of the world, we lose connection with one another - and ourselves" - Jack Cornfield, mindfulness teacher and author.

Research on the positive effects of mindfulness in children is still in its infancy; however, it has been proven that regular mindfulness sessions contribute to the development of cognitive and performance skills. It helps reduce reactive patterns of thinking, feelings and behaviour, whilst enhancing cognitive control.

At Torquay Academy, we are always exploring ways to encourage growth and development, for both our students and our staff. Mindfulness has a huge part to play in providing students and staff with the emotional capacity to cope with life and make positive choices in order to really reach their true potential.



We have linked with Oxford University and Jem Shackleford from the department of Psychiatry who has been instrumental in delivering modules, training staff and ensuring our students benefit from a structured programme of delivery.

Initially we offered students the opportunity to take part as an extra curricular club. Due to the positive outcomes we then built the programme into the curriculum. All Year 7s and 8s have had one learning cycle of .b mindfulness (10 one hour sessions) learning the basics of mindfulness and practice techniques that will help them to deal with situations such as stress, anxiety and improve concentration and attention.

Sessions covered the following topics:

- Worry
- Being here now
- Moving mindfully
- Stepping back
- Befriending the difficult
- Taking in the good



MYRIAD

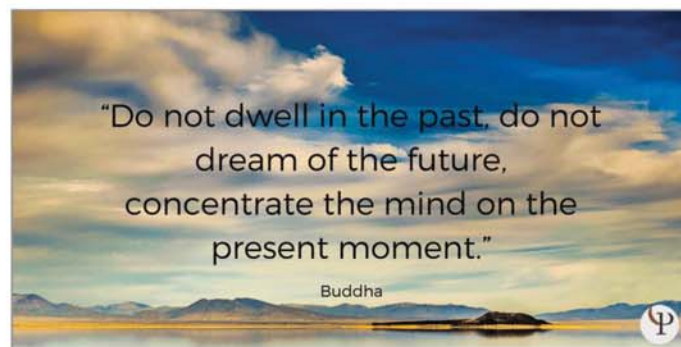
Mindfulness and Resilience in Adolescence

We teach our students to be more 'present' in the moment, which has helped them reduce their anxiety levels and contributed considerably to improved concentration in their lessons. They have become more focused and able to approach situations differently i.e. using breathing techniques and looking at the situation from a different perspective.

For our year 7 students we held a graduation ceremony, in which all parents and carers were invited. It was run by Jem Shackleford who came down especially from Oxford University to host the evening. Over 200 people attended and were inspired by his enthusiasm and vibrant approach to this important aspect of student mental health and wellbeing.



Each student was presented with a certificate to acknowledge their achievement in completing the course. Several parents commented on the positive impact mindfulness had, not only on their child's academic progress, but also on their attitude and behaviour within the family home.



We also put on sessions for our Year 11 students and invited parents/carers in to participate. These were around exam anxiety and worry. The course gave practical exercises to clear the mind of negative thoughts and focus on the positive. It was well received and the feedback was extremely positive.

"I have learnt that for things we can't change or influence it is not worth filling our mind with worry and stress"

(Year 11 student)

"I am now able to focus more on the positive aspects of my life and be grateful for what I have rather than what I don't have"

(Year 11 student)

"As a parent I feel more able to support my daughter in reducing her anxiety, it has brought our relationship closer"

(Year 11 parent)

Next steps

We want to be in a position where, in the future, mindfulness forms part of our culture and curriculum and becomes embedded in our ethos.

Every new student to Torquay Academy will complete the course right at the start of year 7 and will therefore have the tools to be able to deal with difficult times and have a more positive approach to situations.

We will be working with the whole staff team and use the practical techniques in everyday school life.



Equitable support for our PP4 students

Mark Gale, Vice Principal

At Torquay Academy, we currently have 436 students who are entitled to Pupil Premium funding and each of those students is a unique individual with their own background and needs. Some of them are progressing very well academically and others need more support, so we are faced with the issue of treating them as one group of 436 students or trying to deal with 436 individual cases.

Neither of these extremes is easy, so we have looked for ways to categorise students on the basis of their need and their likelihood of success. For example, we monitor whether they achieved good key stage 2 results, we look at their postcode deprivation index, and we look at their average effort across all subjects over time.

Of these measures to identify the students the most telling has been their long-term disadvantaged status. We look at students to find out how many years they have been in receipt of free school meals and categorise them accordingly.

Although they are all in receipt of the Pupil Premium some have been in receipt of free school meals for a short time (18 days in one case) whilst others have been in receipt of free school meals for every day of the entire last 6 years. All other things being equal this could represent very different levels of deprivation or disadvantage.

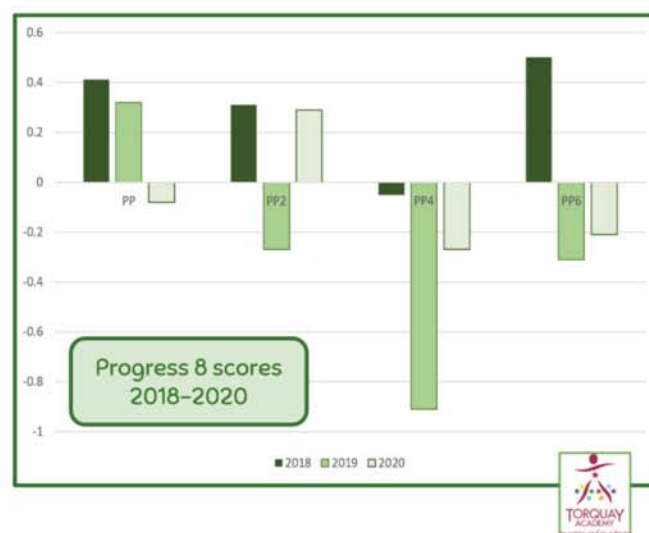
Consequently, we have instituted a range of different Pupil Premium categories:

- PP6 means the student has been in receipt of FSM for the entire six-year period;
- PP4 means they have been in receipt of FSM for 4 years out of the last six;
- PP2 means 2 years of the last six; and
- PP means they have been entitled to FSM for less than two years out of the last six.

We review these on an annual basis because students may change category depending on whether they start or end free school meals entitlement. In addition, we have categories for Forces students (PPF) and Looked After Children (PPLAC).

Looking at our attainment over time we find that it is students in the PP4 category who have achieved less strongly than students in the other categories. This is

demonstrated in the charts below, where you can see over the last three years the PP4 students have achieved lower progress 8 scores than others:



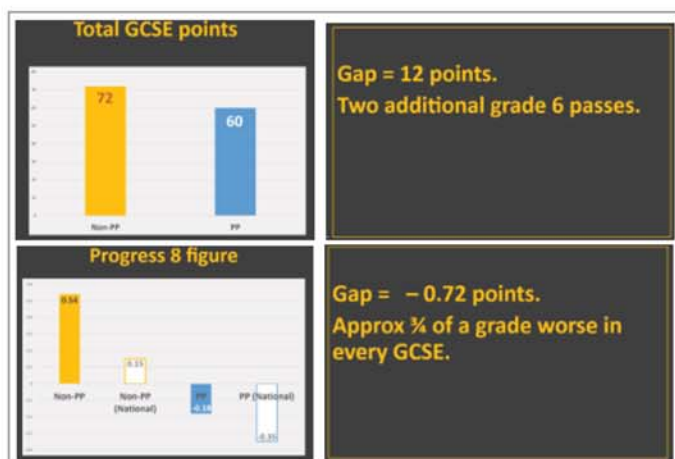
It was clear that one way to narrow our Pupil Premium gap was to focus on the attainment of the pupil of the PP4 students, so we began a year-long strategy of positive discrimination for PP4 students.

Introducing change

Based on Kotter's dimensions of change, it was important to create urgency and build amongst colleagues a powerful vision for change.



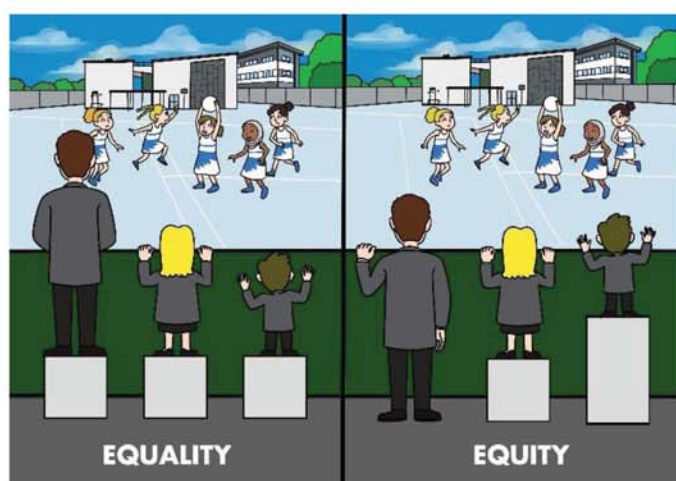
We did this by presenting some striking statistics to the whole staff during an early training session. By appealing to teachers' moral purpose, we were able to build a coalition determined to act:



There was widespread recognition that we could act for our PP4 students to concentrate on closing this attainment gap.

The advantage of focusing on PP4 students as a group meant that instead of dealing with 436 students, we have reduced the cohort to a much more manageable size: in every year group there are 10 to 12 PP4 students. This is a group that staff - teachers, TAs, subject leads and year leads - can get to know well and give direct attention and intervention.

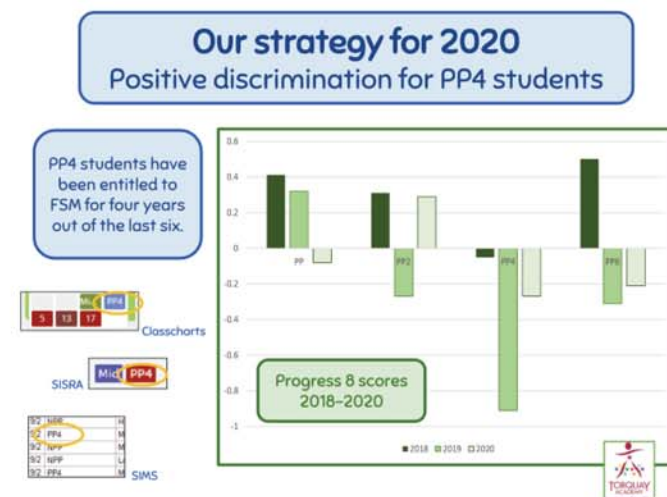
Furthermore, we wanted to get across the idea that these students needed positive discrimination. It is not enough to treat them the same as other students, when their starting points may be far behind their peers. This is powerfully illustrated in the following image, which was used in departmental areas to reinforce the message from the training:



Very quickly, the terms 'PP4', 'equity' and 'positive discrimination' entered the day-to-day vocabulary of our staff. We recognise that it PP4 may well need extra support - being prioritised for cold-calling or being the first to be checked on in lessons; being the priority for year teams to contact home; receiving help with how to actually use revision guides; receiving extra guidance about what to expect on field trips, and so on.

Teachers are highly likely to include PP4 students as their focus for intervention in their teaching and learning packs, and because it is likely that there are just one or two PP4 students in each class, this is highly achievable.

PP4 students are highlighted in various ways in our school systems, including SIMS, SISRA and ClassCharts, as well as any materials produced centrally.



Creating action

Reflecting on Kotter's dimensions of change, now that the climate for change had been well established, it was important to empower staff and create quick wins. This was done through keeping the notion of positive discrimination for PP4 students highly visible - through the posters shown above, through regular briefings and bulletin entries, but also through a series of actions by a wide range of staff.

To do this, we used the Pareto principle - that it is very hard to achieve 100% success on an individual action, but using the 20/80 idea, it is reasonably straightforward to achieve 80% (or more) of the output from fairly low inputs. Therefore, we aimed to have five actions in process at one time (taking 20% each of the time), with the intention of gaining an output of five times 80% - that is, 400% of the output compared to trying one thing at a time.

We established a collaborative spreadsheet of actions categorised "Future / Profile", "Engage / Staff" and "Deliver / Actions" which was bookmarked and highlighted through recurring email reminders. This contained weekly tasks to accomplish, which were ticked off and evaluated with a simple qualitative evaluation at the end of the week.

Future (PROFILE)	Putters in workbooks	MEM	to Jan equity poster
Future (PROFILE)	Raise the moral imperative (equality / equity)	MEM	Twilight 1 + follow up ones
Future (PROFILE)	Reviews of all twilight sessions to consider teaching and learning of PP students	MEM	Twilight 2 TA dictionary
Future (PROFILE)	PP down an HOLA and HOLA/ agendas	MEM	Twilight 3
Engage (DEAFV)	Period 6 writing / staffing	MEM	to Jan document with DMO for cycle 2
Engage (DEAFV)	Associated meeting plans in T: L: guides checked during learning walks + 1200	MEM, HOLA, HOLA, MEM	Twilight 4 guide, 1200 meeting 1, 1200
Engage (DEAFV)	Library of good practice articles	MEM	consider getting in books for bulletin
Engage (DEAFV)	Some staff to act as student changemakers - 'poorly parents' for PP students	HCT impact group	to Jan 1200
Engage (DEAFV)	HOLA staff to be more familiar with PP data (including Feresse + LAC)	MEM	Engage members each 1200, 1200 HOLA, 1200
Engage (DEAFV)	HOLA and HOLA/ data analysis training	MEM	
Engage (DEAFV)	Monitor the mental health support for PP / PP4 students	LEAD	to Jan continued HOLA/ - with any books
Engage (DEAFV)	Lower PA rates in line with non-PP students	SC/DH	Engage Feresse letter to be investigated
Engage (DEAFV)	Lower PP4 parents have made parents' evening appointments	MEM + HOLA	to Jan 1200 to 1200, 1200 HOLA to 1200
Engage (DEAFV)	Teacher assessment review meetings in work 9 - HOLA trained in advance	MEM	Effective supporting meetings about
Believe (LAC/DH)	Book meeting procedures to include assessment PP students (PP4 to 1200 + 1200)	HOLA, MEM	Engage
Believe (LAC/DH)	1200 the students their books are being maintained by HOLA	MEM	to 1200 books continued

The evaluation was important for us, as it enabled us to see which actions were having the greatest impact and if harder challenges required further resources. Some tasks were easy to do and had high impact: these were prioritised, but others were hard to do, even though the impact was seen to be high. The evaluation process allowed us to break down the task and work out how best to do it.

Equally important, the evaluation process meant that we were able to identify low-impact actions and reduce or eliminate these. The majority of the actions did not have numerical evaluations - a qualitative evaluation was just as effective.

Outcomes and next steps

PP4 outcomes have improved in all year groups - for example, the progress 8 score of PP4 students in year 11 is in between that of the PP and PP2 groups. Staff are very clear who the PP4 students in each year group are, and they understand that simple actions done well can have a very positive effect.

This was always intended as a one-year strategy and although the principles of positive discrimination and the long term disadvantaged categories will continue, we will ensure that there is a moment of recognition and reflection in September to mark the end of a successful campaign.



Mentoring of KS3 MAPP Students

Paul Hocking, Vice Principal

Context and Objectives

Torquay Academy is an above average sized secondary school, in a coastal area, with a higher than average social deprivation catchment area. The local area is highly competitive with two grammar schools and two non-selective schools within walking distance of our front gate. Built on the highest of expectations we have a relentless approach to school improvement where no stone is left unturned and everything is done to support our students in attaining better results for themselves. Our interventions and support have focused primarily on KS4 outcomes and filling those gaps that exist in year 11. At the same time the high expectations throughout the academy have led to improving standards in all years but we are still heavily reliant on our extensive year 11 intervention program.

In September 2018 we began a project to produce a 'world class KS3' with the aim of doing things right from the beginning, to eliminate the gaps before they appear. This has been outlined in a case study that year. Following the results of that Summer one of the objectives within the whole academy improvement plan was to focus on the students who fit into the most able and disadvantaged categories. With this in mind we introduced a program of mentoring the most able/disadvantaged group within our world class KS3.

Rationale

This mentoring project is looking beyond academic intervention and aims to support the individual as a whole. Cervoni et al. (2004) demonstrated the positive effects 'licking and grooming' has on young rat behaviour and their interactions within the group. In 'How Children Succeed' Tough (2014) discusses the connection of the work by Cervoni et al. (2004) to educational settings and how quality parenting, by anyone, can improve the success of a student. I am hoping that by providing someone to show the child care and attention, the 'licking and grooming', those early life traumas associated with disadvantaged students can begin to be overturned. The aim is to address concerns in KS3 before the gaps become too wide to address fully in KS4. In an effort to close the gaps before they appear the mentoring in year will hopefully provide the additional pastoral support that might be missing elsewhere.

Academic Mentoring 2018

In the first attempt at mentoring we identified all of the MAPP students within the Yr7 and 8 cohorts and set up mentoring meetings with the Head of academic progress or SLT link with the key stage. During the meeting information was presented to the students and collected from them to be recorded onto a proforma:

Challenge Club – Student Meeting

Student Name									
Tutor									
Tutor Group									
The Purpose of the Meeting Please explain the purpose of this meeting to the student: ✓ As a Most Able student, we are looking to identify the areas in which they are thriving, and look for marginal gains in all areas based upon their assessment data. Is there anything they can do better? How can we take success from one subject into another? ✓ Discuss the key data as identified below and coach/invite the student to make suggestions/think of ways that they can improve. ✓ Set some SMART Targets for them to work towards throughout next cycle.									
Academic Progress			Effort			Behaviour/Readiness for Learning			
Cycle No.	No. of subjects above target	No. of subjects on target	No. of subjects below target	Average effort	Attendance %	Average score	Average behaviour	Average readiness	Average net score
Specific details aimed at improvement			Specific details aimed at improvement			Specific details aimed at improvement			
1									
POSITIVES: (What subjects is the student doing really well in? Are there any common positive themes?)									
NEXT STEPS: (E.g. under target subjects, common themes from teachers' comments, possible links/comparisons between subjects)									
Action planning: What are the key themes that the student taken from the discussion?									
How does the student review/do homework? (E.g. When/Where/How/What is their routine?)									
What are the 'barriers' to improvement? (E.g. Equipment required? Time/space needed to work? Additional staff input required?)									
What are the issues that the students feel they need to work on? Specific subjects/topics. How will they do this?					What can the school do to help? (equipment, resources, facilities etc.)				
Set a time and date for the follow up meeting.					End of next cycle				
What will be achieved by the follow up meeting? (Set SMART Targets) How will we know this has been achieved?									

The form and structure of these meetings was useful in collating the data and identifying for some students where they needed the most support. It did however, change the focus of the meeting from the initial pastoral aim of 'licking and grooming' towards a more traditional academic approach. We also found that it was time consuming and difficult to arrange the meetings after each teaching cycle. As a consequence, some of the MAPP students missed out on having a meeting every teaching cycle.

One Mentor and One Mentee (2019)

The following year I wanted to focus on improving the mentor-mentee relationship, increase the completion rate of the mentoring sessions and finally really focus on the 'licking & grooming' approach as initially described. When identifying the MAPP students in year 7 we initially looked at those who were off target in English and Maths. This identified a small group of students, and gave the opportunity to have a 1:1 ratio between mentor and mentee. This was achieved by expanding the mentoring team to include other members of the senior team. Each mentor was tasked with meeting with their mentee once a week and then to record that the meeting had happened on the tracking sheet shown below:

The structure of the meeting was changed to a format where the conversation was more informal and mentors were asked to simply build a relationship with the mentee. It was hoped that we could provide a friendly face in school and attempt to be that 'middle class' parent. At TA effort is measured using a mixture of factors that are all increased by students making positive choices. We score the students on bringing equipment, attendance, completing homework and the number of behaviour points. None of these are hard to do but all indicate the correct habits of a good student. It has also been shown that higher effort scores correlate to achieving higher grades at GCSE. Mentors were therefore asked to encourage students to display good habits and to do the right things.

My aim was to minimise the impact on colleagues but also recognise that if I get this right in KS3 then the impact of interventions in KS4 will be dramatic. Thus, if we spend more resources in year 7 we might save double the amount in year 11. Mentoring is only effective if kept to small groups of students with a clear focus. In looking solely at the effort grade criteria, I streamlined the checking process and used data that is largely collected elsewhere already. The mentoring conversation was focused on showing the importance of the habits and behaviours. The impact on increasing workload initially was therefore minimal but the benefits are a lag measure and will not be apparent until these students enter KS4. With more early mentoring the time needed for later intervention should be reduced.

Outcomes and next steps

We found that the mentoring was a way of improving habits, producing some measurable success, that the students can experience to build confidence and help them to believe that yes, they can achieve. Initial results have shown that the students being mentored have improved their skills scores in English and Maths at a greater rate than the rest of the year 7 cohort. There has also been an improvement of the average effort grades again at a greater rate than the rest of the year 7s. Next year I would like to continue with the current approach but to use the academic data more forensically to change the mentee group as we identify the students most in need of this support.



Celebrating Student Achievements in the Physical Education Department

Gareth Harries, Assistant Principal



Background and Context

Torquay Academy is a school that takes great pride in the achievements of its pupils whether that be academically or in the creative arts, design and technology, etc or in this case in the world of sport. For the last six years we have developed various methods of recognising these achievements, whether that be in the form of badges, certificates, blog entries, letters and postcards home or recognition through assemblies or end of year award ceremonies.

This case study is written as a way of reflecting on what awards have been introduced, the rationale behind the awards, whether the introduction of the awards has been well received by students and parents and what awards we will be looking to award in the future. For most of the study we will look at the award system that specifically relates to Physical Education (PE) but towards the end we will look at a new whole school initiative that the Director of Sport has played a part in implementing.

The Study

For a number of years, the PE Department has been looking at implementing a system of recognition for students that commit to representing the school at sport, in addition to this it was also felt that it was important to recognise the efforts that students put in to their core PE lessons and finally we felt we needed to recognise the achievements of pupils who took part in sport outside of the school environment.

Through research carried out as part of other case studies (Establishing a Sports Academy, published 2017 and Delivering an Outstanding Physical Education Curriculum at Torquay Academy, published 2019) it was deduced that one of the key issues from students and parents was that there was a lack of recognition for the achievements of students who took part in sport. Many students were committing a lot of their time to either representing the school or a local club and we had no way of recognising what was being achieved. In addition to this some students were taking part in every PE lesson, putting in maximum effort and making outstanding progress and again were not being recognised.

For the past 8 years we have held an annual Sports Personality of the Year Awards Evening, this has proven to be very successful and popular with both students and

parents alike. The awards evening is by invitation only and places are limited. It is the source of immense pride that some students state at the end of year 13 that they have been invited to every one of the awards evenings since they have been at the school. Indeed, some parents challenge their children to receive an invite every year.

The evening has gone from strength to strength and we are now at the stage where current students of the school compare the events of the evening. Over the years we have invited guest speakers along to deliver the awards and whilst there have been many inspirational sports men and women do this, the most inspirational guest was an ex student who is currently a professional footballer who was young enough for most of the students present to remember when he was at the school. Whilst he did not make a speech on the night, his presence and him presenting the awards was inspirational and still talked about some 3 years later.

The aim of the Sports Personality Awards evening is threefold; we want to:

1. Raise the profile of sport within the school
2. Showcase the talents that our students have in a sporting context
3. To bring together students from all years, who have a common bond

Sport is not solely about winning at all costs and we were very conscious from the outset that this awards evening would not only recognise those that had indeed been very successful that year but also those that strived to be the best they could be through dedication, commitment and participation. With this in mind we decided to award the following categories:

1. Attitude towards PE Award
2. Sportsmanship Award
3. Young Leader Award
4. Contribution to Sport Award
5. Individual Performance of the Year Award
6. Team of the Year Award
7. Key Stage 3 Female Sports Personality of the Year
8. Key Stage 3 Male Sports Personality of the Year
9. Key Stage 4 Female Sports Personality of the Year
10. Key Stage 4 Male Sports Personality of the Year
11. Key Stage 5 Sports Personality of the Year

As can be seen from the above list there is a healthy combination of achievement and character awards.

The short list and the eventual winner are chosen by the PE department, which leads to some healthy discussions at departmental meetings and has in fact proved to be very enlightening as it sometimes highlights areas that the department itself can improve on, for an example one year it proved difficult to award the Young Leader award as we were not offering many opportunities for students to prove their leadership abilities. We have since rectified this.

Those shortlisted and the eventual winners, appear on the Principal's blog and the TV screens around the school which adds to the excitement and involvement of the wider school community.

There are certainly flaws with this method of recognising sporting success as there is a possibility that some students are not recognised and will feel disappointed and may lose their enthusiasm for sport as a result. In the past 8 years there have been two such cases that we are aware of and whilst both were genuine oversights that were rectified the following year they were still a cause for concern. The other flaw would be that for some achievements outside of the school provision we are not made aware so we are not in a position to celebrate the success. However, this has improved over the years. (see comments in the Principal's blog paragraph) We will look to keep on developing this evening year on year but to date it has been deemed as very successful.

The Principal produces a blog each week which has proven to be a great way to get the message through to staff and parents about how our students are performing on the sports field week in week out. The prestige of appearing on the blog in a sporting context has grown over the 6 years, when it was introduced. We are now at the stage where on a weekly basis we are getting a number of parents emailing into the school with 'write ups' and pictures about their sons and daughters achievements outside of the school environment. It is more often than not that students view the blog with great pride when they appear on it, although there have been a couple of occasions where students have qualified for National finals but have asked not to appear on the blog as they do not want their achievements highlighted, this is a real shame but we will always respect the wishes of the student. Research carried out within the school indicates that there is still some way to go when it comes to getting the students to read the blog, particularly in the lower year groups where many claim that they do not read it. The weekly "call out" at line up mentioned below will hopefully go some way towards eradicating this and students will learn to view the sports entries on the blog with much pride.

The main initiative that has made a significant difference in recognising sports achievements has been the introduction of School Sports Colours. These were introduced 5 years ago and have gone from strength to strength. They are awarded at the end of each term and announced through the Principals end of term assembly. Students receive a sports colours badge and a certificate for their endeavours, the list of recipients also appears on the Principal's blog that week but the most prominent and public display is on the sports colours notice boards which are situated both in the main entrance to the school and in the corridor of the sports centre. Students take great pride in seeing their names on the list and showing their friends and families when they walk through the sports centre.

There are 3 categories of sports colours:

- Junior Colours - usually awarded to Years 7 & 8
- Half Colours - usually awarded to Years 9 & 10
- Full Colours - usually awarded to Year 11 and Sixth form students



Students can be awarded multiple colours for different sports in each category. Students can be awarded their sports colours for a variety of reasons including;

1. Commitment towards their sport, which includes attending training on a regular basis over a period of time and displaying an excellent attitude.
2. Playing for a school team on a regular basis over a number of years again displaying an excellent attitude.
3. We have also awarded sports colours to some individuals for their achievements outside of school sport.

The introduction of sports colours has been an unequivocal success, there are some students that have achieved their colours at Junior and Half levels in 3 or 4 sports but equally important is the student who receives one sports colour for their dedication and commitment to their sport and school team. There is little doubt that students from all years wear their sport colour badges with pride.

We also celebrate the sporting successes of students through social media, the PE Department have their own twitter and Instagram accounts and regularly post

information about students' achievements on these platforms.

There is an argument that suggests that awards are divisive in that there are criteria that must be met to receive an award and because of this there will be those that succeed and conversely those that do not, those that win and those that lose. Whilst this is a genuine concern it is truly believed by the PE department at Torquay Academy that the range and scope of the awards available to students is such that any student has the capacity to receive an award. They are not just performance based; effort, attitude and endeavour are also rewarded. We strongly believe that students need to earn the right to any reward given and that we should not be implementing an 'awards for all' system as this would undermine the system and the students will see straight through it and the awards will become meaningless.

Most of the awards that have been written about in this case study have been in place in the school for some time and have become embedded in the school structure, however it was the introduction of some new awards in the school that prompted this reflection on where we are to date in terms of awards in the PE Department. This year the Director of Sport has been involved in a whole school initiative that sees subject awards given at the end of every learning cycle and at the end of every half term. Every teacher of every class in every subject issues an award at these times. This is a significant increase in the amount of awards that are issued. However, the criteria is such that again this is not an 'award for all' situation, a student has to earn the award as either the student who displays the best work ethic/effort or the student that achieves the best grades in the class. Again the recipients are published on the Principal's blog and will receive a badge.

As with any department we are always looking at improving our current systems and next year will see the introduction of a number of new initiatives that go some way to further recognise the achievements of our students. We are looking at introducing;

- A team of the week
- A weekly player profile of a successful sports student
- A sports update will be announced every Thursday at the student morning 'line up'

All of these initiatives together with what we already do in terms of awards for our students will hopefully go some way to recognising what fantastic students we have and what amazing sports results they are producing on a weekly basis.



Low Level Disruption

Glyn Penrice, Assistant Principal

Background and Context

In recent years there has been much heated debate about the use of isolation rooms in schools and opinion can be very polarised about their effectiveness.

Parent backlash at school that keeps unruly pupils in isolation room to calm down

By DAILY MAIL REPORTER
UPDATED: 09:02, 29 October 2009

Paul Dix, a behaviour consultant and author of the influential book 'When Adults Change Everything Changes: Seismic Shifts in School Behaviour' claims *"That is not education, it is a custodial sentence."*

He goes on to say that he has seen examples of 50 children at one time in isolation in one school and he had heard of pupils being placed in isolation for not bringing a pen to school. In an interview with the BBC he did go on to say that he recognised that disruptive pupils may need to be removed from classrooms but that he believed they should be returned after a short period and their behaviour should be discussed with a teacher. I certainly agree with his final point but we have to consider when is the best time to hold that discussion. Two angry or upset people will rarely agree and move on. Like an angry hedgehog, they both need time to regulate and rationalise what has happened between them.

Tom Bennett, the independent advisor on behaviour to the Department for Education argues that isolation can be effective in tackling disruption in classrooms. As part of the same BBC item he went on to say that when you're a lone adult with a class of 25 pupils, it only takes two people to really persistently wilfully misbehave for that lesson to be completely detonated. Many teachers would argue the same but point out that there may be as many as 30 in a class.

In common with the majority of schools we employ such a room called the Behaviour Centre. Initially when introduced as far back as 2006, it was in an attempt to reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions, a point raised by Tom Bennett, but over the years, as whole

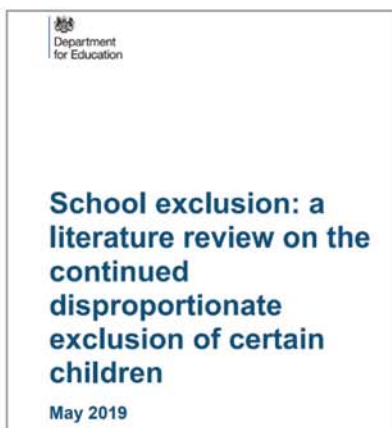
school changes at the Academy have been implemented, the threshold has changed and it is now primarily used to deal with low level disruption in our lessons to ensure that our pupils receive their entitlement to a disruptive free learning environment and the opportunity to succeed. The Behaviour Centre is part of a whole school approach to eliminating what many pupils, parents and teachers feel is a priority as the pupils develop their love for learning throughout their time with us on their journey through life long education towards success.



In 2017 my colleague and Lead Practitioner, Katherine Mortimore, wrote a blog for the Guardian newspaper in which she details various systems in place at Torquay Academy that have led to a positive impact for the staff. She mentions the common approach to lessons that give teachers control. That teachers are allowed to talk, and that students are expected to listen. As a whole school, CPD has focussed upon and been influenced by Doug Lemov's Teach Like a Champion strategies; there is a strong focus on teachers embedding structured routines into their lessons so students are clear about what is expected of them. In 2020 we still revisit many of the strategies on a weekly basis and share them with our pupils.



In the article, Katherine described another of the systems which was the efficient whole-school behaviour policy. She wrote “When a student’s behaviour impacts on others, the issue is dealt with swiftly”. Katherine also referred to the centralised system for follow up detentions and the expectation that staff speak with parents and carers about the issue.



In 2018 the Department for Education published research focussing on the use of Alternative Provision but also touched upon the use of isolation rooms by schools. They found over half of secondary schools used such rooms but

stated that not many schools had evidence that such strategies actually worked. “There was a lack of hard evidence of schools evaluating the impacts of preventative strategies”

Many people argued in the national press that such strategies had led to pupils having to sit in silence on their own for hours for minor infractions of school rules as described by Paul Dix. Some schools felt that using such rooms to reduce exclusions was evidence of success in itself.

At Torquay Academy it could be argued that when viewed within a whole school approach and context that our strategies are successful for many students as we continue to have positive Progress 8 scores and that we are oversubscribed year upon year and that this represents success.

OFSTED inspected us in 2020 and reported that pupils and staff say that every second counts. Pupils are prompt to lessons and waste no time before starting their

learning. Behaviour is good, and learning is rarely disrupted.

Feedback from our Student Voice indicated that students thought it was successful as they were able to focus better on learning when disruption was dealt with.

So, what has changed since the focus of the Department for Education research two years ago? In truth the same ethos applies as described by Katherine and issues are still dealt with swiftly in lessons. We use a traffic light system that allows students time in lessons to reflect upon their behaviour and how it impacts on their classmates. The system in 2017 for dealing with the issues relied upon a pupil being removed from the lesson, the term we use along with many other schools was that the pupil would be parked. They would go to a central area for the rest of the lesson and be expected to attend an after school detention the same day. At this detention there would be a meeting with the members of staff.

In 2019, we modified the system as we began to feel that the system was being used by pupils to avoid certain lessons or teachers and that some would receive multiple parkings in a day. This is not a new concept as back in 1995 research suggested that the isolation procedure was actually rewarding poor behaviour because it provided an escape from demanding classroom situations (Costenbader and Reading-Brown). 4649 incidents were recorded in the academic year 2018-2019. We have 4 learning cycles within the school year and this equated to nearly 1200 for each learning cycle. Our recording system was very basic at this time and the focus was about how many rather than who and why. We therefore developed our recording by using Classcharts in a more robust manner by including the reasons for a pupil being parked and to evidence that the traffic light system was being used properly to enable pupils to reflect and modify their behaviour in the lesson. Pupils could be parked for multiple infractions in a lesson but with the added time and opportunity to reflect, change behaviours, make good choices and avoid the sanctions.

At the start of the 2019-2020 year we also decided to make changes to how we used the Behaviour Centre. We decided that any student who had been parked would spend a day in our Behaviour Centre rather than just the one lesson. This would hopefully provide some deterrent for those pupils choosing which lessons and teachers to avoid. We had also asked pupils what would be effective and many replied that missing a lesson was less impactful than missing social time at break and lunch. Therefore, in addition, pupils would lose this social time. This had previously created some issues about detentions regarding food and several complaints from parents that students were not allowed to eat or

drink. A solution was found by pre-ordering food that was delivered to the centre. Another possible issue would be parents claiming that pupils were not allowed to go to the toilet and we were able to overcome this barrier as well.

We also changed the location and look of the centre so that it was similar to the other classrooms. The centre had been housed in a collection of rooms that were usually small and cramped and thought of after all the other classrooms had been allocated and with some attempt to keep the room away from the mainstream. We identified a room in a new block that had been built last year. It was one of the largest rooms in the school and very well decorated. It was adjacent to a small admin office that we were also able to use. The new Behaviour Centre could accommodate 20 students at one time. Each student working at a desk spaced apart from each other.

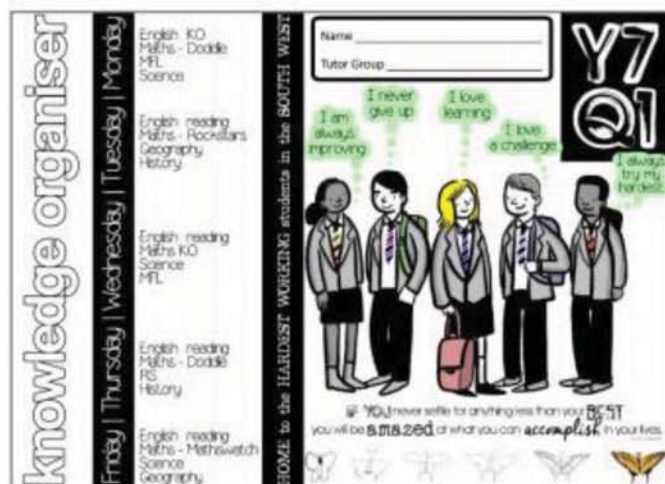
The classroom next door was allocated to me so that I could support the staff there. We wanted to locate the Behaviour Centre within the main area of the school so other students around us would model the aspirational expectations we wanted and this could be visible to our pupils in the Behaviour Centre. It also sent a message that this was something we were taking seriously and wasn't just an afterthought to get troublesome pupils out of the way.

A new member of staff was recruited to manage the Behaviour Centre who had a background of working in special schools and supporting students around issues of attachment. There is support in the Behaviour Centre from members of the Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Academic Progress and Pastoral Leaders. This has meant that the Behaviour Centre Manager doesn't need to spend all day in the Behaviour Centre but was able to be afforded time to support some pupils and teachers in lessons and also created time to develop and maintain relationships with parents and carers as well as the pupils.

We were also able to use the Admin Office staff member to improve our recording processes. If parked, a pupil would firstly report to the office and hand in their mobile phones. Then a message was sent to parents and carers straight away informing them that the pupil had been parked and that the staff member would be contacting them later in the day. Parents are also told that a restorative meeting will take place after school that day. This negates the common defence that parents and carers are only informed of poor behaviour when it reaches a crisis point and a pupil is excluded.

One of the dilemmas we faced was that of maintaining pupil progress during their time with us in the Behaviour Centre. Previously, it was a case of what can they do when in the centre and for many years this was always

the main issue. We initially asked the teacher to provide work but this proved to be too ad hoc and meant pupils having to go and get work. We had trialled pupils working on line but it was difficult to monitor and relied on having laptops available. At times because they were only in the centre for the remainder of the lesson, the work they did was hit and miss. We then attempted to produce work packs but these were often prepared in isolation with no real link into the curriculum that the school offered.

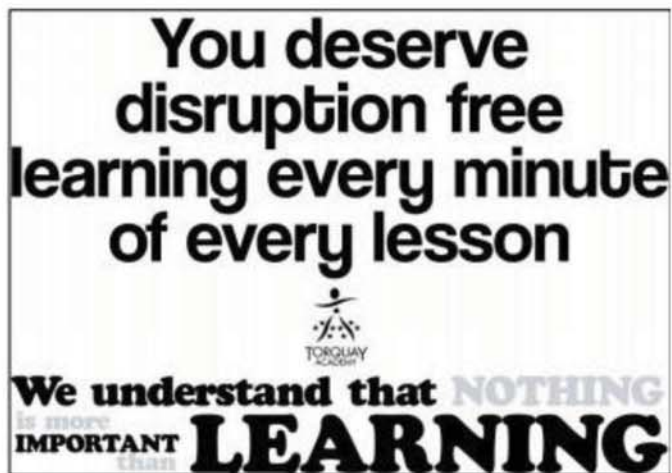


Around this time, colleagues were developing how homework could be delivered in a more consistent way across the Academy. In 2016 we introduced the Homework Knowledge Organiser. This can be seen in the 2016 case study by colleague Evan Pugh. The Knowledge Organisers and workbooks had been improved upon year by year since 2016 and we decided to use them when a pupil had been parked. The Knowledge Organisers were relevant and up to date and covered all subject areas.

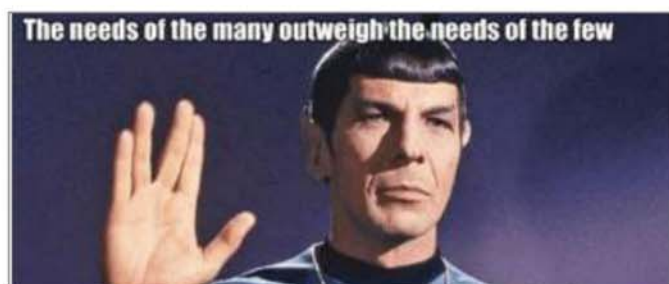
We also placed more emphasis on the Restorative Meeting between the student and the teachers and looked to develop links with home.

We designed and developed a sheet to record the meetings and outcomes. Whilst in the Behaviour Centre pupils were given support to complete the reflection sheet. It was not always possible for staff to conduct these meetings due to other whole school commitments so some are done vicariously by the Pastoral Teams and feedback to staff and parents and carers. The focus is to take responsibility.

Not everyone will agree with the process of removing a pupil from their learning but we have focussed on the learning of the great majority of the pupils.



I am often reminded of Mister Spock's "dying" comments that the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few.



So, what was the impact of the criticism from the DFE research back in 2018? All incidents are recorded using Classcharts and we were able to be more rigorous with our analysis:

In Learning Cycle 1 there was a total of 832 parkings, a reduction of nearly 30% in the number of incidents we had experienced in the previous year.

Learning Cycle 2 saw a slight increase to 893 but in Learning Cycle 3 we saw a further reduction to 772 incidents. This was a pro rata calculation due to the current crisis which also means we have no data for Learning Cycle 4 but overall we have seen a reduction of over 35% in the number of recorded incidents over the three Learning Cycles.

Why had this happened? We identified a group of students who had previously been regulars in the Behaviour Centre and who had not been referred since the new system had been introduced. For many it was the thought of being in the Behaviour Centre all day and missing the lessons they did like. Removal of free time at break and lunch also resonated with this group and so to an extent the deterrent had been successful. Again, earlier research, this time by Infantino and Little back in 2005, notes that for many students such sanctions are perceived as aversive and as an effective discipline practice.

Another deterrent factor was that we were more consistent with contacting parents almost immediately after a parking had happened.

Likewise, we had a focus group of those pupils still receiving multiple parkings. 1.2 % of all students had been parked 10 or more times in a Learning Cycle, almost twice a week. Feedback from them ranged from that fact they liked the quiet and order of the Behaviour Centre rather than being in a lesson to poor relationships with teachers.

So, what else did the data show us? It did highlight individual teachers who used the system more than others. Information was shared with Heads of Learning Areas and Heads of Academic Progress in order to offer support to their staff. We also expected them to contribute to any plan that was developed and implemented for an individual pupil. We also used the Coaching system as reported in 2014 by my former colleague Nicole Sanders and, subsequently by Harrison Littler, to inform coaches of possible areas of focus with their coachees.

We were able to identify hotspots and put in place additional support by deploying the Behaviour Centre Manager and Pastoral teams. We have also strengthened our working relationship with the SEND team in school.

We looked at the data by group and saw that certain groups were more likely than others to be parked. Pupil Premium pupils were up to twice as likely to be parked in Learning Cycle 2 when compared to the whole population within school. This led to a focus on these students alongside other initiatives to narrow the gap and employed interventions to support them. Our main intervention was the development of a focussed tutor group for a small number of pupils. Information was shared with members of the Senior Leadership Team who were mentoring the Pupil Premium pupils and they were given priority support with the restorative process. In Learning Cycle 3 we saw a reduction of nearly 60% in the number of Pupil Premium 4 pupils being parked. Overall, there was a reduction of over 50% in the number of students receiving 10 or more parkings.

We are always looking at how to reduce the amount of time a student spends in the Behaviour Centre. Remember Mr Spock telling Captain Kirk that the needs of the many outweigh the needs of few? Later Captain Kirk tells Spock that the needs of the one outweighs the needs of the many and perhaps this gives our team the focus for next year.



Early Indicators of Attainment - Developing a Model where Everyone Succeeds

Owen Gratton, Assistant Principal

Background and Context

Since 2014, Torquay Academy has improved in many ways as a school: higher Progress 8, a higher percentage of students making good or better progress, increasing roll, more students enjoying school and more students attending university. We have learnt quickly and improved your curriculum and results with the 2017 specifications and qualifications.

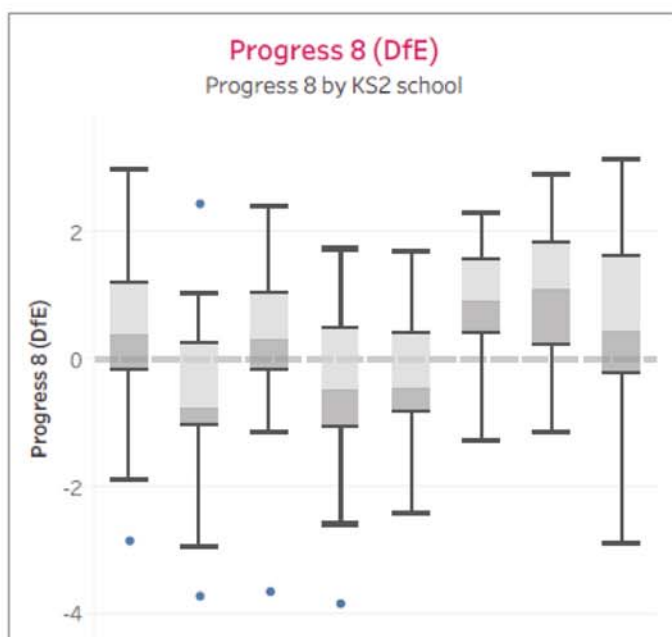


Figure 1 - FFT progress 8 by primary school at Torquay Academy

When we received figure 1 from FFT it became clear that perhaps not every student was getting the same return out of the education and opportunities we were providing. The question was why? Obviously we must take ownership and do everything we can to ensure that every student is successful at Torquay Academy.

Investigation

The question was why do students perform differently to others from different primary schools? It was not a one off set of results as previous reports from FFT showed a very similar variation, although it was becoming more obvious as we were having less students from "other primary schools". Primary schools can be very different for a variety of reasons.

The main one is the catchment area of the school, so to investigate this we looked at the Postcodes, P8 for several year groups average P8.

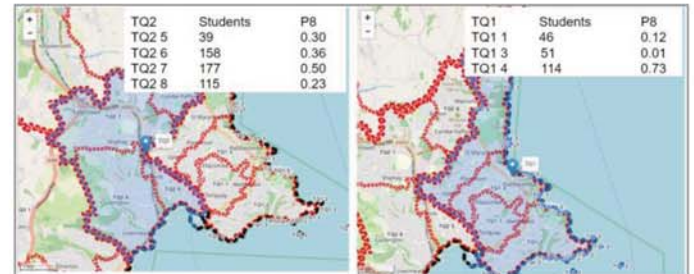


Figure 2 Progress 8 (data based upon 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020*)
*Based upon SISRA estimates)

Again this showed another concerning statement that where you lived affected your educational outcomes.

To investigate this further, we needed a classification about the household in each postcode. We decided to use the classifications used by Acorn. Acorn is a powerful consumer classification that segments the UK population. By analysing demographic data, social factors, population and consumer behaviour, it provides precise information and an understanding of different types of people. Acorn provides valuable consumer insight helping you target, acquire and develop profitable customer relationships and improve service delivery. There are 60 different classifications of postcode each with a unique description ranging from "Exclusive Enclaves" to "Deprived areas and high-rise flats". For a full description and more details see <https://acorn.caci.co.uk/>

Property Description	No of Students	P8	Eng P8	Mat P8	EBacc P8	Open P8
SETTLED SUBURBIA, OLDER PEOPLE	15	1.21	1.73	1.07	0.48	1.67
LOW COST FLATS IN SUBURBAN AREAS	19	0.82	0.88	0.78	0.43	1.21
SMALLER HOUSES AND STARTER HOMES	42	0.72	0.86	0.6	0.2	1.22
ASSET RICH FAMILIES	14	0.65	0.79	0.66	0.18	1.02
SUBURBAN SEMIS, CONVENTIONAL ATTITUDES	44	0.63	0.75	0.49	0.18	1.08
COMFORTABLY-OFF FAMILIES IN MODERN HOUSING	40	0.61	0.65	0.64	0.18	1.01
YOUNG PEOPLE IN SMALL, LOW COST TERRACES	18	0.61	0.95	0.43	-0.02	1.15
OWNER OCCUPIED TERRACES, AVERAGE INCOME	17	0.59	0.62	0.57	0.06	1.11
FADING OWNER OCCUPIED TERRACES	69	0.51	0.45	0.52	-0.04	1.1
STRUGGLING YOUNGER PEOPLE IN MIXED TENURE	48	0.41	0.48	0.29	0.11	0.72
SEMI-SKILLED WORKERS IN TRADITIONAL NEIGHBOURHOODS	65	0.32	0.55	0.18	-0.24	0.83
YOUNG FAMILIES IN LOW COST PRIVATE FLATS	34	0.3	0.46	0.25	-0.08	0.61
POST-WAR ESTATES, LIMITED MEANS	14	0.3	0.27	0.43	-0.21	0.76
STRUGGLING YOUNG FAMILIES IN POST-WAR TERRACES	41	0.23	0.15	0.28	-0.26	0.74
FAMILIES IN RIGHT-TO-BUY ESTATES	41	0.23	0.43	-0.06	-0.3	0.81
ESTABLISHED SUBURBS, OLDER FAMILIES	18	0.08	0.51	-0.33	-0.55	0.7

Figure 3 - Table Progress 8 by Postcode Classification ordered by progress 8

As household types and primary schools overlap there is obviously a more complex picture to discover, and draw conclusions as each individual student has their own student, and different background, internal performance data.

So the next step was to investigate further. To do this we need to gather all the reporting data into a "Data Warehouse". The measuring data we collected where we had it included, arrival data SATs scores, banding, reading age at the start of year 7, effort for each school, attendance for each school cycle, average effort and attendance for each year. We also put the final assessment data for key stage 4.

For each grouping we then built a table to compare the measure against the various success criteria for a student (or the school). The success criteria included 5 at 4 and above including E and M, 5 at 5 and above include E and M, Eng and Maths 7, P8 above 0, P8 above 0.5, P8 above 1, and others.

This data set was large and for most of the success criteria there were similar factors that influenced. From this we decided to focus on perhaps the key underlying success criteria of students gaining 5 standard GCSEs including English and Maths.

Findings and Actions from the investigation

A summary of some of the key finding are in figure 4 below:



Figure 4 a summary of the key finding

One of the striking figures was that approximately 78 students do not get 5 standard GCSEs (30% of the school) and in 2015 it was 83 students (50% of the school).

When studying the findings, as teacher and leaders it hit home the importance of all the key measures we use in a school and how getting students to improve the controllables is crucial for their own success. Importantly, as leaders, the question has to be asked "what more can we do to help the students less likely to succeed to succeed?"

A two pronged approach is required to help more students:

1. Identify the students
2. Treating the problem

To identify the students, we decided to focus on two year groups (year 7 into 8, and year 10 into 11). Each indicator was turned into a red flag for each student, the number of red flags could then be counted for the students, this allows us to identify and check we know the students at risk.

For the year 8s we checked the flags against a pastoral, English and maths progress to see if there were surprises, as a measure of checking the flagging process. There were no students who were a concern that did not have flags, however the flags pointed to several students who upon further investigation were a concern. These students can now have interventions and a closer monitoring when we return.

To start the process of treating the problem we have split the measure into different types and assigned groups to work through them these types are:

- Academic Arrival e.g. Reading age, and attainment measure.
 - Personal Arrival e.g. primary school, postcode.
 - Academic School e.g. Assessment Scores, PPE results etc
 - Personal School e.g. Effort, Attendance.
- The focus of each group needs to be DOES the problem

- diagnose the measure, look into the reasons behind the measure being a success indicator, what are the possible reasons?
- intervention for the measure, what are the appropriate early intervention strategies
- evaluate the intervention strategy, decide on the appropriate method to end the intervention because it has been successful
- systematic monitoring, decide how we evaluate the long term success of the strategy and have a plan to make sure it has stuck.

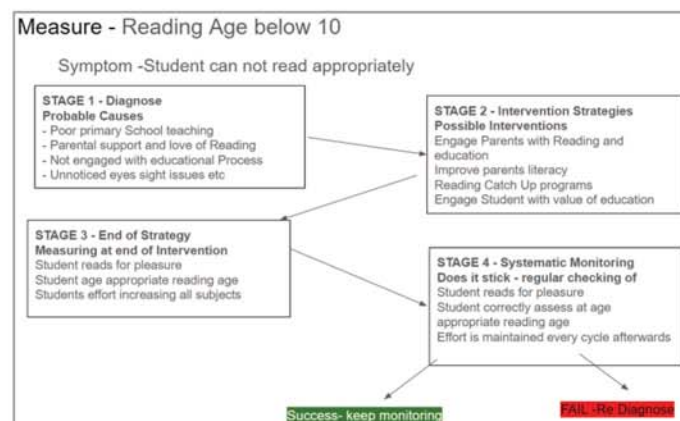


Figure 5 an example model

Next steps

Now we are at a point where we know the flags for the students, so we can identify and intervene and we are able to start designing the strategies.

What we must do:

1. Ensure every Head of Academic Progress has the red flags, ensuring it is followed up so these are a key part of the raising standards meeting and thus setting intervention.
2. Have a real genuine push on reading, although we have all been told it, it is frightening the effect on a student's performance and attendance a low reading age can have.
3. Identify and work with key households, from combining the postcodes, reading ages and effort, as can be identified by the table below.

Home type	Eng and Maths 4	No of Students	Reading Age	Attendance year 11	Effort Y9 Q2
FAMILIES IN RIGHT-TO-BUY ESTATES	N	13	8.69	78.06	2.36
	Y	11	9.27	89.94	2.15
STRUGGLING YOUNGER PEOPLE IN MIXED TENURE	N	12	8.42	89.21	2.56
	Y	9	9.56	93.70	1.85
YOUNG FAMILIES IN LOW COST PRIVATE FLATS	N	8	8.5	78.08	2.33
	Y	7	8.86	93.10	2.02
STRUGGLING YOUNG FAMILIES IN POST-WAR TERRACES	N	10	8.2	85.14	2.27
	Y	10	8.9	93.13	2.16

4. As part of the process we need to find out why the students are not performing and act accordingly.
5. Make the attendance model about moving focused on moving individual students and measuring the individual movements between bands not just the underlying percentage. With the attendance model focusing on motivation more and the purpose of education in greater depth and about developing success for the student.
6. Develop more ways in school of persuading students to work harder because they believe in the value, so students develop habits of work
7. Ensure all interventions are stored to be evaluated

Risks

Developing this further next year to develop the model and actions further has several risks we need to be aware of:

1. Treating the symptom and not the cause so effort is wasted and the symptom will return. An example of this can be rewarding a student with low effort so their effort increases and as soon as the reward (and or sanction) is removed the student returns to normal.
2. A single minded approach to making one of the indicators change, which does not change the outcomes. For example, body count during the Vietnam war was used as a way to measure the

success of the war, however as the body count increased it did not actually mean the war was more likely to be won, or in school terms getting a student into school who then does not attend and attempt to learn although improving the attendance figure, does not improve the students' outcomes. We need to measure what matters and hold ourselves accountable.

3. Avoiding the difficult to change measure of success.
4. The raising standard meeting not focusing on the students and appropriate interventions.
5. Not joining up the solutions so there is no overview so students have different strategies applied with the same purpose.
6. The interventions to selected on the data and not enough on the students' actual needs meaning a wasted effort.

Conclusions

From these key indicators, using the flagging the at risk students and building effective intervention strategies I would like Torquay Academy to be at a point where we have

1. Altered the culture of more students by successfully persuading them the value of education leading to improved effort and attendance.
2. Empowered the teaching of literacy across the school so more students are reading, and improving their reading.
3. Have every single student achieving at least 5 standard GCSEs including English and Maths



Covid-19 – Response as Leader of the Mathematics team

Tom Thatcher, Assistant Principal

Background

The academic year 2019/20 has been like none we have experienced before. Earlier in the year, I believed that the department was on track to improve further on the previous year's A Level results (Maths at Alps 2), and GCSE maths progress 8 score of +0.24. We had seen improvements in PPE (Pre Public Exams) results, the curriculum was as well prepared, and we were well resourced to help the students succeed this summer.

But due to the spread of Covid-19, on Wednesday March 18th 2020, Boris Johnson announced that schools would close, except for children of key workers. We were then informed by Gavin Williamson that exams would not go ahead this academic year, and that performance tables would not be published.

Vision

Setting and realising an educational vision during a pandemic has involved hard work, creative thinking, and ambition. From the start, I have worked closely with my department to:

- ensure that all students due to take qualifications in Maths receive an accurate and realistic prediction;
- deliver a strong and engaging online maths curriculum suitable for students, at all levels, working at home;
- develop the maths curriculum in advance of students' return to school;
- ensure the wellbeing of colleagues.

Outcomes and Impact

1. Teacher Predictions

In the circumstances, it is of course crucial that teacher assessments are a fair and accurate representation of students' abilities and achievements. As a department, we have worked hard over the years to ensure accurate predictions, and so were well placed to predict and rank grades this year. This has involved the maths team comparing, questioning and moderating predictions - no data has been entered in isolation. Our judgements have been informed by existing data, including PPE results from year 11 and year 10; by comparison with other year groups and assessment trends; as well as the online teaching and homework system used prior to the pandemic (Sparx HW), which tracks task completion.

We have been acutely aware throughout this period that our decisions and actions would have an impact on our students, particularly those expecting to sit A Level or GCSE examinations. Final results will be released in August, once Ofqual have completed their review and moderation processes. We are confident, however, that our approach to predictions and moderation was rigorous, and informed by reliable data. We are proud of the GCSE and A Level students' achievements and feel that the predictions will fairly represent their hard work.

2. Home Learning

Providing students with purposeful and relevant work through distance teaching was, of course, crucial during this challenging period. We already use a range of online resources (Sparx and Hegarty), so were able to utilise these for home learning. Initially, students were expected each week to complete a series of Hegarty tasks over 4 days, followed by a day for completing Sparx HW. When it became apparent that school closures (for most students) would extend well in to the summer term, we redesigned the online curriculum to enhance and strengthen maths provision, to ensure students' ongoing engagement and progress.

We were fortunate that, after some negotiation, Sparx made their classroom product available for us to use for free. The Sparx programme enabled us to differentiate activities, to ensure that input was pitched appropriately for all students. We agreed initially to focus on reviewing and revising recent topics, to make sure that prior learning was embedded. Building on this, we then introduced new topics, and included short 5 minute videos to support students in completing tasks.

Our students engaged well with the online maths work, with uptake at approximately 70 % (higher than reported nationally). As a result, many of our students have made good progress during this time. Particularly successful, we believe, was creating short videos which maintained and engaged students' attention, followed by individual tasks. This approach also influenced approaches taken in other subject areas. To stretch and challenge our A Level students, we did take a different approach, which involved delivering a schedule of live lessons. Uptake for these lessons was also high.

3. Curriculum Development

Despite its challenges, this period has provided an opportunity for the maths department to further develop and strengthen our curriculum. A particular focus has been the design and creation of workbooks, building on the KS3 Mastery curriculum and our newly written year 9 and 10 curriculum. During the design of the workbooks, we considered it particularly important that the layout and structure of the workbooks was not restrictive and would enable responsive teaching. The effort involved in putting these workbooks together, particularly alongside the challenges and pressures of a pandemic, is testament to the department's hard work and commitment.

Building on developments at Key Stage 3, we have also rewritten the year 10 curriculum; we decided, however, that the year 11 curriculum would remain the same, to make sure that returning GCSE students are provided the opportunity to recap, and go forward secure in their learning. We also improved the sixth form curriculum and structure by redesigning the year 12 curriculum to compensate for missed time this year, and the year 13 curriculum to later build on this.

4. Staff Wellbeing

Staff health and wellbeing has, of course, been a priority during this period. It has been vital to maintain clear and open lines of communication, to provide opportunities for discussion, and for teachers to share ideas and collaborate. It has also been important to monitor teachers' workloads, and provide support to teachers unfamiliar with devising home learning tasks (something that was new to most of us!).

Next Steps

The pandemic has posed some very new challenges! Although we set out at the beginning of this period, with a clear vision of what we wanted students and staff to achieve, we have had to be incredibly adaptable, particularly in response to frequent changes in government advice. I am proud of the department's efforts during this period, as well as their resilience and enthusiasm. I am confident that students will receive the results that they deserve, and am confident that we have provided as high quality home learning resources as was possible in the circumstances.

We have also learned a great deal, and will maintain some of the changes: e.g. we will continue to use Sparx, which has improved homework structure and completion rates, and we will consider how this resource can strengthen in school provision, for instance intervention support. The curriculum has been strengthened, through the design of workbooks, and in the reform of curriculum plans. We are, however, aware

of the work we need to do going forward: e.g. ensuring high quality and appropriate provision for our nurture groups, and ensuring successful and consistent implementation of the workbooks.

Finally, as we near the end of what has been the strangest of academic years, I strongly believe that the maths department are in a stronger position – and we are looking forward to welcoming students back to school in September.



Getting TA Ready

Dan Jones, Associate Assistant Principal

Background and Context

The transition to secondary school is often a period of excitement and apprehension for all children; however, in light of the COVID-19 crisis, some children may have been especially vulnerable during this time of uncertainty. Feelings of worry are common in these children, particularly as they approach their first day at secondary school. This is mainly due to being unsure of what to expect, and in addition to the usual feelings related to transition, some of the Year 6 children starting at Torquay Academy in September 2020 may have been experiencing heightened levels of anxiety. The 2020 Year 6-7 transition was going to be a very different experience for the children this year, with my customary visits to see them and their Year 6 Induction day cancelled, as well as the standard SEND and safeguarding meetings with primary school colleagues unable to be fulfilled due to Government restrictions. This highlighted the importance of a new and innovative approach to transition for this group of children.

Breaking the mould

We understand that transition is a process, not an event and ordinarily run a very comprehensive transition programme across the summer term. This involves working closely with our feeder primary schools to ensure our prospective Year 7s are welcomed to, and familiarised with, their soon-to-be new school community. However, this year we needed to carefully consider the processes which we would implement for information exchanges and as such, meetings with primary colleagues and parents were held virtually and student information shared electronically in various ways.

For the children, research informs us that familiarity with the new environment and a greater degree of predictability about the structure of the school day, in addition to knowing school staff and making new friends contributes to their positive emotions about school. Therefore, we considered it more important than ever to support the children throughout this big step and prepare fully to ensure that they felt comfortable and confident about this move.

A Virtual Transition

The implementation of Google forms had been such an effective way of conducting our home learning during

this time, so we modified the use of this to bring Torquay Academy to the computer screen of the Year 6 children. Through this way of working, we hoped to achieve 3 things:

1. Introduce the children to the key staff that they were going to work with in Year 7
2. Familiarise the children with how we do things The TA Way
3. Provide the children with the opportunity to tell us a bit about themselves

We also signposted the children towards a number of enrichment activities for them to do over the summer which would help prepare them further for September.

Familiarisation tasks

The focus was solely on familiarisation. We wanted this to be a simple yet informative exercise for them to complete, based on understanding the TA Way of doing things. We emailed out one form each Wednesday for 7 weeks, with the content lasting a maximum of 30 minutes and following a consistent format.



We started off each week with a video message from a key member of staff to welcome the students and explain their role. We also included current lower and upper school students who shared their experiences.

Each week was themed, with a particular focus (e.g. opportunity, responsibility) and then included three of the activities below:

- Reading the TA Way
- Rolling Numbers
- Relevant PSHE topic (E-Safety, mobile, phone use, road safety)
- Homework tutorial
- Virtual tour of key areas of the school



Each week a questionnaire was devised to find out more specific details about the children. This included details about their family, hobbies and how they were feeling about starting at TA. This was also used to collate questions from the children which were used to inform future weeks.



We provided further activities for the children to participate in, such as the 6 in 6 challenge, Principal's blog and fun Friday videos on TA Tube.



Impact

Getting TA Ready has proven to be a very effective substitute for our standard transition process, and has provided us and the children with many benefits. Evidence shows that social networks are a strong protective factor when considering young peoples' mental health and during a time when many of the children would have had limited contact with their school friends, the opportunity for them to communicate their social preferences for Year 7 tutor groups was helpful.

The virtual tour, which identified and explained the main areas of the school was a good opportunity for the children to become familiar with the school setting. Similarly, the introduction to key members of staff, brief descriptions about what to expect and the different ways that students are supported in the school was very useful

for the children. Through Getting TA Ready, we improved our communication with children about how to ask for emotional support when they arrive at school, and the inclusion of current students to answer questions provided clarity and reassurance in many situations, although this is one of a number of areas for development

Next steps

The introduction of Getting TA Ready has, in many ways, provided a more thorough transition for the children, with key information drip-fed gradually over a period of time rather than through shorter, more intense experiences. Despite this, the new Year 7s are likely to need a period of adjustment that has not been necessary in previous years and there will be greater uncertainty about some aspects of secondary school.

Children will have experienced very different situations while at home, in terms of learning and personal experiences. Many Year 6 children may not have returned to their primary school at all in the summer term and therefore may not have had the opportunity to say goodbye to friends and school staff. Some children may have lost social contacts and are likely to find it more difficult to make new friends or reconnect with old friends or they may be worried about what to do if they have difficulty managing their emotions. As such, careful consideration needs to be given to how their start in September is managed, including an assessment of where pupils are in their learning in order to make any necessary adjustment to their curriculum over the coming weeks.

For the 2021 transition and in future years, Getting TA Ready should be used to complement our face to face contact and information sharing with students, staff and parents. When refining the package, it will be important to consider:

- How we can prioritise high needs groups and support these students further
- How to provide a Q&A forum where even greater opportunity is provided for Year 6 children and parents to ask questions
- An academic strand of preparation to support the familiarisation tasks



Gaining 'The Edge' at Torquay Academy Sixth Form

Emma Hosking, Associate Assistant Principal

Our Vision of Success

The overall vision for our school and sixth form is clear: Everyone succeeds. For the purpose of this case study, I want to clarify what success means specifically for our Sixth Form.

'Success' in the sixth form comes in many guises: success can be measured in terms of exam outcomes; or receiving great offers from a range of top universities; or securing a placement for an apprenticeship or simply being effectively prepared for life after sixth form.

As an observer, we only tend to see the outcomes that an individual achieves and are often ignorant of the huge efforts that were necessary to make these accomplishments possible. This is often referred to as the "Iceberg Illusion":



What this theory helps us to realise, is that every successful person has had to invest a lot of effort into their goals in order to achieve them. They have had to be organised in their approach and remain resilient when faced with disappointment. They have had to use their initiative when tackling problems and be able to communicate effectively. In short, it is the character of the person that allows them to achieve success. It is the character of the student that ensures that we achieve our vision of 'everyone succeeds.'

Background and Context

Our attention in the sixth form has been focused on the academic outcomes of each of our students with little attention paid to the character development of our students. We organise drop-down days with a focus on PSHE and we ensure that there are opportunities

throughout the academic year where students are able to experience enrichment activities. However, a clear focus on character, and specifically the development of skills that are needed to allow our young people to succeed - either in their exams or in their university application or in an interview for an apprenticeship or in any other capacity outside of the school environment - has been lacking.

Research

Oxbridge Academy states it takes conscious efforts, ongoing practice, and a commitment to self-development to improve soft skills. Hard skills may look impressive on a CV, **but it is the soft skills that will set someone apart** from the many candidates who have similar expertise.

(Oxbridge Academy; 5 Reasons why soft skills are more important than ever, Dale Hes, May 2017).

The Prince's Trust 'Results for Life' report said that its research shows that many young people **don't feel ready to enter the workforce**, with this disconnect largely attributed to a lack of self-confidence and apprehension that their soft skills are simply not up to scratch.

(CEO Today: Here's why 'Soft' Skills are important in the modern workplace, Peter Westgarth, Feb 2018).

A 2016 **Daily Telegraph** article highlighted the importance of soft skills. The absence of these skills is the reason why, despite huge youth unemployment, 54% of employers, while agreeing recruits are more highly qualified than ever, still complain that they can't fill vacancies. **Soft skills are difficult to quantify but are, according to increasingly exasperated bosses, potentially far more valuable than exam results.**

(Daily Telegraph: Why 'Soft Skills' are more important than a great CV, Julia Llewellyn Smith, June 2018).

Results from a survey commissioned last year by the **Duke of Edinburgh's Award** show that when it comes to employing young people, the evidence of soft skills overwhelmingly affects hiring decisions. **Transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, resilience and leadership are considered equally or more important than academic achievements by a staggering 95% of senior decision-makers**, with nine out of 10 of them stressing that young people with strong soft skills often progress faster in the workplace.

(Why soft skills matter, Duke of Edinburgh's award survey, Censuswide, August 2017).

Objectives

Our sixth form is a respectful community, characterised by organised, resilient and communicative young adults. They are motivated and principled leaders who use their initiative to strive towards exam success that opens doors to the future.

As a school that never stands still and is always looking to improve; we want our students to follow in our footsteps and strive to be the best they can be. We needed to design a clear and structured programme that provided our Sixth Form students with the opportunities to develop their character in order to allow them to achieve success and to set them apart from others in the increasingly competitive workforce. We also needed something tangible at the end of the programme that students could use to evidence their efforts as well offering them something concrete to strive for.

- Design a character programme that provides opportunities to develop the skills and attributes that will set our students apart from others in the workforce.
- Develop an unregulated accreditation in partnership with local employers to ensure student engagement with the programme.

'The Edge' and LORIC



The EDGE

@ tasixthform

Education and industry partners, including the CBI and the National Careers Service have produced lists of desirable qualities for the workplace. Five qualities have been selected as the most representative skills across all the research:

- Leadership
- Organisation
- Resilience
- Initiative
- Communication



These 5 attributes have been colloquially labelled 'LORIC' - part of a PiXL strategy that we have adapted for our own purposes here at Torquay Academy Sixth Form. The LORIC attributes form a part of our larger programme, called 'The Edge' - a programme that puts a spotlight on the character of our students. It is a programme that aims to develop the LORIC skills that go a long way towards that 'success' that we wish for all of our young people in our sixth form to achieve and includes a focus on their vision and habits - both of which play a huge part in being successful in further education.

<p>Attendance</p> <p>Attendance and punctuality are vital in order to progress in your chosen courses.</p> <p><small>ATTENDANCE MATTERS</small></p>	<p>Progress</p> <p>Achieving or exceeding your target grades in your chosen course gives you more opportunities in the future.</p>	<p>Effort</p> <p>Effort is the single most important factor in you making progress.</p>
<p>Independent Learning</p> <p>Engaging and completing homework to the highest standard will provide you with exceptional knowledge</p>	<p>LORIC</p> <p>Sixth Form is not just about what you achieve in exams, rather it is about developing the characteristics and skills which are going to set you up for life.</p>	<p>Praise</p> <p>Going above and beyond in lessons will lead to recognition for the right reasons and create a positive climate.</p>

Over the two years of their sixth form journey, students have opportunities to formulate a vision of their future, establish good life habits, develop their LORIC skills, and build a portfolio of evidence that is then accredited at their graduation ceremony.

Much of this programme is delivered and facilitated by the tutors. Each week, students attend an assembly that focuses on one of either vision, habits, leadership, organisation, resilience, initiative or communication. This is then followed up with a reflection and action planning activity with the tutor:

Cycle 1	Topic	Assembly	Tutor Activity
Week 1	What is LORIC?	What is LORIC?	Looking Back, Moving Forward...
Week 2	Vision	What is Vision?	Twenty Questions
Week 3	Habits	What are Habits?	50 Good Habits: Transform Your Life
Week 4	Leadership	What is Leadership?	What is Leadership?
Week 5	Organisation	What is Organisation?	What is Organisation?
Week 6	Resilience	What is Resilience?	What is Resilience?
Week 7	Initiative	What is Initiative?	What is Initiative?
Week 8	Communication	What is Communication?	What is Communication?
Week 9	The Edge	Developing Character	PLC/Evidence/The Edge
Week 10	Academic Mentoring	Motivational	Impact Reports/Intervention
Cycle 2	Topic	Assembly	Tutor Activity
Week 1	Vision	Dream vs goal	Getting Dreams Done
Week 2	Habits	How to develop good habits	How to develop good habits - Action Plan - Habit Tracker
Week 3	Leadership	How do I react when things go wrong?	How do I react when things go wrong?
Week 4	Organisation	Steady Steps	Steady Steps
Week 5	Resilience	What got you here...!	What got you here...!
Week 6	Initiative	Positive Thinking	Positive Thinking
Week 7	Communication	Productive & Reductive Debate	Productive & Reductive Debate
Week 8	The Edge	Developing Character	PLC/Evidence/The Edge
Week 9	Academic Mentoring	Motivational	Impact Reports/Intervention
Cycle 3	Topic	Assembly	Tutor Activity
Week 1	Vision	Push vs Pull	Your 21st birthday
Week 2	Habits	Mastering the decisive moment	Mastering the decisive moment
Week 3	Leadership	Introverted and Extroverted	Introverted and Extroverted
Week 4	Organisation	The Detail & The Big Picture	The Detail & The Big Picture
Week 5	Resilience	Self Evaluation Vs Self Criticism	Self Evaluation Vs Self Criticism
Week 6	Initiative	How I learn best	How I learn best
Week 7	Communication	Listening	Listening
Week 8	The Edge	Developing Character	PLC/Evidence/The Edge
Week 9	Academic Mentoring	Motivational	Impact Reports/Intervention
Cycle 4	Topic	Assembly	Tutor Activity
Week 1	Vision	Bias towards Action	Mental Contrasting
Week 2	Habits	Talent vs Effort	Talent vs Effort
Week 3	Leadership	Leading with head and the heart	Leading with head and the heart
Week 4	Organisation	Understanding how I work	Understanding how I work
Week 5	Resilience	Autopsy	Autopsy
Week 6	Initiative	Showcasing my initiative	Showcasing my initiative
Week 7	Communication	Plans for the Future	Plans for the Future
Week 8	The Edge	Developing Character	PLC/Evidence/The Edge
Week 9	Academic Mentoring	Motivational	Impact Reports/Intervention

Cycle 1: Vision Activity
Twenty Questions

It turns out that asking, 'What is your goal?' isn't a very good way of unlocking your vision. The question is abstract and slippery and answering it is often embarrassing and frightening. But there are questions that work. Some questions get an immediate response. Don't know the answer to that? Where others don't. The following questions have been tested over and over again with students and seem to do what we are more likely to open up some positive thinking.

We can't promise these questions will work for you, all we know is that they've worked for others. Answer these questions with reference to study and work. Try your best to produce honest and fearless thinking - that means you answer without feeling stupid or embarrassed, and you say what you feel and think.

If you could only take one subject away, what would it be and why?

What happens or elements of study do you find easy?

What do you do in your spare time?

Describe an interesting lesson you had recently. Why was it interesting?

What jobs do you avoid doing, and why?

Example of tutor activity following an assembly on 'Vision'

Habits

Health, mood, and success are all direct results of habits. The activities that we repeatedly engage in ultimately shape who we are. If we can gradually implement a wide variety of good habits with our students, they can transform their entire life. With every day, they get to decide what kind of future they want to create. By using the 'Habit Tracker', step-by-step, students work on eradicating bad habits and replacing them with more beneficial ones - ones that will lead to success.

Cycle 1: Leadership
What is Leadership?

Key Points from Session:

Notes:

Additional Points:

Cycle 1: Leadership
What is Leadership?

Key Points from Session:

Notes:

Additional Points:

Example of tutor activity following an assembly on 'Leadership'.

Vision

A vision inspires action. By creating a mental picture of the result the students want to achieve, it will help make that result real. By allowing the students time to communicate their values and goals, they can improve.

We start the year with 20 questions - all designed to get students thinking about what is important to them. This is then followed by subsequent sessions on planning ahead for the future and putting in the necessary steps in achieving their goals.

HabitTracker
Achieving your GOALS!

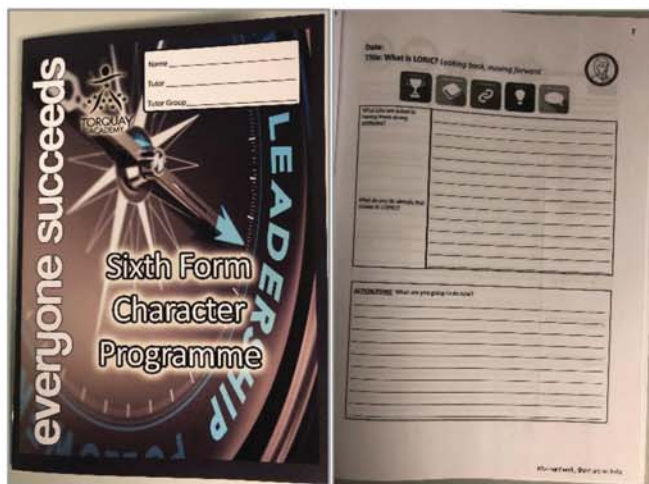
JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN
JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

WEEK 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."
- Aristotle

LORIC

For each of the LORIC attributes, students use a Personalised Learning Checklist to assess their own skillset.



Following this, they are then offered a selection of activities that they could do in order to improve each of the LORIC skills:

Giving myself 'The Edge!'

Suggested LEADERSHIP Activities:

- Take on a Student Leadership position
- Captain a team
- Take part in the Duke of Edinburgh expedition
- Take responsibility for mentoring younger students in a chosen subject across an academic year
- Take responsibility as a young carer for a member of your family
- Lead a club for the younger years

The Leadership activities I have completed are:

- 1 -
- 2 -
- 3 -
- 4 -

Giving myself 'The Edge!'

Suggested INITIATIVE activities:

- Be employed on a regular basis within a school service/restaurant dealing with customers
- Create a blog that demonstrates different study skills and revision strategies that can be used by other students.
- Volunteer on a weekly basis at a business or charity as part of a school enrichment initiative, working with a team.
- Set up your own work experience placement, and report your experiences and learning back to your class
- Volunteer as a Peer Mentor helping younger students at school for an academic year

The INITIATIVE activities I have completed are:

1. Setting up and doing work experience
2. Setting up a sports programme for younger students
3. Volunteer at charity shop and at school
4. Helping out at cooking club

Graduation

Soft skills are difficult to quantify. As such, it was important that at the end of their 2 year journey, students would be awarded for their engagement with 'The Edge':

Attendance		Progress		Effort	
First	100%	First	Above in more than one course	First	Gold classification
2:1	99 - 98%	2:1	Equal in all courses	2:1	Purple classification
2:2	96 - 95%	2:2	Equal in two courses	2:2	Green classification
Pass	Below 95%	Pass	Equal in all courses	Pass	Orange classification

Independent Learning		LORIC		Praise	
First	Score of 1	First	40 activities	First	150 house points
2:1	Score of 2	2:1	30 activities	2:1	100 house points
2:2	Score of 3	2:2	20 activities	2:2	50 house points
Pass	Score of 4	Pass	10 activities	Pass	25 house points

Earlier this year, we gained the support of Torbay Development Agency in such that they wholly agree how important the development of these transferable skills are and are willing to liaise with us in the improvements we wish to make as we move forward into the new academic year.

Reflections and Next Steps

With 2020 being curtailed with a global pandemic, it is difficult to measure just how successful this new character programme has been. The beginnings of positive student engagement was being seen with many students keen to explore opportunities to develop their character. The Sixth Form experience is now much more holistic; students and parents are aware of how personal progress runs very much alongside academic progress. All of which work to ensure that everyone does, in fact, succeed.

Moving forward, we wish to further develop the programme to include a differentiated programme for Year 13. We would also like to continue our relationship with local employers in order to create the links with the community.



Anything to Make the Boat Go Faster *Raising Science Outcomes at Torquay Academy*

John Mellitt, Associate Assistant Principal

Introduction

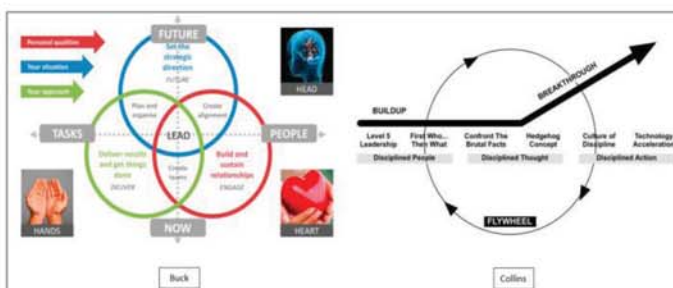
Between 2014 and 2019 the GCSE pass rate in science rose from 38% to 71%. Average subject progress has risen from strongly negative to +0.44 in that period and the proportion of students gaining top grades (7-9) was 18% in 2018 (vs 7.5% nationally inc. selective schools). Level outcomes have improved from bottom quartile to top quartile during the same period.

This improvement has been achieved by creating a strong team culture focussed on a common vision and a small number of high-level goals. Our strapline (the title of this case study) makes for a pragmatic department who face their weaknesses and act to address them.

We focus relentlessly on knowledge acquisition and preparation for exams. We have created a 7 year programme with identical teaching practice, resources and methods throughout. We have centrally planned lessons, bespoke workbooks, a high-energy year 11 strategy and iron-grip on data in years 11, 12 and 13. We strive to control every controllable and maximise students' chances to learn by providing day-by-day structure and consistency.

Philosophy

Our philosophy (applied from the outset) is one of clarity and pragmatism. Teaching is a demanding job and we wanted to minimise unnecessary work coming from foggy direction or time being wasted on activities which do not add value. Nor do not want students to waste time and cognitive effort on activities peripheral to their success. We avoid unevidenced educational ideas. This pragmatic approach focussed relentlessly on student outcomes is summed up in an often-repeated phrase "anything to make the boat go faster". As HOLA I have tried to shape this effort using principles neatly outlined in this slide from Andy Buck, and monitored our progress using Jim Collins' Good-to-Great model.



Approach

We recognise that to succeed, our students needed to know as many scientific facts as possible and to be able to use that knowledge in an exam setting. To achieve this, we set a vision for science at TA, the purpose of which was to make it very clear to the team how things were meant to be:



We then set some overarching WIGs (wildly important goals) to accompany the vision:

- 75%+ pass rate at GCSE
- A level destination-of-choice in Torbay
- Minimise planning & marking time to permit focus on excellent lessons
- Teachers are "mark mechanics" who know the exams species inside out

These WIGs gave us the definition of what "the fast boat" looked like. Anything that didn't help achieve these could be jettisoned.

Early Big Decisions

Our first strategic decision was to change to a three year key stage 4 with the majority of new content taught in years 9 & 10 with a focus on application of knowledge and exam preparation in year 11.

We also changed to subject-specific teaching for KS4 on the simple premise that subject specialists could become "mark mechanics" in their science rather than being generalists who may not be able to give students the necessary level of expertise to achieve their best possible grade.

This also allowed real alignment with the three new science A levels and the creation of subject “sub-teams” within the department which became a real driver for innovation and competition.

Controlling the Controllables

When it came to students succeeding, we wanted to leave as little to chance as possible. We wanted students to get the same experience in every science lesson no matter what, and to ensure that lessons were as high quality as possible. The way to do this was by driving consistency of approach and resources in an almost OCD way.

This led us to undertake several long term projects within the department:

1. Creation of a highly structured common curriculum across all three key stages.
2. Creation of a common lesson format following TLAC and Direct Instruction pedagogies.
3. Creation of a single set of shared lesson resources with a common format for every topic and a firm focus on knowledge acquisition & exam practice.
4. Writing a full set of student workbooks which contain the structure and resources for every single lesson and which embody our pedagogy and central planning.
5. Creation of a common format for routine assessments with smartphone data collection and analysis allowing routine spotting & fixing of gaps.
6. A specific programme for year 11 students with a success formula to maximise outcomes “How Green Are You?” (see “Getting Year 11 Right” below).
7. The creation of a common markbook for year 11 students which encompasses a wide range of holistic data allowing accurate prediction.

Getting Year 11 Right

“Failure to plan = planning to fail” so we wanted to have a clear strategy for year 11 success from the outset - 16 year olds are poor at planning for success so we plan everything for them & keep them motivated throughout the year.

We found that it is critical that the HOLA leads year 11 - it is too important to subcontract!

Our year 11 strategy has a wide range of key components:

- Year 11 success formula explicitly shown to Y11 at every opportunity - almost a brand.
- The premise being “do these 4 things and guarantee your GCSE”



- Lessons focussed on recap & practicing how to answer exam questions with bespoke workbooks - one for each paper sat.



- Everything is structured in line with the content of the 6 papers so that students know what fits where.
- Detailed A3 revision timetable & how to revise sessions by HOLA.

Tongmy Academy Year 11 Science Revision Timetable

Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic
Exam 1	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic
Exam 2	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic
Exam 3	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic
Exam 4	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic
Exam 5	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic
Exam 6	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic	Revision Topic

How green are you? See the reverse side for how to use this. How green are you?

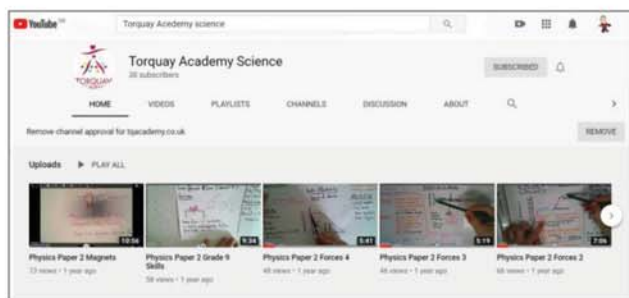
- Continual focus on the routine usage of the Tassomai quizzing App for knowledge acquisition and gap closure.



- “How Green Are You?” Knowledge tests on every spec point to drive intervention.
 - One test per paper.
- Given in September and January.

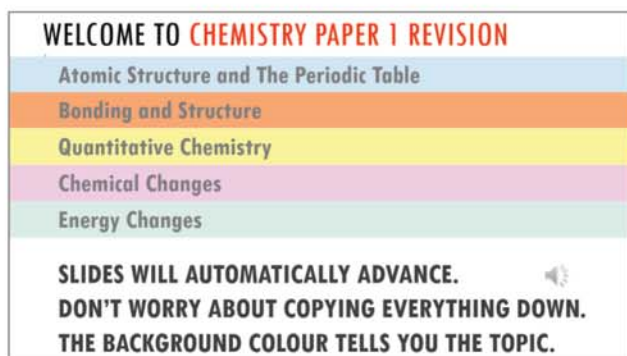


- YouTube channel with revision videos by teachers.



- Holistic performance data on Y11 – use for whole-team grade prediction & tiering decisions.

- Pre-exam assemblies reminding of all spec points in a simple calm format.
- Pre-exam revision lessons using grid format to build revision sheets and low-stakes quizzes.

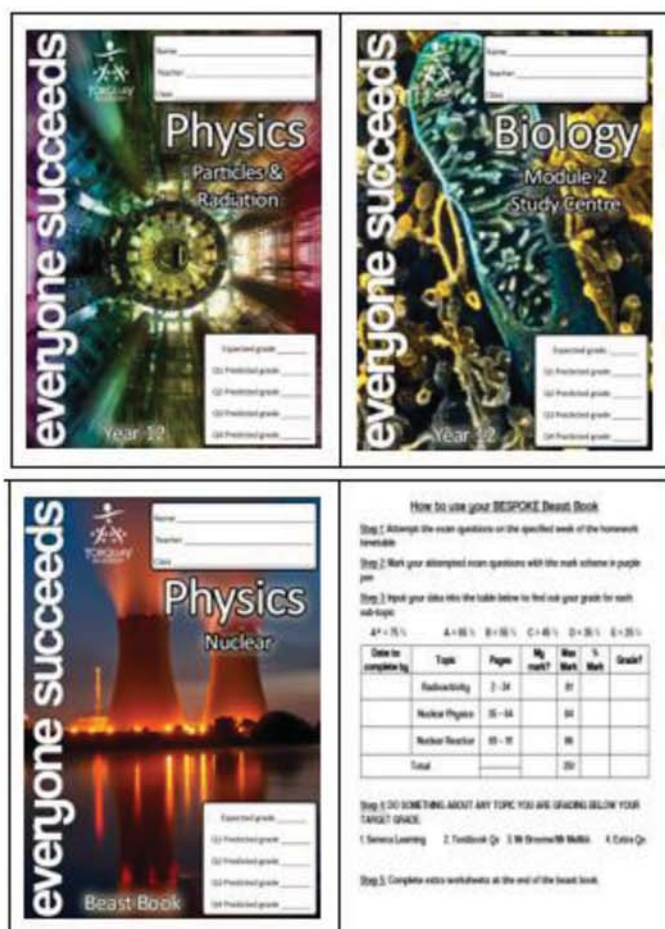


Getting A Levels Right

There is a view amongst educators that A level students should be allowed to manage their own progress and structure their independent learning. It is our view, however, that this grossly disadvantages students who have not yet acquired the necessary planning skills or self-discipline to do this. We believe that it is our role not only to teach our subjects, but also teach how to structure learning and how to work effectively.

To this end we have created three highly structured courses which use the same techniques as the lower school. Lessons have the same TLAC & DI structure. Students work using bespoke workbooks in lessons, spend significant time applying new knowledge to exam questions and have bespoke workbooks to use during private study. This ensures that we maintain a structured workflow even when students are not in a lesson.

We also wrote a series of “Beast books” which are split up by topic and by exam paper and contain every single exam question ever asked on that topic. These books come with a timetable and access to excellent short teaching videos to allow students to fix gaps in knowledge. By insisting that students follow these practices, they in fact emulate the hardest-working self-motivated students anywhere which allows students to have a great deal of confidence in their abilities.



Torquay Academy Year 13 Chemistry 'Run-In' Timetable

Week Begins	Mr Galt's Lessons (3 hours per week)	Mr Hamlyn's Lessons (1.5 hours per week)	Tutor (1.5 hours per week)	Study Centre	At Home	Done?
16 Feb 2019	Colour by Design	Best Book + paper 3	Best Book - ESQD + WMPN	Review for PPE in + revision 8.8 + 8.8	Review for PPE in	
23 Feb 2019	PPE WEEK - Paper 1 Friday 1 March (11.15am-20.15am) - Paper 2 Monday 4 March (8.55am-2hr) - Paper 3 Tuesday March (8.55am) The 2019					
1 Mar 2019	Review PACE	Best Book + paper 3	Best Book - ESQD + WMPN	Rev guide 7.7 + 12.8	Review PPE areas + Best Book	
18 Mar 2019	Review PACE + pre-release	Best Book + paper 3	Best Book - CUC + EL	Rev guide 9.2 + 13.13	Review PPE areas + Best Book	
25 Mar 2019	Tricky concepts 1	Best Book + paper 3	Best Book - DP + ESQD	Rev guide 5.8 + 13.8	Best Book + pre-release + paper 3	
1 Apr 2019	Tricky concepts 2	Best Book + paper 3	Best Book - WMPN + CUC	Rev guide 17.1 + 17.2	Best Book + pre-release + paper 3	
8 Apr 2019	Monday Review 12 chapters and on experiments + 12 best book	Tuesday Review 12 chapters and on experiments + 12 best book	Wednesday Review 12 chapters and on experiments + 12 best book	Thursday Review 12 chapters and on experiments + 12 best book	Friday Review 12 chapters and on experiments + 12 best book	Saturday Review 12 chapters and on experiments + 12 best book
15 Apr 2019	Monday Review 12 chapters and on experiments + 12 best book	Tuesday Review 12 chapters and on experiments + 12 best book	Wednesday Review 12 chapters and on experiments + 12 best book	Thursday Review 12 chapters and on experiments + 12 best book	Friday Review 12 chapters and on experiments + 12 best book	Saturday Review 12 chapters and on experiments + 12 best book
22 Apr 2019	Spoken word 1 + exam papers	Best Book + paper 3	Best Book - ESQD + EL	Rev guide 11.1 + 13.7 + general revision	Best Book + pre-release + paper 3	
29 Apr 2019	Tricky concepts 3 + Best Book	Best Book + paper 3	Best Book - ESQD + DP	Rev guide 9.7 + 9.3 + general revision	Best Book + pre-release + paper 3	
6 May 2019	Paper 3 + Best Book	Best Book + paper 3	Best Book - WMPN + ESQD	General revision from rev guide	Best Book + pre-release + paper 3	
13 May 2019	Tricky concepts 4 + Best Book	Best Book + paper 3	Best Book - ESQD + ESQD	General revision from rev guide	Best Book + pre-release + paper 3	
20 May 2019	Review practical techniques	Best Book + paper 3	Best Book - EL + DP	General revision from rev guide	Best Book + pre-release + paper 3	
27 May 2019	Monday Review Practical Techniques	Tuesday Review Practical Techniques	Wednesday Review Practical Techniques	Thursday Review Practical Techniques	Friday Review Practical Techniques	Saturday Review Practical Techniques
3 Jun 2019	Paper 1 Tuesday 4 June (2.00pm)					
10 Jun 2019	Paper 2 Tuesday 11 June (2.00pm)					
17 Jun 2019	Paper 3 Wednesday 19 June (9.00am)					

Continuous Improvement

The forgoing was not all achieved in one year. In order to keep improving we have a continuous improvement culture in the department and each year the HOLA creates a one-page operating plan to clarify what the priorities and improvement projects are for that year. This is informed by reflection on prior year performance and input from whole-school initiatives as well as ideas from the department.

Science 2018-19			
"How Things Work Around Here"			
Focus Points <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Zero disruption Everyone teachers like champions – consistency is king Best results ever <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. GCSE +75% 9-4 b. All A level students hit ALPS target grade New Key Stage 5 is our Launch Pad <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coachbook Department 	We need every teacher to do it by the book, every lesson, every day.	Be a Champion Teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always teach on the floor – always prep the resources • Always walk the Do Now & check the books • Use the key TAC strategies every lesson • Be the main mechanic – right is right, be positive 	
Launch Pad Key Stage 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut back content to mirror key GCSE concepts • Focus on key knowledge • Focus on investigation & practical skills • Structured around AQA ELC • STEM careers fair to generate stronger interest in science lessons 	Best GCSE Results Ever <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality Master Lessons • Mock Examinations 15 minutes / Subject Focus Teams • Year 11 curriculum – "Top Final Ready" • Knowledge based home work – Education & Technology • Compare the Carrot – A23 • Y12 & Y13 Tutor time – recap programme • Exam questions every lesson 	Best A Level Results Ever <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent consolidation during study periods (PMT2) • Focus on exam question practice in all topics/units • Tracking for each student via Google sheets • Therapy topics for every assessment • Common practice in green stickers, PM22, Y12 etc. 	
Check Work Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No substantive issues on book scrutiny • Whole-department grade predictions accuracy • On-time every time in deadline 	Year 11 Curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content completed Y10 • Start Y11 with 6 x 60 Q&As. Repeat January • Intervention based on above – specific & not on success (see below) • Y11 time to develop any published programme • In-class – Y11 lessons (1 for each paper) • On Now term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Content delivery notes b. Resourced files, notes & related exam Qs c. Compare the Carrot section – alternative successes in exam question practice format d. Exam Question One for modelling cases • Education & Technology PMT (PMT2) manage 080 • Pastures PMT in one with lesson plans • New Green Are You – PLC system 	What does "IT" look like? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct threshold welcome into your room • Immediate silent Do Now – all on task • Walk the room after 10 to check Do Now – green ticks / stamps • Consistent use of mastery lessons but followed to suit – don't just show up & use the slides • Students are working in pin-drop silence • Students are increasing house points • Perfect silent dismissal every time • Resources printed before the lesson – don't send students part way through • Books take correct stickers which filled in and pages are turned & checked • Y12 & Y13 tutor times are interactive science recap work • Y12 / Y13 tutor times are interactive science recap work 	
How Green Are You? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use Edmodo data and PPE data – all broken down by spec item – to create master PLC 2. PLC meet then for each of the 8 items 3. Intervention for the Best Book (aka the "Tail") – Therapy every 10th PPE in sports hall with JARPM20 20 mins key content, 40 mins doing timed exam questions with correct part every 2 mins in 40 4. Therapy intervention for the rest – get equipment for sessions to turn data green, recorded on PLC in their Y11 booklet for that paper & on master sheet 5. Edmodo data are run again in January to record 6. PLC displayed in every classroom – renewed each quarter 			

Conclusion

Our focus on what works best, detailing the structure of our courses down to every minute of every lesson, driving consistency across everything we do and leaving no stone unturned has helped the majority of TA students enjoy great success in science at GCSE and A Level.

This approach has also had a significant effect on the quality of the teaching and raised the game of the teachers in the team. It has created a highly collaborative culture which rises to every challenge.

The next step is to tighten all sails, ensure that nothing is dragging in the water and work out how to bring aboard those who still don't get the success that they should be able to achieve.



Reflections on an eventful year in the world of Safeguarding

Elaine Watling, Designated Safeguarding Lead

During the summer holiday of 2019 myself and Mrs Powell, Pastoral leader for Year 10, joined the Police as we have done every August for several years in a 'walk on' at the Fair. We have been able to help tackle the exploitation of young people. Encouragingly we have seen a shift from the fairground workers being unaware of the risks to cooperating and having a knowledge of CSE. During this walk on we identified an adult who was a risk to children and supported a group of young people consuming alcohol.

The Autumn term passed in the blink of an eye, ridiculously busy with MASH requests for information, TAFs, PEPS and Core group meetings plus the normal daily incidents that children bring.

January 2020, on a personal note, brought for me much needed surgery that brought freedom from pain and the ability to keep up with the students once again. It was a new experience not being in school every day! While convalescing I had to get used to not having eyes on the children, working from home, staying in contact with staff and answering their queries remotely, talking to agencies and speaking to parents and carers by telephone. Little did I know that this was preparing me for the biggest challenge I have ever had to face. Plus, I had to return earlier than expected for the small issue of an Ofsted inspection. I didn't feel I could do that virtually!

When it became clear that COVID 19 was about to bring about the closure of all schools, I sat in the last SLT meeting before closure and social distancing, and looked around the room. We had prepared for critical incidents but never contemplated the havoc this silent enemy would bring. It was, is, surreal, like being in a film that frightens you with "what if this was to really happen". It has happened and everyday there is still the disbelief that this is real. The question at that meeting was if we can't see the children how can we protect and educate them? I have left the delivery of their learning to my colleagues who have done an amazing job. My task was how to protect them.

I find the summer holidays an anxious time when I don't see the children. I always attend meetings and respond to all agencies queries. I try and stay in contact with the vulnerable families, staff and children. Unlike the

summer holidays when staff, parents and PCSOs will contact me to say "I have seen X and am concerned", lockdown has reduced that happening. It has prevented others being "my eyes". I have felt what I can only describe as panic not being able to see and know what is going on with our young people.

I have a vivid memory of my friend's father's funeral. My friend had her arms outstretched trying to put them around her mum and children to comfort them. That is how I feel every day. My "arms" can't reach far enough. We know that our children face an increase in domestic violence, deteriorating mental health, cyberbullying, drug taking and a greater risk of exploitation. We know children are frightened of dying and are fearful this could happen to their parents and loved ones.

We know that charities such as Childline and the NSPCC are reporting huge increases in the numbers of calls. Europol and UK police have seen the increase in online sexual abuse. The TECH firms have fewer people working in key jobs to moderate this worrying trend.

Mental health problems are escalating.

We can only imagine the distress and worry that so many of our children and their families are going through.

After the closure of the Academy, myself and my deputy Mrs Saint have been in school every day. The days have continued with the usual daily requests for information reports for the MASH and reports for Targeted Help. Strategy meetings and Child Protection conferences have still happened virtually and it is surprising how quickly we have got used to this way of working. In fact, we have saved some time by not having to travel to a meeting.

For our children in care their PEPs have all happened by telephone conference with the emphasis being on what is needed to support them during lockdown. The reports for their reviews have been sent and discussion with the Independent Reviewing Officer has taken place. Contact with foster carers and social workers has always been regular. This has continued but also checking there are no issues with online learning and ICT. Fortunately, most of the CLAs have already had laptops purchased for them via their PP+ money.

Initially, nearly all of our foster carers had chosen for various reasons not to send their foster child into school. We had discussions with their social worker and the Virtual school over these decisions. Since returning from May half term all of our CLAs years 7-10 are attending.

Children on Child in Need and Child Protection plans again are monitored in the usual way and reports for Core groups and reviewing conferences along with the completion of exploitation toolkits continue to be written.

As a result of COVID 19 there has been a check carried out by social care on children with a social worker and all schools having the correct details. This was done at the beginning of lockdown. This resulted in being told that there were 19 families on CIN plans that we had no knowledge of. There had been no contact from the social worker or a meeting held. Mr Margetts raised this with the Authority and, as a result, social workers have been tasked with contacting a child's school as part of an allocation task list. Also that managers would not close a child's case until there was evidence on the file that the school had been notified. I am reporting back to Sarah James from TESS regularly so she can raise with team managers the cases and social workers who are not contacting the Academy. The lack of communication from social workers has always been a rant of mine but thankfully COVID has brought about a positive change in practices.

Before school closure all children that had a social worker and were on a TAF, and all those that had historic plans or had concerns and vulnerabilities were identified and allocated a member of the safeguarding, pastoral, Thrive and counselling teams to make the regular calls to the families and where possible to speak to the child. This continues. All other students in the Academy are receiving regular calls as well. Staff are logging on CPOMs any concerns they have from these calls and I will take action as needed. Home visits have been carried out on students where contact by telephone and email has been unsuccessful. I have also had welfare checks carried out by Children services. In two of the cases this has resulted in further action by them.

The Thrive and counselling team have continued to support the children that were open to them. Advice and support on mental health and wellbeing has been given to children, parents and carers. Information is also available on the website.

The regular phone calls home is incredibly important. They have become "my eyes". I have had to rely on staff instinct and the relationship they have built by the weekly phone calls to flag up a need or a concern. I rely

on them to do that in a normal school setting and need them to do that even more now.

Young and old, all of us will have this period of time etched in our memory. We have no idea when this will end and the old normal, if ever, will return.

We are facing the perfect storm. For many children COVID 19 will be another ACE. I wonder how long it will be before it is on the list of ACEs. When children return to school, when will the disclosures begin and we hear what they have had to live with? There will be deep seated fears, not just about what they have experienced in their home but fear for their future. What if there isn't a vaccine? What happens if their parents lose their jobs? We live in an area that relies heavily on tourism. As the impact of the virus on tourism ripples out throughout the region we will see increased unemployment. Financial insecurity, alcohol misuse, drugs, domestic abuse and poor mental health will all be effects. Torbay is the most deprived local authority area in the South West region. Within Torbay around one-in-three of the population live in areas in the top 20% most deprived in England. The expected economic downturn will put extra strain and worry on families. We could be seeing the impact on children for years to come.

It has been widely reported that there has been an increase in incidents of domestic abuse. This isn't surprising. The Home office has announced £3.1 million for organisations supporting children who have been directly and indirectly affected by domestic abuse. When this was checked locally it appears this was not new money and there will be no money directed to Torbay from this source.

It had been hoped that lockdown would disrupt criminal activity in the supply and distribution of drugs in Torbay. It hasn't. We cannot become complacent as criminals and perpetrators of exploitation will find a way to target vulnerable children.

The counselling and Thrive team have prepared resources and are planning for how they will deliver support to what will be a mental health crisis. What has happened will feel like a loss. Torbay has not though had the large number of deaths seen in other parts of the country. While some of our families will have been hurt by bereavement, for many it is the loss of friendship during lockdown. Young people gain a feeling of self-worth and image through the dynamics and interaction of their peer group. Many will be feeling very unsure of themselves and will struggle with finding themselves. Parents have reported that their children have become nocturnal.

Many have become fearful and highly anxious. They won't leave the house and have stopped communicating with their friends.

The pastoral team will continue to work in partnership with safeguarding and agencies. Intervention and support will be put in place as needed.

We have looked at all of the work we do to support our students and reflect on the rationale for it. We are carefully considering what areas we need to revisit with the students: what training and support staff need and how do we support parents/carers in the short and long term.

I feel permanently anxious that I am not doing enough. But I can't fix everything and be the eyes and ears to all. I have had to accept this.

Everywhere you look there is help and advice available. I keep telling myself for my own wellbeing, that we, the Academy, cannot be there 24/7. We don't have to signpost to every source of help. The supermarkets, beauty adverts, television, social media and websites have information, for example, about how to get support from domestic violence, mental health and the dangers of online exploitation. I worry we haven't given enough advice. I have to hope that if we aren't approached by a student or family member they can find and access it "out there".

On a positive note, for some of our families lockdown hasn't been a disaster. Some parents and children have spoken about it being a joyous time. Parents have loved the time with their children. They have had time for walking, talking, singing, baking, eating, gardening dancing and just being a family. They feel enriched by it.

Like all of us, this time has been a chance to reflect. None of us know what the future months will bring and the long term impact of COVID 19 will be. There will be some very tough times ahead for the children, their families and staff.

Further planning is needed. We will have to consider a recovery curriculum. Whatever is ahead we will face the challenge. The "core", the heart of Torquay Academy is about doing the best for every child, supporting their families and our community.

We always put our children first whether it is their education or their safety. Parents and carers have experienced this, especially during lockdown. So it is with a real step of faith into the unknown that I and my colleagues will face the challenges that this silent enemy has brought to our doorstep.

One thing I do know is that it won't beat us and we will do everything to keep our children safe.



The impact of Covid-19 on FSM provision

Claire Beckett, Finance Director

Background and Context

Like many other schools, ensuring that students eligible for FSM's during the Covid-19 shutdown has been a mammoth task for many reasons, predominantly due to the total under-capacity of the Government website to provide FSM vouchers when it was first launched.

However, the experience has not been all negative and has actually provided an opportunity for various staff to show leadership, resilience and a strong desire to work as a team to ensure that none of our students go hungry during what turned out to be and will remain an exceptional period of our lives.

Below is the story of how the staff at Torquay Academy pulled together to ensure that our students were fed.

Pre-planning

In early March, when it looked like a short period of closure may be likely, I asked our catering manager, Claire Dickerson, how she thought we may be able to put together some food parcels to provide the 293 FSM students in school. We discussed what the key components would be, e.g. food that represented 5 meals per week and breakfast elements, as many of our students use our free breakfast service. I gave her a budget of £20 for the first parcel and £15 for any subsequent weeks. Whilst we normally only provide FSM to the value of £12.50 p.w. (£2.50 p.d.) I thought that £15 represented a fair amount to include the breakfast club. Clearly this challenge for Claire released a hidden talent which had lain dormant for the 6 years I had known her. Taking the bull by the horns she researched our existing suppliers and also the local cash and carry to determine what products she could get hold of, in the quantities we required and at an affordable cost! This was not an easy feat; mass buying and stockpiling in the supermarkets was already causing empty shelves and rationing of food items. The challenge to produce up to 400 food parcels weekly was getting bigger by the hour and we had to make a decision whether to take the plunge and order/buy what we could whilst we still had the opportunity.

A further meeting clarified what we needed to do. It was important that the bulk of the purchases needed to be non-perishable food that could provide five meals per week, often feeding two or three children, without making cooking onerous on parents who potentially

didn't usually cook or were unable to be creative in the kitchen. Breakfast was also an important element as that first meal of the day is so critical.

It was agreed that the parcels should contain the following:

- One box of cereal
- Hot chocolate sachets
- A jar of spread (jam/peanut butter/Nutella)
- Juice carton
- 2 tins of vegetables (sweetcorn/carrots/peas/mixed veg)
- A bag of rice
- A bag of pasta
- A jar of cooking sauce or a tin of meatballs
- A tin of tuna or cooked meat
- A tin of macaroni cheese or spaghetti hoops
- A tin of baked beans
- A tin or sachet of soup
- 2 fruit pots
- 2 chocolate bars (penguin/kitkats/breakaways)
- A small bag of crisps
- Four pints of milk
- One loaf of sliced bread
- A tub of margarine
- A packet of cheese

Whilst not seeming an excessive amount the challenge now was to source it!

Ordering the parcels

Our catering manager then spent a few hours on the phone to her many suppliers sourcing whatever was available. Realising these sources were not in themselves enough she set off to the local cash and carry, where we already had an account, in the school minibus driven by one of our caretakers. I agreed to follow half an hour later to pay for the purchases. Approximately two hours later with three large trolleys laden with outers of tins and packets, we emerged from the cash & carry, having virtually emptied the shelves, loaded the minibus and returned to school.

A classroom was requisitioned to lay the food out in so that it could be counted ready for assembling the food parcels. A team of willing volunteers helped to re-arrange the room and distribute the food into similar

products. It soon became apparent that what looked like a massive stock would hardly touch what we needed.

For four days I accompanied the catering manager and caretaker to the cash & carry buying the limited amounts we were allowed. A maximum of two outers of any product. Luckily an outer could contain up to 24 tins and we were allowed two of each flavour for many products. However, as the week went on we became limited to the time of the day we were allowed to shop. Despite daily conversations with the store manager we were not considered key suppliers and no amount of negotiation would allow them to relax their rules. By the end of the week the store manager acknowledged that we had been ahead of the game. Other schools had approached him by then but the stocks in the shop were diminishing daily and they were unlikely to secure all they needed.

I had also approached another supermarket manager who we already had a purchasing relationship with but they too, pointing at empty shelves, said they were unable to provide any more than two individual tins of any product, as for other customers. Schools had not been categorised as key organisations so there was no flexibility.

On final assembly of all the purchases it became apparent that there was insufficient bags of rice and pasta for all the families. As the catering manager was able to source bulk bags of this it was necessary to get the OK from the local Environmental Food Safety Department at Torbay to ensure it was acceptable to split the bags. This was allowed, provided the products were properly labelled and the cooking instructions were included. Accordingly, a document was prepared to go with all food parcels. Other information included refrigerating dairy products and any other relevant food preparation guidelines. Boxes and bags had already been sourced to pack the parcels in.

Assembling and distributing food parcels

By the beginning of the first week of shutdown two classrooms had been taken over for the production of food hampers. One being the assembly area and the other the storage area. Two hundred and fifty boxes were assembled, small ones for one child families and larger ones for two and three child families. Some larger products had been purchased for our 40 families with more than one child to enable a meal to be provided to share rather than individual portions.



Staff volunteered to help pack the boxes and after two days, enough boxes had been packed to provide a food parcel for every child in school eligible for free school meals. In addition, any family asking for support due to changing circumstances as a result of Covid-19 were also provided with a hamper. The camaraderie amongst the staff was brilliant as everyone mucked in to support our vulnerable students.



Every box was labelled and stored in alphabetical order pending distribution.



The logistics in distribution was the next challenge. Parents and carers had been advised when they should collect their parcels and duly began to turn up at the allotted time.

A further problem had however arisen 48 hours prior to distribution. The milk and bread supplier had advised they would not be able to deliver the quantities promised. Again, our catering manager leapt into action and managed to source a different supplier for the milk and a local bakery agreed to do a special run of 400 sliced loaves which were duly delivered on time. The milk supplier was however delayed and a queue of parents gradually grew from Reception to the car park while the delivery vehicle made its way from Newton Abbot. All was well though as the bags of fresh produce were completed and one by one grateful parents left having shown their appreciation for efforts of the school.

There were however, a number of parents who were unable to get to school to collect the parcels. Staff again leapt into action and 2 school minibuses completed multiple drops around Torquay with at one point 3 school minibuses out delivering the remaining parcels to support our vulnerable children.

In school there was no let up. At this stage there was no indication of Free School Meal vouchers and already we were preparing the next batch of food hampers for anyone wishing to have them in the Easter holidays and then ready for the return after Easter. To be ready it meant working flat out up until the end of term to ensure they were ready for collection on the first day back after Easter.

A few lessons had been learned. Not everyone chose to accept the food parcels. We were therefore able to recycle some by removing name labels. A decision was made just to make them all up as individual parcels. Two and three child families would be given two or three parcels. Some of the food items were running low and

further trips to the Cash & carry could not replenish all the stock we needed.

With supermarket shelves virtually empty and many people unable to leave their homes as they were self isolating or shielding, the decision was made to provide hampers during the holidays to anyone who wanted them. One of our teachers gave up several days of their holiday to deliver hampers supported by other staff and many families were very grateful for their efforts.

Free School Meal Vouchers

By the middle of the second week we had been sent details of how to distribute FSM vouchers. At this point we had to decide whether to continue with food parcels or move across to the Government Voucher Scheme. Due to the intensive nature of the food parcels and the difficulty in sourcing the contents it seemed logical to move to the scheme. This decision, although the right one in the long term, created far more work for myself than could ever be imagined. All those who were involved in the first few weeks will understand the frustration that arose from a website with insufficient capacity for the job in hand. Apart from the lack of clarity of how to put the orders through, every move from one webpage to the next could take up to half an hour. The system was so overloaded it was unable to tell you when the order had failed to go through or any error logs, hence it took 5 days before I was able to complete my first order on the system. This was achieved by signing on at 7am on a Sunday morning when no-one else was using it. I then obtained an error report and as soon as it was possible to identify what I was doing wrong, I was able to put it right to complete the order.

The problems didn't stop there! An order would take up to a week to complete. All families did not receive the emails containing their voucher redemption codes at the same time. The redemption process was overly complex and the voucher could take up to a week to be delivered via email even after the ecode was redeemed. Parents were constantly emailing or phoning asking for help. Due to the time taken to access the website and move from one page to another it became a job, predominantly for 7am in the morning or after 7pm at night.

After the first three weeks of vouchers had been delivered we carried out an exercise to see how many of the vouchers had been redeemed to see the scale of the problems. This was done via a Google sheet that could be shared so the information was always up to date. The work put into setting up this spreadsheet and updating it regularly became invaluable to enable us to contact the most vulnerable students who had been unable to access their vouchers. Approximately 60% of parents and carers had been able to access and redeem at least one of their vouchers, some all three. Many had been unable to

access them or redeem them. By gradually working through the issues with parents, I was able to understand both the intricacies of the system and the types of mistakes that parents were making. The redemption success rate gradually increased and by the end of week seven around 93% of all vouchers had been redeemed. The pastoral team contacted those that had not redeemed any and I talked through how to redeem them with many parents, eventually creating my own crib sheet enabling many more to access their vouchers.

It is amazingly satisfying to enable parents, who have totally given up on the process and any hope of redeeming their vouchers, to receive what they are entitled to. It should never have been so complicated but the upgrades that Edenred made over the weeks speeded up the system and resolved many of the early frustrating issues.

The memory of the days and weeks when my waking hours were filled only with FSM voucher queries are gradually fading but the memories of the flowers received from a grateful parent as she finally got her hands on £90 worth of vouchers, and all the kind sentiments and messages from others will remain vividly in my mind.

Summary

As I complete my case study the issue of FSM vouchers continues. We now have many more students back in school, some eligible for FSM.

- Do we stop sending the vouchers as we are also providing meals in school?
- Will that discourage vulnerable students from attending if parents see the vouchers stopping?
- When do we stop providing vouchers for Year 11s and Year 13s?
- Who gets vouchers in the Summer holidays and how will these be administered?
- Will someone need to be around to answer questions all Summer?

There are still a multitude of issues to be ironed out and still a handful of parents who have still not redeemed any vouchers. There are the emails that seem to disappear into the ether when previously they arrived weekly without fail!

The good news however is that ultimately our most vulnerable students have been fed throughout the Covid lockdown. We have continued to provide one or two food parcels every week to those most in need and through all of this I can honestly say the staff have been fantastic in order to manage a difficult situation.

every second counts







**If you would like to find out more about Torquay Academy
or to arrange a tour, please get in touch.**

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