

Case study:

Biddulph High School

HayGroup



Using Transforming Learning to improve school performance

Biddulph High School is a specialist sports college based in North Staffordshire. The area has suffered from severe levels of social deprivation and high unemployment. However the school's results have improved over the last 6 years, rising from 32% to 70% achieving 5 A to C grades. The Senior Management Team and the Headteacher have been judged as outstanding in the last two OFSTED inspections.

The school decided to use transforming learning to:-

- give pupils a greater voice in the school
- gain greater pupil engagement in their education
- provide externally verified data for school self review
- develop an 'open culture' which allows staff and their pupils to openly discuss aspects of school teaching and learning

An open approach to learning

Transforming learning fits well with the open approach to learning that Biddulph High School has, both with the children and the staff. They have been using Transforming Learning throughout the school for about 6 years. They started small with a pilot group and over the years, through open and honest discussion and the development of a feedback culture, have developed the process so that all teachers in the school complete the programme.

The 'big picture' aggregate data that is available with Transforming Learning is used as a bench mark for whole school improvement. Our system breaks down the aggregate data by subject area, and Biddulph High School make sure that curriculum department heads see their own data and can compare that with the whole school picture.

And they believe that the results of TL are about to become even more valuable. Under the new inspection regime the school inspectors have been told to look for 'pupil voice'. There is a need to involve pupils in their own education. TL fits this extremely well, especially if staff explore their classroom climate feedback with their pupils. In their OFSTED inspection of OCT 2006 the HMI especially asked for

information on how we used TL and how it impacted on school self review. TL was mentioned positively on two occasions in the report.

The benefits of Transforming Learning

Transforming Learning gives teachers a clearer understanding of the key aspects of teaching that impact upon pupil's learning. The process of gathering feedback from pupils makes them feel more engaged in their own learning, makes them feel listened to and gives them a valid say in their education.

Transforming Learning feedback clearly identifies issues for the school and heads of department, leads to identifying questions as part of school self review. The results are a powerful tool (objective data) to support the head teacher in his commentary to inspectors.

Transforming Learning helps to bring staff closer to the pupils through discussion to improve their learning – this forms a stronger partnership in the classroom. Over time, as the dimensions improve, pupils notice and appreciate the efforts made by staff to improve.

“School inspections are very rigorous and where you have data which is objective and bench marked against other schools the information can be very valuable.”

“As part of our Performance Policy, classroom observations of staff contain assessments of each of the dimensions of the classroom climate. Whole school and departmental evaluations of classroom climate are reviewed by the Governors curriculum committee. Data from TL informs our Performance Management process and is used to identify aspects of whole school and individual CPD needs.”

“Pupils are very positive about being able to have a say in how they feel about their learning, but without being identified in the questionnaire. Pupils are interested in seeing the results for the school and feel their opinion is being listened to. It particularly works well where staff are confident enough to discuss the responses with their pupils.”

To speak to someone at Biddulph High School about their experiences please contact:

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To find out more about Transforming Learning please contact our helpline on +44 (0)20 7856 7339.