

8-9 November 2017

### The Programme:

This programme is following on from the successful Partnership Challenge programme across Leicestershire. Participating secondary and primary schools cooperate in mutual quality assurance by undertaking lesson observations and discussions with senior leaders in each other's schools and colleges. The main points from their discussion at the end of the two-day visit form the basis of this report.

### Foci for the Peer Review:

The team was asked to focus on three main areas:

- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all key stages
- Evidence that target areas are being addressed across the Campus
- The strength of leadership and management with a focus on middle leadership

### The Participants:

Members of the senior leadership teams from other Leicestershire Schools formed the team. The team that undertook the partnership challenge at Brookvale Groby Learning Campus were:

Abigail Lear	Deputy Headteacher	South Charnwood High School
Clare Darby	Vice Principal	Brockington College
Matt Nicolle	Headteacher	Redmoor Academy
John Taylor	TaylorGill Ltd	(Ofsted Trained)

### Methodology:

The two-day visit consisted of 51 lesson observations, each about 25 minutes long. The lesson observations were jointly undertaken with members of the Campus senior leadership team or heads of faculty. Individual lessons were not graded, but feedback was offered to all staff observed on the particular strengths seen and any areas for development.

Members of the team had 8 meetings with staff with different responsibilities and three meetings with the students.

Evidence from these observations and meetings, together with other data and information provided, was discussed at the team meetings, for which the Campus headteachers were present. Strengths and areas for development were agreed in each of the five main areas covered by the latest Ofsted inspection framework.

Verbal feedback was given to the senior leadership team and the Campus headteachers at the end of the two days.

## Leadership and Management

This section focuses mainly on the middle leaders, and draws on the observations from the meetings with the faculty leaders.

- Last year's data has been thoroughly analysed. The senior leaders have reflected on this and used it to form the basis for the development plan. At KS4 and KS5, faculty leaders are aware of areas for focus being based on last year's GCSE results. In some lessons it was obvious that increased engagement for the boys was apparent in their planning and implementation. The Campus has not yet collected or analysed any data to see if the strategies are being successful.
- Faculty leaders are enthusiastic ambassadors for the recent change to 11-19 working. They know the positive impact of these changes, such as widening the expertise in their faculties, better knowledge of individual students and improved planning for a cohesive curriculum for KS3 and KS4.
- Faculty leaders work with senior leaders on quality assuring the teaching and learning in their area. This has resulted in them gaining an accurate picture of the strengths and areas for development needed by the individuals in their teams.
- In some areas the merger (of the two schools to form the Campus) has meant that there has been a lot of work to do, but this opportunity has reinvigorated the subject areas and made faculty leaders determined to ensure the changes have a positive impact on students' progress.
- Faculty leaders are aware of the key priorities for the Campus. They have implemented strategies for improving the progress of groups which have fallen behind. However, they need evidence to evaluate the impact of the strategies (boys, Post 16) implemented so far, and make changes, if needed, before it is too late to affect the outcomes in this academic year.
- Flight paths have been introduced to set students challenging targets. These are becoming integrated in the published data. A clear system of targets and current predicted grades is seen in most teachers' records and most students are aware of these. The flight paths are continually being developed to produce more accurate targets.
- The increase in the number of students joining the Campus for the post-sixteen courses has provided new challenge. The reasons for the slight decline in the achievement of students, in the more academic 'A' level courses in 2017, needs to be fully understood and 'owned' by faculty leaders and teachers so that effective action can be implemented to address this.
- Students who are in danger of falling behind are given support and improvement plans to help them make faster progress and communication with their parents is readily used to underpin these approaches.
- Disadvantaged students are well catered for. Accurate analysis of achievement data is used to target interventions. A wide variety of interventions has been used, and those thought less successful have been stopped. The success of the additional support in mathematics last year has been extended this year across other subjects. Overall attendance of disadvantaged students has improved, although, so far, this year the current Year 11 shows a slight decline.
- The Campus recognises that it needs to raise the aspirations of higher prior attaining students (HPA), and has organised events, at an appropriate stage in their education, to raise students' awareness of the possibility of applying for and the requirements of the Russell group universities.

- Accountability for overall standards at 16+ is not the responsibility of one senior leader. Reporting and communication channels need to be improved, so tutors and other leaders can easily access a picture of the students' progress across all subjects.
- Expectations about lesson planning are clear, though in some lessons the learning objectives remain too general to help guide the lesson.

### Areas for development:

- Faculties need to deepen their understanding of the decline in students' achievement in the academic sixth-form courses, and then use this to:
  - adapt teaching and learning considering their findings
  - ensure the careers advice and guidance given to the students accurately guides them to the most appropriate courses.
- Review the accountability and responsibility for Post 16 so that:
  - there is improved communication between the teachers, form tutors, pastoral leaders and faculty leaders.

### Quality of Teaching and Assessment

Throughout the two days 51 lessons were observed, which included scrutiny of work and discussions with students and teachers.

- Teachers' planning is thorough and effective in helping students learn well and make good progress.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers' knowledge of the students, their questioning and other assessment methods, and their high expectations in terms of progress, lead to students being inspired, challenged and enthused so they make good progress.
- In these most effective lessons, because of the high-quality teaching and assessment, students can be seen deepening their knowledge, understanding and skills because of the teaching. 'STAR' time can be used well to enable students to reflect and improve and students respond positively to these opportunities and value them. However, whilst STAR time is used frequently, there is less consistency in terms of its impact on learning.
- Teachers' knowledge of students and their progress is generally very thorough and in most cases, used to identify precisely how they can be supported to catch-up. However, this detailed level of knowledge is not consistent across all teachers and, in some cases, there was a lack of clarity about how students could be supported because BRAG sheets are not always up to date.
- Consistently high expectations were evident throughout the Campus in terms of attitude and behaviour. This was not always matched by the expectations in terms of the level of challenge, which was inconsistent. Good challenge was evident in Science especially.
- Marking was positive, and evidence confirmed that it was frequent and detailed, and in the best examples (Art & Design), incisive and sharply focused; allowing students to know precisely how well they have done and how to improve. The quality of student responses is not always consistent, and this is linked to the impact of STAR time.
- The introduction of Google classroom is in its infancy and is therefore inconsistent across different Key Stages and different subject areas; it is, however, valued by post-16 students.

- New staff have responded positively to a thorough induction and have quickly adapted to Campus policies and processes.

## Areas for Development

- Consider how STAR time can be more consistent in ensuring student response to feedback leads to them making further progress
- AFL: develop approaches to teaching students in KS3 how to peer assess to provide effective feedback.
- Post-16 student voice and some lessons indicated a slight passivity in students; whilst well behaved, on task and learning, are not always fully enthused or inspired. Consider how this “love of learning” can be fostered and developed.
- Class profiles and/or BRAG sheets don't always reflect the quality of teaching seen in lessons. These need to demonstrate not just current progress, which may be improving but below target, but also the progress predicted by the end of the year.

## Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare

Information for this aspect of the review was collated from conversations held with students, observations of lessons, behaviour in and around the Campus during the visit and from discussions with key personnel from the SEND Department and Pastoral Team.

### Personal Development and Welfare

- Staff work well together across the Campus to ensure that students feel safe and secure. The Campus “open culture” and monitoring procedures ensure that any issues are dealt with promptly and as a consequence the Campus is a calm, orderly and purposeful environment.
- Students say that they feel safe, and bullying, of any form, is uncommon. Reported incidents are dealt with and the respect amongst students for each other was evident in lessons.
- The support and provision for students with special educational needs or disabilities is very good. The staff leading the department are keen to provide a supportive and nurturing environment that enables students to grow in confidence and flourish. Transition work both from KS2 to KS3 and KS3 to KS4 is well established and effective. Staff know the students for whom extra support is required and ensure that this provision is in place; however, the impact of intervention on progress currently appears less secure. The team, which operates across the Campus, work well but it is acknowledged that further liaison is required to ensure the work of TAs in the English and Maths Department complements and supports the work of LSAs in the SEND department.
- Attendance for most groups of students is good and above national averages. It is carefully monitored, and a full-time attendance officer coordinates the work of different agencies in supporting pupil attendance. The Campus is aware of a couple of groups whose current attendance is below 90% and they are working to improve this. Further opportunities to use tutors more effectively to support attendance and to raise the profile further across the Campus should be sought.
- The recent merger of the pastoral team has had a positive impact across the Campus. The new team of pastoral staff are working well together and amendments to the behaviour policy have had a positive effect across the Campus.
- Students enjoy coming to school; the majority of students display excellent attitudes to learning and behaviour for learning that have a positive impact on their outcomes. Students conduct themselves well, on the whole,

they are well-behaved, polite during lesson transitions across the Campus and have good relationships with staff.

- New staff have been well supported by a bespoke CPD programme and as a result any behavioural issues, experienced by new staff, have been effectively dealt with.
- Where, on occasions, some low-level disruption was observed, it was dealt with promptly and students responded positively. There is a clear and visible system of rewards and sanctions giving students a clear understanding of expectations. Pastoral staff are keen to ensure the new behaviour management system continues to be applied consistently by all staff as the academic year progresses.
- The experienced pastoral team work in partnership with teachers and parents of students who experience difficulties in accessing learning and who run the risk of fixed-term exclusions. The team work hard to engage these pupils and will work across the county to ensure appropriate provision is provided
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students was seen within lessons; however, it was observed that some opportunities to develop this aspect of Campus life were missed. This was particularly prevalent during registration, when there were many tutor groups who appeared to have little focus or direction at this time.
- Students are generally confident and self-assured in communicating their ideas and expressing their opinions, although some learners are more reticent to engage actively in lessons. For most students who were reticent to participate, it was obvious that they were learning and making progress.

### Areas for Development

- Tracking of those groups whose current attendance is below 90% needs to be maintained; ensure intervention is appropriate and proportionate to the concerns.
- Where staff are less confident at teaching a new key stage or where the curriculum has not been fully reviewed and amended, there is the potential for students to go off-task. Staff need to support each other and consider establishing peer observations within departments to share good practice more effectively.
- Staff within SEND team need to ensure they are fully aware of the outcomes of the support and intervention programmes they have introduced, making certain they can link outcomes to progress more explicitly.
- Opportunities need to be sought to develop SMSC within registration time, to ensure this time is used more effectively and productively by all tutors and students.

### Outcomes for Students

There has been a very detailed analysis of the last year's outcomes, this has been used to form the basis of the development plan. Staff are aware of the main areas of focus, and it is evident in lessons that these are being addressed. At the time of this review there was little assessment evidence to confirm the impact on these areas.

## The effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes

- The post-16 team have clear tracking procedures in place and regularly review student progress data. A wide range of actions regularly takes place. Some of these systems are not yet fully developed for maximum impact, such as clearly tracking the impact of intervention plans or sharing intervention plans with the post-16 tutors.
- Strong teacher subject knowledge was demonstrated in the lessons seen and teachers use their subject knowledge to effectively motivate students.
- In the best lessons, exam specifications are used to set targets leading to higher quality learning. The most successful teaching had a high level of challenge and used a variety of pedagogical approaches to structure the learning; this included, effective assessment for learning strategies, targeted questioning, questions to elicit deeper thinking, lessons which had clear real-life context, highly personalised feedback, variety of assessment including peer, and generally those lessons which sought to ensure learning is active.
- In a few lessons, the classroom culture could be described as compliant rather than active, with students reluctant to take risks in their learning or to participate in discussion. Some staff felt this was a symptom of the increased cohort and students who don't know the Campus yet. If this is the case, in addition to the detailed work the Campus already does around transfer, the Campus could look further into transition and induction arrangements.
- The Campus acknowledges that outcomes need to improve at post-16, in particular the variations between academic and vocational courses, and the senior team have begun to put structures in place. It is too soon to evaluate the impact for some of these measures.
- For these actions to be most successful, however, there need to be clearer lines of responsibility for post-16 within the senior team. This will lead to greater consistency and accountability, and ensure the post-16 team are fully aware of the Campus priorities and that their work joins with that around teaching and learning.
- In some departments, staff who are new to teaching post-16 are particularly well supported through subject mentors and opportunities for joint planning. Last year, staff in this position benefited from a cross-subject support group.
- Initiatives to reduce underachievement are not always rigorously and consistently implemented at classroom level; such as the repetition of a failed exam where papers are provided for resubmission but without firm deadlines. Class teachers, through their BRAG sheets, identify strategies for underachievement. Some of these sheets indicated underachievement without any strategies identified for improvement.
- Faculties plan units of work which meet the content and skills demanded by the new curriculum. In some areas, it is questionable whether sufficient pedagogical thought has gone into the way these courses are structured; particularly, in terms of the different demands of a linear curriculum, its associated increase in knowledge and increased demands of retention of information.
- The work ethic amongst post-16 students seen during the visit was high. However, whilst they complete homework, students can be dependent on teachers to direct their learning. Not all students have a grasp of independent learning or possess the tools such as course breakdowns and specifications. In some subjects, this is exacerbated through inconsistency in the organisation of student folders, which does not enhance learning or show the high levels of personal organisation needed.
- As a resource to support their learning, both in school and out, post-16 students speak highly of the move to Google Classrooms.

## Areas for development

- Review and strengthen the SLT line management of post-16 to ensure clearer accountability.
- Quality assure the curriculum design of linear 'A' level courses to ensure there is sufficient attention to strategies for long term retention such as interleaving, spaced learning, distributed learning etc, and to ensure that these strategies are reflected in the teaching.
- Ensure whole Campus improvement policies, e.g. the repetition of failed tests, are consistently implemented.
- Consider how whole Campus improvement policies, such as the repetition of failed tests, can be more consistently implemented.
- Student folders don't reflect the quality of teaching seen in lessons and, for some students, may be a barrier to independent learning and effective revision. Review base-line expectations around student folders and systems to ensure consistency.
- Develop approaches to teaching which ensure student learning is active rather than passive, alongside reviewing transition and induction arrangements.