



KEY THEMES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

At The Henry Cort Community College, over the last three years, outcomes for all students have increased to now be consistently above national figures, and in 2017 attainment for Free School Meal students was in line with national and achievement in English and mathematics was well above the national averages. Progress however, still remains an issue. For disadvantaged students, the progress 8 score in 2017 was in line with Hampshire average of -0.73 (meaning every disadvantaged student finished one grade below their peers in 7 out of every 10 grades), which is why it remains a focus for the college.

The challenge for The Henry Cort Community College is to ensure that although attainment benchmarks are being achieved, we buck the local and national trend of progress and ensure disadvantaged learners go on to make better than expected progress. Disadvantaged students at The Henry Cort Community College are well prepared for the next stage of their education: 87% of our disadvantaged students went into further education once leaving us with the national average for all students in 2016/17 being 85%. This in turn means more young people are likely to become earners and increase the aspirations in the local community. Over half the students with Special Educational Needs have also been in receipt of free school meals in the last six years, meaning access to high quality teaching is essential for them to make the expected progress.

ACTIONS TAKEN

In evaluating our strategy for the last few years, we had often tried to focus on ‘groups’ of students, with limited success. The project has refocused us on the individual and this has been the driving force throughout this project.

Priority 1: High Quality Teaching and Learning

Although obvious, it was important that we focus on the teaching and learning of disadvantaged students. This is all about raising the expectations of teachers, embedded rules and routines and sharing good practice in terms of strategies. The new coaching programme has allowed staff to trial strategies; share good practice and embed strategies that have worked for individual students. Staff CPD programme has been focused on stretch and challenge, which was an area of weakness identified last year. The most recent teaching and learning statistics show that there has been an impact with the number of lessons meeting the teaching standards, when it comes to stretch and challenge. The number of lessons demonstrating stretch and challenge strategies has improved by 16% from Term 1a to Term 2b.

Priority 2: Plugging the gaps

The way we assess students has changed dramatically over the course of the project. Each subject at The Henry Cort Community College assesses in strands that make up each subject. This was designed to ensure we were fully aware of what gaps in knowledge students have and hence set about plugging those gaps. The mantra of “Any percentage gap is purely a gap in knowledge” was embraced and as a college we set about using this philosophy to ensure all students, but particularly those in receipt of the pupil premium, finish each term with the knowledge and skills to enable them to move on.

This was carried out in a series of ways:

- Pre learning materials
- Over learning
- Creation of dedicated intervention time in the day, created by making lessons 5 minutes shorter
- Homework and breakfast clubs which were subject specific

Priority 3: Building Relationships

❖ *Treating every student as an individual*

This is a key focus for us. We spent a twilight session in November really getting to know our disadvantaged students. We got every member of staff to focus on every disadvantaged student highlighting learning strengths, barriers to learning, interests and any other important information. This then created individual profiles but also allowed us to focus on those who have specific barriers and begin implementing strategies to overcome their barriers. This has also been used by another local secondary school who have also reported positive outcomes from the meeting. This became quite bespoke - for example one student found timings difficult so he was set up with a simple watch that buzzed. It was given to him at the start of each day and was synced by us.

❖ *Coaching*

Following the identification of individual barriers, in staff twilight in December 'Ubuntu' teacher coaching was set up to support teachers develop and experiment with strategies, taken from the EEF toolkit for overcoming barriers to learning. Each coaching group focuses on a specific pupil and sets itself a target strategy to explore and feedback by the next session. The programme is very much in the early days but has already yielded some successes, particularly with pupils historically attempting to stay 'under the radar'. The time given for teaching and learning conversations and the encouragement to experiment has sparked an enthusiasm to tackle the challenges collaboratively. Identifying specific pupils to focus on has meant a very practical approach that results in a strategy bank for each student that can be shared with all staff.

❖ *Transition*

We have always been strong in our pastoral transition, however for the 2017 intake we have had a much greater emphasis on the academic transition, particularly for the disadvantaged students. We have used the knowledge of the year 6 teachers along with question level analysis of their KS2 SAT papers and CAT tests early on to produce a student learning passport for all students in year 7. This has fed into the high quality teaching and learning and coaching programmes.

Priority 4: Building Cultural Capital

The gap between those with ample cultural capital and those with limited cultural capital has always been a focus at The Henry Cort Community College. We continue to increase the opportunities for new experiences annually and this year we have included trips to London, theatre trips, pantomime visits, sailing opportunities, author visits and Higher Education programmes, all aimed at disadvantaged students. We have introduced a variety of mentoring schemes involving local businesses, providing students with access to a host of new opportunities.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

High quality teaching and learning remains a fundamental priority throughout The Henry Cort Community College and programmes where middle leaders monitor and intervene is now well established. We have set up SIMs interventions to record every intervention that is taking place across the college. This has proved vital in allowing the intervention co-ordinator to assess the impact of intervention strategies and the cost effectiveness. It has also allowed us to cease interventions when the impact was deemed negligible compared to the cost (for example sending an attendance minibus out to pick up students with poor attendance). Feedback from staff meetings has been incredibly positive and ensuring we continue to keep these students high on our agenda will only lead to improved outcomes.

IMPACT AND WIDER LEARNING

	What impact has been seen?	What lessons have been learned?
Priority 1: High Quality Teaching and Learning	87% good or better lessons in 2016/17 – up from 76% in 15/16. AtLs improving from 3.1 to 3.36 for disadvantaged students	Focus by middle leaders ensuring teaching is of high quality is essential
Priority 2: Plugging the gaps	The Spring data drop 2018 shows year 7 disadvantaged students outperforming their peers for the first time. Gap narrowing in all year groups, and year 11 indications are very positive.	Having a data system which takes into account workload management strategies is key to finding the gaps.
Priority 3: Building Relationships	One student commented (when a member of staff in his coaching group greeted him in the dining hall) “Oh, I didn’t think anyone knew who I was”. Filterable barriers enabling us to group like students for interventions Personalised learning enables good progress	Spending the time getting to know the barriers and strengths for each student is very time consuming but staff felt it to be worthwhile and said it was a “good investment of meeting time”
Priority 4: Building Cultural Capital	The impact of increasing cultural capital globally is very difficult to measure. However anecdotal evidence from individual students is invaluable. For example a child questioned if we were out of Hampshire because she had not seen fields before and another student was excited to see Big Ben and it was actually a church tower in Wandsworth. The response from mentees taking part in our new mentoring programmes has been extremely positive, one commenting on ‘having her eyes opened’.	These experiences do not need to be expensive or time consuming. The introduction of pupil passports to record activities that the students participate in outside of school would help the identification of gaps.

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