

Implementing the SEND Reforms: High Quality, High Impact Coningsby PRU, Croydon

Background

Coningsby PRU joined Achievement for All alongside two other members of The Saffron Valley Alliance. The principal aim was to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all teachers and teaching assistants met the needs of each individual student. In addition Coningsby were looking for external support to improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding.

Achievement for All aimed to bring the three PRUs together to share and develop good practice. Relationships with parents were a challenge as many had lost faith in the education system.

The PRU also wanted to take the staff training offered as part of the programme particularly in Structured Conversations.

Context

The Coningsby Pupil Referral Unit provides education for students who are at risk of being, or have been, permanently excluded from mainstream secondary schools. The PRU takes students in Years 7 to 11 with 27 currently on roll, six of which are female.

All the students have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and two have an EHP. The proportion entitled to the Pupil Premium grant is above average – 15 of the 27.

There are no looked after children on roll but there may be students who are at risk of going into care. Coningsby has benefitted

from sharing resources provided to a partner PRU working with Achievement for All on the London Fostering Achievement project.

Coningsby faces the huge challenge of trying to identify and bridge often significant gaps in learning, as well as supporting students to make progress both academically and socially in a short space of time.

A core purpose, particularly at Key Stage 3, is to support transition either back to a mainstream school or identify specific needs through an Education Health Care Plan, transition to a more appropriate educational setting.

In order to secure the best possible education future for their students, Coningsby feels it is imperative they gain the trust and support of their parents/carers.

Approach

Coningsby built on existing good practice and identified priorities from a Ofsted inspection in December 2013 when the school was rated as Good.

Teaching and Learning - inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning

Using Assessment For Learning and use of data to inform planning:

- an inset session was delivered by the Achievement Coach with a focus on

formative assessment strategies and differentiation

- A whole school period of focus on using data to inform planning and trial of a range of assessment strategies in the classroom
- Peer observations/team teaching and developing resources to be shared across the PRU, and cross-PRU with others in the alliance

Marking and Feedback:

- Inset session included training in outstanding marking, quality written comments, teacher/pupil dialogue and cross-subject marking approaches.
- Staff sharing session looking at a sample of books across subject areas, identifying areas of strength and areas for further improvement
- SLT quality assurance rota was drawn up to ensure a continuous focus on marking throughout the year. Staff gain one-to-one feedback with a member of SLT and have the opportunity to reflect on the impact their marking and feedback has on students. Learning walks and observations include a comment on the quality of marking.
- A resource for staff which contains examples of outstanding marking in each subject area has been created to encourage consistency across subject areas.
- Teachers allocate time once a week to allow and support students to respond to written feedback.

Greater independence through Reflective Practice:

- To support students to become independent and reflective learners, 'reflective time' takes place in the final

5-10 minutes of a lesson. Initially this has been implemented in one Key Stage 3 class with the aim to roll this out to become common practice in every lesson. Staff encourage and guide students to self-assess, to take responsibility for their behaviour and effort in lessons and to regularly reflect on their learning. It is hoped that this will also support students to leave the lesson on time and in a positive frame of mind, ready for their next lesson.

Good to Outstanding coaching programme:

- This has supported one member of staff to achieve outstanding aspects in her teaching. The approach will grow so that as more teachers secure outstanding lesson grades, more will receive the coaching support.
- This improved outstanding engagement, pitch, pace and challenge, and progress of the majority of pupils in her lessons as a result of the support received. Relationships, behaviour and subject knowledge have been consistently outstanding.
- The teacher is currently involved in middle leaders training via the Teach First Hub of three Croydon secondary schools.

Parental engagement:

- Structured Conversation training is given to all staff
- Staff have professional development on communicating with parents and joint target setting.

Sharing of good practice:

- Regular staff training on specific learning difficulties, appropriate

strategies and responses in the classroom for the pupils in Years 7 and 8 who have a wide range of SEND

- Weekly staff meetings include a staff rota of sharing 'what went well' tips, behaviour/teaching and assessment strategies for particular students/classes.

Impact

- Teaching and learning has developed across the school. More staff are securing regular lesson observations graded as good and practice as a whole has become more personalised.
- Staff use data to inform planning and are more confident in the delivery of a range of assessment strategies. Teachers have developed practice through peer observations, and through partnerships with teachers from their subject areas in neighbouring PRUs. They have the opportunity to practice standardisation and Key Stage 4 moderation annually.
- Some teaching staff do not have teaching qualifications. The Head Teachers offers staff support with professional development and career progression and the Achievement for All programme has underpinned the ongoing developing in teaching and learning.
- Marking policy and practice is improved and have a procedure in place bespoke to the students in this setting. The most recent book scrutiny saw some excellent examples of teacher/student dialogue.
- Teachers recognise the importance of self-reflection and how that can lead students to become more independent and successful in the future.

- The Good to Outstanding coaching programme has supported one member of staff to achieve an outstanding lesson grade. This approach will grow so that as more teachers secure outstanding lessons grades, more will receive the coaching support.
- Parents/carers are fully involved in the decisions made about their child's future. Staff have developed communication skills through the Structured Conversation training and have become more skilled in target setting. At the start of every term, students have a Structured Conversation with their key teacher. This has resulted in students having a more focused approach, working toward short term targets which aim to improve attendance and accelerate progress in core subjects.
- Whole school attendance has risen from 69%, when Coningsby started working with Achievement for All in the summer term 2013, to 75.5% in autumn term 2014.
- The Year 11 focus group made progress of 16 APS in reading and writing and 14 APS in maths from July 2013 to July 2014.

Key Learnings

The work that has taken place at Coningsby over the last year, exemplifies the impact that quality first teaching has on progress and attainment of all young people.

The Achievement for All programme challenges teachers in a supportive way to raise standards to meet expected outcomes. Staff have had a voice and helped shape an area of focus or choose a target group for a

particular strategy. They work closely together as a team to share strategies and swap resources.

Aspirations for the students have been raised amongst staff and parents with a focus on life outcomes and greater independence.

Next Steps

- Develop early intervention to support students with SEND. To monitor teachers' use of IEPs and support them to use the appropriate approach and strategies in the classroom with a specific learning difficulty. The Achievement Coach is working with the SENCO on how best to support staff with this.
- Form a student voice group to provide students with greater choice and control over support. This group will contribute to the development of teaching and learning and a member of teaching staff has been identified to lead on this area.
- Evaluate the impact of reflective time and plan roll out to all classes. A schedule of learning walks and observations by the Head teacher and Achievement Coach is taking place shortly and will be followed by feedback from teachers, teaching assistants and students.
- Continue to scrutinize targets set during Structured Conversations and support staff with ensuring they are SMART.
- Formal evaluation of parents' view on Structured Conversations – there has been an overwhelmingly positive response from staff and parents on these to date.

Contact Us

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