

“Can we close the gap for Pupil Premium Students?”

Researchers:

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Rationale:

We wanted to explore a range of strategies to improve the school experience for Pupil Premium students and in doing so close the attainment gap for all. We wanted to identify and breakdown barriers to learning and raise the aspirations of PP students.

The range of strategies used included:

- **Student questionnaires**

QE girls selected PP students from Years 8 and 9 following their last report who were making less than expected progress in several subjects (9 in total). We asked questioned students on aspects of their school experience to establish any barriers to learning and to identify any areas that we could support them with to improve their engagement at school. The link below shows the questions that the students were asked as well as an overview of their responses:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdyn_jDbOHgkumxU-xjLPIh1Xiy5yVun-EMpleKIHcJOS05KA/viewform?usp=sf_link

Claire Redgewell / Michelle Madden

- **Staff questionnaires**

I wanted to see what staff knew about PP students and what they were doing in lessons to help close the gap. To do this I created a questionnaire to find out what knowledge staff have. Staff wanted to understand what makes a PP student PP and wanted to know more about the student as an individual rather than looking at them as a group.

Natasha Lawrence

- **Mentoring – using year 12 to mentor KS3 students**

From the answers to the student questionnaire, we matched up students in Year 12 to act as mentors based on similar school experiences. The link below shows the questions that the Year 12 students answered before the start of the programme:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeU2pnAbhrDYakMj4yBCEeLogP86GNhMPPToW9FpPqmITG0dw/viewform?usp=sf_link

We created a mentoring handbook for the Year 12 mentors and ran a training session prior to their first mentoring session (please see the link below)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WQ1pkGQI9np3jiHbuRuQnH19m6d7miAUoi17nQRF9aQ/edit?usp=sharing>

Students meet weekly in the Sixth Form Common Room and Year 12s are provided with an agenda as a guideline of what to talk about with KS3 students, including reflections on the week, plans for the weekend and up and coming events at school, such as KS3 exams.

Claire Redgewell / Michelle Madden

- **Creating a PP register for staff**

I created a register that identifies attendance, barriers to learning and strategies to use for each individual PP student. This will be updated each term and although it took, a lot of time to set up this is a good resource to support staff in their lessons. The feedback from staff has identified that 96% of staff have found this helpful and will use it for future planning.

Natasha Lawrence

After the questionnaire results from KS3 PP students were collated, we produced a register summarising the responses of key questions that could help inform teachers' planning, feedback and classroom practice. Below is a link to student responses that will be shared with staff (*QE girls*):

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1UqHx3BgF9OI2nZbnR_iYXIRgO7WFNQMG38e_xlPkGgOc/edit?usp=sharing

Claire Redgewell / Michelle Madden

- **Planning visit to University/British museum to raise aspiration**

From the questionnaire, it was identified that a number of students were interested in higher education, including at university and apprenticeship level. In order to develop students' understanding of what this might involve, we are planning a trip to a Russell Group university in London which will include a cultural experience to broaden their understanding of what is available to visit for free to enrich their learning

Claire Redgewell / Michelle Madden

- **TLDW research focused on improving attendance and improve results**

I decided to complete my TLDW and my focus was Pupil Premium, I wanted to look at strategies to help close the gap. Over the year, I have read multiple books, visited different schools, presented at network events and implemented new strategies. I found this helpful and enabled me to develop my practice. The impact of this is the register has been created and the 8 steps have been shared with staff, I will spend the next year embedding these two resources in to every day planning.

Natasha Lawrence

- **Increasing school engagement eg running clubs**

Questionnaire results highlighted differences between students' engagement in extra-curricular provision, therefore we will involve Form Tutors in tracking participation in clubs to ensure every student is taking part in at least one of the clubs available.

Furthermore, the questionnaire highlighted a number of extra-curricular activities the students would like to take part in that are not yet offered in the school. We will now look into possible expertise within the staff to see if it may be possible to offer a wider range of activities to engage as many students as we can.

Claire Redgewell / Michelle Madden

- **Confidence workshops**

The Girls Leadership Group is a group of 19 Year 10 and Year 12 students, the purpose of this group is to build confidence in the girls at Dame Alice Owens and the girls have run multiple confidence workshops to all year 7 girls. The workshops were initially for PP students but were then rolled out to all girls. They are a great way to build relationships between different year groups and give the girls the support they need in becoming confident young women.

Natasha Lawrence

- **Visiting other schools**

I have found visiting other schools a great way to get new ideas and new strategies.

It is clear that many schools are spending time working with the family and primary school, not just the pupil. The impact of this is that secondary schools are making links with primary school to ensure nothing slips through and every pupil is given the time and support they need. Families are finding it hard to go from primary school where they have lots of support and their child's teacher knows them very well to going to secondary school and being a little fish in a big pond. Developing the transition process in schools could have a big impact on PP outcomes.

Natasha Lawrence

As part of our school's CPD programme, we were encouraged to visit another school to see what they have put into place for PP students. We discovered a wealth of knowledge and good practice that we were able to learn from and develop and adapt for our own context and trial some of the strategies that they suggested. This helped us to create the Year 12 Mentoring Booklet as well as the register of PP students for teachers. We found this to be an extremely valuable experience and look to encourage more collaboration in the future (*QE girls*)

Claire Redgewell / Michelle Madden

- **8 steps**

During a network event, I was given the 10 teaching steps to close the gap that are used at John Henry Newman. I decided to adapt these steps and make them more specific to DAOS. The 8 steps identify how important it is to teach good lessons and to know your

pupils. These have been shared with staff and I have received lots of positive feedback on these steps.

Natasha Lawrence

During our research we found that over a quarter of staff want more information on Pupil Premium and how to support students in lessons.

We hope the outcomes from the research will inspire staff in other schools to share good PP practice and find the resources available here helpful.

Sarah Lofthouse and Tim Leake

Research Group Co-ordinators