

Developing strategies to improve transition in Mathematics from Key Stage 2 to 3

Ben Disley, St Clement Danes School, Hertfordshire, UK



Ben was concerned that the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 was negatively impacting students' learning in mathematics. There seemed to be a lack of challenge and opportunities for independence in his Year 7 Scheme of Work and therefore students were becoming de-skilled. Ben also felt there was a need for stronger links between St Clement Danes and their feeder primary schools.

To begin with, I initiated a small focus group consisting of five colleagues in the maths department to discuss my concern. We identified three main ideas to focus on:

- creating online challenge homework tasks, including difficult questions, problem solving questions and a research task
- mixing up classes on a regular basis based on students' ability on a specific topic to better support and challenge all students in lesson time
- improving links with our feeder primary schools and planning a maths transition day for 2021.

Alongside these initiatives, my task was to lead this group of staff effectively. This involved arranging and chairing meetings, assigning tasks, keeping lines of communication open and maintaining the progress of the project, particularly through school closure due to Covid. Several staff had appraisal targets related to the project, so I sought to develop the professionalism of my colleagues, empowering them to drive change.

1

KEY LEADERSHIP LESSON:

Having small 'special interest' groups of engaged and invested colleagues is an efficient and effective way to drive change.

2

KEY LEADERSHIP LESSON:

Exercising leadership means giving control to others thus creating greater ownership for colleagues and empowering them to exercise leadership themselves.

3

KEY LEADERSHIP LESSON:

Practising leadership is challenging but vital for developing leadership in colleagues in non-teaching roles.

PUPIL IMPACT

- positive student response to optional challenge homework and research tasks
- positive student feedback on different groupings
- improved end of year results.

PROFESSIONAL IMPACT

- effected positive change within the Maths department
- potential legacy for improving transition in other departments across the school.

PERSONAL IMPACT

- deepened understanding leadership
- more effective at developing colleagues
- better prepared to become a head of department.

SYSTEM IMPACT

- developed colleagues' professionalism and leadership empowering them to drive change across the department and wider school.

A teacher's professionalism is how they develop and expand their professional identity beyond their own classroom to drive change – Dr David Frost, HertsCam Network Event