

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNER NOTES FROM VISIT

School	Wadebridge School
Headteacher	Tina Yardley
SIP	Sandra Critchley
Date of visit	22 June 2015
Purpose of visit	
1. Review of Y7 Catch Up Programme	
Summary of SIP activities during visit:	
1. Review of Y7 and Y8 'Catch up' group student outcomes in English & Maths; classroom visits to Y7 English and Maths catch up group classrooms; Y7 Catch up group student voice discussion.	
2. Preliminary findings shared with two members of SLT (LB, DT) at end of day.	
Summary of outcomes	
<p>The Y7 Catch Up programme runs in both English and Maths lessons. In English the learners are those with a KS2 level below level 3 and those whose English assessment at the start of Y7 was below level 4. The students follow the phonics based "Read, Write, Inc." scheme that provides learning focused on reading and writing in module booklets with short activities. The Set 5 group of 25 learners is split into four groups of 6 each and one 1:1 taught by either a teacher, HLTA or a TA. The scheme has been running for a number of years.</p> <p>The school data shows that in the current academic year students have made 0.5 levels of progress in Reading and -0.28 levels in Writing (explained by the KS3 teacher as resulting from different areas for assessment between KS2 & 3 in Writing). From the data presented for the current Y8 it seems as though progress for the catch up group may accelerate during Y8, although the data to support this as a trend over time was not available. The data presented also suggested that Y7set 4 made good progress in Y7 but their progress may begin to stall in Y8, however this is a tentative conclusion as the data provided was for the current cohorts only.</p> <p>During the lesson visit, I spent time with each group of students. The students were focused on the activities and the atmosphere in all rooms was purposeful. The quality of instruction was high with no obvious differences between the teachers and TAs. Reading activities were dominant, writing activities were short and focused and there were regular changes in tasks. Strong literacy displays adorned the walls of the main classroom (E3).</p> <p>In Maths, the students selected for the Catch Up programme are those below level 4 at KS2, a total of 17 students at the start of the year. The students had been tested using a WRAT diagnostic tool, and this identified those who were working below average or lower against their chronological age, and identified weak areas in numeracy. A new scheme 'Power of 2' was introduced to support these learners make progress in their areas of weakness with 1:1 extraction from their Maths lesson, initially for 10 minutes and subsequently for 20 minutes. A new appointment of an HLTA to support the programme was made this year, and two other TAs support the programme by delivering the extraction. Following re-testing at Easter seven students (all pupil premium) were scored as average and taken off the scheme, so that 1:1 time could be prioritized to those who had not made sufficient progress.</p> <p>During the classroom visit learning was focused on divisions and timetables in the lesson, with 1:1 extraction focusing on individual targets, mainly number bonds and times tables. Individuals moved promptly to and from extraction and were supported by the teacher on return to ensure reintegration back into the lesson. Two additional TAs worked in the classroom to support SEND pupils. The teacher exuded energy and positively encouraged all learners to take part in the lesson. The HLTA had a very crisp, nurturing and professional manner and the extracted students were pleased to note their progress. It could well be beneficial to share her good practice by providing opportunities for peer observation and/or further training in the use of the scheme for the TAs.</p>	

The **Y7 Student Voice** session was a real delight; the 5 Catch Up students spoke at some length about their experiences at primary school, and in Y7. They were excellent ambassadors for Wadebridge School, all agreeing with the comment that they “like this school better than any other”. They commented that they felt confident in Literacy and Numeracy in primary school as it always took place at the same time and they were in the same groups and were concerned at transition from Y6 about what would happen in Y7. They described feeling ‘pressured’ by the Y6 teacher to complete the numeracy work even when they did not understand it. One student said she felt “really dumb” at primary school and kept telling her mother that she did not want to go to school. She says that is not the case now and she always looks forward to school. Two of the students said they find Maths easier now, explaining that it was because they had learnt more, they understood the work better and they knew they would receive support when needed.

When asked about English, I was told that at first they enjoyed “doing modules’ as they were different from the reading and writing they were used to from primary school. Now that they are on module 26 the students all agreed that they found them boring and described them as repetitive, but two students immediately opened the booklets for module 1 and module 26 and held them up to show me quite proudly how much better their work had become, and the others agreed that their work had improved over the year. They really preferred learning in small groups as they felt there was little opportunity for distracting behaviour and that the pace of work was better. All of the students readily described their reading outside of school, with only one (Kia) appearing to be a reluctant reader of fiction, preferring non-fiction articles about animals.

The students were very positive about the Power of 2 scheme and were able to explain that they were on different booklets and at different places because they all have different areas for improvement. They said that they ‘love the books” and when one student said she wished she could take them home to do 3 pages a night for homework, the others agreed and went on to say that they would make more progress that way. They explained that they began with the booklets and extraction programme in November once their teacher had “found out” what their problems were. One student went to say that she had struggled with Time and when her teacher realised she had given her lots of extra sheets to practice on with extraction support, and she felt she had improved “lots” as a result. The students spoke warmly about the class teacher and said that after extraction she always went back over the classwork and checked that they knew what to do and may hold them back at the end of the session for some extra support. They really appreciated that the teacher would explain things again and in different ways, to help them understand.

Recommendations:

Overall, the school has made good use of the Catch Up funding. I would recommend:

1. Y7 English and Maths Catch Up teachers (or those responsible) to meet together periodically through the year to discuss individual progress and review barriers to learning and effective intervention strategies.
2. Review English Set4 programme to support learner’s progress – would it be appropriate to incorporate elements of phonics programme, for example.
3. Consider whether some variety should be introduced into Y7 Catch Up English to add variety part way through the year, possibly with some more extended tasks to build resilience, in preparation for Y8 work and to maintain momentum.
4. Develop a strategy for Y7 Maths Catch Up group as it moves into Y8 to ensure continued progress.
5. Develop opportunities for Maths extraction TAs and HLTA to share strategies and participate in peer observation to share good practice.
6. Follow up English and Maths progress trends over time in Y8 for the Catch Up students, against their peers.