



ST JOHN FISHER CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Developing independent learning for students entitled to Pupil Premium

Some time ago, we looked at the best ways to develop independent learning for our students entitled to Pupil Premium. In particular, we wanted to stretch the most able students and develop their use of digital technology. We also wanted to provide for their particular learning style and found that many of our students entitled to Pupil Premium were auditory learners. We were also very keen to engage parents in something concrete and manageable in supporting their child's learning and school life. All of these strategies were essential for us as we believed that as shown through research, as outlined through the Education Endowment Foundation, the progress that could be achieved through these strategies was positive. GCSEPod engaged with many of these areas of development for us, and seemed to offer some real, concrete evidence on such engagement.

RATIONALE

One major challenge was that we could not purchase the GCSEPod subscription for our students entitled to Pupil Premium alone. This meant that we would have to endure an outlay of £2500, which would cover all other students. We looked at alternatives, such as tablet applications specifically for the students entitled to Pupil Premium. However, when we took into account that we would only pay for students entitled to Pupil Premium, the cost was more than the GCSEPod subscription for all students. This meant that as value for money, this was not a viable alternative. Looking at the numbers of students entitled to Pupil

Premium that we have in Key Stage 4, it works out that GCSEPod costs us £22 per student, which is very low cost with a positive outcome on progress according to EEF toolkit.

We also took into account that as an intervention, GCSEPod for all students did not mean that students entitled to Pupil Premium were being singled out, and that by planning on assertive mentoring ensuring that the target group were making use of the subscription, we justified that the outcome would lead to an increase in progress, a more savvy use of digital technology by students entitled to Pupil Premium, greater collaborative learning by our target group, greater parental involvement with our target group, and greater independent learning by our target group. This also offered a planned outcome of stretching the more able students entitled to Pupil Premium, which then allowed more focused assertive mentoring with such students, something that we as a team struggled with in supporting the more able students and Gifted and Talented students (15 in Key Stage 4) entitled to Pupil Premium.



INFORMING STUDENTS

GCSEPod launched on 30th January 2014 in St John Fisher Catholic College through an assembly to Year 11 students. Within 3 days of the launch, 80% of our students entitled to Pupil Premium had logged on and accessed podcasts. Within 7 days, all students entitled to Pupil Premium who were accessing curriculum in school had logged on. We then rolled out the service to our Year 10 students, and within 1 week, every student entitled to Pupil Premium who accessed curriculum in our school had logged in. Through our Pupil Premium mentoring team, we were able to see each of these students, introduce them to the service, get them logged on and point out how this service would help them in taking ownership of their learning and in taking some independent steps to greater achievement and progress across subject areas. We identified many students who were accessing the service to a huge extent and identified them as GCSEPod experts, something that they were very pleased about. The badge that accompanied this title was much sought after, and was extremely useful in engaging the students with the service.





INFORMING PARENTS

We informed parents through an email and a letter home. The parental response has been very positive, with parents looking to support their children in accessing this service. As part of the Pupil Premium agenda, we will be looking to offer some IT lessons to parents, and GCSEPod will be explored through these.

INFORMING STAFF

Finally after a fortnight, we emailed the staff and explained to them about the subscription that we had signed up for. By telling staff that there was a service where 3500 podcasts were accessed by students, we were telling them that this service works for our students - there was no question that this was a powerful independent learning device and resource through using such numbers. The students had taken ownership of the service and were calling the shots on how to use it. The teachers were playing catch-up.

PLANS

Over the next few months, we look to offer teachers some training on using the service to the best of their ability, to utilise all opportunities afforded through it. Through assertive mentoring, we will look to engage our students entitled to Pupil Premium in greater independent and collaborative learning. We have already seen this take place.

Some students now use GCSEPod in their mentoring sessions, showing off poster mind maps that they have completed through using GCSEPod (interestingly this is something being done by a student on the Gifted and Talented register who is entitled to Pupil Premium), as well as small groups of students entitled to Pupil Premium working together on accessing the service.

GCSEPOD IN THE WHOLE SCHOOL

As on 20th February, 78% of students in Year 11 have accessed and used the service (within 3 weeks of launch). In Year 10, the figure is reduced to 41%. Bearing in mind that the launch to Year 10 was less aggressive, this was to be expected. It is anticipated that over the next half term, we aim to have figures for both years hitting 80%.

2015 RESULTS UPDATE...



There are lots of individual students who accessed GCSEPod very specifically who have exceeded target grades (clear correlation). Pupil Premium students who accessed GCSEPod regularly (at least once a week) achieved 82% 5A-C including English and Maths, compared with 23% of students entitled to Pupil Premium who did NOT access GCSEPod regularly.*



Garrett Murray, Assistant Head

Find out how GCSEPod could impact your results, call 0191 338 7830.



Subject Knowledge



Exam Board Filtering



Exam Specific Playlists



Current & new specs



Community Question Bank



Assignment Setting



Automated Intervention



iPhone and Android Apps



Setup & Support



Advanced Usage Reporting

