



CamSTAR
Cambridge School
Teachers & Research

STAFF PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

2023/2024

IN CONJUNCTION WITH CAMSTAR

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Welcome Message



Cam STAR



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Welcome Message



At St Peter's Catholic School, a culture of continuous professional development is at our core, and we take pride in providing opportunities for all staff to have development opportunities. High quality teaching improves pupil outcomes, and effective professional development offers a crucial tool to develop teaching quality and subsequently enhance children's outcomes in the classroom. Research has found that professional development, on average, has a positive effect on pupil attainment (EEF, 2021). The Teacher Development Trust's 'Developing Great Teaching' report (2016) has stated that successful PD strategies a 'sustained, coherent programme' rooted in evidence and explicitly linked to student outcomes,

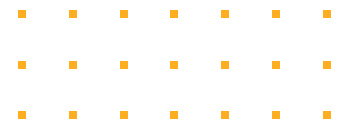


Sarah Shelton

*Director of Learning
Personal Development*

At St. Peter's our Professional Development model is built around this goal, through a variety of pathways. One of these pathways is working with "CamSTAR®, a network of schools who work together to support school-based Teacher Research and / or Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The network is international, across the whole of the UK and international schools round the world. The philosophy that underpins CamSTAR® is straightforward – Teacher Knowledge is at the heart of effective teaching and learning, and the professional right of teachers to engage with, generate and disseminate such knowledge is paramount for teachers' continuing professional development."

Cam STAR



“Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better” Dylan Williams

“Cam STAR is based at the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education, CamSTAR (Cambridge, School Teachers and Research) is a national network of primary and secondary schools who believe school based enquiry to be the foundation of sustainable professional development for teachers – at every stage of their career. All staff are invited to take part in a mini research enquiries. Choice is central to this programme, it is supportive in helping us to make personalised and professional decisions about our own training needs, which reflect both our own interests and the school vision.

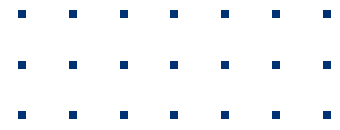


The research project is broken down over the course of the academic year:

1. Develop question
2. Carry out some background readings and research
3. Carry out your methodology
4. Share findings

As a final outcome of a disciplined enquiry, staff write up their findings and present them to staff, SLT and governors and share them in our informal CamSTAR café. The idea is many of these ideas can support whole staff professional growth, as well as support our School Improvement Plans.

Mrs S Lakin



Using pupil voice to improve opportunities to celebrate cultural diversity within St Peters.

Background



This quote sums up the reason why I chose the focus of my Camstar project, in addition to being an advocate for using pupil voice to inform policies I was interested in engaging with pupils thoughts and ideas on how well as a school we celebrated the cultural diversity within school to make a judgment on how inclusive we are as a school. According to school ethnicity data 15% of our pupils have an ethnicity other than white British, this is significantly lower than the national average which is 36.6% it therefore is more prevalent that pupils are given the opportunity to not only feel included within our school, but also for other pupils from more dominant ethnicity groups to learn from other cultures.

In many ways, what happens in our schools directly informs how society changes. If we do not feel included and represented in school, the risk is that this becomes the norm in society, and there is a growing body of evidence linking isolation and loneliness to poor mental wellbeing. Adam Boddison, CEO, nasen

Ultimately, by building more authentic portrayals of the diverse experiences, backgrounds, contexts and communities that make up modern Britain into our classrooms, we can work to prepare pupils for the modern world and stamp out prejudice, building a more tolerant and educated society, where all walks of life are not only accepted, but celebrated. Pearson Education Diversity and Inclusion Schools in report Nov 2020

I was therefore intrigued, from a pupil perspective on how far this was happening within classrooms and how we could celebrate cultural diversity more explicitly. I do appreciate that diversity and inclusion covers a wider scope than culture, such as disabilities and SEND but for the purposes of the projects, and to complete something which was manageable I decided to explore just one element of diversity.

Methodology



STAGE 1: Through reading a variety of books on different methods of engaging with pupil voice I decided that I would use the learnings from Edge Hill university and create a working party of pupils to provide a more informal way of gathering their views. Using an formal Microsoft questionnaire seemed too sterile to engage with the views the pupils would have on celebrating their culture. and through a discussion I could explain how I myself have mixed heritage and ethnicity, and how my mother came to England at the age of 9 without speaking any English. It also gave me the opportunity to press ideas further. I wanted the pupils to understand that this so that they felt comfortable to share their own experiences.

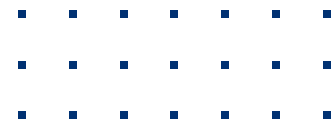
STAGE 2: Pupils were selected based on their ethnicity, this included pupils from Poland, Italy, Romania and Spain, in addition to Asia, India, Pakistan Africa, the Caribbean this was because I wanted all pupils with mixed heritage to have the opportunity, I wanted the pupils who spoke to me make the wrong assumption that skin colour was the main factor in identifying diversity.

STAGE 3: sent letters home to all pupils involved as pupils conversations were being recorded and transcribed so that there was a clear snapshot of what the pupils were. Parents and the pupils were informed of what was happening.

STAGE 4: 15 minute interviews took place with a selection of pupils (around 10 in each group) three questions were asked, but mainly prompts to gain further depth rather, The idea being pupils lead the discussion.

STAGE 5: Conversations were transcribed so that clear snapshots and quotes and pupil voice id evident

Mrs S Lakin



Using pupil voice to improve opportunities to celebrate cultural diversity within St Peters.

Findings



The pupils in years 7 & 8 were the best at articulating how they felt that cultural diversity was celebrated the most within school, they gave suggestions like there is a diverse range of staff; one pupil particularly noted that there are staff from Hong Kong. They said that they felt that culture was celebrated in Form, PSHE and within History and RE lessons. One pupil noted how Black History month is acknowledged. They believe that the school is inclusive as there are not just Catholics which attend.

Year 10 pupils articulated how they would like to have the opportunity to celebrate their own national sports and role models from their own heritage.

All pupils believed that there should be a culture day/festival within school where their cultural identity could be celebrated, they were very clear that they would like space to display ideas and educate the other pupils on their identity. They would like to wear their national dress and colours of their flags, and bring in dishes for other pupils to try.

Year 9 and 8 pupil's would like people from other cultures to come and speak to them in assembly, they felt that assemblies were not a celebration of different cultures, this was something they would like to change. The Hong Kong pupils liked the fact that they could lead on Chinese new year but believe that their culture extends beyond this.

Further implications



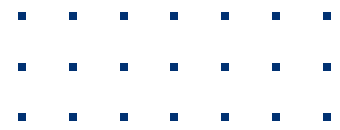
The Department for Education (DfE) highlights in its five-year strategy goals, that "ensuring young people are prepared for adulthood, the world of work and to be a fulfilled and active participant in society" is a priority. We have a duty of care to expose our pupils to as many experiences as possible, this is so they grow into tolerant adults. Do we do enough? Whilst this piece of work focused on cultural diversity, this has provoked further thought on how much we do in-terms of inclusion for SEND and pupils with disabilities. Do we discuss and celebrate role models who are from these groups, could some of our pupils with autism, ADHD etc provide some resources so they could educate other pupils and staff what it is like to live with these conditions? Only 19% of teaching staff say this group is 'very represented' in the content taught in school (Pearsons Diversity and Inclusion questionnaire 2019) 15.5% of all pupils in England have SEN - that's 1,373,800 children.

Form engaging in pupil voice all year groups expressed a wish for a culture day where there was an opportunity to share their cultural heritage and identities. This has been shared with key members of the SLT to support for next academic year. One point which was raised by a pupil from Hong Kong was that cultural groups tend to stick together and not mix as much, therefore further work is needed here. Some pupils have asked if we can make the diversity pupil group voice a regular meeting as they enjoyed the discussions around how their heritage can be celebrated in school. This again is something which will be implemented in the next academic year, along with pupil voice input on how we design our Culture Day.

From discussions more celebration is needed across departments so that pupils could identify more than RE and History in which they feel that diversity is celebrated. Going forward this will be an agenda item for DOLs so that we can map the opportunities where role models and cultures from across the world can be focused upon.

Next year further work will be completed based around form saints to provide the opportunity for a wider reflective range which reflects our school community. All in all there are many things we do well, but opportunities for us to do better.

Mrs S Lakin



Using pupil voice to improve opportunities to celebrate cultural diversity within St Peters.

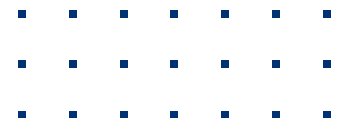
Research



- Using Qualitative and Quantitative data to inform our support for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Students, Edge Hill university 2019.
- Schools, pupils and their characteristics: Department for Education, 2020
- Black Lives Matter: how to teach children about anti-racism in a racist world, Anti-Bullying Alliance, 2020
- About Loneliness, Mind, 2019
- 4 reasons why classrooms need diversity education, The Edvocate, 2016
- Place and Belonging in School: why it matters today, NEU, 2020
- Black Mixed-race Male Experiences of the UK Secondary School Curriculum, Remi Joseph-Salisbury, 2017
- Measuring Poverty 2020, Social Metrics Commission, 2019
- Special educational needs in England, Department for Education, 2020
- Consulting Pupils: What's In It For Schools?:Flutter, Julia, Ruddock, Jean 2004
- How To Improve Your School: Giving Pupils. a voice by Rudduck, Jean 2004



Miss L Shaw



1 Preface

Thousands of pupils a year transition from primary to secondary education. It is an important part of their school experience, but do we understand the process and how it impacts those actively involved? Why are certain students having a positive transition, while other pupils are having a negative experience? How are we implementing strategies to improve this important transition?

So, St Peter's Catholic School pupils were asked, how have you found the transition from Primary to Secondary School?

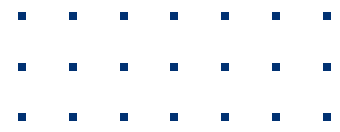
2 Background

According to Harris, Nowland, and Todd (2024), 30% of pupils have difficulties during transition. They found SEN and EAL pupils are overlooked, children from a minority background have the greatest academic decline and girls experience hypersexuality. This is supported by evidence from those explicitly with Autism expressing that they feel overwhelmed and unprepared for secondary education (Minnie, 2023). Furthermore, research exploring the experiences of LGBTQ+ students found devastating facts that they are the most likely to have a negative experience because of bullying (Horton, 2022). Whereas pupils who have lots of friends, particularly from primary school, are more likely to have a positive experience (Sime, Gilligan, Scholtz, 2021).

3 Methodology

I created a Year 7 qualitative questionnaire (19 students) and a quantitative questionnaire (55 pupils). Both surveys had the same twenty-one questions, but for the qualitative questionnaire, students were asked to explain each answer further with a verbal or written response.

Miss L Shaw



4 Summary

There is evidence that pre-intervention (in Primary school) has an important effect on the transition experience. In the qualitative and quantitative data, most responses were from pupils remembering the transition day and valuing the booklet. Also, both surveys found that MfL and Science were perceived as the biggest academic jumps with students clearly stating the content and lesson approach are very different (going from fun lessons with games to structured independent lessons). It was clear the post-interventions (in Secondary schools) were helping with Form Tutor support being the most effective.

Those who stated to having a positive transition linked it to having more friends (mostly from Primary School or multiple classes) and understanding the rules. This particularly benefited EAL students. Despite this, there are still students experiencing a hard or negative transition with indication students with SEN, PP, EAL or female are more vulnerable.

5 Future Implications

In summary, to improve future transitions I suggest a variety of interventions should be enforced before entering Secondary school and during Year 7. Some suggestions that can be carried out in Primary Schools are more transition days, meeting future teachers/fellow pupils, and identifying vulnerable students early on so support can be put in place. Year 7 interventions might be closely monitoring vulnerable children (to a negative experience), school tours, and specific transition support (nurture groups).

Regarding future CAMSTAR projects, I feel more research should be conducted on the transition from primary to secondary education, specifically for SEN, PP, EAL, or female students. There was an indication that they were more likely to have a negative experience. For example, feeling it is fast-paced and overwhelming. However, there is little evidence for these individual groups to conclude a trend. On the other hand, my research has given me an increased understanding of the transition process and the impact on the students actively involved.

Mrs K Hutchings

How we can use seating plans to improve participation ratio in the classroom?

1 Background

Following the recent focus in teaching & learning circles on Rosenshine's 10 Principles, along with Lemov's discussion of 'ratio' in his guide 'How to Teach Like a Champion' I have been thinking about how to consciously improve the active participation in my classroom. I decided to focus on Rosenshine's suggestion to 'ask a large number of questions and check the responses of all students' (2012). In recent years we had, as a school, already introduced a principle of prioritising cold-calling in the classroom, described by Tom Sherrington as 'The #1 strategy for inclusive classrooms' (2021). However, despite my best efforts I was aware that I was not always consistent applying this strategy, and could on occasion lapse into asking questions that invited hands up. This can allow some students to dominate the conversation while others might spend a significant portion of the lesson without the 'active participation' advocated by Lemov.

While exploring various ideas on social media I found a blog by David Didau describing his use of 'messy markbooks'; effectively a strategy of using a paper copy of the seating plan which is then annotated during the lesson to note down which students have directly responded to questions. This seemed to suit my desire to improve my use of cold calling, and formed the basis of my research going forwards.

2 Methodology

STAGE 1 - BASELINE: 2 lessons were used to establish a 'baseline'. I recorded the students who answered questions, whether it was 'cold called' or 'hands up'. This would allow for a measurement of ratio improvement. Obviously this was subject to the Heisenberg Principle - while I tried to conduct myself 'as usual' it must be recognised that the focus on measuring classroom participation may have impacted my baseline measurements. However, I found that despite a school practice of cold calling, I still asked several questions that invited hands-up in all lessons, and allowed some students to answer more than once while between 1/4-1/3 of students did not answer a question at all.

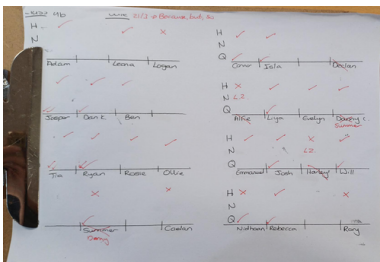
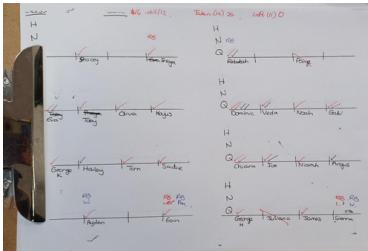
STAGE 2 - INSTITUTING CLIPBOARDS: I made a paper copy of the seating plan for each class, adding space for question responses, homework hand-in and general notes. A new page is used each week (each lesson is colour-coded), to enable me to track participation and any other issues across a week rather than individual lessons. I also make notes on whether students have struggled with a question, if I need to return to them, or if they have skipped a mini-whiteboard task. The clipboards were not discussed with students.

STAGE 3 - REVIEW: Comparisons were made to the initial 'baseline' data, along with anonymous student responses to an online survey to explore their perception of participation in English.

Mrs K Hutchings

How we can use seating plans to improve participation ratio in the classroom?

4 Findings



I have found that I am much more aware of ensuring all students are asked, and that I don't just keep calling on the same students; by physically recording contributions I am much more conscious of who is and is not speaking. I've extended the records to include homework, attendance, equipment etc, meaning I feel I have a much better awareness of patterns that emerge in my classroom beyond participation.

In feedback from students, 88% reported an awareness of my use of clipboards, and most had a rough idea of how they were being used. Of particular interest was 45% of students did not feel they made a difference to the lesson; I am actually reassured by this as I did not want it to become a tool that distorts the lesson, but subtly helps me to manage the classroom more effectively. Only 2 students out of 40 reported answering a question in English less than once a week, which is a significant improvement on the 15%-20% I identified at the beginning of the study. Significantly, 86% of students identify that participation in English is important to their progress, so a mechanism that makes little explicitly conscious impact on the student's experiences in lessons but also ensures that the ratio of participation has dramatically improved can only be a positive.

5 Future Implications

- Consciously tracking participation significantly improves participation ratio.
- Strategies such as clipboards make very little difference to the student experience of the classroom; they are not a distraction and do not seem to 'raise the stakes' in participation.
- Having a pre-prepared space for recording other classroom information (homework, time-out cards, warnings, blue cards etc) makes it far more likely that these will be logged without disrupting the flow of the lesson. It also makes this information available easily from one lesson to the next easily, allowing me to have a better awareness of ongoing concerns.
- MWB tasks are briefly noted; I would like to expand this to note students who are struggling with those tasks to enable me to circle back at a later time.

6 Further Reading

<https://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Principles-of-Instruction-Rosenshine.pdf%20https://learningspy.co.uk/featured/messy-markbooks-how-to-monitor-participation-in-lessons/>
<https://www.innerdrive.co.uk/blog/maximise-cognitive-engagement/#:~:text=Doug%20Lemov%3A%20Participation%20ratio%20is,and%20deep%20students%20are%20thinking%20https://teacherhead.com/2021/02/07/cold-calling-the-1-strategy-for-inclusive-classrooms-remote-and-in-person/>

Mrs S Shelton

What is the impact of establishing 'communities of practice?'

1 Background

It is increasingly apparent in educational settings now that a growing body of scholars, educators and policy makers that schools should be reconceptualised as "learning organisations" that can react more quickly to changing external environments, embrace innovations as an organisation, as well as improve student outcomes. Many scholars have written about learning organisations as a "multi-level concept involving individual behaviour, teamwork, and organisation-wide practices and culture."(OECD, 2024) Despite strong support for this vision, there does seem to be a lack of research and practice in schools to know how to best do this. Any vision to transform a school into a learning organisation should be one where each individual is encouraged to seize learning opportunities throughout life, to broaden knowledge, skills and attitudes – not just our pupils but all stake holders. A growing body of evidence shows that teachers' professional development can have a positive impact on student performance and teachers' practice. It is incredibly hard for teachers to engage in professional development however, because of the busy day-to-day requirements of the job and even harder if there is no structure to do this. It is important in school to create opportunities to collaborate and to appreciate our inter dependence. While many CPD opportunities will be well facilitated, research dictates that colleagues in schools are unlikely to translate learning into schools effectively unless sufficient time and resource is provided within an effective learning culture in school (Cordingley et al, 2018; Mccrea, 2018; Papay & Kraft, 2015). A challenge for school leaders is to be able to carefully curate which CPD opportunities are effective and which might be best avoided.

2 Related Reading

Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) write, "The vision of practice ... requires most teachers to rethink their own practice, to construct new classroom roles and expectations about student outcomes, and to teach in ways they have never taught before." However, teachers' efficacy beliefs influence the amount of effort teachers put into teaching, their willingness to adopt new teaching strategies, and their ability to persevere in the face of challenges (Bandura, 1997). The more people believe they can effect positive future outcomes, the more motivated they will be to work towards these outcomes, and thus, achieve them. These theories thus point to the critical role that teachers' efficacy beliefs play in the work of improving student learning. If teachers believe that they can positively affect student learning, they are more likely to put forth the effort to implement different pedagogical strategies, and to keep trying even when faced with setbacks. Wenger writes that were we see great learning organisations, or as she write 'Communities of Practice', there is "mutual engagement" with staff who have different roles... different relations.. and complementary competencies ..and learning that looks to "maximise interactions between generations." Wenger states it is important to have "the mix of participation and non-participation ... to reflect our power as individuals and communities to define and affect our relations to the rest of the world."

3 Methodology

The research conducted this academic year takes a "communities of practice" approach to explore the connections between teachers' evidence-based decision-making practices and their efficacy beliefs. The impact of staff collaborative community research has been explored in a number of ways, primarily through questionnaires and observation instruments to measure and analyse teacher engagement, expectations and impact. Using CamSTAR as a tool to support a learning community, it was essential to encourage colleagues to be innovative in their daily practice. The idea was to encourage staff to look at an aspect of their role they wanted to review / develop / expand and have the ability to do that, acknowledging that some initiatives and experiments will fail, while others will succeed. Openness to failure was an important aspect of the methodology – because problems and mistakes should be seen as opportunities for learning. To explore the impact of this rationale and to be a learning organisation, it is important to create opportunities for staff to learn about their learning together and take time to consider what each person understands about the learning and knowledge they have created – the CamSTAR café is a key opportunity for this to take place in an informal setting, with pastries and coffee, but to provide a calendared opportunity to come together.

Mrs S Shelton

What is the impact of establishing 'communities of practice?'

4 Important Findings

When a school is running smoothly and student outcomes are good, as is the case at St Peter's, it can be easy to take for granted the strengths and talents that make up the school workforce. The use of CamSTAR to create a learning community as a means to improve teaching practice and pupil outcome is a move that staff certainly support and value, as indicated by teachers' perceptions of impact as cited in questionnaires. Indeed, at the start of CamSTAR most staff embarked on this journey to improve their own knowledge, skills and abilities in their classrooms but recognised that their findings could have an impact on e.g.: whole school literacy, behaviour, and well-being. Staff noted that a reason for getting involved was to do something they were passionate about and interested in which could then be shared with the whole school community - CamSTAR provided them with autonomy over their own professional development and empowered them to make change to their own practice and support others to do the same. Sadly, due to pressures of planning, marking and general teaching 2/3 of those who began the CamSTAR journey have been unable to offer the required time to the research and unable to complete summative findings / share research in our CamSTAR cafe. Those who have stayed the course have spoken of the importance of flexibility and working at their own pace as a key component for being able to conduct their own research. As a school there needs to be greater thought about how we can ensure more staff who commit to CamSTAR are able to complete it if we are to take this idea of communities of practice forward into the next academic year. Research conducted is a snapshot measurement of communities of practice at St Peter's. Future research is recommended to focus on the development of communities of practice in the school workplace by including measurements.

5 Decision to Actions

Those who have participated in CamSTAR feel it has been a valuable learning experience and I certainly feel the breadth of research done, highlights the need to put our own staff at the centre of their own professional development. INSET opportunities next year, for example, could offer tailored CPD sessions for smaller groups of teachers and support staff, based on the areas for improvement that arise from the QA cycles. These will be led by teachers who have expertise, have shown strong practice, perhaps through their participation in CamSTAR, and are part of the leadership team or a UPS teacher. Teachers can select which session to attend or they may be guided to one by their line manager. CamSTAR could also be a key component required for UPS staff to support the criteria for UPS for staff paid at this level to demonstrate that they are "highly competent in all elements of the relevant standards; and that ... achievements and contribution to the school are substantial and sustained." This will allow us as educators to keep pace with the current standards and initiatives but also it ensures we share ideas as a learning community of research led strategies that can have a positive impact on pupil outcomes. It is worthwhile encouraging those that deliver CPD to share their academic references so that others can also read into the topic further if they wish. Access to new research is important and a key strength of CamSTAR has been the additions to our T and L library in the staffroom. Moving forward, there is certainly enthusiasm and support for communities of practice at St Peter's and I very much hope we are able to continue offering CamSTAR to staff as an opportunity for teacher led CPD. Creating enough time for CPD can be challenging beyond the allocated INSET which is often dedicated to whole school needs but it would be helpful to have CAMSTAR built into the CPD calendar to allow for greater collaboration and sharing of ideas amongst staff who are taking part and perhaps to allow for coaching opportunities, should staff wish, as they trial research led ideas into e.g: their lessons. Empowering staff development and creating a positive classroom climate is central to the success of any school. As the eminent educationalist, Professor Dylan William, says: "If we create a culture where every teacher believes they need to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better, there is no limit to what we can achieve."

6 Further Reading

School improvement architecture Building an intelligent, proportionate, and connected system of Improvement – Jan 2024

What makes a school a learning organisation? A guide for policy makers, school leaders and teachers. OECD, 2024.

Knowing in action: Beyond communities of practice A Amin, J Roberts - Research policy, 2008 – Elsevier

Communities of practice theory and the role of teacher professional community in policy implementation -CE Coburn, MK Stein

Development of professional learning communities through action research: understanding professional learning in practice -P Johannesson - Educational Action Research, 2022 - Taylor & Francis

Mr K Mallon

What are the opportunities and impacts AI has on teaching?

1 Background

The integration of AI in classrooms is significantly transforming education, bringing both promising opportunities and challenging implications. Recent advice from the Department for Education (DfE) in the UK highlight that AI is enhancing personalised learning, automating administrative tasks, and providing advanced data analytics. These technologies allow teachers to tailor educational experiences to individual student needs, thus improving engagement and outcomes. For example, AI-driven platforms can identify areas where students struggle and adapt content accordingly, offering additional resources or alternative explanations.

However, these advancements come with notable concerns. The DfE has cautioned about the ethical implications of data privacy and the potential for AI to exacerbate educational inequalities. Schools with limited resources may struggle to implement these technologies effectively, widening the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. Furthermore, reliance on AI could undermine the teacher-student relationship, reducing the personal interaction that is crucial for holistic development.

There is clearly a risk in the use of AI for all concerned in terms of the devaluation of traditional teaching skills and critical thinking. A common misconception amongst pupils (and maybe some staff) is that the product is valued more highly than the process - in other words, the actual finished essay is more important than the thought, crafting and deliberation used to construct it. The overreliance on AI by teachers can in itself mean the thought process and critical thinking devoted to lessons maybe sacrificed. As AI continues to evolve, its integration into education must be managed carefully to balance the benefits with the potential drawbacks.

2 Methodology

The methodology behind incorporating AI into teaching involves a strategic approach to harnessing technology for various educational tasks. My research and application in this area have focused on several key areas. First, using AI to mark pupil work has streamlined assessment processes, providing quicker feedback and reducing the administrative burden on teachers. This involves employing algorithms that can evaluate written work for grammar, coherence, and adherence to criteria, although it has shown varying success in accurately capturing nuanced student responses. Secondly, AI-generated model paragraphs serve as effective teaching tools, demonstrating high-quality writing for students to emulate. These models are created using advanced language models that ensure clarity and adherence to academic standards.

Additionally, AI has been utilised to draft risk assessments, policies, and letters to parents, significantly saving time and ensuring consistency in communication. These documents are tailored to specific contexts and requirements, although they occasionally require human refinement to ensure appropriateness and tone.

AI is also used to produce bespoke articles, offering customised content that caters to specific educational needs or topics of interest. My previous experience with similar AI tools has been mixed; while AI can efficiently generate content and administrative documents, it sometimes falls short in understanding complex educational nuances and personalisation, necessitating a balanced integration of AI with human oversight.

4 Findings

Resources such as articles: The use of AI classroom to create bespoke articles has yielded insightful yet mixed results. AI efficiently integrates subject terminology and content, generating informative pieces tailored to specific educational needs. However, a significant drawback is the lack of providence, as pupils are unlikely or unable to reference secondary sources, undermining the development of critical research skills. Additionally, AI-generated content often requires meticulous review, as it can be vague or factually incorrect. This necessitates careful oversight by teachers to ensure accuracy and relevance, highlighting the importance of balancing AI capabilities with human expertise to maintain educational integrity.

Mr K Mallon

What are the opportunities and impacts AI has on teaching?

Resources such as modelled paragraphs: Using AI to produce modelled paragraphs for pupils has been particularly beneficial in English, where demonstrating specific writing skills is crucial. AI-generated paragraphs effectively showcase techniques like varied sentence beginnings with different word classifications or the use of structural features. This tool saves teachers from the time-consuming task of searching through resources for examples, providing immediate and relevant models. It works best with shorter texts, such as those fitting on a single A4 page, ensuring clarity and focus.

Production of formal documents: Using AI to produce letters, policies, and risk assessments has proven highly efficient, saving considerable time and ensuring formal, grammatically correct documents. AI-generated content often includes additional information that the writer might not have initially considered, providing a valuable bonus. However, it remains crucial for individuals to meticulously check all AI-generated content, as it serves only as a starting point. There is a danger that staff might assume these documents are comprehensive when they are not, particularly with risk assessments and policies. Thus, human oversight is essential to ensure accuracy and completeness, preventing over-reliance on AI.

Marking pupil work: Marking pupils' work has shown particular effectiveness in supporting literacy assessment, providing actionable feedback for improvement. When AI is used alongside marking schemes, it offers useful insights, though its accuracy varies with subjective criteria, often resulting in vague and generic comments. The technology works best with objective marking schemes, suggesting a promising area for further research. A significant limitation is that AI requires digital text input, making it unusable for handwritten responses, which are common in exams. Thus, while AI has potential, its current application in marking is constrained by these factors.

5 Future implications / Areas for further research

The research above has focussed on the use of AI for teaching staff but future implications of AI in the classroom extend beyond its impact on staff to significantly affect pupils' learning experiences. AI has the potential to support pupils' work through effective use of prompts and automated marking, offering personalised feedback and helping them develop their skills more efficiently. However, the rise of AI also raises concerns about plagiarism, as students may use AI tools to generate content, challenging the integrity of academic work. Current tools to detect AI-generated work are still limited, making it difficult to ensure authenticity. Furthermore, AI can support adaptive teaching, tailoring educational resources to meet individual learning needs more precisely. This bespoke approach can enhance engagement and improve outcomes by addressing each pupil's strengths and weaknesses. However, the implementation of AI must be managed carefully to balance these benefits with ethical considerations and the need for human oversight. Further research is essential to explore effective strategies for integrating AI in a way that supports both teachers and pupils, ensuring that the technology enhances learning without compromising educational values.

6 Wider Reading

[Guidance on AI Detection and Why We're Disabling Turnitin's AI Detector | Brightspace Support | Vanderbilt University](#)

[Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Detection in Turnitin - Digital Education \(lincoln.ac.uk\)](#)

[DFE "Generative artificial intelligence in education"](#)

[GPT & Auto Essay Marking - by Chris Wheadon \(nomoremarking.com\)](#)

[If we are setting assessments that a robot can complete, what does that say about our assessments? \(nomoremarking.com\)](#)

[https://www.google.co.uk/url?](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewi6s_21rdqEAXVjX0EAHQ84CDsQFnoECBcQ.AQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.reddit.com%2F%2FchatGPT%2Fcomments%2F11iv2uc%2Ftheres%2Fno%2Factual%2Fcut%2Foff%2Fdate%2Ffor%2Fchatgpt%2Fif%2Fyou%2F%2Fusg=AOVaw3vXnD7B0eO90buBP3lYrZo&opi=89978449)

[sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewi6s_21rdqEAXVjX0EAHQ84CDsQFnoECBcQ.AQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.reddit.com%2F%2FchatGPT%2Fcomments%2F11iv2uc%2Ftheres no actual cut off date for chatgpt if you%2F%2Fusg=AOVaw3vXnD7B0eO90buBP3lYrZo&opi=89978449](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewi6s_21rdqEAXVjX0EAHQ84CDsQFnoECBcQ.AQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.reddit.com%2F%2FchatGPT%2Fcomments%2F11iv2uc%2Ftheres%2Fno%2Factual%2Fcut%2Foff%2Fdate%2Ffor%2Fchatgpt%2Fif%2Fyou%2F%2Fusg=AOVaw3vXnD7B0eO90buBP3lYrZo&opi=89978449)

[ChatGPT: The cognitive effects on learning and memory - Bai - 2023 - Brain-X - Wiley Online Library](#)

Mrs N Ferry

Why is reading for pleasure important and how can we encourage it?

1 Background

Reading for pleasure has a positive impact on mental health and academic achievement across the curriculum. Reading affects a sense of self and reading aloud to children is a “shared and highly social bonding experience and an amazing way of creating the group cohesion that is needed for a happy childhood” (Farshore and HarperCollins, 2024). In addition, YA fiction has been shown to provide a form of escapism because “it is highly engaging and relevant to readers and identifying with situations or characters is compelling, immersive and engrossing” (Farshore and HarperCollins, 2024). However, recent research such as the Mercer’s Company *Reading and Writing for Pleasure* and the Renaissance Learning *What and How are Kids reading* shows reading for pleasure amongst secondary age children in decline. 23% of 0-17 year olds read for pleasure 4 days a week or more, a decline from 38% in 2012. For 11-13 year olds, only 1 in 5 read daily. Those who rarely or never read has risen from 13% to 22% in the last ten years. For 11-13s it is almost 33%. 38% of 14-17 year olds boys rarely or never read. Over 50% of 14-17 year olds say that they have too much schoolwork to read.

The other issue highlighted is the fact that although primary school age children often choose books above their reading age, secondary children tend to continue with the same popular authors such as Jeff Kinney and David Walliams. The Renaissance Learning survey of reading for pleasure found that only 43% of 8-18 year olds enjoy reading for pleasure. The gap between girls and boys enjoying reading has closed from 10.7% to 4.8% but this is because girls are enjoying reading less than they did, not because boys are enjoying reading more. Therefore, there is a need to identify barriers to reading for pleasure and find positive means of encouraging engagement by increasing access to books and reading communities. Interestingly, 30.6% of children said that listening to an audiobook got them interested in reading books on paper. Other benefits of reading for pleasure include expanding horizons, improved empathy, relaxation and wanting to talk about a subject more.

2 Related Reading

The Farshore and HarperCollins Children’s Books annual review of reading for pleasure (2024)

The Mercer’s Company, Reading and Writing for Pleasure: a framework for practice (2024)

Renaissance Learning, What and How are Kids reading: the Book Behaviours of Pupils 2024

The Teaching Realm: An Interview with John Biddle #12- The Reading Realm (2024)

3 Methodology and findings

All KS3 pupils completed the OUP reading for pleasure survey during form time in September 2023. This revealed that only a small minority of pupils enjoyed reading in their spare time and that this declined in Y8 and Y9 compared to Y7. Most pupils identified that their English teacher enjoyed reading but many pupils themselves felt that reading for pleasure was boring and irrelevant. Further research was undertaken with pupil voice during a literacy curriculum review in June 2024. This revealed similar issues, particularly a lack of enjoyment of reading. Some pupils see reading as a subject to learn rather than as an enjoyable pastime. Therefore, affirmative feedback and guidance from adults is important; for example, recommending books, reading books aloud and offering spaces to be a reader. Adults can also be role models of personal engagement as readers. Reading needs a high profile to increase engagement and motivation. The Mercer’s Company research suggests treating pupils as readers rather than as “doing reading” as this identifies children as experts and respects their views and ideas as readers. This research also highlights the importance of “informal interactions around texts” to nurture positive connections.

During the 2023-24 academic year, pupils have been given opportunities to enhance reading for pleasure such as BookBuzz (a free book for every Y7), a Y7 weekly book club, the Scholastic Book Fair, World Book Day and form time reading. Nevertheless, there is still much work to be done in enhancing pupils’ opinions of reading and motivating them to read for pleasure regularly.

4

Further actions

Obstacles to reading for pleasure include motivation and distractions and finding the time to read. Lack of access to books is a significant barrier so getting a library at St Peter's is a key priority. It is important that pupils have access to a rich choice of texts and dedicated times and places to read. With this in mind, a "Love to Read" time is being added to the timetable. Encouraging talk about books and book recommendations is also key, as is responding to pupils' views about reading for pleasure to encourage their self-efficacy as readers. Opportunities such as the Scholastic Book Fair and book clubs should help to embed support for reading for pleasure. All new Y7s are part of the summer book club and have received a free copy of *Wonderscape* by Jennifer Bell to read over the summer, along with an activity pack. We hope to build on this to encourage these pupils to continue to read for pleasure throughout their school life. Seeking the support of parents/carers is also crucial, so the proposal is that subjects provide recommended reading relating to the topics being studied in lessons. to encourage pupils to read further to enhance their understanding. Y7 parents are given the opportunity to attend a literacy and numeracy evening near the beginning of Y7.

Mrs N Kenny & Mrs R Mason

1 Our Question:- _____

Which of our previous staff wellbeing incentives at St Peter's have had the most positive impact on staff motivation in order to plan future effective wellbeing strategies?

2 Research taken from Anna Freud : Mentally Healthy Schools

There have been a limited number of studies looking at school staff wellbeing. The majority of studies focused on individual-level interventions such as mindfulness. Fewer studies have focused on organisational level systems.

It is suggested that a combination of individual and organisational approaches to mental health and wellbeing is likely to be most effective, rather than focusing wholly on the individual. It is clear that further research is required. (Links to some of the most recent studies are listed below).

Here are some of the findings:

- Better teacher wellbeing is associated with better student wellbeing and lower psychological difficulties.
- A better teacher-student relationship is associated with better student wellbeing.
- Teachers with poorer wellbeing may be less able to develop supportive relationships.
- Teachers agreed that their wellbeing affects their ability to teach in the classroom.
- There are many factors that impact teacher's wellbeing, not simply workload. Personal life and circumstances also impact wellbeing, for example, bereavement, relationship difficulties, childcare.
- The strive for perfection impacts some teacher's wellbeing negatively.
- Being organised and being able to prioritise can have a positive impact on wellbeing.
- More schools are striving to be more open about mental health and wellbeing.
- Pupils in primary school were attuned to their teacher's mood and could usually pick up when they were stressed, even if teachers tried to hide it.
- Mindfulness techniques have helped manage some individual teachers' stress levels.

The seven initiatives being investigated:-

- 1. Secret Saint.** This initiative happens every November for the whole month. People email their request to join to the organiser who then randomly matches each 'Saint' to their 'Saintee'. For the whole month, the Saint does nice/ kind/ generous things for their Saintee in secret. It could be a nice poem or quote placed on their desk, or a small gift in their pigeon hole, either weekly or just whenever the Saint chooses to.
- 2. Secret Santa.** This is the standard initiative, where again people request to join in and then are given a randomly selected colleague to buy a gift for at a suggested price limit of £10. Gifts are then handed out in secret, at a small Christmas gathering in the last week of term.
- 3. Christmas Raffle.** SLT join together, to supply a selection of raffle gifts, one for each working day in December. The organiser then places the names of all staff onto a 'wheel of fortune', this is then spun each working day and the lucky winner gets to go and choose a gift.
- 4. Staff Shout Out.** When a member of staff wants to recognise/thank/praise a colleague for anything, big or small, they can email the comments over to the co-ordinator, and they will be sent anonymously to the recipient, hopefully resulting in a lovely surprise.
- 5. Mugged Off.** This began with 3 members of the Wellbeing committee buying mugs and filling them with treats for a deserving colleague of their choice. The idea was that the colleague would then enjoy the treats and refill the mug to pass on to the next deserving recipient, or alternatively, they could keep the mug and buy a new one.
- 6. Star of the Month.** At the end of each month, Staff were encouraged to email in their nominations for 'Star of the Month', one for Teaching staff and one for Support Staff. During the SLT meeting, they would count up and discuss the nominations, and the winners would then be presented with a gift during the morning briefing session.
- 7. Staff Socials.** Every couple of months, a new Staff Social will be advertised, all staff are welcome to attend and may bring a +1 if they choose. There may be some cost to participants depending upon the activity, and school minibus travel is offered where possible. This could be a day out competing in a 'Wolf Run', an afternoon supporting a local football match, an evening meal at a local restaurant or a group session of 'Escape Rooms'.

Infographics:-

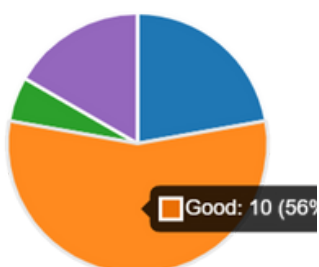
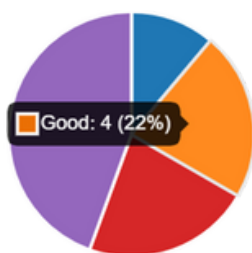
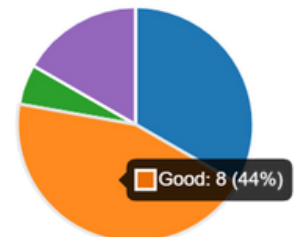
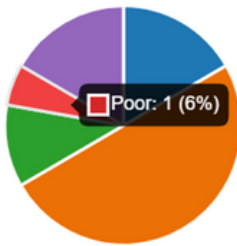
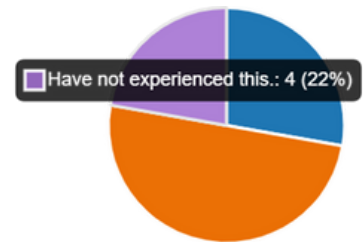
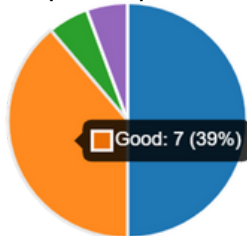
The blue section represents the amount of people who thought that initiative was 'excellent',

Orange represents 'good'

Green represents 'fair'

Red represents 'poor'

Purple represents 'have not joined in with this'



Conclusion and Recommendations:-

We conclude that the most successful initiatives to increase positive staff wellbeing, were the ones that occur annually. We feel that this is because they are only active for limited times so do not have the ability to 'fizzle out'. The raffle was jointly the most successful as it did not require any input at all from staff; it tied with the Staff socials which are also popular because it is a chance to get to know colleagues from other departments, and they provide fun opportunities outside of work.

We recommend continuing with the annual events, although a new introduction might be nice in April, maybe something Easter based, to spread them throughout the year but avoid the busy exam period. We also think the Staff Socials are a good thing to continue, just not too frequently and trying to include a wide range of activities so it is not always the same people that go on them.

Mr Branson and Mrs Moreton

Artificial Intelligence:
today's tool for teaching and learning?.

1 Background

The rapid technological developments in the field of AI, and its accessibility across various platforms, can support us with ease in our goal to teach our students well. Not all are technologically minded, but the advancements and competition amongst AI tools has forced such tools to be more intuitive and consequently much easier to grasp. We do, of course, have many experts in our midst at St Peter's, keen and willing to share their expertise with others for the benefit of staff and students.

Within computing we use Quizizz from year 7 through to year 13 in most lessons so students in St Peter's are familiar with this as a tool to support learning in and outside the classroom. This is used to perform literacy tasks, retrieval tasks and plenary quizzes. Within Quizizz there is a function that allows classroom resources to be developed with the use of AI.

Using this allows for classroom resources such as articles, worksheets, lesson slides and video clips (YouTube links) to be copied into Quizizz and multiple choice questions created on this resource. These can then be set to student to complete giving teachers and students instant feedback on their understanding and progress on topics and units.

Although students all use computers in computing lesson, making this a powerful tool for learning. It can still be used by all subject as an excellent resource for homework or revision.

2 Methodology

This project aims to leverage AI-driven tools, specifically Quizizz, to enhance student learning and engagement across various subjects at St Peter's. The methodology involves the following steps:

1. Tool Selection and Familiarisation: Quizizz has been selected as the primary platform for this project due to its familiarity among students and staff. AI capabilities within Quizizz will be explored to create customised classroom resources. This includes importing articles, worksheets, slides, and video clips to generate AI-assisted multiple-choice questions.

2. Resource Creation and AI Integration: Teachers will use Quizizz's AI functionalities to develop interactive learning resources for students. These resources will include quizzes, retrieval tasks, and literacy exercises. AI-generated questions will be reviewed by subject matter experts to ensure quality and relevance.

3. Implementation Across Year Groups: Quizizz will be incorporated into computing lessons from Year 7 to Year 13. Other subjects will utilise the platform primarily for homework and revision purposes, enabling teachers to provide instant feedback and track student progress.

4. Feedback and Iteration: Teachers will assess the effectiveness of Quizizz-based resources through student performance data and feedback. Adjustments will be made to the content and delivery as needed to improve outcomes.

5. Expert Collaboration and Training: Staff with expertise in AI and technology will provide guidance and training to other teachers, ensuring effective implementation and maximising the potential of AI tools in the classroom.

This methodology will enable both students and staff to make full use of AI-powered educational tools, enhancing learning experiences across all subjects.

Mr Branson and Mrs Moreton

Artificial Intelligence:
today's tool for teaching and learning?.

3 Findings

The implementation of AI-driven tools, particularly Quizizz, has shown significant benefits in enhancing student engagement and learning. Students demonstrated improved comprehension and retention of material through the use of AI-generated quizzes, particularly in literacy tasks and retrieval exercises. The instant feedback provided by Quizizz helped both students and teachers identify areas of strength and those requiring further improvement, leading to more targeted revision and support.

Teachers reported that the AI capabilities within Quizizz significantly reduced the time spent on resource creation, allowing them to focus more on delivering lessons and supporting students. Additionally, staff with varying levels of technological expertise found the platform intuitive and accessible, with minimal need for extensive training.

A notable finding was the potential for extending the use of AI-powered quizzes beyond computing lessons, as other subjects successfully incorporated the platform for homework and revision tasks. This has fostered a more cohesive learning experience across different departments, enhancing overall student outcomes.

Further evaluation and collaboration are recommended to continue refining the use of AI in the classroom, ensuring its sustained positive impact on learning across the school.

5 Further Action

Further actions for this project could include expanding the use of AI tools beyond Quizizz, incorporating other platforms to diversify the learning experience. Additionally, regular training sessions could be organised to ensure staff remain up-to-date with the latest AI advancements and best practices for classroom integration. Ongoing evaluation of student outcomes and teacher feedback will be crucial in refining the approach, and collaboration between departments could lead to the development of interdisciplinary resources. Lastly, a pilot programme could be introduced in other year groups or subject areas to assess the wider applicability and effectiveness of AI-supported learning.

6 Wider Reading

Artificial intelligence in education | UNESCO

What UNESCO does on AI in education

International Forum on AI and Education: Ensuring AI as a Common Good to Transform Education, 7-8 December 2021; synthesis report

International Forum on AI and the Futures of Education, developing competencies for the AI Era, 7-8 December 2020: synthesis report

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