

Case study City of London School



City of
London
School

Using Alps to develop tracking for pupils and reporting/scrutiny for the Board of Governors

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Context

City of London School is a leading academically selective day school educating boys between the ages of 10 – 18. We occupy an iconic position in the vibrant heart of the City of London, in the shadow of the dome of St Paul's Cathedral and across the river from the Tate Modern. We are non-aligned and have strong links with the City of London School for Girls in the nearby Barbican, and City Junior School in Gray's Inn. We recruit from all over London, and we are committed to offering transformational bursaries. With a school roll of over a 1000, the Sixth Form has over 280 pupils.

How is Alps used?

We have been using Alps since 2018 and it is an integral part of our tracking systems for pupils as well as offering us strong information to ensure we have developed our reporting and oversight to Governors. Whilst we first moved to Alps as it offered us stronger tracking and value-added for PreU, we have remained with Alps as we are now fully A Level and we are also developing the use in the GCSE years.

Sixth Form

By using the average GCSE score we are able to generate MEGs, which in the Junior Sixth are an internal monitoring and cross-referencing point. In the first two terms of Junior Sixth we can cross reference this to pupils struggling to adapt to the more independent work in the Sixth Form and give advice on moving from four to three A Levels and EPQ. We are then able to add our own robust data from the end-of-year

examinations in May and from this we can carefully pinpoint pupils in need of extra support or monitoring as they move into the Senior Sixth. Our interventions are more focused and pupil-centred due to the robust data and we can cross-reference to any learning differences and teacher concerns to ensure the right pupils are 'man-marked'. We are then able to add in more internal data in the Autumn Term and Spring term to cross-reference to the MEGs generated by the GCSE average, using this to highlight possible under-performance, and hence, intervene in the most fruitful way. The March Senior Sixth Mocks is a further data point which can be cross-referenced to MEGs and internal data, ensuring close and sensible scrutiny, aimed at the best possible outcomes.



Discussions within departments are enhanced by easily digestible thermometers, candid discussions about which areas need to be focused on are enriched, and interventions are precise and pupil-centred.

GCSE

We do not have KS2 data but do get out Third Form (Y9) to take CAT4 which can go into Alps to generate Prior Attainment and MEGs for GCSE. This means that we can operate a similar model here as for the Sixth, inputting the end-of-year exams in June, the Mocks in January of Fifth (Y11) Form and updating this with internal predictions linked to evidence collection from timed work.

Heads of Departments, Heads of Year, Section Heads and the Director of Studies

We have had Alps training for HoYs in the GCSE and Sixth Form to ensure that they can access Alps at every data input point and comfortably and confidently look at the data at a pupil level. This has ensured strong pastoral interventions to support pupils who might be struggling academically and it has encouraged conversations between the pastoral and academic teams.

The Heads of Department have had in-house training to refresh their confidence in Alps so that they can access the data at each point. They are then able to use the thermometers to look at the pupils for whom interventions would be sensible. The 'What If' function guides them to see what they need to do to meet School targets and interventions are sensibly targeted and timely. It ensures that we are all working together to have high expectations and we are also working together to hold the pupils to high standards. Red is hot, blue is not is such a straightforward reference point for HoDs and in our cluster groups where members of SMT have oversight, the comparisons that can be made and the ease with which pupils can be identified, along with comparison of teaching groups, has meant a common language is prevalent.

Discussions within departments are enhanced by easily digestible thermometers, candid discussions about which areas need to be focused on are enriched, and interventions are precise and pupil-centred. Teachers are able to see this is a tool for driving improvement and ensuring the best pupil outcomes and a culture of high standards permeates. Pedagogical discussions are improved by robust, trusted data and dialogue about how to help those who are struggling and which strategies work within our cohort have led to the sharing of ideas within and across subjects, year groups and sections.

Whole School

Alps analysis post results has been welcomed by the Board of Governors as it is clear, relevant and easily digestible. This has strengthened engagement and further improved oversight as comparisons to targets, areas to focus on for future improvement and granular analysis is straightforward.

We are also able to scrutinise outcomes across different groups within the school as we have entry points at Y6, Y7, Y9 and Y12. We can add in tracking of entrants from our Junior School, from our bursary programme and for those with learning differences. All of this provokes thoughtful and fruitful conversations that ensure a lack of complacency and a desire to continue to improve.

For Heads of Department and Heads of Year who aspire to Senior Management there has been the advantage of 'in-house' CPD as confidence with how to use data with colleagues, parents and pupils, how to implement it for tracking and monitoring, what are sensible and effective interventions are all strong areas that enhance their ability to apply for and be appointed to senior roles.

In summary

Alps has been met with a positive response due to its clarity, our ability to input robust internal data and therefore generate meaningful material that colleagues will engage with in a professional and thoughtful manner. We will continue to develop our systems, looking to develop the use of personalised targets, monitor and debate the best times for the right data to be used and to ensure we are using Alps to encourage every pupil to meet their potential in an atmosphere that cherishes academic excellence.



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