

Embedding a sustainable coaching culture

Oak Hill Academy

What began as an initiative to improve the quality of teaching and learning at Oak Hill Academy, quickly became the means to build a sustainable coaching culture, moving teaching from 50% good in 2010, to 100% good and 25% outstanding by 2014.

The Headteacher, Mandy Lancy, and her teachers began a programme of remote coaching with the help of independent Education Consultant, Mike Fleetham, with the aim of building a sustainable coaching culture within the school.

“The work that Mike has done with the teachers has been fantastic. They’ve all developed not just their teaching skills and confidence, but also their approach to using IRIS Connect. They are more open to being coached and overall it’s been a really positive experience.”

Mandy Lancy, Headteacher, Oak Hill Academy

The Problem

A visit from Ofsted in 2010 left staff at Oak Hill Academy feeling deflated and with a target to make at least 75% of teaching good. So Principal Mandy Lancy began looking for ways to rapidly boost morale and standards. After doing some research, video for professional development seemed the obvious tool to employ, but she was concerned that staff would be apprehensive and reluctant to use it.

She needed to find a system that would allow teachers to feel secure and safe because they’d have control over their videos.

The Solution

IRIS Connect instantly caught Mandy’s eye, and soon after adopting it the school started to see some great results, “It’s significantly impacted the teachers’ development, by boosting not only their skills but their confidence too,” says Mandy.

Once IRIS Connect was firmly embedded, the school decided to move their CPD up a notch and embarked on a 6 month remote and live coaching programme. With the help of Education Consultant, Mike Fleetham, teachers focused on specific areas of personal development and used remote coaching to insert new techniques in to their practice straight away, having an almost immediate effect on the learners.

After seeing considerable improvements in the teachers’ practice, Mike then began training some of them to become coaches themselves, so when he left the school they could sustain their own coaching programme.

Mike says:

I feel confident that the teachers' have enough skills embedded to be sustainable with IRIS Connect and for their strategy to develop under its own steam. I think the reason that this has worked so well is because from the start there were a handful of people who were totally dedicated to making it work.

They were people who were already comfortable with their teaching skills but they weren't comfortable with staying where they were. They wanted to get better and would basically fight tooth and nail to improve. Then all of a sudden their principal provided them with this powerful tool, which they picked up and ran with. It was the right place, right time, right people.

The Impact

Not only has Oak Hill Academy built a sustainable coaching programme, they've also exceeded Ofsted's target to make 75% of teaching good. Their team now comprises of 100% good teachers and 25% outstanding.

Relationships among staff and pupils have been strengthened, teachers have gained new skills and become more confident, newer teachers are learning from old hands and vice versa. All helping to grow an open door culture and ethos of sharing and collaboration amongst staff.

The school has found other innovative uses for the system as well; using it to improve students' learning behaviour by showing them clips of their reactions in class, and allowing teaching assistants to use the system. One teacher is even using it as a coaching video diary with the idea that eventually she will be able to coach herself.

*The Ofsted equivalent is [Education Review Office](#).