

Beauchamp College



Insted Feedback 2010

Introduction

Last year's inspection focused on learning, curriculum, extended services, truancy, tutor time and enrichment. As a way of evaluating the extent of development from last year, this year there has been a focus on punctuality, displays, creativity, celebrating student success and Moodle. These focuses were a result of the recommendations from last year's report as well as specific areas the team has been asked to investigate by members of staff. Over the past year, 70 students have observed 160 lessons and the following results have been obtained.

Punctuality

Generally, most departments are consistent in using strategies to promote punctuality. Due to this punctuality across the school is not a major problem. A lot of departments have their own course of action for dealing with problems regarding punctuality, which have proved to be very effective. Several departments keep late students behind at break, lunch or after school, depending on the lesson. A particularly effective method used within the Media Department regarding punctuality, included asking the student to stand at the doorway. This way the student became aware that being late was unacceptable, but at the same time did not miss out on the lesson's content as they were still able to listen to, and see, the teaching taking place. Along with this, many departments deal with late students in other ways that do not disrupt the rest of the class. For example, in Applied Learning, the late student was told to do the test which was being done in the lesson, outside of the classroom. Due to methods such as these, punctuality problems are, in most cases, addressed early, so that the problem does not persist. Some departments keep records to monitor the punctuality of students, and so those students who are persistently late, or show concern, have phone calls home and/or are put on a punctuality report.

Areas for Development

Although punctuality across the school is monitored and addressed in an excellent way keeping the problem to a minimum, some departments struggle to highlight the importance of it. In these cases, students do not regard punctuality as an issue, and so persist in lateness, as there are no repercussions. In such cases, departments should consider implementing some kind of consequence system to ensure that students arrive on time.

Displays

The college boasts an excellent use of displays to praise and encourage exceptional pieces of work. Therefore, displays are a means by which student success is celebrated, and in some departments names of pupils such as the 'Students of the Month' are also displayed. Not only this, but displays are also used by departments to present photographs from plays, dramas carried out in class time and to present photos of those who have excelled in sports at a higher level. A lot of departments also display key words and themes alongside pictures that are relevant to the course that in effect act as a visual stimulus to students. Several departments have used displays to show prospective GCSE and A-Level students what the course involves. Many boards are regularly updated with opportunities available to students. This can be particularly useful during exam time and for those considering a future in the subject. A lot of departments also have displays related to Insted, showing strengths and areas of focus for the coming year. Generally displays are vibrant and colourful, and help to build and maintain a motivating and positive learning environment.

Areas for Development

Although there are many displays throughout the college, in classrooms and corridors, some departments should try to update these more regularly, for example the information could be changed frequently to correspond with the topic being learnt. This would ensure that it provides optimum relevance to students. Pictures could also be updated more regularly in some departments to make for a more varied learning environment.

Creativity

Across the college Creativity Day was a great success. The majority of students worked with enthusiasm and were innovative throughout the day's activities. A variety of workshops took place within different departments which catered for all abilities. This flaunted the creative talent of the students and many pieces that were created and devised were performed at the end of the day. For example, the Honda Choir, which was put together by Mr Leech, was extremely successful, being performed and received with such enthusiasm. The Languages Department devised a play that was performed in four different languages, which proved to be an encouraging method in combining creativity with subject relevance. There were also many opportunities around the college for students to show off their music abilities whether they were music students or not. This proved to be very popular amongst students. Not only this, but a Media classroom was turned into a news room for the day. Students were delegated roles and deadlines were set

and a fantastic effort was made by students to devise a special edition of the 'Beauch Speech' magazine, within one day.

Areas for Development

A minority of departments did not participate in creativity day to ensure that student revision was not affected. However, these departments could consider adopting creative methods of revision as a compromise, such as creating mind maps or 3D models to visually represent key themes being studied. In this way, students would acquire a variety of skills for revision that would act as a visual stimulus to them in exams.

Celebrating Student Success

There is a variety of methods used throughout the college for celebrating student success. In classrooms, a positive, encouraging atmosphere is created where teachers positively commend students for good work, effort and contribution. In many departments, a Student of the Month or Year is selected to celebrate excellent work or progress. This has been shown to encourage students to work to the best of their ability, especially when rewards and prizes are given to the student alongside contacting home.

Some departments effectively promote excellent work done by students. This is done through displays of the work itself or photographs of the student. Furthermore, giving students the opportunity to perform or present their work has also been shown to be a beneficial way of celebrating student success. In Design, for example, awards for outstanding commitment and positive contribution were given out in front of students and their parents during an Open Evening and Drama regularly puts on productions to showcase the talents of the students.

The use of the Gifted and Talented programme has been used successfully in some departments, for example General Studies, where residential trips to Villiers Park are organised. This allows those students who consistently achieve high grades to be challenged.

Recommendations

Although some faculties extensively celebrate student success, it must be ensured that all departments make an effort to increase this celebration. This can be achieved in lessons with positive encouragement and praise, but also with presentations and showcases of work. It is advised that this is done across the whole college as it can encourage other students to work harder.

It would be beneficial to increase the opportunities available to Gifted and Talented students across the college to challenge these students to work to the best of their ability. However, it must also be ensured that celebrating student success does not become selective to those that consistently achieve high grades.

Moodle/ICT

The use of Moodle and other forms of VLE has increased dramatically since last year, for example Business Studies, where the number of resources available has improved. Many faculties use Power Points, videos and animations in their lessons to provide a variety of teaching methods. Moodle has been shown to be successful in aiding students with exam revision and coursework with an increase in the number of articles, past papers and quizzes uploaded. These have all been shown to be beneficial to the students' learning.

Some departments use Moodle in an innovative way. Beauty Therapy, for example, use 3D models to enhance the learning experience. As well as providing extra resources and quizzes, some departments have also created blogs to allow the communication between teachers and students more easily as well as giving students the opportunity to discuss topics further. Science has created an online calendar that allow teachers to post important dates and information to students quickly and effectively. Online textbook facilities, animations and videos have also proven to help students to revise, catch-up on a missed lesson and extend their knowledge effectively.

Nevertheless, there is a divide within the college in relation to staff's knowledge with using Moodle. In the larger departments, it is possible to have some staff trained and dedicated to use and update Moodle. For smaller departments, this is not always possible and, coupled with a lack of resources, means that VLE is not always used effectively.

Recommendations

It is advised that all faculties aim to use VLE in all lessons to create a variety of different teaching methods to suit different learners. It will also provide exciting ways of teaching and encourage students to be punctual to lessons. Although 56% of the students feel most of their lessons involved either themselves or their teacher using technology, it must be increased to all students experiencing technology in every lesson.

Moodle, although improved extensively from last year, needs to be used consistently across the college. The questionnaire shows that 31% of students use Moodle rarely in their lessons and 36% use it rarely at home. This may not indicate a lack of resources on Moodle, but instead suggest that students are not encouraged to use Moodle regularly. Therefore, it must be ensured that all departments make an effort to use and update Moodle regularly to encourage student use.

It is also advised that heads of departments ensure all teachers within their department are able to use Moodle proficiently to ensure it is updated regularly to develop teaching and learning.

Strengths across the whole college include:

- Excellent teacher/student relationships where encouragement and praise are frequent
- A variety of resources used in lessons, including excellent use of VLE and Moodle, to enhance learning
- Excellent target setting alongside a challenging pace to lessons that allow students to work to their best ability
- Energetic and enthusiastic teachers with good subject knowledge and well-planned lessons

Recommendations across the whole college include:

- Improve punctuality across the college by rewarding students for being prompt. This can be done through exciting and engaging starter activities
- Update displays in both classrooms and corridors regularly to create a dynamic and interesting learning environment
- Implement consistent behaviour policies to minimise disruption in lessons

Examples of good practice:

Punctuality

An excellent practice to encourage punctuality, which has been introduced by the Media Department, involves making late students wait by the door inside the classroom until there is a suitable opportunity for them to sit down without disrupting the class. This means that the late student does not miss any learning and will not disrupt others. It also discourages lateness as students will not want to stand by the door until a suitable time is available, which may not occur for 10 or 15 minutes.

Another successful practice, implemented by the English Department, is the 'Move Along' strategy where teachers stand at the doorway to their classroom and tell students to 'move along' to their next lesson. This stops students chatting in corridors with their friends and also stops blockages in the corridors therefore helping students to get to their next lesson on time.

Displays

Displaying students' work, and regularly changing and updating the displays, is both encouraging and rewarding. This year, as part of Creativity Day the Design Faculty also displayed work produced by teachers across the school. This inspired students and made them realise that their teachers are just as passionate about their subject as they are.

Interesting facts and philosophical quotes can also improve both the classroom and corridor environment. The use of these has been very successful in both the Maths and Geography Departments because they instantly create an educational atmosphere as well as inspiring students.

Creativity

Many departments have shown excellent use of creativity in lessons. The English Department, for example, have incorporated more drama to enhance learning and take some lessons outside to remove learning from the standard, and sometimes restrictive, classroom environment. Furthermore, the Science Faculty asked students to build models of turbines and cells to develop learning.

Celebrating student success

Giving rewards to those students that have consistently succeeded in lessons has proved to be very beneficial. The History Department, for example, have a 'Mug of the Month' instead of 'Student of the Month'. This creates variety from other departments and gives the student a more physical representation of their success. The Design Faculty incorporated an awards ceremony at their end of year exhibition which rewarded students publicly for their work as well as recognising determination and perseverance.

Another positive way of celebrating success and encouraging students is giving rewards in relation to the subject. For example, the Psychology Department give books to students to allow them to research the subject beyond the curriculum.

Moodle/use of ICT

Throughout the college, there have been many examples of improved use of Moodle and ICT and many of them can be used frequently by all departments. Beauty Therapy's use of 3D models and the Geography Department's use of animations, for example, all have shown ways to improve teaching and learning.

Some departments have shown an excellent use of Moodle. The Science Faculty uses an online calendar to make important dates and information quickly accessible to students. Furthermore, the blogs used by the English Department allow students to discuss the subject beyond the curriculum and therefore further their knowledge and interest.