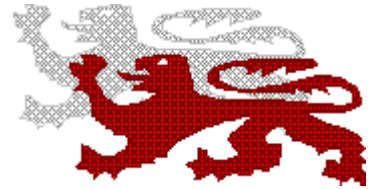


# Insted



**Beauchamp  
College**

## Final Report



**February 2009**

# **INSTED**

Insted uses the student voice at Beauchamp to put a spotlight on learning.

The focus of Insted is to look at learning and to seek out the characteristics of a successful and effective lesson as well as highlight areas for development to help the college become an even better place to learn.

## **Insted Team**

Insted Co-ordinator	Pooja Walji
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<u>Team Leaders</u>	
Applied Learning Design English and Media Humanities	Shradda Naker Karishma Naker Chirag Thakrar Ruth Taylor Laura Whitehouse
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## **Lesson Observers**

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## **Insted background**

Insted is an innovative form of Student Voice. It is an internal inspection led by a team of Beauchamp College students.

After a slightly disappointing Ofsted report, where it was felt that not enough first hand evidence was gathered to make a fair judgement on teaching and learning, Beauchamp College felt that the students could provide an in depth view of the college through student lesson observations which would be highly valued. The Insted team aims to celebrate the positive aspects and to identify areas for development in order to help Beauchamp College progress.

All students involved partook in vigorous training, and those who applied to be involved in the Insted team were interviewed for their role. Each team leader was designated a Faculty and as well as observing lessons and overseeing a team of student observers also went to departmental meetings and conducted interviews with heads of department.

The team felt it was important to raise student awareness of Insted and to gain valuable input about their views. Assemblies were arranged for all key stage 4 students and this was followed up with a questionnaire to all students in the college. The main focus of the Insted team is learning, as this is clearly the most important aspect within the college.

Insted week ran from 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Feb and during this time over 150 lesson observations took place, a truancy questionnaire was distributed, tutor time was observed across all years, interviews were conducted with heads of departments, members of leadership and students and the Insted team met daily to discuss progress.

# Overall summary

## Learning

Beauchamp can boast a fantastic learning environment. Teaching styles vary but all ensure that students are relaxed, engaged and focused on the task in hand.

Most lessons start well with either a recap or a starter, which helps students to focus on the learning objective of the lesson and what needs to be achieved in the time available.

Students are encouraged to discuss and share ideas and also to work independently. They support each other and are of course given great support and encouragement by their teachers.

Students make effective use of time and show great commitment to learning. There is a bond of trust between teachers and students and attitudes to learning are very positive. Homework is taken seriously by all concerned and is mostly completed on time.

Students respect the extensive knowledge of teachers and teachers respect the needs of the students.

## Areas for Development

Large class sizes can be an issue, especially at a GCSE standard. This leads to disruption from some students when the teacher is dealing with independent queries and some students are overlooked as a consequence.

Departments need to make sure that wherever possible there is a reasonable number of students in each class to ensure that learning is not compromised. A-Level classes could also be tiered, so top sets are larger and lower sets are smaller so that the teachers' attention is spread.

Most lessons have a fantastic start to the lesson, but this is not always reflected at the end. Teachers need to make sure that students have understood what has been covered in the lesson by wrapping up all the points made.

In some classes, students can be accidentally ignored and their learning may not be completed properly. Students may not always understand all the points in the lesson, and this could be addressed.

To increase the variety of teaching techniques, interactive learning (for example Moodle) can be implemented. Worksheets can be put up on Moodle or the department's own website, and homework can be set and delivered in this way to increase the use of technology within the college.

## Curriculum

The new buildings have improved teaching and learning at Beauchamp. They have created an innovative and modern environment as well as providing more space and equipment to aid student development. However, in departments that are not located in the new buildings, it is necessary to ensure that the classroom environment is kept fresh and stimulating to create a positive impact on the learning. Nevertheless, classrooms throughout the college are excellently equipped for students

A high percentage of students who completed the truancy questionnaire truanted because they felt that they had made the wrong option choices. Therefore, every department needs to ensure information is given to all students to fully inform them of all their options.

While Moodle is used effectively in some departments in others it is disregarded. Effort needs to be made to ensure that the college use this resource consistently. As some departments find Moodle an excellent way to aid students and promote learning, it is recommended that all departments implement Moodle. Faculty websites can then be used as support for Moodle. Other technology is used well throughout the college to aid teaching and learning. In regards to Power Point presentations, it must be stressed that they should only be used when appropriate and should not be the focus of lessons. Some departments effectively use modern technology such as itunes and video clips in their lessons. However, it is recommended that heads of departments ensure all teachers within their department are able to use all the available technologies proficiently

The college effectively supports both gifted and talented students and students with learning needs. G&T students are offered several opportunities outside of the curriculum to encourage active, independent learning and competition. In most departments, student mentors are used to further aid student development. This scheme also benefits the mentor who gains extra skills. In some departments graduate teachers and student mentors work with students with learning needs and this works well. However, departments need to check that collaborative planning with learning support staff ensures that lessons are consistent and are focused on lesson objectives.

## **Extended Services**

Beauchamp has an extensive Extended Services network and is recognised both nationally and internationally. Beauchamp, as a college, benefits through meetings such as the Dream Team where good practice can be shared. Students involved in such schemes as Duke of Edinburgh, Sports Academies and Dragons' Den are able to develop skills outside of the classroom such as determination, commitment and self-reliance. They also allow students to develop a passion for extra-curricular activities, which are favourable for employers. It must be ensured that plans to advertise these schemes to all students are carried out.

## **Truancy**

Results from the questionnaire have highlighted the fact that students truant across the entire range of subjects offered. Some subjects are not as highly valued as other others, which leads some students to truant from these subjects more often. Students can feel that a subject is not of value because no formal qualification will come from it. The majority of truancy occurs as students enter the second year in each key stage. Students claim that they can use their time more efficiently doing work for other subjects. This shows that as students are reaching a more critically important time in their education, where final examinations are the main focus of lessons, truancy

rates are in fact increasing. ***“I could have got better marks which could have led me to a better future”, Student X.*** From the results of the questionnaire, it is quite clear that students do feel that they need more time to revise and to complete homework. Student X stated in the truancy interview conducted that her main reason for missing lessons was ***“cos I would over sleep or hadn’t done the work”***. Additionally the majority of the responses were that the students did not enjoy the particular subject they chose to truant. Unfortunately, it also appears that the time spent truanting is rarely used constructively and therefore the students who are truanting are missing out on a lot of opportunities to learn. The students were all very willing to discuss their individual truancy, providing they remained anonymous. According to the questionnaires over 50% of parents are aware that their child does, or has, truanted. This raises a concern that families are aware but not responding to the problem.

### **Areas for Development**

Students are extremely comfortable with discussing their truancy. In order to make effective use of this, students who have truanted and are able to look back and see the disadvantages of their actions could be paired up with students who have begun to truant in order to help them understand the consequences.

College policies need to be enforced across all faculties to ensure standards of learning are not affected by the rate of truancy.

### **Tutor Time**

More year 10s and 11s turn out to tutor time than years 12 and 13. Messages are passed on but the bulletins are not used effectively. The tutor keeps good interaction with students showing good relationships between both parties. Some tutors use fantastic activities like quizzes and can encourage punctuality and attendance with reward schemes such as breakfasts. However, other tutors do not keep to a focused task. All tutors seem very open to any problems students have with college life.

### **Areas for Development**

There are clusters of students spread around the room in friendship groups and the tutor could do more to increase students’ interaction with each other. A focussed activity could make use of the short amount of time. To increase year 12 and 13 attendance, tutors could promote the advantages of being present in tutor time, for example sending emails and text messages. Changes could be made to the format of the bulletin to make it more engaging for students and the distribution methods could be reassessed and improved.

## **Enrichment**

Some subjects offer fantastic enrichment provisions such as the Toyota Technology Challenge in Electronics and Target 2.0 in Economics in which students have gained national accolades. Other events such as drama productions and music concerts are very successful. Students break down academic barriers and branch out to the local community through a wide range of initiatives such as the 'Number Partners' and 'Right to Read' schemes set up by Leicestershire Cares. Year 12's now also have a large variety of enrichment programmes to choose from, ranging from the Duke of Edinburgh Awards to learning Japanese. The majority of students take part in extra curricular sports in which the PE department hold excellent clubs. Trips seem to run at full capacity such as theatre trips in English or Drama. This shows the level of enthusiasm students have to broaden their knowledge. Exchange visits at Beauchamp College are undertaken cross-curricular, inviting a range of students from a range of subjects to take part. This shows the effectiveness of enrichment at the college.

## **Areas for Development**

A large number of students tend to sign up for extra curricular activities to add breadth to their UCAS applications and CVs. This is, of course, acknowledged and accepted. However, both students and teachers need to be educated on the personal qualities that can be developed by enrichment courses. Emphasis should be removed from future career gains and placed on personal development. 34% of students still do not participate in enrichment so further publicity of enrichment activities can be given. (ref. Insted Questionnaire 2009) Although sport is a highly respected area of the college's enrichment programme students should also be made aware of the other far-reaching possibilities which are available.

## **Group Interviews with Students**

Students from all years confirmed that their parents were aware of the work given by college. However a student suggested that emails could be sent home about their progress. Students feel they are working to the best of their ability and feel that help is easily accessible when they come across difficulties in their lessons. The majority of students interviewed felt behaviour is generally good however there is a minority group of students that let the college down. Students informed us that their extra curricular activities are mainly sport related however there are many other activities students partake in such as Duke of Edinburgh and volunteering schemes. Students feel well-supported and comfortable discussing problems with teachers. Students are extremely happy with the way Beauchamp College is a multi-cultural college and also the vast amount of technology that is available to them.

**Strengths across the whole college include:**

- Enthusiastic and committed teachers with a high level of subject knowledge
- Excellent teacher/student relationships which promotes enthusiasm in students
- Variety of different and engaging teaching styles together with well planned lessons
- A commitment to Student Voice
- Student mentoring adds another dimensions to the learning experience

**Recommendations across the whole college include:**

- More effective use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) for example Moodle throughout the college to compliment learning in the classroom and to stimulate learning outside the classroom.
- To improve the classroom environment across the whole college
- Lesson objectives need to be consistently used across the college to ensure all students understand what they need to achieve during the lesson.
- College policies need to be enforced across all faculties to ensure standards of learning are not affected by poor behaviour or the rate of truancy.
- A high percentage of students who completed the truancy questionnaire, truanted because they felt that they had made the wrong option choices. Therefore, every department needs to ensure information is given to all students to fully inform them of all their options.

Dear Students,

We would like to thank you all for your help during our Insted inspection, especially everyone who gave up their spare time to attend interviews with us. We would also like to give our special thanks to all the observers who have not only taken time to be trained, but also observed lessons for us both before and during the Insted week. Your contributions were vital for us to produce our report and your hard work has allowed the school to progress and develop.

Insted is in its first year, yet we believe our inspection has been innovative, constructive and motivating. We have been lucky enough to not only identify areas for development to help Beauchamp advance, but also celebrate the positive aspects of our college.

So what did we find out? We discovered that not only are our teachers committed and enthusiastic, but there is a fantastic teacher/student relationship. We were also lucky enough to observe a variety of different and engaging teaching styles, teaching which was aided by some of you, the student mentors. We found that student mentoring adds to your learning experience and helps you to progress. There is also a palpable commitment to our almost unique Student Voice at Beauchamp.

We did find, however, that some classroom environments need to be improved, though the new school buildings have positively affected learning. We also investigated the use of Moodle, and we advise that it should be used throughout the college to stimulate learning outside of the classroom.

There are some areas of development where we believe you can help and support the college. We noticed that some students truant because of wrong option choices, so not only do we advise departments to ensure you get lots of useful information, but also that you talk more to your teachers and get help from them.

As you can see, our inspection has been very useful to everyone involved in Beauchamp College. Because of this, we are planning a follow-up investigation next year to evaluate how far the college has improved since our Insted week. This will ensure that all the hard work from those involved in Insted will continue to develop your learning and experience at Beauchamp.

Thank you once again for your help and support,  
The Insted Team