

Improving attainment and progress in maths and subjects with a high maths content at KS4 for disadvantaged and white British students in Leicester schools

Overview

Attainment and progress in maths at KS4 for disadvantaged and white students in Leicester is below the national average. The project aimed to improve outcomes by supporting teachers, leaders and pupils in 19 secondary schools.

The project consisted of:

1. A two-day departmental maths review for all schools to support rigorous, externally validated, self and peer evaluation and action planning.
2. Three CPD programmes to be made available to staff in all schools; a maths leadership programme; a conversion course for non-specialist maths teachers and a programme focusing on numeracy across the curriculum in subjects with a high maths content.
3. A bespoke offer of additional support for targeted schools based on need identified through the reviews which will include coaching, student interventions and school to school support.

Leicester is growing fast with secondary numbers increasing faster than the national average. This is aggravating issues around recruiting enough high-quality maths teachers. To mitigate against this the project focused on developing existing maths teachers and leaders, helping non specialist teachers to develop a specialism, maximizing the contribution of all teachers through improving numeracy across the curriculum and encouraging all schools to work more collaboratively with a greater sense of collective responsibility for all students in the city.

Good practice to share with others interested in running school improvement projects to ensure projects deliver the intended outcome.

- Make it a requirement that all schools engage with robust validated self and peer evaluation to identify appropriate areas to work on before starting the programme.
- Ensure activities are bespoke according to the individual school's needs.
- Good local governance arrangements that held the providers and project manager to account on a monthly basis helped ensure there was no slippage.
- Realistic budgeting and expert financial management.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities through agreed service level agreements and job descriptions.
- Commission providers with a proven track record.
- Using data and local intelligence to identify appropriate priorities and

schools.

- Ensure that the project is planned to contribute to building local capacity.
- Good joint working between all providers will ensure schools receive a coordinated approach.
- Hold a launch event that sets out clear objects and expectations.

What the project may do differently in the future

- Ensure all providers have the systems, skills and capacity to deliver in time and on budget.
- Allow more time for planning and implementation.
- Require a stronger commitment from school governors.

Sustainability measures taken by projects to ensure improvement are sustained beyond the funding period.

- Well-developed working relationship and links with Maths Hub.
- Local headteachers are working together to ensure the project continues to be monitored through a local Maths Hub.
- All schools have been encouraged to engage with an external review of their maths provision to strengthen and validate their self-evaluation processes.
- Ensure the expertise and capacity developed is available for schools and appropriately commissioned.
- Encourage School leaders and governors to ensure maths has a high profile in all schools and that maths leaders are appropriately trained and deployed and included on leadership teams.
- Support schools to develop effective systems to track pupil progress from their key stage 2 baseline.
- Support schools to encourage governors to develop their knowledge and skills to be more effective in monitoring provision and holding schools to account.
- Support schools to develop more appropriate curriculum and schemes of work that meets the needs of students.
- Consider strategic and operational approaches to improving transition between key stages across the city.
- In addition, the project has helped secure significant additional capacity which includes:
 - New SLE's
 - Teams of trained reviewers able to offer high quality reviews to support all schools

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- Additional capacity within teaching schools attached to special schools
- Better links and outreach between special and mainstream
- The extension of the support delivered in pilot schools to include all schools.