

Andre Bailey – profile



What is your role within the field trial?

Lead professional.

What do you see as the most exciting aspect of your work?

Engaging young learners who have been lost to the system and written off as 'unteachable'.

You recently invited parents in for Bridge Academy Online (VLE) training sessions. How did it go?

Some very nervous parents engaged in some pretty straightforward learning tasks and chatted about their children being really motivated. We haven't really given this the attention it will require yet because we had a post Ofsted celebration and various other things happening at the front end of this term. There are three further dates between now and Christmas. We'll do a bit of marketing to make sure we reach as many families as possible.

At the moment you are developing online Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for students. Tell us how you think they will address barriers to learning.

Our aim is twofold:

1. Every learner will have (90%+ have them already) an ILP that aims to deal with the very issues that led to their referral. More often than not these are learning related (eg low levels of literacy), but poor behaviour, anger management, bereavement and low self-esteem also appear frequently on our radar. We use our learning support and mentoring resources to provide time-bound, targeted intervention for these learners alongside their day-to-day learning experience. We believe that there is a message about learning in every behaviour: "I can't read it ...", "I don't get it ...", "This is too easy, I'm bored ..". The ILPs will deal with learning issues and raise ability levels, and at the same time they will make us think very carefully about the learning diet we offer our young people. An understanding of learning style and attitude is fundamentally important. Not every learner is happy to read large blocks of text or engage in physical activity in front of peers. The ILPs mean that we know this in advance and can tailor learning accordingly.
2. To have a learning plan built into assessment for learning protocols in every department across the school. These will be linked to planning and assessment on a lesson by lesson basis with agreed reporting protocols that provide families with clear descriptions of achievement and clear expectations about where we feel improvements can and should be made. The parent, the young learner and the teachers/school-based adults will all monitor these plans and comment on progress or the lack of it using a 'blogging' tool.

In short, every learner will know where they are required to make progress, what they have to do to make that progress and what help will be available to them to reach their learning goals.

What do you see as the key challenges for your site at the moment, and how are you setting about overcoming them?

Assessment and monitoring of online learning outcomes and engagement levels seems to be a hot topic at present. Middle leader discussions have led to a review of assessment and monitoring procedures so that we can eliminate any duplication arising out of BAO assessment

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procedures. Unlike other areas of the field trial where we altered practice wholesale to take the online changes into account, we seem to have looked at assessment in isolation.

If you are as successful as you hope to be, what changes will there be in 12 months time and what difference might that make for young people?

All of the learning and teaching at The Bridge Academy will be planned and organised through our management system which will link to personalised digital assets in our VLE. This bank of assets will have reduced the planning time necessary for adults in the school to organise learning opportunities for learners with specific needs. As a result, more time will be available to intervene where learning issues arise. The child with low levels of literacy will be supported by proven resources in school and at home and significant learning gains will be demonstrable using assessment protocols built into the system. ICT skills will go 'through the roof' with all young learners achieving some form of ICT accreditation; initially our new AQA Unit Award. [Assessment and Qualifications Alliance \(AQA\)](#) is the largest of the three English exam boards and it has a leading reputation for promoting education for the public benefit and draws on long experience of setting and marking public exams such as GCSEs, A-levels and other qualifications. They also offer first class support for teachers and learners. We drafted our own 'Unit Award' entitled 'Using a Virtual Learning Environment'; it's an entry level qualification.

The range of learning options will also be much broader, and our curriculum offer will include a mixture of online and face-to-face options at school, college and third party sites. Learners on exclusion will have work (and support) provided online from Day 1 of their exclusion. The field trial will not rely on any lead professionals, because knowledge will have trickled to a significant number of staff members who will feel confident about this way of working.

Can you tell us something about yourself, your life, family or interests?

Love sport, play hockey every week and watch obsessively when my two boys (Max 4, Jack 2) let me! Doesn't matter what I watch, although rugby is top of the agenda at the moment because my wife's cousin is playing for England at the World Cup; we were in Paris for the Tonga victory a couple of weeks ago.

What keeps you awake at night?

Nothing! Too tired to be awake. Actually my two year old comes in quite frequently and has very sharp elbows. Does that count? I tend not to obsess about things. It's easier to have a quick rant with a friend and then move on.

When was the last time you laughed out loud and why?

30 seconds ago listening to Your Teacher.com (multiplying Decimals) - how to use contemporary technology to perpetuate rote learning ... no discussion about the size of the numbers, a possible estimate, mental calculation etc. etc., just focus on the process. It must be the primary maths teacher in me ...

How should people contact you?

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