

STAR (STudent As Researcher Project) led by Central Foundation Girls' School (Tower Hamlets)

The project aimed to:

- Enhance classroom challenge, particularly in the core subjects and,
- Promote students' sense of agency through their role in the project as researchers & planners.

The key feature of this multi-layered project is that it involved training students as researchers (STARS) to collect data from other students and staff relating to raising achievement and motivating students in learning and enjoyment of the core subjects. The STARS worked with the teachers to enhance classroom challenges from both the perspective of students and teachers.

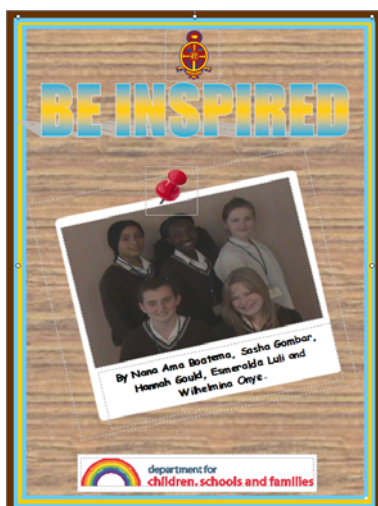
This project was underpinned by the belief that by involving young people in research, their sense of agency, own motivation and involvement in the whole educational experience will be enhanced. It is expected that the current student led research will evolve and STARS will be involved in co-constructing more challenging lessons with teachers for lessons in the core subjects.

A goal for the future would be that more teachers in the school take part in working with the students in their lessons to conduct investigations into how learning is progressing. This project will be used as an exemplar in the school to encourage more teachers to become part of the process of involving students in discussion and investigation into their learning.

Be Inspired Project led by Gumley House Convent School for Girls (Isleworth)

Their students are proud of their achievements in all areas but the school is always looking to find ways to help them develop and succeed even more and were particularly looking for ways of using student voice to do this.

Five Year 8 students worked as researchers on a project to find out about the best strategies, ideas and tips that students had used to help them succeed in our school.



In December 2007, they attended a “Students as Researchers” training day organised by the Association for Maintained Girls Schools. They then conducted interviews and focus groups with a number of Gumley students and integrated this research with other sources of information to create a magazine called ‘Be Inspired’.

‘Be Inspired,’ will be given to all new Year 7 students to help with their transition from Primary schools but the girls have decided that it should also be useful for older students. The magazine will be published in print format as well as uploaded onto the school website.

A Global Curriculum for Anytime, Anywhere Learning! Project led by Ursuline High School (Wimbledon)

In September 2007 the Ursuline High School launched a combined pilot project comprising a new competency based curriculum in Year 7, and Anytime, Anywhere Learning (AAL).

AAL would provide laptops for students in Years 7 and 12 and a Virtual Learning Platform. These strands were combined to complement each other and to raise achievement while helping to embed the school focus on independent and personalised learning. The pilot scheme was introduced in Year 7 with a focus on “Global Subjects”, (English, History, Geography, Drama, Art, RE, ICT and Music).

These subjects delivered agreed themes and shared the responsibility for helping students to develop their competency as learners. In Year 12, two subjects (Business Studies and Psychology) led on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

The project has now moved into its second phase. All students in Years 7, 8, 12 and 13 have access to the VLE.

The global curriculum has moved into Year 8 and plans for a further roll out are already underway.

A*/A Strand - Motivating the ablest girls.... Project led by Newstead Wood School for Girls (Orpington)

This project’s purpose was to identify some of the causes of underachievement in able girls and to present strategies that prove effective in building high achievement.

Key findings included;:

- A focus on mission, values and moral purpose is a prerequisite for building an ethos of confidence, aspiration and success.
- Rigorous and sophisticated approaches to assessment and data reduce complacency amongst staff and engage students.
- An exciting curriculum and an entitlement to enrichment beyond the classroom are essential, to engage and inspire able girls.
- Schools that are committed to Deep Learning and Deep Leadership provide an environment that nurtures self-awareness, independence, resilience and community cohesion, where able girls thrive. Student Voice is well developed.
- Schools have redesigned their organisations and pedagogy to sustain their high achievement strategies.

Acknowledgements

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