

Success Story No.7 – Online Staff Meeting & Using Show My Homework

May 2020

I had the pleasure of speaking with Barbara from a secondary school in Enfield and she shared the school's success with an online staff meeting and using Show My Homework for the young people.

What is your school context?

We are 7.5 form entry secondary community school with sixth form. I am on SLT with responsibilities including CPD. I currently teach year 8 and year 10 French.

What has been the biggest challenge?

I think our main issue is that a significant number of students do not have access to the sorts of hardware that enables us to easily set consistent work for all.

We have been using Show My Homework for a while, and this works for some activities, but when we're asking for students to think through a more complex piece of work, or set up for them to watch live teaching, many don't have internet or devices to do this on.

Year 12 have devices, so they are the only year accessing live teaching, though we are trialling with Year 10.

We've reflected that if we could all learn virtually we would. At this time, you can't be the teacher in the classroom and that limits what you can do. In particular, the lack of live feedback changes what you provide for your students.

Before we closed, we did a quick survey to find out which students can't access the internet easily, so some are receiving hard copies of work. We have a list of these students and a member of support staff photocopies work weekly and posts this to them.

Can you share your success with running a staff meeting online?

We were due to have a Twilight and were unsure whether to keep going with it, but we decided to go ahead, and it was such a positive experience.

Three members of staff led on different aspects. Someone led on research – he summarised the recent reports from the EEF on distance learning. Someone else ran through a live lesson she had done with her year 12 class, and I talked about using the Nudge theory; giving little messages to students such as what the class average is for a particular activity. to encourage engagement. This is all done through Show My Homework.

Can you share how Show My Homework is working for you?

It's the only platform we're using so we have consistency. Students know whatever we upload or post, it will be on there. It also works effectively on phones. We were looking to move over to Google Classroom, but that had been limited and any teacher that is using it, is giving instructions through Show My Homework.

What has worked well with French on Show My Homework?

I'm working closely with another colleague to produce one PowerPoint a week, and we're recording our voices over it. Students then still get to hear French. We're asking them to read through it, listening to the recording, and then say the vocabulary out loud. Later in the week, I have been setting a test or a translation, so it's a "teach and test" cycle and that seems to be working well.

Students have responded well to the quizzes. Multiple choice has been effective, it has high student response, is easy to access on their phones and I can identify misconceptions in learning quickly.

What has engagement been like?

We have high 90s in terms of percentages of students that are accessing Show My Homework daily.

Show My Homework has a comment feature, so some students use that to respond, again this is easy to do on a phone. Sometimes they upload a piece of work and some are taking photos of work and uploading. Then I can give feedback either individually or to multiple students, even the whole class. Previously we'd been doing a lot of work on making feedback powerful and manageable. We have a system in place for those students not engaging – a shared spreadsheet that tutor teams use to make contact with all students. There is support in place for students that aren't logging on or struggling to manage this new way of working.

What are you thinking about next?

One of the things we're looking at in languages for year 10 is finding out what work we can do best in this sort of environment. We've mixed up the curriculum. We are now providing work that can be attempted without a teacher at the moment, such as listening, reading and short quizzes, as well as preparing short paragraphs but leaving parts of the curriculum that really need us in the room with the students until we're all back in school. It's been really important to mix up the curriculum in this way. We're using this time now for students to practise and review.

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Any final thoughts?

I think it's proved how important school is. The students are doing quite a lot but not nearly as much as they would be. The social side is huge, and we need to plan for what happens when they return to school.

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