

Salop Teaching School Alliance
Case Study Outline

Project Title	Use of a Voice Coach
School/Organisation	The Priory School
Date Project taking place	April 2013
Aim of Project	Student feedback and Behaviour records have reinforced the view that the relationship in the classroom is the most important factor in effective learning and this has become a focus for the school including work on presence. Part of this has been identified as teachers' use of voice. We aim to trial the use of a voice coach with identified members of teaching and support staff.
Project Details	<p>Key staff were identified who would potentially find a voice coach useful. These included a small group of female teachers who were generally quieter than others or who perhaps pitched their voices more highly, a GTP, teaching assistants who were often lunchtime supervisors as well and need to use their voice to control behaviour and cover supervisors who not only had to supervise classes but larger numbers of students during examinations and the lining up process for examinations.</p> <p>Research and recommendation led us to approach The Voice Care Network UK who deliver a range of workshops to schools and other organisations. A half day course entitled "There's no need to shout!" was identified as the most appropriate. The content of the course included:</p> <p>A practical interactive workshop to boost vocal capability and clarity in the classroom</p> <p>Advice on how to use the voice in a positive, calm and assured manner to help manage pupil behaviour</p> <p>How to prepare the body and the breath for sustained voice use to minimise strain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posture, Breathing, Balance, Relaxation, Warming the voice • Clear spoken English (active articulation) • Using a language of choice not power • Setting the tone with your tone! (adjustment of the learning atmosphere through tone of voice) • Building resonance (volume) • Muscular speech for audibility (energy and vitality in delivery) • Understanding the impact of voice in influencing and redirecting challenging behaviours: economy of language, using the voice to set boundaries, expression, volume control, keeping the voice calm under pressure • Best practices to safeguard vocal health and hygiene

	<p>The workshop was expensive at £495 but could be delivered to 30 people at most. To ensure value for money additional places were offered to Sixth Form College who also sent some teachers to participate giving a final group size of 24.</p>
<p>Who was involved? (collaborative partners)</p>	<p>Voice Care Network UK Sixth Form</p>
<p>Outcomes</p>	<p>Staff who attended felt there was a variety of outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They had a better understanding of the need for voice care, and how to prevent damage to the throat. • They were able to use other techniques to get attention rather than using voice all the time. • They understood the importance of and could utilise good posture and looking confident. • They developed effective breathing techniques which enabled them to speak louder without shouting. • They understood how they could try to keep their voice calm when challenging behaviour. <p>In addition participants felt valued that time had been put aside within the school day to allow them to attend training.</p>
<p>Project Evaluation/Impact Outcome</p> <p>How was the impact measured?</p>	<p>Teaching staff involved have since been observed to be teaching good lessons. However as they also participated in the ITP programme the impact of the workshop cannot be quantified.</p> <p>Cover supervisors have since run both GCSE examinations and Year 10 internal examinations and concerns identified at the time of Year 11 examinations in December have been largely addressed. Whole cohorts of students have been lined up in the playground and quietly brought into the hall with no need for a megaphone.</p> <p>Teaching Assistants have found it difficult to quantify the lasting outcomes of the course. Informal evidence would suggest that they are using their voices effectively but there is no quantifiable way of proving this.</p> <p>Feedback from participants revealed that as well as all the positives listed under outcomes they did feel that the course would have been even better if it had focused more on voice projection, pitch and tone.</p>
<p>Intended dissemination of outcomes</p>	<p>Shared with Key stakeholders</p>
<p>Next steps for project within the organisation</p>	<p>It is unlikely that such a workshop would run again due to cost unless a specific need was identified across a consortium of schools. Follow up next year is likely to focus more on peer observation rather than external CPD to reinforce the course content</p>

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