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My portfolio focused on a larger than average secondary school which is the central school of a Challenge Partners hub that serves 18 schools across all phases and specialisms. The school is rated as outstanding by OFSTED but on speaking to key stakeholders in the school it was clear that assessment systems were not maximising the opportunities for data analysis through summative means, or informing teaching and learning through more formative processes. The school had set-up an assessment group to focus on these key issues and I decided to focus on the Design and Technology faculty as my own specialism is within Engineering.

The focus of my support was to look at how different areas impacted the link between formative and summative assessment, and how this data was reported to parents as well as pupils to both recognise attainment but to also inform next steps in learning. I found that mixed attainment teaching and the quality and consistency of formative assessment in lessons was having an effect on the quality of outcomes for pupils and the clarity as to how data was being reported to parents. I used opportunities to get pupil and parent voice on this by setting up questionnaires through MS Forms, and these responses validated the feelings of staff in the faculty, when analysing the impact of using target grades to motivate and challenge all levels of learners.

As many staff felt there were too many assessment points in the year, it could be seen that there was an overload of data that was lacking in quality and validity. I recommended that the faculty streamline their data entry to two assessment points per material area, with one mid-way through each scheme of work in order to maximise time to achieve the desired outcomes for pupils. I also recommended more peer-assessment and peer target setting to allow pupils a greater depth of understanding of assessment criteria so that they could then apply these to their own work. The outcome of this has seen the faculty create new banding systems and clearer success criteria. These can be analysed at a greater depth, giving the pupils more of an awareness as to how to progress, but also allowing the staff to be more diagnostic in their approach, and therefore having more meaningful data to analyse after each assessment point.

Follow-up parent and pupil voice has shown that more are now fully aware as to how to improve their work in Design and Technology, with more pupils engaging in target setting, not just for themselves, but for other pupils too. Staff feedback has shown that the greater clarity over assessment criteria has allowed for meaningful assessments and how these can then inform teaching and learning strategies as pupils move between material areas. The recommendations have been so successful that the Design and Technology department have now been responsible for modelling this approach to other practical subjects and this has driven a change in whole-school reporting systems.

This whole process took me out of my comfort zone, as I have never really undertaken anything on this scale before, but to see the impact that this has had on staff, pupils and parents alike has filled me so much confidence about the impact that I can have on whole-school strategies and approaches. It has also helped hugely in my day-to-day teaching and my work as an examiner. To fully understand the reliability and validity of data and assessment procedures has made me a more effective and efficient practitioner and has helped me to pass this on to my pupils to ensure that they are getting the benefit of my expertise.