

Improving the attainment and progress of MABLE students in Psychology

Background to Closing the Gap

- 'To increase the number of A*-B grades at A-level' was a priority on the school improvement plan.
- The results for the current Psychology cohort were significantly lower than previous years with only 31% of students achieving A*-B grades in their AS exams. School target = 52%.
- Significant increase in MABLE students in the current cohort. Previously only 2 students (2016-17) Vs. 13 in the current cohort (2017-18) out of 45.
- Ofsted (2013, 2015, 2016) suggest that schools are still not doing enough to support MABLE students. Their performance is now a central part of the 'common inspection framework'.

Key Project Activities

Thinking Hard

Following training and research, as a department we started to embed 'thinking hard' strategies (e.g. 'ranking tasks' 'compare' 'prioritise' 'odd one out') into lessons to ensure a greater focus on higher order thinking skills.

Collaborative Learning (Kagan Strategies)

Incorporate various collaborative learning activities within lessons such as 'Quiz Quiz Trade', 'Numbered Heads Together' 'Rally Robin', etc.

Independent Psychology Project

Students were required to conduct a novel piece of Psychological Research. Students needed to research and write a rationale for their research. Once approved they had to plan, carry out, analyse, evaluate and present the findings of their research.

Wider Reading:

Wider reading was promoted and encouraged through wall displays and a Facebook Group. Also all students were given access to the 'Psychology Review'.

Grouped Mentoring

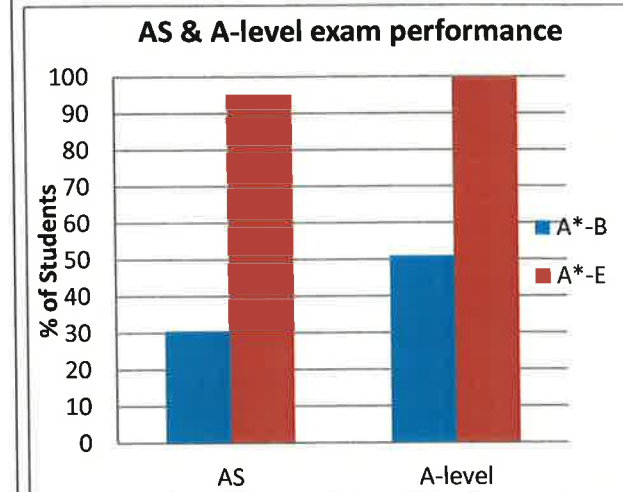
MABLE students worked with other (underachieving and/or lower ability) students as the 'expert'. They were asked to tutor students on topics which they struggled with.

Targeted Revision Session

There were 3 revision sessions aimed only at A-A* skills. These focused on how to write an A* essay, developing more effective evaluation, embedding 'issues and debates' into essays.

Impact of the Project

Significant increases in attainment in A-level Psychology compared to AS grades for the current cohort



Attainment of 13 MABLE students (identified by school data)

Above	On	Below
4	7	2*

*one is being remarked

- Student Voice (Psychology Project):
 - Enjoyed independent & open nature of the psychology project
 - Useful for 'practical experience' which helped understanding
- Student Voice (Mentoring)
 - Positive and useful experience
 - MABLE students: 'it made me think' and helped to consolidate understanding
 - 'Tutees': It helped to have concepts explained in different ways.

Relevant Research & Reading

Vygotsky and ZPD: Vygotsky, L.S, (1962), Thought and Language, Cambridge: MIT Press

Craik & Lockhart (Levels of Processing):

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/3dfe/73e2169198d1d5bd5a4507bb52cb50e4b6c8.pdf>

Teacher Tools from London G&T

<http://teachertools.londongt.org/?page=inTheClassroom>

Kagan Strategies:

https://www.kaganonline.com/free_articles/research_and_rationale/