

Case Study

Changing observations from snapshots, to everyday development opportunities



discover. develop. share.

“IRIS Connect has been one of the most powerful and useful tools we’ve used.”

Chris Parkinson, Principal

Bosworth Academy is using IRIS Connect to transform self-reflection and peer observation, embedding it as an essential part of their on-going coaching programme

Principal of Bosworth Academy, Chris Parkinson, saw a need to use lesson observation as more of a tool for professional development. ‘We wanted to alter the paradigm of observations from being about one off performances, to being about improving what we do normally.’ explains Chris.

In order to make the shift, Chris chose to adopt IRIS Connect. The system now plays a key role in professional development among staff. ‘A lot of staff hadn’t even considered filming their practice and were quite reticent about it at first. Our Science department really embraced the idea of using IRIS Connect and ran with it’ describes Simon Brown, Vice Principal. ‘Our Science team now have some of the top value added scores in the county for performance according to ALPS.’

‘I wasn’t very keen on using IRIS Connect in the beginning’ says Russell Baker, Team Leader for Science. ‘However, I found it so useful that I wanted everyone in my department to get involved. As a result I think the use of the system has been quite a revelation for all of us.’

Each person in the Science department was asked to pair up and identify an area of strength and an area for development in their practice, with the intention of improving pedagogy. They were also asked to demonstrate that they had made progress and this is where the use of IRIS Connect was crucial.

‘Simon Brown and I paired up and agreed to both work on our questioning techniques,’ explains Science Teacher Sam Middleton. ‘We shared our observations with each other, gave each other tips and pointers and then repeated the process several times. Although Simon was my coach and has more experience than me teaching, I in effect helped him as well, so the whole

“The school mantra for students is to ‘be better than you thought you could be’ and now IRIS Connect is helping our teachers to do the same.”

Simon Brown, Vice Principal



**Bosworth
Academy**



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experience became less about the coach informing the coachee and more about creating a coaching cycle.’

Jason Scrimshire, Science Co-ordinator adds, ‘One of my strengths since I became a teacher has been reflecting on my practice. I would always take time after a lesson to think about how it went, but IRIS Connect has helped amplify that to another degree. Whereas before I might’ve thought back and forgotten something, now I can’t miss anything because it’s right there in front of me. As time goes on I think that IRIS Connect will accelerate all teachers’ practice. I’m seeing massive improvements in myself and the colleagues I coach already as a result of this technology.’

‘I think that people have quickly realised what a valuable tool it is, and not just for formal observations, but for when you want to try something new, or get an opinion on an idea or part of a lesson,’ explains Russell. ‘Year on year, Chemistry is rated Outstanding here at Bosworth and this year Biology was rated as Outstanding too. Our Physics results are quickly improving and I see IRIS Connect as a major tool driving forward.’

‘In the last twelve months the amount of staff opting to use IRIS Connect completely unprompted has exceeded our expectations,’ adds Chris. ‘IRIS Connect has certainly resonated and enhanced the supportive culture and coaching programme that we have here at Bosworth. It’s been the ideal tool for us and is having real impact.’

Simon continues, ‘Our Human and Social Studies team have also embraced the technology and are looking at doing a similar project. They’re using the observations that the Science practitioners created using IRIS Connect, to help make adjustments in their lessons with the same groups of students. By reading the time-stamped comments they can reflect on teaching practices and evaluate classroom strategy.’

‘Moving forward, Russell, the Team Leader for Science, will share with other team leaders his innovative project. We can then encourage even more innovations about the way in which IRIS Connect can be used across the curriculum to support Bosworth’s journey towards Outstanding’ concludes Simon.

“I’ve seen improvements straight away using IRIS Connect, literally from one lesson to the next, in both my practice and in my students.”

Sam Middleton, Science Teacher

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