

Quest – A Trust Wide Approach to helping Y7 & Y 8 Catch-up



Overview of the Trust Schools

The Wickersley Partnership Trust currently has five secondary schools and eight primaries, mainly in Rotherham and South Yorkshire. All schools differ in their context and catchment but work closely together.

Why did the Trust choose to partner with SfA?

Quest, our KS3 Intervention programme, met the Trust's immediate and mid-term school improvement needs as it could be tailored to each school's context. In addition to supporting reading and writing, Quest also links with the school's ambition to develop vocabulary and support access to the full secondary curriculum for all learners. In addition, five out of the Trust's eight primary schools use other SfA programmes, so Quest also supported more vulnerable children in making a successful transition to secondary school.

How was Quest rolled out across the Trust?

Quest is a flexible intervention programme in that schools can choose the quantity and level of the programme resources they use. Each school analysed their needs and selected a range of unit plans to develop a targeted curriculum for their Y7 & Y8 pupils. The materials range from Quest Level 1 supporting children with a reading age of approximately 6 years, to Quest Level 6 designed for children with a reading age of 12+ years.

Over sixty senior leaders, teachers and teaching assistants from all the schools were trained to use the programme's strong pedagogical approach. Along with comprehensive training on the teaching of reading, writing, grammar and spelling/phonics strategies in the materials. Each school also had personalised support by an experienced member of the SfA team, to ensure they were fully prepared to start the programme in the latter part of the autumn term.

How did schools implement the programme?

Three out of the five schools chose to use Quest as their main curriculum for their lower Y7 & Y8 sets, selecting units from Quest Levels 3-5 to both challenge and support pupils.

The fourth school identified that their Y7 & Y8 pupils had weaker phonics and early reading skills, so they selected

Trust Name:	Wickersley Partnership Trust
Region:	Rotherham/South Yorkshire
No of Secondary Schools:	5
Age Group:	Ranges from 7-18
Pupil Premium:	Ranges from 19%-60%
EAL:	Ranges from 4%-44%

units from Quest 1 and 2 along with some materials from Level 3 & 4. The fifth school bought a range of units to trial the programme and are now looking to widen the use of the materials with more pupils as it has been so successful.

Each school opted for between one to four days of extra support to provide additional guidance, modelling or coaching from their SfA Implementation Partner. To further develop their provision several schools have selected to use many of the optional additional training modules to refine their practice. These included phonics, language development and Co-operative Learning.

The Impact of Quest

Although the Covid-19 pandemic interrupted the school year we have been able to evaluate the impact evident at the start of March.

In a school that is using Quest with about one-third of their Y7 & Y8 pupils they have seen evidence of impact even in the early stages of implementation:

"SfA has helped us turn our vision for a language-rich curriculum into a reality for all of our learners. The vast library of pre-complex texts in the SfA programme is an invaluable source of wider world knowledge for our weakest readers. The co-operative model, at the heart of SfA, is helping our students become more competent readers, and all-round better learners." Jamie Skirrow - Assistant Headteacher Rawmarsh Community School

The following school chose to use Levels 1 & 2 of the Quest programme with approximately seventy of their three-hundred and seventy Y7 & Y8 pupils:

"Students are engaged with the programme and enjoy the structured lessons, we are seeing an improvement in a wide range of reading skills but most notably in their fluency and comprehension, assessment data is also validating this" Taylor Wilkinson - Quest Facilitator Clifton Community School