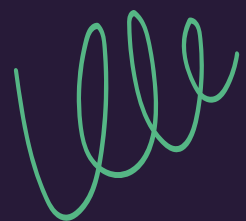


Juniper



Case Study

Lisburne School



Case study

Lisburne School and Juniper Assessment Tracker



Achieving Excellence in SEND Education through Data-driven Tracking

Introduction



Lisburne School, catering to many SEND pupils across split sites, achieved an Ofsted 'Outstanding' grade in June 2023. Their success was attributed to the consistent use of the Juniper Assessment Tracker for students accessing subject-specific learning, effective preparation for the inspection, and a centralised approach to monitoring student progress. Despite the diverse challenges presented by varying student abilities and unconventional subjects like PE being an area of focus during the inspection, the school showcased its commitment to excellence and adaptability, setting a standard for special schools navigating modern inspection criteria.

We speak to Deputy Headteacher and Assessment Coordinator Gillian and Subject & Pathway Lead Richard to learn about Lisburne School's experience achieving an Ofsted 'Outstanding' rating and how the Juniper Assessment Tracker supports the school.

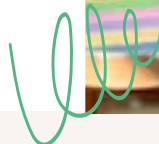
Background

Lisburne School, as a special school with a high demographic of complex SEND pupils, embraces a unique approach to education. Catering to students working predominantly at pre-national curriculum standards, their methodology often diverges from mainstream educational practices. Juniper Assessment Tracker is an instrumental tool adopted by the school to navigate these challenges and ensure every student receives a tailored, comprehensive education.

The Day-to-Day Practice

At the heart of Lisburne's curriculum are two distinctive tracks. While their early years follow the EYFS framework, subsequent years see students divided between a pre-formal curriculum based on the engagement model and a three-path formal curriculum based on student needs.

Given the unique nature of student achievements, most of the tracking is done via photo evidence and descriptive write-ups rather than traditional recording methods. Teachers often use these materials to evidence progress, especially for those on the engagement model. For subjects within the three formal pathways, the Juniper Assessment Tracker is employed long-term.





However, due to the diverse needs of their students and the intricate details of their educational journey, progress isn't always inputted daily. Teachers often assess achievements in blocks, such as when a topic or subject area is concluded. Furthermore, while certain objectives might be established on the Juniper Assessment Tracker, they are frequently broken down into smaller, more digestible steps tailored to each class's specific pace and abilities.

The Evolution of Assessment

Initially, all students had assessment folders containing typed records and photographic evidence of their progress. As staff became more familiar with Juniper Assessment Tracker, this practice became a more streamlined recorded system. While the tracker offers features for digital evidence input, many educators at Lisburne found that this often duplicated the evidence already available in the physical books, making it redundant.

Nevertheless, the data collected is invaluable. Pupil progress meetings occur every term, using the Juniper Assessment Tracker as a foundational tool to discern where each student is in their academic journey. It allows for a nuanced understanding, considering individual challenges such as hospital stays, medication effects, or home issues which could influence a student's progress.

Analysis & Stakeholder Communication

The English and Maths departments, in particular, frequently extract data from the Juniper Assessment Tracker for detailed analysis. This data is then repurposed into digestible formats for stakeholders like governors.

The adoption of Juniper Assessment Tracker by Lisburne School has been gradual, and while they've harnessed its primary tracking capabilities extensively, there are features yet to be explored.

Implementing the Juniper Assessment Tracker has transformed how Lisburne School operates, offering a structured, efficient approach to assessing the progress of their SEND students. The ability to fine-tune and customise educational pathways for their diverse student body while maintaining a clear, cohesive tracking system underscores the platform's value. For Lisburne, Juniper Assessment Tracker is not just a tool – it's a partner in their quest for excellence.

While some reports and analytics might seem overwhelming to stakeholders, especially governors unfamiliar with special education nuances, their primary goal is to provide valuable insights for the faculty. Teachers at Lisburne meticulously track each student's progress, which eventually feeds into broader analytics. While tools like Excel serve their purpose in crunching numbers, Juniper Assessment Tracker provides the comprehensive data background essential for accurate evaluation.

Lisburne School's Ofsted 'Outstanding' grade is a testament to their commitment to SEND students. Their strategic use of the Juniper Assessment Tracker and willingness to continuously learn and adapt underscores their dedication to excellence. In a world of one-size-fits-all solutions, Lisburne's tailored approach, bolstered by the tracker, ensures every student receives the holistic, individualised education they deserve.



Challenges in Communicating Progress

Governance and stakeholder comprehension of student progression posed unique challenges for Lisburne. While some governors, particularly parent-governors, understood progress from their child's perspective, others lacked the intrinsic knowledge of special students' nuanced progressions. Unlike mainstream schools, where improvement can be categorised as below, on target, or above expectations, Lisburne's dynamic necessitates a more detailed and descriptive approach. While Juniper Assessment Tracker offers such categorisations, the school finds this aspect not applicable due to its distinctive student body.

Lisburne's unique challenge was managing the diverse range of SEND pupils, split across different sites, with varying abilities in each subject. Monitoring progress and ensuring consistency presented difficulties, especially in unconventional subjects like PE.

Customised Use of Juniper Assessment Tracker

No two schools use the Juniper Assessment Tracker in the same way. While some might harness its capabilities to the fullest, Lisburne strategically utilises features that cater best to their needs. The tool's flexibility allows for this selective usage, ensuring schools can reap maximum benefits tailored to their unique requirements.

However, as the school grew more familiar with the tracker over the years, there was a recognition of potential unexplored features that might further enhance their assessment methodologies. With three years of data on the platform, the school's

interest in extracting specific historical patterns, identifying student trends, and undertaking deeper insights into the data has been piqued.

Continuous Learning and Training

Acknowledging that some functionalities and deeper analytics might be underutilised, the school showed interest in more comprehensive training. Juniper Assessment Tracker offers specialised one-on-one sessions and general webinars, allowing schools to choose their learning path.

The thirst for knowledge didn't end at the platform itself. The SLT at Lisburne expressed interest in developing the comparison of year-on-year data, analysing standardisations, and evaluating different demographics. This sort of nuanced data investigation, especially when conveyed through valuable reports, can be instrumental in strategic decision-making and is currently completed by the Assessment coordinator using different data collection methods.

The Inspection Day Experience

On the day of the inspection, the Ofsted inspectors were not interested in numerical data but in understanding how the school tracks progress across subjects like maths, English, reading, and PE. The school's approach was tested as the inspectors delved into understanding progress across split sites and triangulating information between curriculum leads, teachers, and students.



The Role of the Juniper Assessment Tracker

The Juniper Assessment Tracker became an invaluable tool for the school. It provided a centralised system, ensuring consistent assessment methods across all subjects and effectively allowing teachers to demonstrate their understanding of pupils' knowledge throughout the academic year.

In subjects like PE, which Richard led, the Juniper Assessment Tracker played a pivotal role in demonstrating pupils' nuanced progress, as the subject's progression doesn't align with conventional subjects like maths.

Key Takeaways from the Inspection

Consistency is Key: One of the critical factors in achieving an 'Outstanding' grade was the school's consistent approach across subjects, levels, and even sites.

Preparation and Anticipation

The school leadership had done their homework. They researched the expectations from recent special school Ofsted inspections, ensuring they were ready to effectively showcase their methodologies and results.

Deep Dives into Curriculum

The school has been engaged in deep dives for the last two years. The curriculum leads were questioned by either the governors or senior leaders about their subjects, ensuring clarity and effectiveness in the curriculum's intention, implementation, and impact.

Parental Input

Inspectors sought feedback from parents to understand how they perceived their children's progress, emphasising the importance of a holistic assessment approach.

The Changing Landscape of Inspections

With the new education inspection framework introduced in 2019, Ofsted shifted its focus from hard raw data to cross-referencing information, ensuring what's said at the leadership level matches the ground reality in classrooms.

Conclusion

Lisburne School's achievement of an 'Outstanding' grade is a testament to its dedication to excellence, its effective utilisation of the Juniper Assessment Tracker, and its proactive approach to understanding and meeting the ever-evolving requirements of Ofsted inspections. Their success story is a beacon, demonstrating how schools can adapt, innovate, and achieve outstanding results even in the most challenging environments.



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