



CAMBRIDGE

How Ibstock Place School is using Cambridge Insight

as part of a holistic approach to measuring the effect of oracy across the curriculum



Ibstock Place School
South West London, UK

cambridge.org/insight

Ibstock Place School is a co-educational day school for children aged 4-18. It has been using Cambridge Insight baseline assessments since 2001, primarily for their lower secondary students in a two-pronged approach:

1. To understand predicted outcomes, trends and analysing the value-added over time
2. To help identify learning needs, such as special educational needs (SEN)

Seeing the big picture for each student

Christine Young, now former Head of Learning Support, explains how MidYIS data supports early understanding of students as they join the school in Year 7.

"We use MidYIS both as a cohort analysis tool and as part of the wider narrative around each student, helping us to identify learning needs and monitor progress."

While overall MidYIS scores provide a useful starting point, staff look closely at the breakdown of results, particularly across reading, proofreading and perceptual speed. This helps to uncover more complex learning profiles that may not be immediately visible in a high-performing academic environment.

MidYIS data is combined with information from

previous schools, interviews, registration forms and early teacher observations. These insights are shared with Heads of Faculty and teachers in a clear, accessible format, enabling patterns and points of concern to be identified quickly at both individual and cohort level.

From early identification to classroom practice

At Ibstock Place School, baseline data is always viewed in context.

"MidYIS gives a snapshot of ability – it's not the end of the story," Christine explains. "It helps us ask the right questions and supports early identification, which is crucial."

This holistic approach helps staff ask the right questions, decide whether further diagnostic testing is required, and confirm early concerns



raised by teachers. Early identification supports timely intervention and ensures appropriate levels of challenge are put in place from the outset. Sharing student profiles encourages professional dialogue and supports a consistent, informed approach across departments.

Sharing the MidYIS student profiles with teachers stimulates discussion and leads to the setting of appropriate levels of challenge."

Embedding oracy across the curriculum

Building on this holistic approach to assessment, the school recently implemented an 'Oracy and Debating' lesson for Year 7 and Year 8 students, alongside an embedded oracy scheme of work for every subject for Years 7-13. This scheme of work is modelled using the Oracy Skills Framework developed by Voice 21 and Oracy Cambridge. Part of the University of Cambridge, Oracy Cambridge aims to promote oracy in schools, led by Director Neil Mercer, Emeritus Professor of Education and Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society.

Their use of Cambridge Insight data is part of a holistic approach to understanding students' communication strengths and learning profiles,

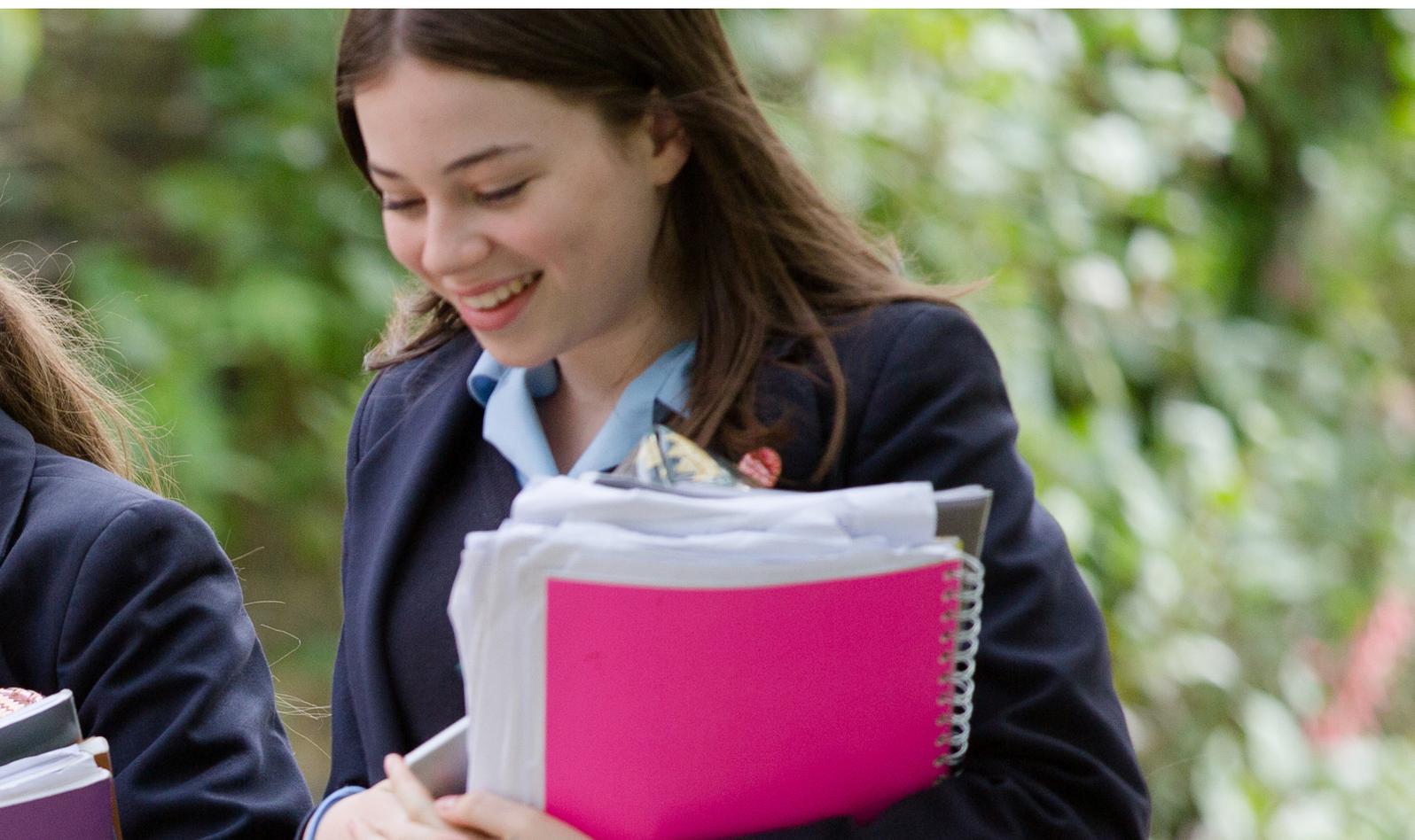
enabling them to design lessons that target both confidence and skill development.

The inclusion of oracy is particularly relevant given the Secondary oracy, reading and writing framework announced in the Government response to the Curriculum and Assessment Review:

"We will therefore publish a combined secondary oracy, reading and writing framework that brings together guidance on these topics, to support teachers to connect and use all three in their teaching and to embed literacy and oracy across the entire curriculum as part of a whole school strategy."

Chris Wolsey, Headteacher, has already seen the value of embedding oracy into their programmes of study:

"It's not enough to simply utter warm words about the importance of oracy. If students, parents and teachers are really to take this part of our provision seriously, then it needs to be properly integrated into our programmes of study, and at a really fundamental level. Writing oracy into our schemes of work helps us to do this, and to ensure that our students experience it right across the curriculum – and sometimes in some unexpected places."



Triangulating insights: Student surveys, ESB results and Cambridge Insight data

At the end of each year, Year 7 and Year 8 students are assessed by the English Speaking Board (ESB) on Speech.

Year 7 students are also asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of 11 statements about their oracy lessons. The results of this survey were cross-referenced with their ESB Qualification results and their Cambridge Insight baseline assessment data. This created insights into how a student scored in their assessments compared to how they felt about the oracy lessons.

Key findings

- 65% of students reported that oracy lessons made them more confident public speakers
- Students who achieved higher ESB grades reported greater personal pride in their work
- 79% of respondents agreed that oracy is a valuable life skill
- 73% agreed that oracy should be taught in all schools

Matt Hazell, Head of Oracy and Head Coach of Debate England, reflects on the programme's impact:

"Our programme has been transformational in terms of our students' experience. It's given them a voice in an environment which is safe, supportive and structured. The skills which they develop form the cornerstone of an approach to learning which endures right through to the end of their secondary education, and beyond."

A successful approach to continuous development

By combining Cambridge Insight data with ESB results and survey responses, the school gained a comprehensive understanding of both ability and confidence, supporting targeted teaching and the continuous improvement of the programme.

Ibstock Place School will continue to include oracy as a key part of their curriculum given the overwhelmingly positive response from students, carrying the programme forward with this year's Year 8 cohort.



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Cambridge Insight's baseline assessments have already opened up some really interesting lines of enquiry for us and as we pursue them further, we'll be better able to design future provision which best serves all of our students' needs.

Rachel Palmer, Deputy Head (Academic)

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Get in touch to find out more about Cambridge Insight's baseline assessments.