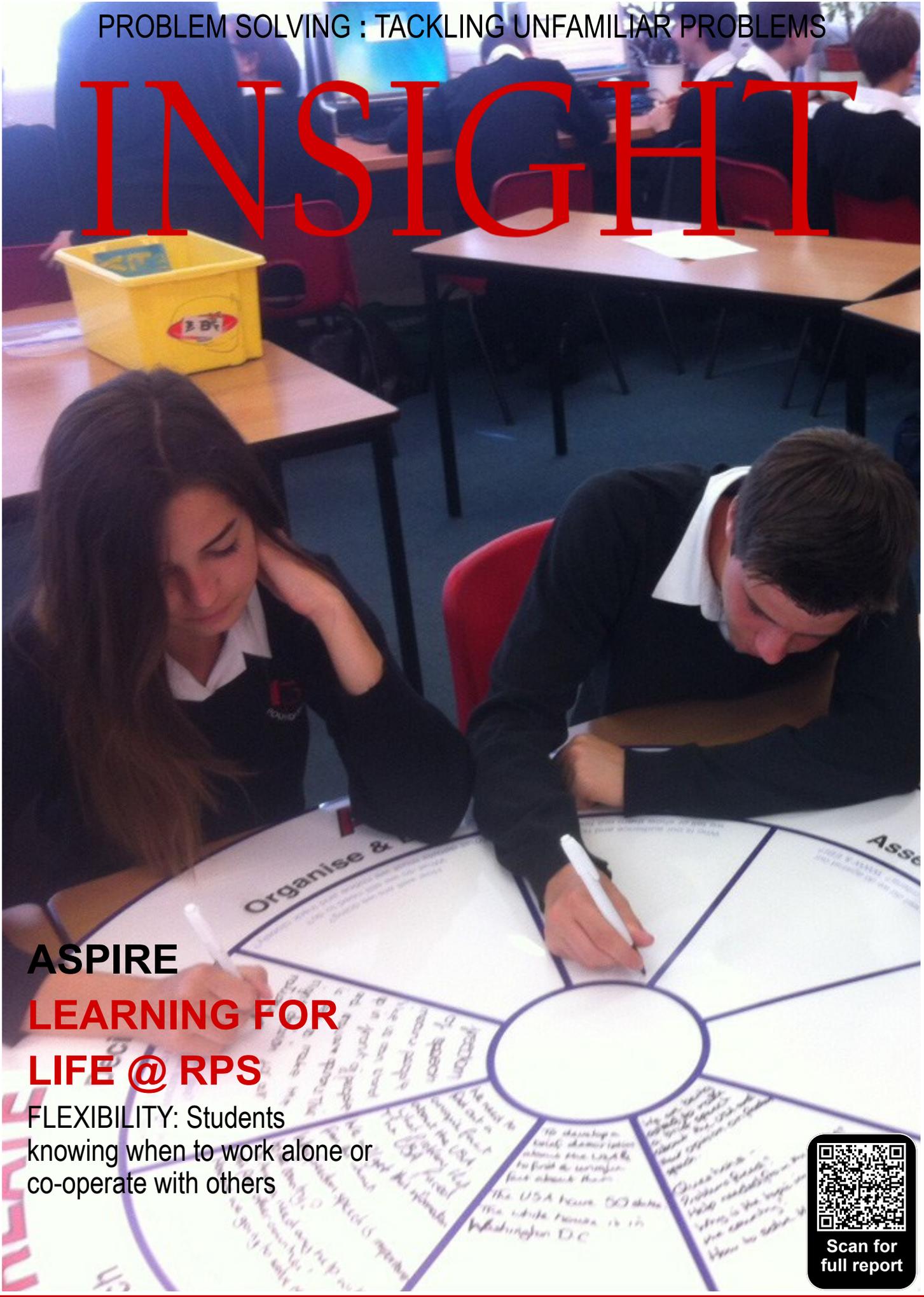


PROBLEM SOLVING : TACKLING UNFAMILIAR PROBLEMS

INSIGHT



ASPIRE LEARNING FOR LIFE @ RPS

FLEXIBILITY: Students knowing when to work alone or co-operate with others



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Briefing

‘As a school where valuing others is a key part of LIFE, it is great to see those habits associated with respecting others and friendship are allowing our students to learn in a supportive but purposeful environment.’

1. **ALAN HENSHALL**, Headteacher of Roundwood Park, reflecting on how the core values of our school have naturally led to the Evolving with others learning habits being highly developed at this stage.

‘There was loads of independent learning going on and the students were so motivated when they were given the full control of an open-ended learning task.’

2. **HELEN ALLUM**, Second in Science, expressing her observation that where teachers provide students with higher levels of autonomy for their own learning, the progress students make in the classroom is greatly enhanced.

‘It was a really valuable experience. I will now think about students more as learners and make that a greater focus in lessons.’

3. **NICOLA LAYTON**, teacher of English, found it great to have the chance to visit other lessons in other subjects and see the students working in different environments, to pick up new things for her lessons.

‘We saw very successful lessons where the planning and lesson teaching were merely conduits for student creativity and self-led learning.’

4. **FERGAL MOANE**, Head of Business Studies and Economics, on what he discovered about learning from the students’ point of view, during Insight III class visits.

‘Students were very respectful of other learners and they seemed very good at learning as a member of a team, and alone when it was appropriate.’

5. **JARROD KEEGAN**, Head of Mathematics, describing his experience having visited classes in other subjects and seeing students and staff learning together.



85%

Determination

Determination was the learning habit seen the most, and used in learning by students, during every Insight this academic year!



63%

Problem Solving

New problem solving mats have been created by colleagues and are now being used in lessons across the school.



Evaluating

The learning habits which has seen the biggest improvement from Insight II; students identifying strengths and weaknesses in a task and seeking improvements



35%

Organising

The learning habit used least by students, after being resourceful. Students must learn how to prioritise and track their own Progress.

10 Questions

During **Insight III** we focused on Years 7, 8 and 10. Staff were fascinated to see how students learned differently in other subjects and the amount of independent learning taking place.

What learning habits were seen most frequently?

Evolving with others (social interaction) is seen as a real strength among the learning habits at RPS at this moment in time. The learning habit seen most in this quadrant was *flexibility*, where students were making good decisions about whether to work alone or able to decide when it was best to co-operate with others. A good number of students were also *learning respectfully*, where they were demonstrating good listening skills, trying to understand and explore others' views in discussions and in some cases changing their views as a consequence. The strong consensus of the Insight III team was that students *collaborated* very well in groups and were committed to contributing fully towards team discussions and tasks.

What other habits were also seen as a strength?

Students *determination* and engagement in lessons was again noticed most frequently of all, and in nearly nine out of ten lessons. Students also demonstrated very good *self discipline*, making effective use of time, managing distractions as well as still very clearly enjoying their learning.

Was there a learning habit that was not seen much?

The opportunities for students to *organise* themselves were limited. Students need to learn how to prioritise, design a route and track their own progress along the way. Teachers need to consider how they will adapt learning tasks in school and

through home learning to give more scope for this to happen.

What learning habit was the biggest 'riser' from the last Insight?

Evaluating was seen in students' learning last time in 46.6% of lessons visited, and then was seen in nearly two-thirds of lessons (62%) this time. The *evaluating learning* habit is where students are identifying strengths and weaknesses in a task; followed by seeking improvements and further refinements, to make it better. This increase has come from more opportunities for *evaluation* to happen in Year 7 and Year 8 lessons which is extremely encouraging.

Which lesson in Year 7 really caught your eye?

In one Year 7 English lesson students were asked to improvise and act out some scenes from a play they had read. They were asked to develop the scripts *responsibly* themselves and *collaborate* by allocating parts and roles through rehearsals.

The rehearsals were extremely helpful to consolidate their learning from reading the play and it got them even more *inspired* about the text, as their plays literally brought it to life.

What about learning in Year 8?

Determination was seen as a huge strength, as it was in Year 7. A Year 8 music lesson gave opportunities for students to access learning habits under the *Individuality* quadrant. Students were *taking risks* with new software, which many had not experienced before. They managed these risks sensibly and produced some excellent new versions, by taking full control of their learning *responsibly*, and re-working some popular and classic music together.

Which lesson in Year 10 stood out?

In a Year 10 physical education lesson a small group of students, who were not participating, were given the task of deciding which students

would learn in which ability courts for a new tennis module. They did this by working *collaboratively*, *making links* to previous teacher assessment (badminton) and their powers of

observation and *evaluation*.

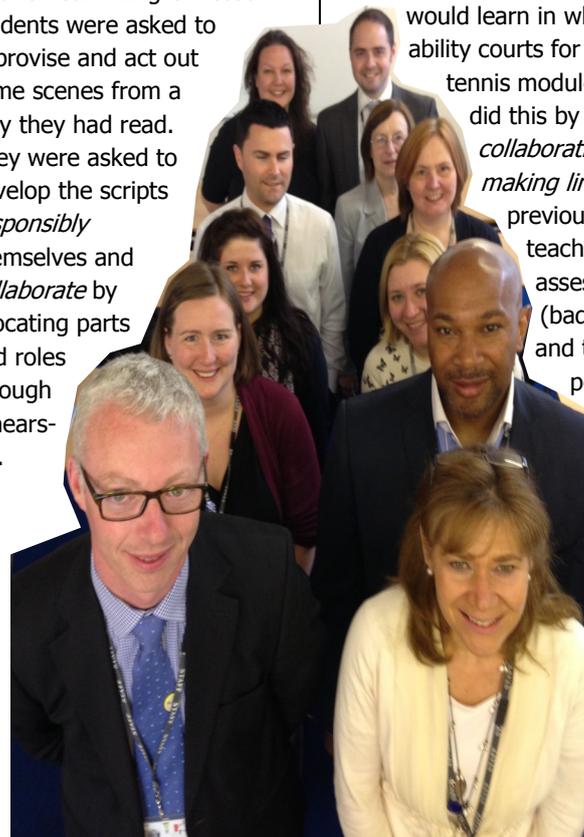
They watched their peers play in mini-games for short periods, reporting back as a team before seeking further information again, prior to making their final judgements together. They also prepared how they would *communicate* their decisions, as a committee, to their peers at the end, including how they would handle any possible objections if some students were not happy with their selection.

What are your plans for the learning habits from September?

The focus for next year, and probably the year after too, is to engage students with their subject content through significant learning habit activity; where they are engaged with as one. To achieve this subject areas have chosen one of four key learning habits *questioning*, *evaluating*, *perseverance and collaboration* to focus on in their lessons in the first half of the year, but not at the exclusion of all others. With these habits they will work *collaboratively* with other subjects to develop a progression model for each of these habits. This will clearly define four levels towards really deep and profound learning where students can initiate, connect and truly extend themselves.

How did the Year 6 and Year 11 induction day sessions go?

The students said, "It made us think more logically." "It made us really work well in a team and take risks with the challenges and questions we had to solve." Students said the task they liked the most was when they had make four equilateral triangles using only six straws. Maybe you could give that one



*Members of Insight III Team a try at home?

Learning to understand

Problem Solving
Adapting existing knowledge and skills to tackle unfamiliar problems

Thinking Logically
Examining and testing, finding things through step by step questioning

Questioning
Having an enquiry about something, asking how, why and what if?

Making Links
Seeing the connections with something in the outside world

Being Resourceful
Finding and selecting the most suitable resources for a task

Creative Thinking
Using imagination to generate fresh ideas and original solutions

Individuality

Planning Ahead
Researching, making and preparing thoroughly, anticipating possible problems

Organising
Prioritising, managing time and keeping your progress

Reflecting
Understanding yourself and keeping track from experience

Risk Taking
Trying new things, working creatively, whilst managing your emotions

Evaluating
Assessing the quality of a task, looking at alternatives and other individuals

Responsibility
Directing and being in control of your learning

ASPIRE
LEARNING FOR LIFE @ RPS

LEARNING INTEGRITY FRIENDSHIP EXCELLENCE

Focusing

Inspiration
Enjoying learning, approaching it enthusiastically and with a smile

Self Discipline
Identifying tasks, making decisions, breaking tasks, making decisions

Determination
Staying motivated and pushing to achieve your desired goal

Persistence
Readiness to make mistakes, learn from failure, accepting them and carrying on

Insight
Being aware of what and the bigger picture, backed by the right amount of attention

Evolving with others

Collaboration
Knowing when to work alone or cooperate with others

Flexibility
Working effectively in a team, sharing everyone's individual skills

Communication
Presenting ideas and team, clearly and concisely for an audience

Learning Respectfully
Learning to understand and appreciate the views of others

Valuing Others
Recognising and offering the benefits of others to enhance your learning

THE ROUNDWOOD PARK LEAVER:

FORWARD LOOKING
DETERMINED
LITERATE
ORGANISED COMMUNICATOR
RESPECTFUL
ARTICULATE
SOCIAL
NUMERATE

INDEPENDENT LEARNER
RISK TAKER
WELL ROUNDED
IMAGINATIVE
SUPPORTIVE
INVENTIVE

RESPECTFUL
ARTICULATE
SOCIAL
NUMERATE

HAPPY
ANALYTICAL
INITIATIVE
RESPONSIBLE
TEAM WORKER

ACHIEVER
MORAL
COMPASSIONATE
REFLECTIVE
CONFIDENT
GLOBALLY AWARE
HIGHLY SKILLED
RESOURCEFUL

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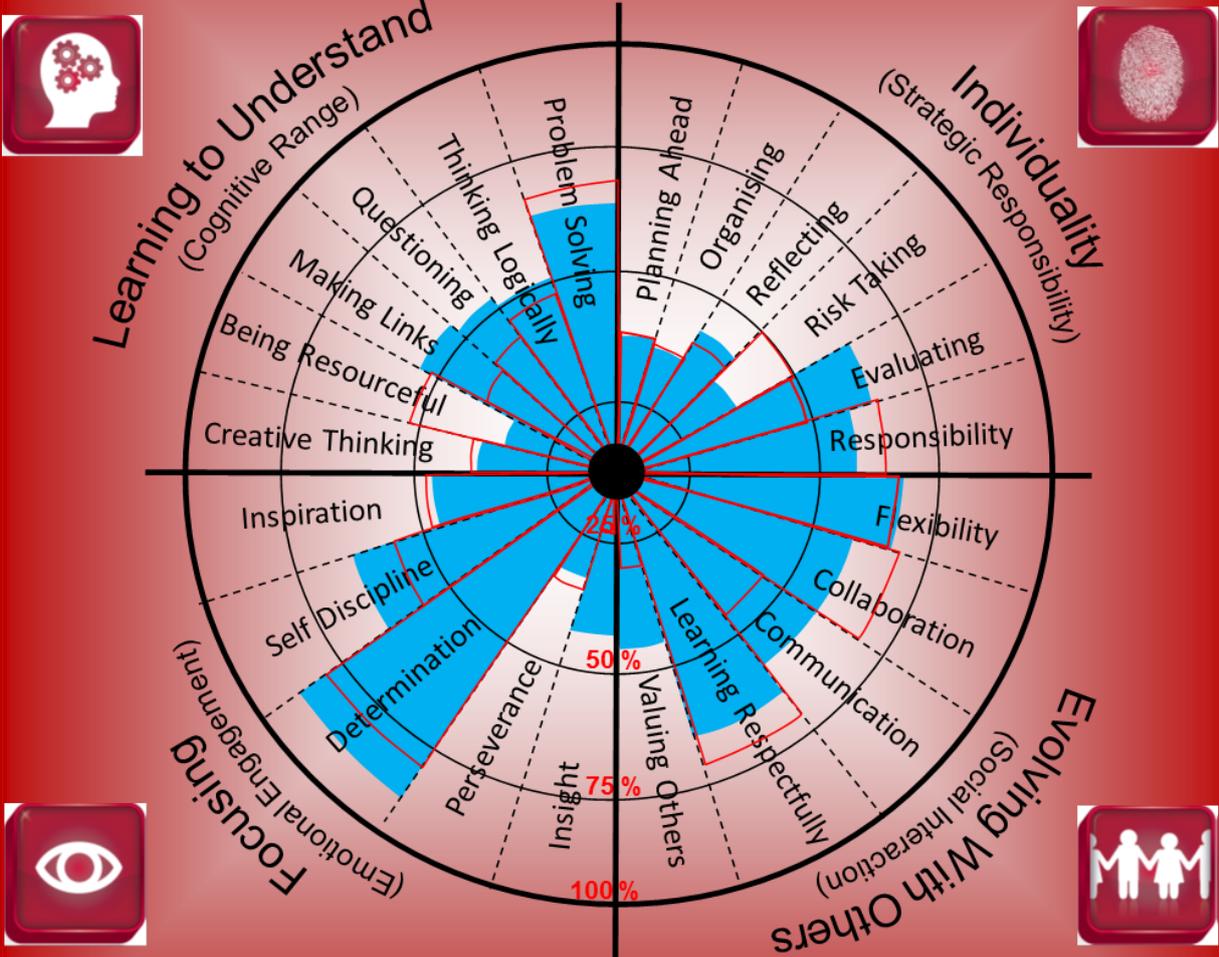
TEAM PLAYER
LEARNING AMBITIOUS
PASSIONATE
LOVES LEARNING

INSIGHT IV
RPS 14 - 18 OCTOBER 2013

NEXT EDITION OF INSIGHT
07 NOVEMBER 2013



Insight I and Insight III Comparison



Insight I
Insight III

FRONT PAGE IMAGE

Fiona Lamburn and Jaydon Gill using an ASPIRE Problem solving mat for a Model UN workshop during Activities Week.

These mats have been developed in school to give students some structure to help them solve unfamiliar problems independently.

LEARNING INTEGRITY FRIENDSHIP EXCELLENCE

languages, maths & computing

Outstanding 2008/2009

