



# ASPIRE Learning Insight V - Summary Report

27<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> January : Spring 2014

## 1. THE PURPOSE AND NATURE OF THE INSIGHT

The purpose of this Insight was to find out what the students are learning and which learning habits are being used. The objective of the Insight was to deepen the understanding of the learning habits of students and the ways in which the school community can become better learners. The team focused on Years 8, 10 and 13. A total of 74 lessons were visited by the team for approximately 20 minutes each.

## 2. LEARNING for LIFE @ RPS

### *Some Positive Points:*

	<b>Points about students' learning</b>	<b>Impact, conclusions or probable explanations</b>
1	<i>Focusing</i> (28.6%), emotional engagement	The group of learning habits used most by students
2	<i>Determination</i> (82% overall again) was the second most seen learning habit	This shows our students' sustained desire and drive to learn and achieve, as well as the high levels of student engagement seen
3	<i>Perseverance</i> (55.4%) and <i>Insight</i> (70.3%) have both risen by more than 20% from Insight IV, to unprecedented levels seen in any previous Insight	These rises demonstrate our students are becoming more adept at managing their emotions during learning and are more resilient; able and ready to persist to be successful in their learning
4	<i>Evolving with others</i> (26.3%), social learning	The second highest group of learning habits displayed
5	<i>Learning respectfully</i> (68.9%), <i>Collaboration</i> (68.9%) and <i>Flexibility</i> (60.8%) underpin this outcome (point 4)	There is more evidence than we have seen before of students working more effectively in teams and a continued rise in listening and learning through empathy for others' views to change their opinions
6	<i>Valuing others</i> (59.5%), recognising and utilising the strengths of others to improve their own learning rose by more than 33% from Insight IV and to an all-time high	This shows students are increasingly using their peer group as a resource to help them solve problems and improve their work. It probably means teachers are allowing more opportunities for this 'social or peer support' within learning, which is healthy
7	<i>Learning to understand</i> (24.6%), the cognitive learning habits, maintained a high overall proportion of all learning habits seen	<i>Problem solving</i> (83.8%), <i>Thinking logically</i> (59.5%), <i>Making links</i> (63.5%) and <i>Questioning</i> (59.5%) are the thinking skills students regularly use most in lessons
8	<i>Problem solving</i> (84% overall and 87% in Y10 students) was the learning habit seen most frequently	This shows our students are using knowledge and skills they already know to tackle unfamiliar problems, as well as suggesting high levels of student-centred activity in lessons, which should drive engagement
9	Students in Year 10 (70%) are better at <i>Being resourceful</i> than Year 8 (33.3%) and Year 13 (39.1%) students	This suggests that students in Year 10 are better at seeking and selecting the best resources to be successful in their learning, or that they have more opportunities to do so
10	<i>Making links</i> (63.5%) reached its highest ever level and was the learning habit seen seventh most	Students are more frequently than before making connections within learning, either across subjects in school or to the real world, and this is steadily becoming a habitual part of most learning. This suggests teaching is making sure that curriculum content and learning is both relevant and inspiring
11	<i>Reflecting</i> was seen in 71.4% of Year 8 lessons visited, compared to Year 10	Year 8 students are showing strong engagement with the habit of mulling over their learning, as well as a confidence to do so. It

	(36.7%) and Year 13 (34.8%)	might be that older students have either had less practice at this, or have a lower perceived need to do so to improve as a learner
12	<i>Inspiration (58.1%)</i> reached its highest level ever	In nearly six of every 10 lessons visited colleagues noticed that students were enjoying their learning, approaching it enthusiastically and with a smile. This is healthy for students well-being and resonates with other habits which contribute to a very positive picture of student engagement with learning

### ***Some Points for Thought and Improvement:***

	<b>Points about students' learning</b>	<b>Impact, probable explanations or solutions</b>
1	<i>Individuality (20.5%)</i> , the strategic range, group of learning habits continues to be least visible	Teachers and students need to further explore how to create opportunities to more frequently and strategically track their own progress, understand themselves better as learners, as well as take and manage risks.
2	<i>Evaluating (60.8%) and Responsibility (63.5%)</i> were the learning habits seen most, from the Individuality learning quadrant, as they often are	Students are able to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning and enjoy directing and taking control of learning tasks, when they are given the opportunities or choice to do so
3	<i>Risk taking (36.5%) and creative thinking (36.5%)</i> were the learning habits seen least in learning	This suggests more opportunities are required for taking learning spontaneously in an unexpected direction, whilst managing the risks involved. Perhaps some of the 'possibility thinking' exercises showcased in recent staff training used as starters in lessons might help generate more imagination and creativity for students to find new ideas and solutions to more open-ended tasks or stimuli

The Insight V team, from their visits, described these learning conditions as most conducive to ***deep learning***:

- Student led lessons, when the teacher wasn't directing too much, worked far better and the students were consequently more focused, more engaged and finding learning more enjoyable
- Where students were working in a team and where students were allowed to move around to work with others interdependently or move the furniture in order to positively engage in groups
- When students get stuck. Where there is a CHALLENGE
- opportunities to reflect on their learning and evaluate their strengths and relative weaknesses
- discussion among their peers allowed the students to use their own skills and learning to problem solve and create their own resources to make progress; where the teacher stood back
- When students were 'settled' with all the resources to hand, to choose from (books, worksheets, laptops, etc..) and allowed to get on with it, quietly focus on a difficult task requiring perseverance
- Student discussion of ideas or a range of activities linked directly to the topic and learning habit

These demonstrate that there are many examples of deep learning taking place in 'Learning @ RPS'. They also demonstrate our focus for teachers to consider how to '**engage students with subject content through significant learning habit activity**', is working. This is shown by some of the data for learning habits, eg: *Perseverance, Valuing others, Collaboration, etc.*, which link directly to the bullets above, continuing to increase in the incidence they are seen in Insights over time.

### ***Learning Exemplars by Year Group***

**Year 8** – In the twenty-three lessons visited, the *Focusing* learning habits were seen most frequently.

- In a music lesson students created a short improvised 'piece' following the rules and themes for Indian music. Students were highly engaged, focused and clearly enjoying this task.
- In a science lesson students began building a revision guide for a topic being introduced, by answering the simple questions before starting off, "what will you need to know?" This made students *Plan ahead* and *Make links* with previous learning.
- In a physical education lesson students self-evaluated their progress in Badminton, tracking using their personal profile booklet, and then discussing and justifying why they had reached their personal

judgement, with some students listening so genuinely that they subsequently changed their original judgements.

**Year 10**– In the thirty lessons visited, the *Focusing* learning habits were seen most frequently.

- In English students worked *collaboratively* by contributing their ideas to a group set of notes, by one team member typing into a word document through the discussion. Then they distilled the whole group's thoughts by prioritising the statements.
- In a textiles lesson all students gathered around one table to *Evaluate* one student's stencil development. *Listening respectfully* to her learning process, over the course of three lessons, she explained why she made particular changes to her original idea; *self-evaluating* frequently as she went along

**Year 13** – In the twenty-one lessons visited, the *Focusing* learning habits were seen most.

- In a chemistry lesson students used their data and results from an experiment to try and work out an equilibrium constant. They were working in pairs, all with slightly different results due to the different solutions they had used. Initially they were getting the wrong answer, which they knew because of their understanding of chemical formula theory, but stuck at it until they got the correct result, and then went to help others still working on it in the class.
- In a physical education theory lesson students shared a sporting example they had placed on a theoretical model about attentional styles. The quadrants of the model were set out in the room and students had to move themselves to the quadrant they thought best exemplified the example. Then they had to justify their choice, using the underlying theory and understanding of attentional styles.
- In a further maths lesson students were highly challenged to prove an accepted mathematical equation using other wider maths equations that they knew to derive it. Without teacher help this took them far longer than it might have but led to much deeper understanding of the skills and method involved.

This report provides some views and questions about 'learning @ RPS'. Please do look further at the reflection wheels and year group tabular data, which will certainly stimulate further possible conclusions or lines of enquiry, particularly in searching for similarities and differences between year groups!

### **3. FUTURE INSIGHTS, REPORTS AND INFORMATION:**

- Please read this report in conjunction with the tabular data, also at year group level, in 'Insight V Data SPRING 14', the 'Insight V Reflection Wheel' and the 'Insight V Reflection Wheel Overlay SPR 14'
- The next ASPIRE learning Insight VI will take place, from Monday to Friday, in the week of Wednesday 14th May to Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2014. During this week colleagues will be visiting Year 7, 8 and 9 lessons.

**Insight Team V (ABo, ALZ, ALi, BTi, CPa, HTw, JGd, LMa, MTa, NGr, GPe)**

**7<sup>th</sup> February, 2014**