

Feedback Case Study



A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF BEST PRACTICE

OXLEY COLLEGE
BURRADOO, NSW

aitsl
Australian Institute
for Teaching and
School Leadership
Limited

- 🌀 INNER REGIONAL
- 🌀 NON-GOVERNMENT
- 🌀 K - 12
- 🌀 ICSEA 1151
- 🌀 55 TEACHERS
- 🌀 535 STUDENTS
- 🌀 LBOTE 5%
- 🌀 INDIGENOUS STUDENTS 1%

(Accessed from MySchool - June 2017)

Identifying a need

In 2012, Oxley College moved from only secondary schooling to operating as a K-12 school. This prompted the leadership team to review their teaching practices to ensure student progress along a continuum of learning across the years. The team explored the differences between primary and secondary teaching pedagogy to agree on a consistent approach.

Oxley's leadership team selected Professor John Hattie's *Visible Learning* as the basis for developing effective teaching practice across the college. This provided a framework for staff and leaders to revisit whenever they encountered teaching challenges. Incorporating feedback practices was a key focus in clarifying student progress and next steps in learning.

“ When you do a piece of writing, that’s practising what you know. The learning shift is between my feedback and the changes you then make.” 📌

Justine Lind, Head K - 6

KEY IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES

Reviewed research and selected to adopt new feedback practices to drive teaching improvement.

Selected Visible Learning Leaders to lead the implementation phase.

Established Visible Learning teams, led by VL leaders, to support teacher collaboration in reviewing research and data from walk-throughs, and measuring impact.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. **Identified a need** to review pedagogy given the expansion to a K-12 college.
 2. **Reviewed research** and selected *Visible Learning* as the basis for establishing a unified pedagogical approach.
 3. **Established Visible Learning Leaders** and teams to work collaboratively on improving practice, including developing teachers' use of learning intentions and success criteria.
 4. **Built student capacity** to work with learning intentions, success criteria and rubrics, engage in peer feedback, and track their own learning progress.
 5. **Used data** to track student growth, agree on learning goals and to inform feedback practices.
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Implementation narrative

To drive implementation, six staff who were already modelling effective practices were selected as *Visible Learning* (VL) Leaders in the college. The VL Leaders were from a range of domains and year levels, and included early career and experienced teachers.

All staff were then allocated to a VL team facilitated by one of the VL Leaders. They met regularly to discuss chapter readings from *Visible Learning*, with the starting point being how the learnings might apply within their classrooms.

At first, teachers concentrated on developing learning intentions and success criteria individually for their classes and collaboratively for whole units of work. This clear focus then guided the planning and structuring of lessons, ensuring teachers were comprehensively addressing the key concepts and skills.

Teachers aimed to build student capacity to work with learning intentions and success criteria by taking time to explain these in class, helping students grasp what they looked like in practice. Teachers then developed learning intentions and success criteria together with students to further engage them in the learning process and determine their level of understanding.

Rubrics are commonly used across the school to help students see what they have achieved in a lesson and identify what they need to achieve in the next one. Rubrics also provide a basis for peer feedback and inform lesson planning.



KEY FEEDBACK PRACTICES

Learning goals and success criteria are shared with the students at the beginning of each lesson so they know exactly what is expected. Teachers refer to these when providing feedback.

Rubrics are used as the basis for feedback to students from teachers and peers.

Building student capacity to understand learning intentions, success criteria and rubrics, and to track their own learning progress.

Teacher/student conferencing helps teachers understand where the students are in their learning, to review their work and progress, and to agree on the next learning goals.

Self and peer-assessment helps students to review their own and each other's work referring to the success criteria. Students are specifically taught the skills of peer feedback.

Classroom techniques include:

- **Two stars and a wish** as a means for providing feedback to students – two elements to continue, and one to develop.
- **Students writing a response to their feedback** to illustrate they have understood and will act on it.
- **Year 9 students reviewing the work of younger students** to provide feedback for improvement.
- **Students respond at the end of a unit of work** to the questions: What have you learnt? What are you still working on? What do you think you could teach to someone else?



Another staff objective was to collect evidence of learning to measure the impact of the introduced changes. VL Leaders undertook a series of 10-minute classroom walk-throughs to observe:

- how learning intentions and success criteria were being used
- if students could articulate what they were learning and why
- how students were engaging with the classwork.

The VL Leaders shared the insights they had drawn from the walk-throughs at VL team meetings to stimulate discussion, reflection and improvement. Other activities included formative assessments of student learning at the beginning of the term, and again once the units were underway, to track the impact of the VL strategies, and learning progress. The teams discussed this evidence of impact at VL team meetings.

A student survey in 2013 revealed that further work was needed to raise the quality of feedback provided to students. The existing structures of VL teams, walk-throughs and staff professional learning days were used to focus attention on this over the following two years.

Teachers concentrated on providing task, process and self-regulated feedback to students, with specific reference to the learning intentions and success criteria. Subsequent surveys showed a marked improvement in student perceptions about the standard of feedback received.

ENABLING CONDITIONS

Presenting a strong evidence base to secure staff buy-in.

Expert teaching is recognised as a key element for becoming a *Visible Learning* Leader.

School led differentiated professional learning – recognising that teachers were at different stages of implementing strategies.

Teachers are supported to trial new approaches and to evaluate them candidly. Successful approaches are adopted and those that fail are discontinued without reproach to the teacher.

Oxley College has also added other activities to boost its implementation of feedback practices. Data for each student from formal and informal assessments is collated in a spreadsheet. This is made available to all teachers, which means they have the latest information to draw on when planning units of work and tracking student progress.

The college uses teacher/student conferencing as an opportunity to review where students are in their learning, gather evidence of progress, provide feedback and agree on learning goals. This process helps students to track their own learning and growth.

Another recent initiative is student-led parent/teacher conferences. Teachers provide students with frameworks to facilitate the meetings. Students are required to collate work samples to support their discussions about skills, self-management and personal engagement in their learning. These examples must include ones which students have found most interesting and most challenging, as well as activities that demonstrate independence and organisational skills.

Oxley has also established a peer feedback class. Students respond to teacher guidance before sharing their work with their peers. Using guidelines and questions provided by the teacher, the students give each other feedback to help them improve. This process enables students to develop familiarity in critically reviewing each other's work and giving feedback based on set criteria.



“ It really is about that mindful design of what your learning intentions are for the unit, and where you’re going to spend your energy in terms of that peer-assessment, self-assessment, review and refinement phase. ”

Justine Lind, Head K - 6