



PARTICIPANT CASE STUDY

RAISING THE BAR IN WEST LONDON

**Peter Haylock, Future Leader, Cohort '08,
Deputy Executive Headteacher – Assessment and
Intervention at Fulham Cross Girls' School and
Language College, Hammersmith & Fulham:**

- ★ Located in a socially mixed area, with large pockets of deprivation
- ★ A student population of 600 girls
- ★ At least 80% of students from minority ethnic backgrounds
- ★ 50%+ are eligible for Free School Meals

Students at Fulham Cross typically come from financially deprived backgrounds and/or have English as a second language. In recent years the school has faced uncertainty about its future, and has had several headteachers. When Peter Haylock took up his place on the Future Leaders programme in 2008, the school was about to face a new challenge; that of federating with a local boys' secondary school, Henry Compton Boys' School.

Having worked all of his career teaching in inner city London schools, and with the aspiration to lead such a school, Peter was immediately drawn to the mission and values of Future Leaders. "I believe that every student needs a route to be successful and can achieve; the focus of this programme and its mission, and my beliefs, are completely aligned".

In his role as Assistant Head, and as a new Future Leader in his residency year, Headteacher Bernie Peplow gave Peter the task of leading on Assessment and Intervention, with a particular focus on improving GCSE results.



Peter Haylock, Future Leader, Cohort '08

Several mountains to climb

New to the role, Peter quickly and incisively grasped the core issues: a significant proportion of students on the D/C borderline needed boosting in one subject area in order to achieve 5 GCSEs including English and maths. "I believed that the majority of students could get 5 GCSEs, including the core subjects, and with the right level of support and targeted intervention, we could help them achieve their dream to go to university. We divided the students into 3 groups of increasing challenge: Snowdon, K2 and Everest, with Everest being the largest group with a potential weakness in one core subject area. The next step was to work closely with my colleagues to take that strategic analysis and turn it into practical solutions for closing the gaps."

He knew that the students had high aspirations – a survey had indicated that 80% of Year 7s wanted to go to university. "It was about developing both group and individualised solutions to get them focused in the right direction so that they could achieve their dream. The *'High Expectations'* – a Future Leaders core belief - were there in essence, but a significant

proportion of the students needed specific and personalised support to make the leap”, says Peter.

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Turning insight into action

Getting colleagues onside was “like pushing an open door”, because Bernie, in her role as Headteacher, had created an inspirational vision for the future of the school, as well as the climate for change. As a result, Peter’s colleagues were receptive and positive about doing things differently because they cared about improving outcomes for their students. To ensure the momentum was maintained, Peter worked tirelessly with the senior leadership team and other colleagues reminding them of their collective duty to ensure that all students should achieve their potential and that there were *‘No Excuses’* – another Future Leaders core belief - for their students failing. Together they devised a series of initiatives that would help particular students and student groups, such as additional homework and exam practice; a core subject revision day; and additional exam and revision technique support. These interventions supported the students in making the level of progress necessary to achieve the higher grades as well as equipped them with the skills and confidence to perform well in the exams.

To further support this work, Peter employed a progress tutor to work with targeted students. “We needed someone on the ground to focus on those students who needed a bit of extra help outside of the lesson. They would be in the lesson and identify where follow up support was required. This enabled particular students who didn’t understand something the first time, to receive dedicated support and get to the required level of understanding, so they could make faster progress.”



Peter Haylock, Deputy Executive Headteacher, in action

Peter became affectionately known as ‘Mr. Data’ through his continued conversations with subject leads and heads of faculty, bringing the data to life by talking about it in relation to particular students and their academic learning needs.

He would also make it a habit to have spontaneous ‘learning conversations’ with students whilst in passing, reminding them of their goals and the short-term tangible things they needed to do to stay on track. “I remember all the students and their grades.” He made parents aware of their child’s learning plan, and ensured they were alerted where student commitment seemed at risk. “It was about keeping an eye on individual students and their progress all the time, which I could do, as we are a relatively small school.” Throughout the year, he truly *‘led the learning’* – another Future Leaders core belief – through his subtle, persistent, but persuasive interactions with all parties involved.

Hard work, outstanding results

That year (2009), 71% of students achieved at least 5 GCSEs A* to C, including English and maths, an increase of 23% over 2008 results, which saw Fulham Cross achieve the greatest improvement in results the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham had ever seen and put them in the top 9% of schools nationally in terms of student progress.

In addition, 69 students achieved an A* or A grade, and in the following subjects - Religious Studies, Citizenship, Business, Product Design, Travel and Tourism, ICT, Art and Drama - over 90% of students achieved A*-C.

Peter was delighted with the results, particularly because of the outstanding progress made where 22 out of 24 D/C borderline students gained a C or more. The results, he said, were achieved through the dedication and hard work of his colleagues and the students themselves.

As a further accolade, the school received an 'Outstanding' Ofsted inspection in September 2009, putting Fulham Cross among the best schools in the country, an achievement backed by the huge leap in exam performance. *"The school is outstanding because it ensures achievement for all students and strives constantly to provide the best possible care and education for each individual."*

The report also noted that *"Leadership and management of the school are highly effective. The strong and ambitious drive for improvement provided by the headteacher and senior leadership team has raised the morale and aspirations of staff and students... Leaders and managers demonstrate outstanding capacity to sustain improvements. They have embedded robust systems for quality assuring all aspects of the school's work and they constantly strive for improvement. The impact is seen in the rapidly rising trend in achievement and standards of attainment."*

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Ensuring Sustainability – continued Success in 2010

Although 2009 saw significant achievements for the school, Peter was not complacent about the future. He continued to embed the practice of tracking and goal setting, as well as targeted intervention and support throughout the school years, so that higher levels of attainment start earlier on. This involved further work on systems and reports, as well as support and training, to make data and the tracking of student progress more accessible for colleagues. The dedication of staff and students certainly paid off: 2010 saw Fulham Cross achieve its finest set of results in the history of the school -

- ★ 92% of students achieved 5 A* – C grades overall (an 8% increase from 2009)
- ★ 69% of students achieved 5 A* – C grades including English and Maths.
- ★ 89% of students achieving at least one grade A or above.
- ★ The school was in the top 2% of schools in England with regard to their CVA score.

The headteacher acknowledges that Peter's work on Assessment and Intervention in the past year has played a significant part in achieving the 'outstanding' category, and looks to evolve the good practice he has developed to other areas going forward. "Most of the credit for recent success remains with the students, staff, families, governors, the local authority and partners of the school but Peter completely espouses the mission of Future Leaders and truly 'walks the talk'. He develops strategy, consults, and then ensures delivery, whilst supporting staff by making sure they can deal with the increase in demands. He has excellent relationships with everybody – staff, students and parents – and is equally respected by all. He has learning conversations with students all the time, and the way he speaks to students develops this ethos of aspiration and achievement."



Bernie Peplow Headteacher

“Peter completely espouses the mission of Future Leaders and truly ‘walks the talk’. He develops strategy, consults, and then ensures delivery, whilst supporting staff by making sure they can deal with the increase.”

Looking Back

On reflection, Peter feels the Future Leaders programme has helped him immensely. “The training is brilliant, it is clear and specific and focuses on what’s important, which is the students’ academic achievement and as many students as possible being successful in getting the required standards, with ‘No Excuses’. The programme has really made me raise the bar in terms of student expectations. Before I was more accepting of lower grades. The key things for me have been learning how to make it possible through the training and the endless support from my Leadership Development Adviser, Anne Barton, who is brilliant at breaking things down. I have also greatly appreciated the access I have to a network of like-minded colleagues to share ideas with.”

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Peter has now been appointed as Executive Deputy Head of the school, and will continue leading on assessment and intervention strategies, both at Fulham Cross, but also working with the senior leadership team and staff at Henry Compton. He has many new ideas on how to take assessment and intervention to a new level and looks forward to the challenges and opportunities that the federation of the two schools presents with a joint sixth form scheduled for 2013. A brand new Language College Centre also opened in January 2011.