



Helping pupils achieve outstanding success

The Haberdashers' Boys' School (Habs) is a large independent day school for boys aged 5-18, educating around 1100 pupils.

The school fulfils its aim to challenge bright boys and provides an outstanding educational experience. It enables pupils to perform to the highest level of their ability, make excellent progress and demonstrate exceptional achievement in their levels of attainment and co-curricular activities.

The challenging curriculum and supportive community mean that pupils achieve outstanding success at GCSE, IGCSE and A Level.

Habs have consistently used CEM assessments, including MidYIS and Alis, for the last 20 years. Director of Studies, Kirti Shah, explains here how they make the most of their CEM assessment data.

Doing good things with **assessment data**

'Each pupil is assessed on entry to the school using CEM assessments and the results are shared electronically with all staff, pupil by pupil. In light of their MidYIS or Alis scores, individual Teaching and Learning advice is established for each pupil.

'We make all of this information easily available to all teachers electronically, so that all teachers can see MidYIS profiles as they enter their own marks from homework and classwork.

'Therefore the data is used regularly and is used for each individual student. It is the accessibility to the information electronically that allows this to happen and thus allows us to make frequent reference to the data.'



Using data to inform teaching and learning

'We do not set targets for pupils; rather we use the data to inform our teaching on a day to day basis. For example, a student with a low Vocabulary score might come with the following advice for the teacher:

- Provide regular opportunities to develop reading skills.
- Encourage the pupil to use new language and do not penalise for misuse.
- Provide clear written instructions.
- Allow time to complete long written passages or answer complex questions.
- Provide a glossary and/or 'scaffolding' to structure work.
- Encourage the pupil to develop their own glossary and write their own meanings for words.

'We have developed this advice ourselves but it is based on advice from CEM, as well as our own knowledge of our pupils.

The advice is tailor-made for each profile – so we have advice for high Maths scores, high Non-Verbal reasoning scores and so on. This allows us to focus on the strengths of each individual student profile. All our pupils are bright, but they are not equally capable in all areas and that is what the data and our presentation of it allow us to see.'

Triangulating the data

'We make sure the Teaching and Learning advice is readily accessible throughout the year so that it can always be referred to. It is used to both prepare for lessons, and for teachers to use in support of the information they are learning about their pupils over the course of the academic year.

'From long experience, we know that teachers find it very reassuring to put some baseline, objective, standardised data alongside the subjective and nuanced information they gain from classwork and homework.'

The MidYIS feedback provides two sets of standardised scores to enable more meaningful comparisons: nationally standardised scores and scores which have been standardised against other independent schools.

The feedback also groups pupils into four 'bands'. Band A is the top 25% of pupils' scores, Bands B and C the middle 50% of pupils' scores and Band D the lowest 25%.

'We have used the CEM bands to develop our own 'Habs bands': We did this because many of our students are in CEM Band A. Our Habs bands allow us to see the strengths and weaknesses of our students at a glance, within the context of our cohort. For example, pupils who are in the top 10% of the year group are in band A*. Thus we can support our boys to achieve the highest standards.'



Pupils reaching exceptional levels of achievement

Haberdashers' latest ISI Report notes: 'Pupils make excellent progress and demonstrate exceptional achievement in their levels of attainment ...the school operates an excellent system to track the pupils' progress'.

Kirti explains: 'We use a system of progress grades to communicate progress and predicted exam outcomes to students and parents.

'This is done every half term across all year groups 7 to 13. The grades, or rather numbers, for attainment are *, 1, 2, 3 and 4. A '2' is the expected score for most of the time for most Habs pupils, whereas a '4' is a serious concern that would result in further actions.

'The CEM data informs the actions we take in light of the progress grades. We use the MidYIS and Alis data to map onto our own progress grades.

'For example, given a pupil's MidYIS score we might expect him to be achieving a '2' in chemistry. If he achieves above that, we can celebrate his achievement, if he achieves below that we might consider that he is not performing to his potential. Or if his MidYIS score indicates he should achieve a '3' in chemistry and the pupil achieves a '1' then this is a major success, perhaps more so than for a pupil for whom MidYIS predicts a '1'.

Understanding value-added

'After the GCSE or A-Level examinations, we use the results to calculate our value-added. This begins a conversation with our academic departments about trends and teaching strategies, and it will trigger specific action points with departments.

'These conversations and the questions we ask ourselves about what we could do better still are driven by the following reports provided by CEM:

- The summary worksheet which shows pupil and subject value-added
- The scatter graphs of pupil and subject value-added
- The average standardised residual graph showing subject performance against expectation
- The SPC chart showing trends over time

'These conversations begin as soon as the Autumn Term begins so it is important that our Heads of Department have these results quickly and we are very pleased that CEM are able to provide much of the data on results day.

'At the start of every year, we share the macro data (the MidYIS profile across year 7 in all skill areas) with colleagues and compare it to previous years. It most often shows us that the profile of our intake is the same year on year, despite what teachers may think!

'Showing trends over time is important: including the fact that our profile is actually very similar year on year. This reassures us that we can continue to achieve outstanding and high value-added results.'

Sharing best practice

'The most useful aspect of the CEM data is that it provides an objective, standardised guide to the skills sets of our students. Combined with our own entrance exams, classwork and qualitative data, it provides one data point among many that we use to inform our teaching practice every day.

My main recommendations for making the most of the information schools gather would be to:

1. Simplify the data to suit the needs of your school: lines of data on huge spreadsheets are not useful for most teachers.
2. Make the data user-friendly: put it into the language of your school.
3. Personalise the data to each student.

The data is at its most powerful when it helps you to understand the needs, strengths and areas for improvement for each individual. Endless pages of data tell us little when it comes to our individual classroom but the MidYIS micro data offers really useful insight.'