

# **Intervention Impact Report for Wychavon District Council October 2018**

## **“Speaky: Speaking Skills For Schools”**

### **Background**

In “The State of the Nation 2017 – Social Mobility in Great Britain” Report published by HMG Social Mobility Commission, Wychavon District was ranked 310<sup>th</sup> out of 324 Local Government Areas in the UK.

Wychavon District Council is investigating educational interventions which have the potential to improve the life chances and social mobility of young people living in the District. WDC sponsored the deployment of the **“Speaky: Speaking Skills for Schools”** Programme at Droitwich Spa High School from May 2018.

### **Intervention Overview**

The “Speaky: Speaking Skills For Schools” is a classroom resource developed by The Oracy Hub to improve Key Stage 2 and 3 student’s Confidence and Communication Skills. The resource comprises 14 short videos to be shown to the class together with 6 Teacher Training Videos and six lesson plans with details of attendant class exercises.

Droitwich Spa High School deployed the “Speaky” Intervention between May and July 2018 with a selected group of Key Stage 3 students for whom it was considered that an improvement in personal Soft Skills may be particularly beneficial in improving their general attainment.

### **Key Results**

- **Doubling in Pass Rate of Age Expected Communication Skills Assessment from 5 out of 12 Participants to 11 out of 12 Participants**
- **Achievement of MERIT in Age Expected Communication Skills Assessment by 5 Participants**
- **Individual Improvement in Personal Skills in all Participants of between 24%-78%**
- **Aggregate Improvement in Personal Skills across the group of 44%**

## About the Participants

All of the students were 12 or 13 years of age at the time that the *Speaky* course began. There were 12 students in the group, 8 girls and 4 boys. The average reading age of the group was 8 years, two months. The average spelling age was 9 years, 8 months. One of the students had profound hearing and sensory issues. The group was considered unable to access the full curriculum. They therefore had a dedicated teaching room of their own and a full time teaching assistant. The *Speaky* sessions were delivered by one of the group's English teachers. 5 of the 12 students were in receipt of free school meals at the time of the study. 6 of the 12 students qualified for Pupil Premium funding.

## About the Assessments

All assessments were undertaken by school staff who know the students well.

The Communication Skills of the Participants were assessed against 6 criteria:

- Willingness - willingness to participate in and contribute to group activity
- Vocal Projection – confidence to speak audibly and adjust to differing situations
- Pace – ability to speak at a speed that content can be understood, including pauses
- Logic – ability to structure and communicate information and thoughts logically
- Body Language – ability to stand, gesture, smile and make eye contact appropriately
- Inclusion – ability to listen and interact appropriately with others

The class teachers allocated a score between 1-5 for each criteria to each Participant before and after the Intervention based on classroom observation.

In addition the class teachers undertook formal assessments on three dates 4 June 2018, 22 June 2018, 6 July 2018 during the intervention. These formal assessments assessed the skills of the participants against the Age Expected Skill Levels in the general population in anticipation of the requirements at GCSE.

## Intervention Lead Teacher Review

"The key messages have worked well for us and the students have certainly taken them up in the way that we hoped they would.

It was a reasonably challenging start. The sessions concerned with self-presentation, posture and stillness involved giving the students a message that they did not necessarily want to hear. That slumping, mumbling and fidgeting are likely to prove self-defeating in the real world caused some degree of push-back. We braved it out, though. The students modified their approach according to the advice that you gave them and were indeed soon offering a well intended critique of how I was standing when addressing them, etc. I would think that is pretty much what we were aiming for.

We have worked through the sections on warming up and maintaining confidence. The students have given a couple of short formal presentations intended to give them a chance to demonstrate what they have learned. The simplicity and clarity of the *Speaky* material has made a positive difference. Our experience has been that it is memorable and useful. I know that you are interested in how it might work in a secondary rather than a primary setting. A couple of things have been apparent in our case. The systematic nature of the programme clearly gets results but makes the "sell" on the part of the teacher slightly more difficult. *Speaky* has been most effective for us woven around an existing programme of study, rather than standing alone. There was also some feeling that the branding of the materials suggested a younger target audience. It didn't last long, though. The students forgot about it after the second lesson and just focused on the substance.

"Let's get some advice from Mimi" and "time for some Speaky" are now parts of our classroom language. As I type this I am waiting to meet a colleague joining us in September. Our head teacher would like me to familiarise him with the materials so that he can lead on them, too. And so it grows. It has certainly been a positive and productive experience for our students."

*Duncan Hall, Intervention Lead Teacher, Droitwich Spa High School*

## About the School

Droitwich Spa high School is a larger-than-average secondary school with a sixth form, which serves the town of Droitwich Spa and the surrounding villages. It converted to academy status in July 2011 and is rated a **Good Provider** with **Outstanding** Leadership and Management by Ofsted.

Most students are from White British backgrounds and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action and school action plus is below average. However the proportion of students with a statement of special education needs is above the national average. The proportion of students who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average.

In April 2017, in their latest report, HM Ofsted Inspectors wrote:

**"You, your leadership team and the governing body have a tenacious and relentless determination to provide the best quality education for all pupils. You offer a broad and rich curriculum. Pupils' life chances are your highest priority, and no matter what barriers pupils face you are determined all shall succeed."**

## About the Intervention

The Speaky programme is targeted at Key Stage 2 and 3 Pupils and consists of 14 dynamic Class Videos, each covering a specific teaching point, to be played to the class. Teacher Training videos, detailed notes and suggested lesson plans accompany the Class Videos and equip teachers with the necessary skills to run activities, give feedback and support progress, and form an important part of the teacher's Continuing Professional Development.

It is possible to run all the Speaky Class Videos any number of times over the course of a year's subscription, and there is no limit to the number of pupils in each class.

There is considerable flexibility for the teachers to run the programme as best suits their timetable and their class, both in terms of size and capabilities. The Teacher Downloadable notes are notionally grouped into six lessons each involving 2 to 3 Teaching Point Class Videos. However individual Teaching Point Class Videos can be run as stand-alone lessons, or the number covered in one lesson can be tailored to suit the timetable and class.

The "Speaky" programme was deployed successfully by the teachers at Droitwich Spa High without additional training or involvement from The Oracy Hub. More details about the Intervention can be found at [www.oracy-hub.org/resources](http://www.oracy-hub.org/resources).

## Cost of Intervention

The cost of the complete "Speaky" – Speaking Skills for Schools resource is £200 +VAT for a 12 month licence covering all teachers and students within the client school.

Wychavon District Council kindly provided the entire cost of the Intervention in this case.

# Detailed Results

## Results of Formal "Age Expected" Assessment of Communication Skills

Student	Assessment date		
	04/06/2018	22/06/2018	06/07/2018
A	Fail	Pass	Pass
B	Pass	Pass	Merit
C	Fail	Fail	Pass
D	Pass	Pass	Merit
E	Pass	Pass	Merit
F	Fail	Pass	Pass
G	Pass	Pass	Merit
H	Fail	Fail	Pass
I	Pass	Pass	Merit
J	Fail	Pass	Fail
K	Fail	Fail	Pass
L	Fail	Fail	Pass

## Total Results for each Participant across 6 Criteria

Student	Before	After	Improvement
A	12	18	50%
B	18	23	28%
C	9	13	44%
D	15	20	33%
E	17	22	29%
F	9	15	67%
G	16	23	44%
H	9	16	78%
I	21	26	24%
J	15	23	53%
K	11	18	64%
L	9	15	67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>44%</b>

## Aggregate Results for the Group by Criterion

Criteria	Before	After	Improvement
Willingness	34	40	18%
Vocal Projection	27	41	52%
Pace	27	38	41%
Logic	18	34	89%
Body Language	26	40	54%
Inclusion	29	39	34%