

Case Study Broad Oak Sports College, Bury

Deputy head Chris Owen explains how IRIS has helped turn the school around:

Background:

In 2006 BOSC had no electronic system for recording or analysing rewards and sanction in the school. We wanted to find out what was going on in our school, but in the absence of any hard data it was impossible to make any informed judgement on several key issues:

- The strategic impact of the school behaviour policy
- The consistency of staff in applying sanctions and dealing with misbehaviour
- Assessing the match between level of misbehaviour and type of sanction applied
- The consistency of the rewards policy – which teachers were or were not giving rewards
- The criteria teachers were using to give rewards

We were in the dark about behaviour, rewards and sanctions in the school!

We assessed four different pieces of tracking software: SIMS, Sleuth, a bespoke system and IRIS. Sleuth we found too inflexible and SIMS simply didn't deliver. IRIS was the clear winner. It delivered exactly the information we needed and it was implemented in early 2007. This gave us the evidence we needed to develop a consistent approach and to challenge staff if appropriate.

We then developed a behaviour and rewards policy to take full advantage of IRIS's features. At the same time we introduced a rewards shop for our pupils, taking advantage of the pupil merits 'bank account' feature on IRIS. For our Y11 pupils we introduced a rewards system based on our annual school prom where pupils could 'buy' a limo ride and get money off the price of prom tickets. We also allowed pupils to buy free meal tickets with their credits. The ability to track behaviour easily on IRIS meant that we could readily withdraw prom invitations from pupils engaging in poor behaviour.

Impact:

All our staff are 100% positive about IRIS. It has hugely improved communication, hugely improved opportunities for intervention and helped us make a massive impact on behaviour in the school. Introducing IRIS into our school was like turning on the light in a darkened room.

Our pupils love IRIS too; they like to see where they are and are actively tracking their own behaviour and rewards. They like to see how many merit points they have in the bank and being able to see their own behaviour concerns in real time does encourage them to improve their behaviour.

Using IRIS we have been able to

- Quickly identify vulnerable pupils by their behaviour and be proactive in providing support before issues escalate.
- Have a solid evidence base to use in discussion with parents of pupils causing concern. As a matter of routine we always print off the pupil's IRIS behaviour record before any interview with parents.
- Have a clear, watertight audit trail of incidents, sanctions and interventions in the case of exclusions.

- Engage parents in monitoring their child's behaviour and rewards online via IRIS's parent login facility.
- Engage our pupils in monitoring their own behaviour and rewards via IRIS's pupil log-in facility.
- Ensure that that our rewards and sanctions policy is being followed consistently by all our staff, using IRIS simple and effective analysis tools.
- Easily identify trends and patterns across all areas of the school; student groups, areas of the school, times of day, types of behaviour, and actions of staff and much more.
- Introduce merit competition between houses, thanks to IRIS powerful rewards facility.

Using the analysis:

We introduced IRIS in January 2007. The following June we did our first major appraisal of the analysis. We were most concerned at the outcome of that analysis, we found that

- 44% of all incidence of class disruption resulted in no sanction being applied.
- There was a clear lack of consistency in both the application of sanctions and the level of sanction applied to similar misbehaviour. This meant that pupils were not clear about the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

These findings were shared with staff and we immediately began planning clear policy changes for the coming school year. Clear guidance on use of rewards and sanctions was given to all our staff.

These actions resulted during the following year in a reduction in un-sanctioned misbehaviour of 24%, significantly more consistency in the application of sanctions and a 240% increase in the number of merits awarded.

We now have no reported misbehaviour which does not have an appropriate sanction applied and we are on target to award over 90,000 merits by the end of this year. IRIS really has helped us to show staff that our pupils respond positively to rewards.

Summary:

Without the analysis provided by IRIS we would not have been able to so readily identify the inconsistencies in behaviour management across the school. Using the knowledge gained through IRIS, we have been able to reduce low-level disruption and thus greatly improve the quality of the teaching and learning experience in the classroom. This, in turn, has impacted very positively on our exam results. We have met or exceeded our rising 5A*-C targets for the last 4 years running.