

Using Belbin GetSet at Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls

Julie Cole, Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls



The Scenario

Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls is a high achieving grammar school on the outskirts of Birmingham, taking in students from a wide variety of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. It is an academic environment where students are encouraged to achieve the best of their ability. We promote an ethos of 'It's cool to be clever' and place learning at the heart of all we do.

As a school we are now in our fifth year of using Belbin GetSet and our first cohort have now completed their GCSE's and the results have been impressive. The students are selected at the end of Year 7 by combining their academic results in their end of year examinations with pastoral knowledge to identify students at the lower end of the year group who would benefit from the programme.

The identified group complete the Belbin GetSet Questionnaire and associated work through an 8 week 'Opening Doors' programme where a variety of learning needs are addressed. The programme is completed in Year 8.

On designing the programme five years ago it was very much felt the girls under achieving needed to be given skills to help them know themselves more and better understand what sort of learning behaviours they had. This is obviously a difficult concept to a twelve year old. However, we looked at what was available and after taking advice we embarked on a partnership with Belbin and the results which follow speak for themselves;

2010 Cohort – Current Year 12 Students

This group are the only group to have completed their GCSE's. Since the girls completed the Belbin GetSet Questionnaire and programme there is significant improvement by them as a cohort from the end of Year 7 through to their GCSE results. Only two of them ranked lower in the year after GCSE results (based on average points per entry) than they had ranked at the end of Year 7.

On average, the girls have improved thirty places within the year group from the end of Year 7 to the end of GCSEs with the highest rise being 90 places. If you remove the two negative scores from the group of students, the average rise in rank is 38 per student.

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Some more of the key statistics are as follows:

- Only 1 student didn't make 5A*/C inc. English and Maths and she was the only EAL (English as an Additional Language) and Pupil Premium (PP) student out of the 18 in the cohort. Perhaps indicating that EAL students need further targeted support for literacy issues.
- 14 out of 18 achieved an average of a B grade or higher.
- 3 Achieved an average of an A grade or higher.
- 8 are attending Sixth Form here.
- 8 girls ranked in the top 100 for the year - top 66%.
- All but one girl achieved a B or higher in Maths.
- Average attainment was roughly half a grade on average behind the non-Belbin group but this gap had been closed from the figures at the end of Year 7.

2011 Cohort – Current Year 11 Students

A much bigger difference exists between the two cohorts in comparison to the 2010 group. This may partially be the case due to the fact that we are only looking at forecasted GCSEs and therefore the students can still overachieve and that may have been the case with 2010 cohort. This report will need to be updated when the GCSE results are available for this group. The main highlights in this group are;

- None of the students have managed to break into the top 100 students by rank of average points per entry.
- This cohort on average improved 8 places in rank order since end of Year 7 exam results.
- This cohort though does contain more Pupil Premium students, 5 compared to 1 in 2010 group. This is a clear indication that socio economic factors may be having an impact on PP students.
- One student has left the school.

2011 Cohort – Current Year 11 Students

In this year group there were 19 girls who completed the Belbin GetSet Questionnaire and programme and for the majority of them it has seen some success.

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- 12 out of the 19 girls now rank an average of 16 places higher within the year group than they did at the end of Year 7.
- There are double the number of students in the top 100 of the year group at 4, again compared to the end of Year 7.
- 4 of the students are PP students and two are EAL students which can be a contributing factor for lower academic performance.
- The gap between the Belbin students compared to the rest of the cohort has not grown any bigger since the end of Year 7, suggesting that rates of progress are on a par between the two different cohorts. Although, as was shown with the recent GCSE results, sometimes a lot of the progress and achievement is gathered at the very end of the course as opposed to during Key Stage 3.

2013 – Current Year 9

This group are the newest group to have completed the Belbin GetSet Questionnaire and programme. However early indications are positive and the girls chosen have shown good progress has been made.

- Firstly, the gap between the two cohorts has narrowed in the last 12 months with the difference in average points per entry dropping by 0.6 in 12 months.
- In terms of individual students, 11 out of the 19 have seen their ranking increase and this has been by an average of 35 places in the year.
- Originally 5 students were in the top 100 and this has increased to 6, but 3 of the students are now in the top 50 for their year group.
- Within the cohort there are 7 EAL students and 4 PP students, which is a higher number than in the previous years that were looked at.
- One student has left the school.
- This group was selected on slightly different criteria to take into consideration underachievement in G&T students. The candidates were however still in the bottom third of the year group but not necessarily the very bottom like all the other cohorts.

The impact of the Belbin GetSet programme can be seen from the results highlighted above and demonstrates the positive impact that it has had upon both the students and the school. The strong performance of the first cohort in their GCSE examinations has made a long-lasting and significant impact upon the students involved, increasing their opportunities and aspirations for the future. Results in other year groups suggest that this will not be an isolated impact and we hope that our continued partnership with Belbin will continue to improve the results and aspirations of our students and give them every opportunity to succeed.