

**SIMS**



# GETTING TO THE HEART OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT WITH SIMS

INDEPENDENT

- **Supporting greater achievement, simply**
- **Uncovering hidden potential**
- **Providing insight, without adding to workload**

### Aims

To give staff greater insight into students' effort and achievement so they can boost progress across the curriculum.

### Impact

Staff can establish what "great" looks like for individual pupils and then using live data instantly see how their students are doing in each subject over time. This enables staff to provide the support needed to ensure every child achieves all they are capable of.

## Background

Philanthropist Rev. Dr Andrew Reed left a powerful legacy when he first established Reed's School in Surrey as a charity for educating under-privileged children in 1813.

Whilst the school has evolved into a successful independent day and boarding school, Reed's legacy continues, from the chapel to the chemistry lab and cricket pitch – to equip boys and girls with the academic qualifications, personal skills and enduring desire to go out into the world and improve it. Quality teaching is central to this. To nurture children's confidence and help them realise their true potential, teachers are provided with the information they need to make sound decisions that support their students' progress.

## Focused and on track

School life at Reed's centres around inspiring children to be all they can. For this to happen effectively, teachers need easy access to the most complete information possible for each child.

Susie Lacey, database manager, explains their methodology, "Our vision initially was a desire to change our reporting process to parents. The aim was to make it clearer for them to understand how their children were doing in school. The starting point was to make it simpler for our staff to monitor and support students' progress so that they could provide parents with the information that is of most value to them.

"We began by looking at how we could use our existing SIMS system to give teachers more information about how students were progressing, particularly in the two years prior to GCSEs.

"A dashboard for individual children was created, which draws all assessment grades, exam results and various other measures directly from SIMS to help us monitor students' achievement as well as spot common patterns of progress or decline across all subjects during this crucial time."

## Insight into greater achievement

For the past year, the information that teachers put in SIMS marksheets has been displayed in bespoke, colour-coded dashboards that provide teachers with real insight into students' effort and achievement. Susie continues: "Our dashboards are populated with the information that teachers already put in to the system each half-term so there is no additional work involved. Attainment and effort grades are presented to them in an easy-to-read way.

"Previously, staff could access this type of information for a specific time period, such as the Autumn term to see the achievement of Year 8 in maths, for example, but they couldn't easily track how a child was doing over the course of the year across more than one subject. Parents want to know how their child is progressing over time across the curriculum. The dashboard gives teachers this insight clearly – without them having to put any more information into the system or set anything up manually over and above what they would normally have done within SIMS for parent reporting purposes."

## Visual appeal

To ensure clarity, the dashboards are colour-coded according to the parameters the school have set up in relation to their MidYIS (Middle Years Information System) grades. "We have mixed abilities within our classes, so colour-coding attainment and effort makes individual children's performance and potential much clearer for teachers.

"Red means a child is achieving more than a grade below their predicted target, yellow flags up to one grade below, green denotes being on target and light blue shows a child who is out-performing their predictions.

**"Our dashboards are populated with the information that teachers already put in to the system"**

*Susie Lacey,  
Database Manager,  
Reed's School.*

"It's a simple way to help us act quickly to support a child who has started to slip behind, keep stretching and challenging all our students, and identify and encourage those individuals who might be achieving As, but could really be doing much better to get to the next level."

## Delving deeper

Another benefit of the system is the depth of analysis it allows. "From Years 9 to 11, children have the same tutor who gets to know their class very well and the dashboard is a useful check for them to keep an eye on the children they have pastoral responsibility for. They are quickly alerted to an unexpected drop or sudden acceleration in a child's achievement across the curriculum, and can use this information to start productive and supportive conversations with students.

"On the other hand, if we want to, we can dig much deeper across cohorts and flag up the 15% of students who have the greatest positive difference between the MisYIS grades and their actual attainment grades, and the 15% who have dropped the most, for example. It means we can plainly see how children are doing compared to their capabilities, at a level of detail that is relevant, rather than overwhelming."

The colour-coding happens almost automatically across the school's dashboards. "I just open up a marksheet and press calculate to display the different colours. There's no need to put colour-code formulae into every single subject marksheet, which would be a substantial amount of work," says Susie.

## Impact of attendance on attainment

As well as grades, the dashboards contain attendance percentages which help monitor any impact absence could be having on children's achievement. "We wanted to see if there was a correlation between a student having a downward spike in effort or attainment and absences, regardless of whether this was due to illness or other commitments such as training and attendance of high level sporting events.

"It's something we like to keep an eye on as we have a number of students who play sport at a serious level and this can take them out of the classroom for periods of time. While this is counted as an approved educational activity, and would be adjusted for in their attendance percentage, we want to be aware if it begins to negatively affect the child's learning progress."

## GCSE Student Tracking

Student: **An Example Pupil**

Tutor: **XXXXX**

Year: **Fm5**

House: **XXXXX**

DOB: **XX/XX/XXXX**



% Attendance		
Session	Fm4	Fm5
Aut 1	91	94
Aut 2	100	98
Spr 1	88	98
Spr 2	98	96
Sum 1	100	
Sum 2	95	
<b>Total</b>		

MidYIS Information	MidYIS Band	MidYIS Score	Reed's Mean	Diff from Mean	Rank (/104)
Vocabulary	A	126.00	114.00	11.20	8
Maths	A	112.00	124.00	-12.00	93
Non Verbal	B	105.00	117.50	-12.50	82
Skills	C	100.00	107.10	-7.10	70
Overall	A	120.25	119.70	0.53	48

Examination Performance							
Subject	MidYIS Target	Fm4 Exam	Value Added	Mock Exam	Value Added	GCSE Exam	Value Added
English Language	A/B	A	0.50	7	0.50	6	-0.50
English Literature	A/B	B	-0.50	6	-0.50	6	-0.50
Mathematics	A	B	-1.00	6	-1.00	8	1.00
Biology	A	B	-1.00	A	0.00	A*	1.00
Physics	A	B	-1.00	B	-1.00	A	0.00
French	A/B	A	0.50	B	-0.50	A	0.50
Geography	A/B	B	-0.50	7	0.50	7	0.50
History	A/B	B	-0.50	A	0.50	A*	1.50
Latin	A	B	-1.00	7	0.00	8	1.00
Reed's GCSE points or Mean Value		20	-0.50	23	-0.17	29	0.50

SEN information relating to the need and support required

Subject	MidYIS Target	Attainment Grades								
		Form 4					Form 5			
		Aut1	Aut2	Spr1	Spr2	Sum1	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 2	
English Language	A/B	A	B	B	B	B	A	A	7	
English Literature	A/B	A	B	C	B	B	A	B	7	
Mathematics	A	B	B	B	C	A	B	C	6	
Biology	A	B	B	B	A	A	A*	A*	A	
Physics	A	D	B	C	B	B	B	A	A	
French	A/B	B	A	C	A	B	B	C	A	
Geography	A/B	B	A	C	B	B	B	C	A	
History	A/B	A	A	C	B	B	A	B	A	
Latin	A	B	B	B	D	B	B	A	7	
Mean Value										

Effort Grades									
Form 4					Form 5				
Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 2		
1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1		
3	1	2	2	2	3	2	3		
2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1		
4	1	1	1	1	2	2	2		
2	1	2	1	1	2	3	1		
2	1	2	3	2	2	3	2		
2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2		
<b>2.25</b>	1.38	1.75	1.62	1.50	1.88	1.88	1.62		

Data Drop Rank v MidYIS Rank					
Form 4			Form 5		
Aut2	Spr2	Exam	Aut2	Mock	
1	15	30	32	26	
-5	-8	12	20	0	
-2	-25	-1	-7	-10	
-6	6	10	25	17	
-20	-3	11	-6	12	
34	33	19	-5	19	
22	-1	1	-25	17	
23	11	1	1	22	
0	-15	9	1	6	

\*Attendance is calculated to indicate % of days actually in school – SIMS Individual pupil session and lesson reports should be used to get full detail.

## Next stage

Reed's has been so pleased with the success of the dashboards that plans are afoot to roll them out into both the sixth form and the lower school. "We are able to choose what information we put into these dashboards, so there's great flexibility across all years in the school. In the sixth form, for example, students only study three subjects so that gives us more scope as to what we might want to include in a dashboard, such as the student conduct information already being recorded in SIMS. The most important thing is that all staff, including teachers, pastoral staff and housemasters, can easily see and understand whatever information is most relevant to them to help our students fulfil their potential."

**"We can plainly see how children are doing compared to their capabilities, at a level of detail that is relevant, rather than overwhelming."**

Susy Lacey,  
Database Manager,  
Reed's School

Discover more about SIMS by getting in touch

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