

The Sir Bernard Lovell School Language College

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Oldland Common is a semi-rural area situated mid-way between Bath and Bristol. The school is about twenty minutes' drive South East from the M4/M5 Almondsbury interchange and a similar distance from the Bath exit on the M4. The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff and volunteers are expected to share this commitment.

The Sir Bernard Lovell School is an 11-19 comprehensive school. We are a popular, well-established and growing school of around 1302 students, including an expanding post-16 centre. We serve a large area extending to the borders of Wiltshire and into the outer suburbs of Bristol to the west; the school receives children from urban and rural communities and the intake is comprehensive socially and academically.

In September 2006 we were again oversubscribed in year 7 and approximately 50% of year 11 students joined our post-16 centre. We wish to increase this in future years whilst having due regard for the needs of individual students. A new technology centre was completed in September 1999 and expanded in September 2005, and a new arts centre was completed in September 2001. A new capital programme has been agreed for sports accommodation. Completion 2007/08.

The leadership and curriculum structures of the school are built upon the creation of three broad curriculum areas – International and Cultural Studies; Science, Maths and Technology; and Language and The Arts. We intend each of these areas to become Centres of Excellence in their own right. The school's senior management team - the Leadership Group - comprises the headteacher, the two deputies, ten assistant headteachers, the director of post 16 and the director of e-learning.

In September 1996, following a successful bid to the DfES, the school was designated a language college. An international ethos is central to the culture and practice of the school, across the whole curriculum and all areas of school life. The school enjoys a growing number of international links. By the end of compulsory schooling all students should be confident and competent at communicating in at least two languages other than English: an ideal preparation for life-long learning, study at post-16 and for entry into a demanding and rapidly changing labour market.

The school was inspected by OFSTED in April 2003 and received a very good report which began:

"The Sir Bernard Lovell School is a very good school because of the effective leadership and management, improvement since the last inspection and the achievement of the students."

THE SCHOOL'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN

At the Sir Bernard Lovell School we are committed to raising levels of achievement for all, developing a community of learners and strengthening international education.

Our school development plan, known as our Plan for Continuous Improvement, is based upon a set of **student outcomes**, compiled by the staff and governors and incorporating the agreed aims of the school. At SBL we want to create a community of learners where students are able to:

- ◆ **Participate and share in the life of the school and community** through an inclusive curriculum which is appropriate to their interests and needs and which offers exciting enrichment opportunities. We want students to be involved in enquiry and decision-making for school improvement, to play a responsible part in their own communities as active citizens and to develop links with industrial and educational partners here and abroad. We want our students to become independent and lifelong learners and to be

equipped to achieve economic well-being. We aim for the school to act as a focus for continuing education for our parents and the local community, and for both to be actively involved in the life of the school.

- ◆ **Meet intellectual challenges in creative and critical ways** through excellent teaching based upon a regularly reviewed curriculum and well-planned lessons. Students will have access to appropriate and challenging resources in an exciting and literate learning environment. Processes of monitoring, review, evaluation and critical enquiry will ensure consistency of approach and lead to the sharing of good practice amongst teachers.
- ◆ **Share in the responsibility for their own learning** by understanding the learning outcomes for each lesson and for the wider scheme of work. Students will play an active part in lessons and be able to describe their learning. They will be involved in assessing their own and others' work and teachers' marking will be positive and constructive. Students will have negotiated targets for each subject clearly identifying how they can improve. Targets will be discussed in regular tutorial sessions in the light of detailed information about current progress, and parents and mentors will play an important part in supporting students' learning.
- ◆ **Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts.** Students will have opportunities which take account of gender differences to develop a broad range of communication skills through oral and written work and through the planned use of ICT. They will be encouraged to communicate with students in other schools, including those in other countries, as part of their personal development. Students will be educated in an environment which values and promotes literacy, oracy and the other key skills, and in which the school language policy is implemented consistently.
- ◆ **Value themselves and others, and form sound and caring relationships.** We will ensure that students are safe and will do all that we can to encourage them to lead healthy lifestyles. We will focus upon their emotional and social development so that they learn to value themselves and others. Teachers will have high expectations of all students, and parents will be encouraged to share in this. Students will be given opportunities to enjoy learning and to achieve within and beyond the classroom and their work will be celebrated in many different ways. Students will understand the learning and equal opportunities policies and will actively promote an ethos which values others as learners.
- ◆ **Recognise the strengths and richness of diversity** through a curriculum which reflects and celebrates cultural diversity. This will be evidenced in the strong intercultural dimension running through teaching resources, displays, assemblies and through opportunities for visits at home and abroad. School policies will be implemented to ensure that all students feel equally valued and to encourage all members of the school community to explore and to tackle prejudice.

THE CURRICULUM

The school is committed to equal opportunities and an entitlement curriculum. At KS4 students select courses from all curriculum areas, including humanities and the expressive arts. Each of the curriculum areas (language and the arts; international and cultural studies; and science, maths and technology) has its own detailed development plan, which includes an analysis of professional development needs.

We believe that all students are entitled to a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum. This covers the main areas of human knowledge and experience and leads to a well-balanced range of public examinations. As a 14-19 Pathfinder, we have piloted a range of courses to create greater choice and relevance. We are also developing integrated approaches at KS3 to provide more coherence and challenge. The school is actively extending contacts with people from different cultures and environments and integrating such communication into and across the curriculum and schemes of work.

There are five lessons of 60 minutes a day and 50 periods per fortnight on an A/B cycle. We offer a full range of after-school enrichment opportunities, including exam courses at KS4. The curriculum structure at present is as follows:

KEY STAGE 3:**(hours per fortnight)**

6	English	
6	Expressive Arts -	2 Art
		2 Drama
		2 Music
9	Humanities (including History, Geography and RS)	
6	Mathematics	
7	Modern Languages	
	5 Modern Languages 1	
	2 Modern Languages 2	
6	Science	
5	Technology	
4	PE	
2	ICT	

An integrated **Personal Development Curriculum** is being introduced in years 7 & 8 from September 2006

KEY STAGE 4:**(hours per fortnight)**

10	BTEC First Diploma courses in Sport, Performing Arts, Art & Design, ICT and Health & Social Care
7	English (including English Literature)
5	Expressive Arts GCSE options (Art and Design, Drama, Media Studies, Music or PE)
5	Humanities options (Business, Health and Social Care, History, Geography, Psychology, RS or Sociology)
6	Mathematics
5	Modern Languages
4	Optional specialist courses (including MFL 2 GCSE and additional time for GNVQ and BTEC courses)
9	Science (single, applied or double award)
5	Technology
4	Personal Development Curriculum (Extended project, RS, Citizenship, PSHE and MFL 2)

In addition to BTEC and GCSE accreditations, we offer a Certificate in Digital Applications at KS4.

PSHE is delivered by a specialist team at KS3 and KS4.

There is no streaming, but students are grouped by ability in maths from year 7, modern languages from year 8 and science from year 9. All students have a broad experience of a range of modern foreign languages.

Students' work is assessed and monitored through a variety of measures and systems. There are curriculum area based assessment and evaluation processes, regular individual interviews with tutors about academic achievement and to plan targets for learning, as well as interviews with members of the Leadership Group. A spotlighting system for each year group indicates successful learning and any concerns in respect of individual students, and parents receive an annual formal subject based report. We emphasise the importance of students being able to discuss and articulate their learning, so they and their teachers can plan clearly and successfully for future progress.

THE POST-16 CENTRE

The school's post-16 provision and resourcing has been expanded significantly in order to deliver high quality courses matched to students' abilities and ambitions. We are in partnership with five other schools and a college of further education. This enables us to offer a rich programme of Level 2 and 3 courses. All students have access to a full enrichment programme including work in modern foreign languages and information technology. Students' progress is recorded through a half-termly monitoring system as well as in tutor interviews and formal reports. The majority of advanced level students proceed to higher education. We anticipate a new Post 16 Centre being built in the near future.

STUDENT SUPPORT AND MONITORING

We place great emphasis upon supporting and monitoring students closely. Tutors are central to this and their work is overseen by Year Co-ordinators in each year. Tutor groups are carefully balanced on entry, and year teams work hard to establish good relationships and a positive ethos. Year teams plan activities such as residential experiences, assembly themes and special PSHE sessions, and encourage high levels of student involvement in whole-school

activities. We have active Year and School Councils and are moving hard to incorporate 'Student Voice' into our school self-evaluation processes.

Tutors and Year Co-ordinators play a key role in raising levels of achievement by monitoring students' progress. Regular tutorials help students to review their progress and to set targets and help tutors identify wider issues (such as homework) which can be discussed. Year teams play an important part in operating our system of rewards and in celebrating the success of individuals and of groups of students. The work of year teams has been greatly strengthened by our growing behaviour support team which is working across the school to implement a strategy of positive behaviour management.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

Quality staff training and professional learning is a priority. The school has been a Training School since September 2003 and is recognised as an Investor in People. We are now embedding professional learning into our plan for continuous improvement at whole-school and team level and run an in-house CPL programme on Wednesday afternoons. As part of our Leading Edge programme, we are running middle leaders training for our Partnership of Schools. We have established a cycle for school self-evaluation and 20% of staff have received Ofsted-based training. All staff are engaged in the processes of monitoring, evaluation and review for their areas. We have prioritised the identification and sharing of good practice and, to this end, professional learning has become more school-based. A number of staff have engaged in school based enquiry. We are fortunate to host, on site, the independent International Learning and Research Centre.

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