‘Self-assessment and peer-to-peer marking’   
transcript

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[MUSIC PLAYING]

NARRATOR: Students at St. Joseph’s College in Swindon know all about self-assessment and self-analysis. It’s seen here as a route to success.

KATHRYN SANDERS: We have a very strong strategy – and we’ve had it for some years – of assessment for learning being at the forefront of most of our lessons. I actually see it as a way of empowering students.

NARRATOR: Teachers at St. Joseph’s believe it’s vital for pupils to regularly reflect on their work and set targets for improvement. Kathryn believes all teachers should consider this strategy.

KATHRYN SANDERS: You put a title here – ‘Target Setting Skills and Planning for Success.’

I’d be asking them to do an exercise with students, or suggesting that they do an exercise, where they get a student to think about what kinds of things anywhere they are good at. What kinds of things do they think they would need help with.

NARRATOR: Here Kathryn’s working with a group of year nine students in an English lesson and is asking them to think about how to assess their performance.

DANIELLA: Because most of my strengths are outside the classroom, I find it hard making links from them to English.

KATHRYN SANDERS: Your strengths outside the classroom, there must be some links to English. How can I bring those in? So we perhaps need to discuss that later.

I’ve seen Daniella dance. She’s very good. She knows what she’s doing and she can take those very same skills into her English. And it’s making them realise that everything they learn can be applied almost anywhere.

NARRATOR: In this lesson students have been learning how to write in a Gothic style, but it’s now time to reflect on what they’ve achieved so far.

KATHRYN SANDERS: And I want you to see if people’s vocabulary levels have improved as well.

NARRATOR: A key element to this self-assessment is allowing students to constructively criticise each other’s work. In other words, peer-to-peer marking.

MALE STUDENT: It’s always better than always having one teacher marking all your work. It just gives it – I wouldn’t say entertaining – a more sociable kind of way of marking work, really.

NARRATOR: These pupils have looked at each other’s writing and are now giving feedback.

MALE STUDENT: You’ve tried to attempt them with subordinate clauses, but if you try to read more and write – try to attempt it a bit more, and then you’ll probably crack it on.

NARRATOR: But peer-to-peer marking is not just about helping classmates progress, as assistant headteacher Ben Slater explains.

BEN SLATER: How can I peer assess somebody? How can I assess someone else in the class if I don’t know what the levels mean, if I don’t know what an example of a level five looks like, if I don’t know what different examples of a level five look like? So peer assessment is not just a case of providing feedback between peers –

KATHRYN SANDERS: So, Francesco, give us one appropriate way –

BEN SLATER: – but it also gives students the tools to get beneath the levels. To not just see them as description of, ‘this is how I’m doing,’ but to see them as tools and as targets for improvement.

MALE STUDENT: You could of got like high level six.

FEMALE STUDENT: I feel like they’re making a good point because usually I think I’ve done worse than I’ve actually done in reality.

KATHRYN SANDERS: And it always amazes me how a student will find something good that I hadn’t even perhaps immediately noticed. They find something. So they get that affirmation from their peers.

MALE STUDENT: It’s always better with you reflecting on your own work more than the teacher reflecting on your work because it just builds up your confidence really.

NARRATOR: I would expect – and my colleagues would expect – that by the time students get to Key Stage 4 they have the ability to reflect on their performance.

And now that you’re in year nine, it’s really important that we get it right because we’re on that transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. This is going to help you be ready for doing the controlled assessments where the teacher’s not allowed to help you.

The students at St. Joseph’s, since we’ve been using this system of assessments but also combining it with self-awareness, their marks have soared.

[MUSIC PLAYING]