



Q Case Study:

Successfully Using LiteracyPlanet to Support Year 7 and Year 8 Students

Fulston Manor School

📍 Kent



Megan Silver works at Fulston Manor School - a large non-selective secondary school, in Kent. The students there range hugely in terms of their backgrounds, needs and literacy levels; Year 7's reading ages when they start at the school can range from 7 years to 16 years, 6 months.

At the start of lockdown, school librarian Megan was given the additional role of Literacy Coordinator. Whilst shielding, she devoted her time to exploring a range of schemes and products to support literacy teaching and raise standards in reading and writing in her school. And that's when she found LiteracyPlanet (more fondly known as LP).

Read on to find out how Megan and her colleagues are using LP in their setting and the impact it's having on students.

Prior to Using LiteracyPlanet

Megan realised how spelling, grammar and punctuation were being taught differently in her school, among different staff. SPaG books were being purchased for the students to work through, but these were being used to varying degrees – with varying success. She noticed that the students, on the whole, didn't seem too enthused by these books, either.

Megan felt that Fulston Manor needed a more consistent approach to SPaG, using a resource that would increase student engagement and motivation. Through her research into products and resources that might fit the bill, she came across LP.

What first struck Megan about LP was the fact that the gamification format looked much more interesting than the current textbook offering, particularly for Year 7s.

She also liked the way the reading comprehension skills were taught, as well as the SPaG elements.

When she went back into school and spoke to the English teachers about it, they too seemed keen. LP was put in place for Year 7s with the decision being made soon after this to get Year 8 students using it, too.



“When comparing LiteracyPlanet with other resources, what stood out, for me, was that the evidence and data were there to back up what the resource said it did. I wasn't seeing that with a lot of the other products I looked into. But with LiteracyPlanet we felt confident as a school that this was a worthwhile investment.”

Implementing LiteracyPlanet

LP was implemented in the school, in October 2021, at the start of Term 2. That second term was a period of teachers and students alike getting used to the platform and all its features. It didn't take long at all for everyone to navigate their way around it and for the students to be working through their personalised tasks and missions.

Students access LP during their library sessions. It's also set as their English homework. For any students who might have issues accessing LP from home, the school makes sure they can use the computers in the library. One of the teachers also runs a weekly 'LiteracyPlanet Lunchtime', so that students have an opportunity to complete their weekly tasks then.

LP is also being used very successfully as an intervention with small groups of students who have very low reading ages. They work closely with a tutor on a weekly basis and go through an LP comprehension together, learning how to decode the text, explore the vocabulary and draw meaning from what they have read in order to answer questions about it.

Students are set different levels on LP. This differentiation means that individuals are working at a level that's right for them. This can be regularly reviewed and adjusted, using the different tracking and reporting tools.

“ On a lesson-by-lesson basis, the students' page that shows improvement is really useful for the teachers.”

Progress and Outcomes

Every teacher and school want to see their students engaged and motivated. As we all know, this aids progress hugely when coupled with high-quality teaching and the best teaching resources.

At the end of the first year of using LP, Megan buried herself in data and graphs! She tracked the students' use of the platform and plotted it against reading assessment data. What she found was that those children who were doing a significant number of LP missions showed, on average, an accelerated reading age of three years!

Vocabulary expansion is another key area that the staff have noticed progress in. Educators all around the country share the concern about the widening vocabulary gap between our advantaged and disadvantaged students. Staff at Fulston Manor noticed an improved vocabulary in students' speaking and writing, in as little two to three months after starting LP.

Teachers also report improved accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar in students' written work.



Moving Forward with LiteracyPlanet at Fulston Manor

Megan has been supported by the school's Director of English, who was appointed at the end of last year. Together, they have initiated the rolling out of LP to Year 9. Years 7, 8 and 9 now accessing the platform is a significant part of the changes taking place at Fulston Manor to raise standards in literacy.

Plans are in place, having now used the platform for almost two years, to refresh staff training (and provide full training for new members of staff) on how to get the very best from the resource.

The team will be focusing on making sure the students are interacting regularly with the platform in a way that aids their progress. This will include tracking students more closely by going into their pages and seeing how they are completing the tasks, and – in particular – checking their accuracy scores. Megan feels these accuracy scores give a great indication of students' progress.

Teachers will also be devoting some literacy sessions at the beginning of the year to explicitly teaching the students how to use LP effectively. The dialogue between the staff and students will mean any teething problems or misconceptions students might have can be quickly addressed early on.

The students who find literacy more challenging will be further supported to use LP more confidently, as they are guided through each aspect of the different tasks. Megan says this has worked wonders for those students who have used it in this way, supported by the tutor in the small intervention groups.

Even secondary school students benefit from a little handholding when first using a new resource, so they fully understand how to get the most out of it!



What Megan, Her Colleagues and Her Students Love about LiteracyPlanet

Megan's very positive about the way the students at Fulston Manor have engaged with LP. As a resource that has been new to all students joining the school so far, it has been met with a degree of excitement; a new way to develop SPaG skills, in a new school setting.



Students really like the fact they can lose themselves in a mission. They can work through it, and it doesn't matter if they fail because they can have another go."

LP complements other schemes being used at Fulston Manor. It addresses many gaps in SPaG learning and supports confidence and progress in reading and writing.

The school feels it's good value for money because it covers all the literacy strands: sight words, spelling, reading, grammar and punctuation, and comprehension.

The way the reading comprehension is taught in LP contrasts with another scheme the school uses. This means the students get two different approaches and a greater range of texts and style of questions.



LiteracyPlanet looks fun, and the platform is approachable. It's certainly a lot less 'dry' than the SPaG books we were using. It also has rewards-based learning, which works really well for so many students.

Megan also loves LiteracyPlanet's customer service support. She is often in touch with Rob at LP, who is always keen to hear about how Fulston Manor are getting on with using the platform and to answer any questions. Megan really values that relationship and feels that her feedback and comments are, in turn, valued by the LP team.

“ I’d definitely recommend LiteracyPlanet to other schools and what I’d say about getting started is to spend the time at the beginning going through how it all works with the students. As a class, or in groups, we go through a couple of comprehensions together – and some of the different tasks – so they can all see exactly how it’s supposed to be done. That’s how to get the best from it.”

When Megan first came across LP during lockdown, she could see its potential to engage Year 7 students and address the gaps in their SPaG knowledge. Little did she know then that this scheme would become a core part of Fulston Manor’s literacy provision, that students really love using beyond Year 7, as they move into Year 8 and Year 9.



“ One Year 8 was so excited when she found out that the school were going to bring LiteracyPlanet back in Year 9, she came to see me especially to say that she was so happy that she’d be using it again next year, because she loves it!”