Case Study

How Developing Experts can support the most vulnerable and disadvantaged students

In partnership with Suffolk County Council's Alternative Tuition Service

Contents

Overview

Suffolk County Council's Alternative Tuition Service (ATS) works with children of primary and secondary age who are referred to the service due to not being able to access mainstream education. Children can be referred to the service for the following reasons:

- They are deemed medically unfit to attend school
- They have been permanently excluded
- They have SEND and are awaiting specialist placement

The service provides a blend of face to face and online tuition for students, and works in partnership with families, schools and other agencies to provide the best possible support for children and young people

Partnership with Developing Experts

The ATS approached Developing Experts and asked to trial the product with a select group of tutors and children over a 3-month period. After this proved successful, ATS requested a full licence to the platform. With it not being a traditional school-based platform model, Developing Experts engaged in several consultation meetings and created a bespoke platform which was both user-friendly for the needs of ATS, as well as being considerate of the needs and safeguarding of the platform for users.

Training was held with heads of the service and the tutors in Ipswich, and the product was launched in April 2019. Regular feedback and support have been provided and Developing Experts and Suffolk County Council's ATS are developing a strong partnership which helps to support and enhance the learning experience of vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

The following pages are a detailed quality assurance and evaluation document completed by Kirsty Munns, who is a co-ordinator for the ATS and has been the main point of contact during the partnership.

Developing Experts' Core Curriculum Team

Sarah Mintey - Founder & CEO
Sarah has over 20 years' experience in education and is a former principal and CEO of the Open Youth Trust.

Jon Badgery – Science Lead & Presenter
Jon taught for 7 years in large secondary schools, including being a head of physics and science engagement co-ordinator for a cluster.

Paul Usher – Curriculum Director
Paul was a teacher, lead practitioner and vice principal in schools for 12 years and has an extensive background and knowledge in SEND and alternative provisions.

Heather Bingham – Science Writer & Presenter
Heather has a first-class degree in climate science and has worked in industry and an environmental officer. She is also an internationally published author for educational science books.

## How has Developing Experts been implemented in your establishment?

We invested in Developing Experts to support our KS1 and 2 pupils who are currently not attending a school. These pupils typically work alongside a 1:1 teacher for 5 hours a week. The Developing Expert platform supports the Science based learning opportunities, which is considered a core subject. Some teachers use the platform as a supporting resource for their lessons, others leave it as additional work for them to complete during non-contact time. (This is to support our statutory duty of providing 25 hours of education per week).

Through extensive training opportunities, supported by Paul, each of our ATS teachers have their own log in for the platform. They use this log in to create classes for each individual pupil, creating a bespoke course of lessons to suit pupil interest, areas of development or keeping in line with content taught within their school, if they are on roll.

The platform is introduced by the 1:1 teacher, alongside their pupil, during their first lesson together. The teacher shared the pupils log in information and supports through the navigation of the website, leading to the pupil eventually using the platform independently.

The ATS SLT have admin access to the website and are able to monitor individual pupil / teacher usage remotely. This has created opportunities to share valuable information with parents / school during educational review meetings.

ATS has created handbooks for both teachers and families to support their use of the platform, enabling it to be used to its full potential.
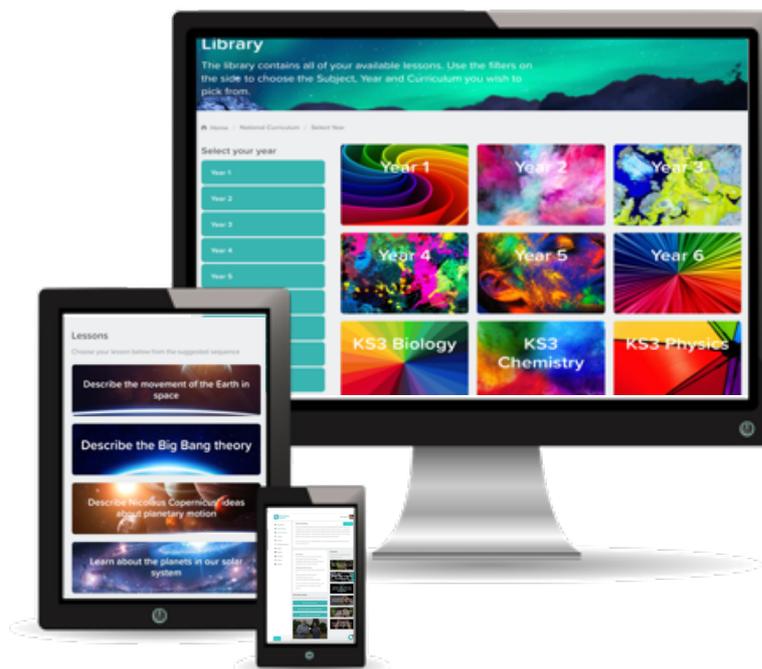
What features of Developing Experts are most enjoyed by teachers and users?

After using Developing Experts for a term, a survey was completed by our ATS teachers / pupils / parents to evaluate use.

Please see below for the main findings from each sub-group.

Teachers:

- Graphics are very detailed / educational
- Rocket words help prompt key learning areas
- Simplicity supports ASD learners
- Use of everyday materials for experiments creates quick preparation time
- Range of lessons ensures a bespoke course can be created for each individual pupil

Pupils:

- Easy to use – logging in / going through presentations
- Videos are fun to watch
- Prizes for doing the quizzes
- Fun experiments – making things
- It takes me back to where I need to go if I get stuck – during assessment

Parents:

- Ease of use
- Can be used on tablet
- Suitable for age e.g. narration for younger ones
- Videos / sings break up the presentation
- Fun 'assessment' – quizzes / word searches
- Child is engaged even when working alone
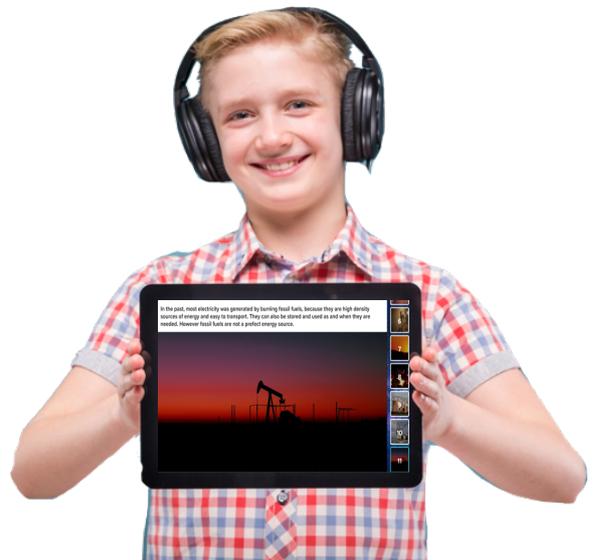
What impact has Developing Experts had on your learning community?

Our ATS teachers have noted how much more confident they feel with the planning and teaching of Science, due to the robust planning / resources on hand. During our most recent PD day, we explored how Developing Experts could be used in a cross curricular way, particularly to encompass Maths and English skills. This unleased our teachers creativity, which they were keen to put into practise during tuition time.

As a service, we feel that there is now a more adequate package for our primary aged users. Through thorough monitoring, the ATS SLT can see that all of our primary pupils have a log in to their own dashboard, with a unique course to support engagement during non-contact time. There have also been some success stories of pupils who are unable to work with a 1:1 teacher, but have still been able to gain some learning opportunities on the Developing Experts platform.

How would you rate Developing Experts customer care, advice and training?

Paul Usher has been our main point of contact since first exploring Developing Experts. Particularly at the beginning of our journey, whereby we were working out how this platform would fit into our unique establishment, Paul was always at the end of the phone / an email to offer support and guidance.

When arranging training, to introduce the platform to ATS teachers, Paul travelled to meet the ATS SLT to ensure a high-quality delivery. On top of this, Paul travelled to Ipswich to conduct some of the training and assured our teachers he could be contacted for any further support.

The 'chat' option on the Developing Experts webpage (once logged in) is also as extremely helpful function for our teachers during lessons, as they receive an almost instant reply, this then does not impact on their tuition time with pupils.

Would you recommend Developing Experts? Why?

We would recommend Developing Experts for schools / home educators for a number of reasons, the main being:

- Security of up to date / relevant curriculum information – endless CPD opportunities
- Varied resources to entice pupil curiosity
- Links to varied support areas to ensure potential of platform is being met
- Additional teaching resources, which are regularly updated, further enhancing the learning possibilities
- Safeguarding – as this is an insular site, we are confident that our pupils are safe online
- Ease of use for both teachers and home users
- Being able to access the website varied devices e.g. phone, tablet, laptop