

# Raising Attainment and Aspirations with Podium



## A Gifted and Talented Case Study

Grays Infant and Nursery School is a school for girls and boys aged 3 - 7. Based in Newhaven, East Sussex, the school is set in quite a deprived area and parents tend to have low aspirations and confidence about what the children can achieve. Attainment at the end of KS1 is often below the national average so as a school they are always seeking ways to improve and to encourage the more able pupils to recognise that they can and will go on to do higher things.



When Headteacher Christine Terrey came across Podium she was really excited as she instantly saw a way to engage parents in their child's schoolwork, helping to foster the support needed to encourage pupils to be better achievers, whilst also demonstrating to parents that their child could accomplish more than they thought. Christine knew that being able to download podcasts via iTunes to their iPods was something that many parents would do.

### **'Addressing every aspect of literacy...'**

In September 2007 Christine set about developing a podcasting action plan with the long term aim of raising attainment in writing for a group of more able Year 2 pupils, in order that they may achieve a level 3 in the summer 2008 SATS. Two groups of six pupils were engaged in the intervention programme that had them taking part in weekly podcasting sessions with the aim of improving the pupils' speaking and listening skills. With heightened skills in this area, Christine felt sure that improvements in the pupils' writing capability would be sure to follow.

Christine said: *"The children were not exposed to a wide enough range of higher speaking and listening skills but podcasting encourages this. Podium has an excellent scripting feature which enables text to be assigned to different 'actors', the role of*

*which different children can then adopt. By making use of this scripting tool the children were not only enhancing their speaking and listening skills using Podium, but their writing and reading skills too, addressing every aspect of literacy. Because of this, I saw Podium as genuine tool that could help to raise standards."*

The children were asked to present a radio news show following the debate and discuss session on the week's news that they were used to doing each Thursday. The weekly podcast series ran throughout the course of the year and was a real hit with parents. "Podcasting is obviously about broadcasting a series of episodes so having a weekly news slot fits very well with this" added Christine.

### **'Exceptional results'**

At the end of the year all the pupils who took part in the project achieved a level 2a in writing, with the exception of one pupil who achieved a level 3, plus each of the pupils achieved a level 3 in speaking and listening. "We definitely saw huge improvements" said Christine. "We couldn't say that this was all entirely due to Podium as there was lots of other good work going on in the classroom too, but having evaluated the project by talking to children and parents it's fair to say that it must have played some contributing part as the SATs results were a real success."

*"Podium was so straightforward and easy for the pupils to use - from the 3-2-1 countdown before recording, to scripting, editing and publishing their work - and the pupils really enjoyed using it. The staff have had training on how to adopt Podium in a variety of curriculum contexts and they all really like it too."*

Based on the success with gifted and talented pupils Grays Infant School is continuing to use Podium this year with lower ability children to see how podcasting can improve their speaking and listening skills. Grays are also now hosting pupil podcasts on their learning platform so they can be accessed by parents from home.

For further information about Podium, to download a free trial and to read more case studies, visit [www.podiumpodcasting.com](http://www.podiumpodcasting.com).

