CASE STUDY

Heathland School: Using Early Insight to Build Belonging

THE CHALLENGE

For Harry Allen, Head of Year 7 at The Heathland School in Hounslow, the start of each academic year used to mean one thing. ***Uncertainty.***

Pupils arrived from multiple primaries with limited information beyond academic results. For some, the story was even more concerning: persistent absence, poor punctuality, or comments sent over via email or in spreadsheets like "doesn't enjoy school."

"You'd see things like 'truant from school' or 'doesn't enjoy school for this reason or that reason', but without the context it was hard for us to know how to help," explains Harry.

The result was a cycle of reactive interventions. Tutor groups were having to be restructured weeks into term, pupils moved around due to personality clashes or unmet needs, and anxious students were struggling to settle.

THE SOLUTION

When Heathland introduced SixIntoSeven after Hounslow Education Partnership delivered the platform to their schools, the process changed entirely. The digital transition platform provided a secure, detailed picture of every incoming Year 7 pupil, including attendance trends, safeguarding notes, interests, and triggers.

"Since using SixIntoSeven, with the context provided, a lot of those pupils that were down as poor attendance have massively improved."

Armed with richer insight, Harry could allocate tutor groups with greater confidence, placing pupils where they'd feel supported, known, and understood.

> " **"I've tried to allocate pupils with a tutor who I've felt could get the best out of them and encourage them to have responsibilities... so instead of just seeing, 'this kid hates school, he's a school refuser', now I have data with context that I can use to my advantage with a full picture of each individual child."** "

THE IMPACT

The impact was instant and Harry shared a learner's story that stands out from all others.

This learner's primary record described him as a persistent non-attender with little engagement or motivation. But Harry noticed something in the data provided through the SixIntoSeven platform. There was a love of chess and games. By sharing this information early with the tutor, Harry helped build a positive relationship before term even started.

> "We found out that he loves chess and he loves playing games and just by knowing more about this individual student and what excites him, with the right approach, his attendance improved. It might not be from an academic point of view as to why he's now enjoying school, but he's now attending because he's made new friends with similar interests."

"I invited his parents in early to build that relationship, and personally for me, he's been the biggest success story so far. He was the most concerning from a behavioural and attendance point of view, but he's had no behaviour issues at all since joining Heathland and has made quite a few friends." Harry said.

The difference has been transformative. Not just in attendance, but in his confidence, communication, and emotional wellbeing.

"His conversational approach with teachers has improved, and he's no longer anti-school and is really enjoying school now."

For Harry, that change represents more than data working well. It's about the sense of belonging from day one.

> "It just shows that sense of belonging. He now feels like he belongs in the school and he's known."

Across the cohort, the results have been similar. Anxiety among pupils starting Year 7 has reduced, and for the first time in years, tutor groups have remained stable throughout the academic year.

Harry said, "In the past, we've had to move pupils around early in the term as issues arose. This year, we haven't needed to. Every single student has been in the right place from day one."

WHAT'S NEXT

Looking ahead, Heathland plans to continue building on this success, streamlining how transition data is used across the local area through SixIntoSeven. Harry explained that the process was really smooth and saved workload.

For Harry, the benefit is clear and it's about more than logistics.

> "You're giving pupils the best start by knowing them before they arrive. That's what this is really about and SixIntoSeven has made that happen."

CONCLUSION

SixIntoSeven helped Heathland turn early data into early understanding; reducing anxiety, preventing unnecessary movement, and creating a sense of belonging from day one.

The pupil who once refused to come to school now arrives smiling, and playing chess with friends.

And that, as Harry says, is *"the biggest success story so far."*