

# Using Alps throughout a MAT to aid school improvement



by **Melanie Calder**  
Head of Data and Impact at Anthem Schools Trust

## Context

**Anthem Schools Trust** consists of 11 primary schools and 5 secondary schools, 4 with post 16 provision. The schools are spread across the East Midlands, London and Thames Valley serving over 8,000 children and young people. When joining the Trust in September 2021 the initial focus was to promote consistency and accuracy of data. The use of Alps at both Key Stage 4 and 5 has been a vital tool in supporting this. Alps has empowered staff at all levels throughout the Trust, from Educational Director and Trustees to teaching and support staff, to use data to ensure focus is directed to the appropriate areas at a school, department, and pupil level.

## Use of Alps by Trust Leaders

At a Trust level, Alps Summit allows us to identify trends at a whole school and subject level. Spotting the trends allows us to easily focus in on areas of the data to challenge, validate and to celebrate. Analysis of data produced in Summit is presented to Trustees and the Executive Team where the visual use of red, black and blues gives them a clear indication of subject areas in the school where there are successes along with knowing where resources will need to be focused. Anthem Trust has a strong school improvement team including subject leads for English, Maths, Science and Humanities. Alps Summit allows these colleagues to easily compare how their departments have progressed between data points in the 5 schools and where their attention needs to be focused. To help promote consistency and accuracy of data across Anthem, a common approach to Pre-Public Exams and moderation has been implemented. By triangulating the data in Alps with what the school improvement team sees on the ground they can spot anomalies. These anomalies are discussed and reflected with Heads of Department to ensure the data being used is validated.

## Case study Anthem Schools Trust

### Use of Alps by Senior Leaders in Schools

The reports generated by Alps gives Senior leaders in schools an insight into the headline figures. Having this information means they can discuss strategically how best to distribute resources in the school. Having the ability to look down to a student level allows senior leaders to spot trends in individuals and develop strategies for these individuals across the school.

Initially Summit was only used by the school improvement team at a Trust level, however as the way we use data has developed, we have invited Key Stage 5 leaders in schools to use the platform. It is a valuable tool that aids them in cross school collaboration. For areas of the curriculum that they have identified as a focus, they can use Summit to easily see firstly if other schools in the Trust offer the same course and secondly the Alps grade indicating the level of progress students are making and then can reach out and collaborate, sharing best practice.

Pastoral leads in schools find the 'Student Analysis' function useful to get an overview of students' progress across the range of subjects they study. They have also empowered their tutors to use this function to prompt conversations with tutees around subjects where they are excelling and those where they may need to direct their focus towards.

At Key Stage 5 leaders use Alps Connect to help them set aspirational targets. It is every department's aim to be Alps red. Initial targets are uploaded to Alps at the start of year 12. After half a term of getting to know students in their subject areas, teachers and heads of departments use the 'What if' function to amend targets ensuring the overall Alps grade will be Alps red, indicating being in the top 25% nationally. These targets are used throughout the year at a student level to promote aspirational expectations and ensure early intervention is implemented where necessary. This method of target setting promotes aspiration and teacher judgement, whilst ensuring consistency across the Trust.

Consistency is also enhanced through both the strategic review meetings at school level and at MAT central team level. These meetings have ensured laser sharp analysis of the data is supported by Alps team experts and focused schools on the most meaningful data to be utilizing.

“ **By empowering staff to use the platform it means they do not have to wait for data to be analysed and presented to them, but they can work straight away on delving down into the data to identify classes, groups, and students to focus on.** ”

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### Use of Alps by Middle Leaders and Teachers in Schools

Throughout the 5 secondary schools all heads of departments use Alps Connect. The visual nature of the platform allows even the least data confident members of staff to take control and identify trends in their data. Remembering the mantra that 'Red is Hot, and Blue is Not' allowing staff to easily spot areas of success and areas for development. Once trends have been identified Alps allows staff to dive deeper to see what is happening at a pupil level. This pupil level analysis is what ultimately drives change in attainment. By empowering staff to use the platform it means they do not have to wait for data to be analysed and presented to them, but they can work straight away on delving down into the data to identify, classes, groups, and students to focus on.

The use of the 'ad hoc' groups has enabled staff to look at progress made by different intervention groups or allow data to be analysed with pupils being removed for the cohort. Staff particularly find the use of dragging the thermometer useful to give them an insight into what is required to meet targets, and then amending grades using the 'what if' function to aid in selecting individual students to focus intervention on.

Similar to the use of Alps to spot anomalies in the data between schools by subject leads at a trust level, Alps is used by head of departments to sense check data between teaching groups, prompting conversations where there are inconsistencies. This validation of the data before it is submitted to the trust helps to ensure it is accurate.

### Looking Forward

What we love about Alps is how it has empowered staff at every level across the Trust to use data to inform people on areas of best practice and areas for improvement. Its simplicity ensures that it is accessible to all. We look forward to seeing how schools, departments and individuals' outcomes develop over the coming years as a result of intervention being put in place based on the analysis shown in Alps.

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more about Alps...**





## Awards and Partners

At Alps, we pride ourselves on the relationships we build with our schools. The same is true of the many partners and award bodies we work with year on year.

### Melanie Calder

Head of Data and Impact, Anthem Schools Trust



The support from the team at Alps makes the programme accessible to all, even if you don't have a 'data head'.

### Ian Nock

Director of Maths and Data, Invictus Education Trust



It is a really powerful tool to help identify your better performing subject, classes and students.

### Graham Corbyn

Group Head - Education, Aldar Education



Aldar Education have used Alps across the our group of schools for the first time this year and we are looking forward to increasing the use of Alps in our schools in 2022/23. Alps Summit is an exciting new group platform that enables our leadership to identify fantastic outcomes for young people and celebrate their success. Alps and Aldar Education share a common aspirational ambition for the young people in our schools.

### Julian Appleyard

Pontefract Academies Trust



We are using Alps Summit to share best practice across the MAT – to identify strengths and to signpost where intervention is required. Alps Connect and Alps Summit are essential in our strategic vision for the MAT and our relentless push to ensure all students achieve the very best outcomes that they can.



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