

## Case Study King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy



# Integrating HPL with Alps for Enhanced Student Performance

King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy is a prestigious secondary school located in Birmingham, UK, dedicated to the education and empowerment of young women. As part of the King Edward VI Academy Trust, the academy serves students aged 11 to 18, fostering an inclusive environment that values diversity and academic excellence.

With a strong commitment to unlocking the potential of every learner, the school integrates innovative educational frameworks like **High-Performance Learning (HPL)** and **Alps**, ensuring that all students are equipped to achieve their highest potential.

The academy prides itself on its mission to prepare students not just for academic success, but for life, encouraging them to become confident, capable individuals ready to make a positive impact in the world.



## Why Choose HPL?

King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy, situated in the culturally diverse city of Birmingham, has a strong commitment to empowering young women through education. The school's mission to unlock every learner's potential aligns perfectly with the High-Performance Learning (HPL) framework, which posits that high performance is attainable by all students, regardless of their starting points. This case study details the academy's journey in embedding the HPL philosophy alongside the Alps platform to drive significant improvements in student performance and staff development.



## Case Study

### King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy



#### The Decision-Making Process

The journey at King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy began with an inspiring keynote speech by Professor Deborah Eyre, which resonated deeply with the school's mission. The philosophy that high performance is possible for every student provided the impetus for a major shift in the school's approach to teaching and learning.

**“We started by working through the first of the pillars, ‘Mindset Shift’, which supported us in ensuring all of our staff had the core belief that all students have the potential for high performance regardless of their starting points.”**

Sally Yates, Deputy Headteacher

This belief became the cornerstone of the academy's strategic transformation, influencing everything from teaching methods to student groupings.

#### Implementation Strategy for HPL:

The first step was to establish a mindset shift across the academy, where staff and students alike embraced the belief that every student could achieve high performance. This involved changing the language used within the school, incorporating the 7 Pillars of HPL into all professional development and school improvement initiatives, and crucially, involving students in this cultural shift.

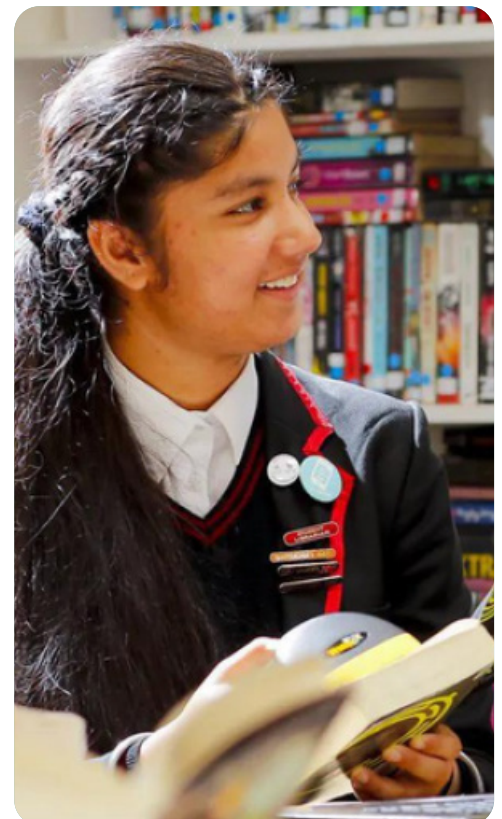
**“We moved from rigid sets based on ability to a flexible fair banding strategy based on current performance, which set the tone for our journey ahead.”**

Sally Yates, Deputy Headteacher

This shift allowed more students the opportunity to reach the highest levels of achievement by removing the cap on tiered entry, particularly in key subjects.

The school also introduced the language of 'not yet' into their assessment rhetoric, which became a part of their pastoral standards policy. This forward-looking language encouraged students to see their potential for improvement, rather than being fixed in their current abilities.

By the fifth year of their HPL journey, the philosophy had become deeply intertwined with the academy's vision, mission, and values, guiding all decision-making processes and helping to recruit staff who shared the school's aspirational goals.



## Using Alps for Performance Improvement

The Alps platform played a critical role in the academy's assessment strategy. Rather than focusing solely on grades, the school shifted its attention to how secure students were in their knowledge and application. This approach transformed the way students received feedback, making them more responsive to improvements and focused on mastering content.

“**The Alps platform has supported our conversations at senior and curriculum leadership level to drive what assessments need to be put into place to check understanding regularly.**”

Sally Yates, Deputy Headteacher

By using Alps, the academy could compare performance across subjects, analyse student data, and identify trends, allowing for timely interventions and challenges.

## Aligning HPL with Alps

The integration of Alps with HPL was seamless, with the school using Alps data to inform their HPL strategies. Regular training sessions for curriculum and senior leaders ensured that everyone was proficient in using Alps. The platform became essential in leadership discussions, particularly in identifying students who needed additional support or challenge.

“**An essential part of embedding Alps has been to use the platform live in training sessions, line management meetings, and data drop analysis sessions.**”

Sally Yates, Deputy Headteacher

The Alps thermometer provided a common language among curriculum leaders, supporting high performance across different subjects and student groups.

“**At King Edward VI HWGA, we believe that Alps provides a common language for setting targets and tracking performance effectively.**

**It enables timely interventions, offers clear data for analysis, and plays a vital role in raising aspirations—a key priority for our school.**

**Alps supports both academic performance and outcomes, ensuring that students stay on track to achieve their full potential.**

**Our staff, including pastoral managers and curriculum leaders, find Alps invaluable, with the thermometer tool being particularly useful for monitoring progress and driving success.”**

Miss Kiran Takhar, Headteacher



## Impact and Outcomes

**For Teachers:** The integration of HPL and Alps has empowered teachers at King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy to set high expectations for all students. Teachers now use a standardised approach to target setting, aligned with Alps, ensuring that all students are expected to meet or exceed their minimum expected grades.

“The Alps thermometer has given our curriculum leaders a common language that supports high performance.”

Sally Yates, Deputy Headteacher

This shared language has been crucial in driving forward the academy's goals and ensuring consistency in teaching and learning across the board.

**For Students:** The impact on students has been profound. The academy's focus on performance, rather than simply grades, has helped students to set aspirational targets and believe in their ability to succeed. The use of Alps data has allowed the school to track progress meticulously, providing interventions where necessary to ensure all students are on track to meet their goals. At Key Stage 5, for example, the school uses Alps to identify students who may need extra support through the student analysis tool. This tool has been particularly useful in implementing swift interventions, such as tutoring and mentoring, to keep students on track for success.

**For the School Community:** The alignment of HPL and Alps with the academy's vision has fostered a more aspirational community. The school's growth mindset approach, coupled with high expectations for all, has been embraced by staff, students, and parents alike. This shared vision has driven the academy's mission forward, ensuring that students are well-prepared for both academic success and life beyond school. King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy's integration of HPL with Alps represents a significant stride towards achieving educational excellence. By embedding the HPL philosophy across all aspects of school life and utilising Alps to drive performance improvements, the academy has created a culture where every student is encouraged to reach their full potential. This case study demonstrates the power of aligning educational frameworks with school vision and goals to foster a highperforming, aspirational community.



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**Alps** is a leading educational organisation dedicated to improving student outcomes through advanced analytics and data driven insights. Established with the mission of helping schools and colleges unlock the full potential of every learner, Alps provides a suite of tools and resources that support educators in setting ambitious targets and tracking progress. The Alps Connect platform, known for its user-friendly interface and powerful analytics, enables teachers and leaders to monitor performance, identify trends, and implement timely interventions. With a focus on raising standards and achieving high performance across all student groups, Alps empowers schools to deliver exceptional education and ensure that every student can achieve their best, regardless of their starting point.



**High Performance Learning (HPL)** works with schools to embed the HPL philosophy where every student is seen as a potential high performer. Its unique teaching and learning framework systematically recalibrates the school and enables students to develop the cognitive skills, values, attitudes and attributes needed for high academic performance and lifetime success. HPL offers a range of programmes to enable schools at any starting point to begin their journey towards being an HPL school.

The HPL World Class School Award recognises the very best schools in the world and is designed for those at the forefront of educational thinking.



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