



The need for transformation

The need to transform education is being driven by global and national issues, as well as local concerns. Amongst the key 'drivers' for change to which Waingels is responding are:

The need to compete effectively with other countries. Although the United Kingdom's educational performance has improved in recent years, we still lag behind our competitors in key areas such as the percentage of 16 year olds staying-on in full-time education (under 70% compared with the European average of 85%).

The need for young people to develop the skills of 'learning how?' and 'learning why?' rather than just 'learning what?' The speed of change means that we need to develop our students' ability to think effectively for themselves rather than just learning quickly outdated content.

The need to become lifelong learners. Together with focusing on learning skills rather than learning content will be the need to develop our students' enthusiasm for learning as a lifelong pursuit; the days of a career for life have long gone. Our students will probably have at least three complete changes of career in their working lifetimes – many in fields that have not even been invented yet!

The need to master and use new technologies. The continued and continuing rapid rise in the power and availability of new technologies means students of today will need both skills and judgement of a far more sophisticated nature than their parents.

Transformation in practice

Responding to these and other issues effectively means doing two, closely related things well:

Moving from a 'one size fits all' curriculum to a personalised one that meets the learning needs of students as individuals.

Establishing a flexible framework, supported by highly trained staff and the very best resources.

As a leader in this area of work, Waingels has developed or is developing a personalised curriculum fit for the 21st century. Amongst the measures we have taken or will be taking are:

Re-grouping subject departments into five, broader Curriculum Teams (Creative Arts, Communications, Humanities, Mathematics & Computing and Science & Technology) to increase collaborative working amongst staff, the understanding of

“Our aim is to create a learning culture in which every student will flourish”

College Principal



knowledge links by students and the improved use of resources.

Increasing the opportunities for more able students to take on earlier and greater challenges in their learning (e.g. by encouraging early entry for KS3 SATs and GCSEs, introducing the International Baccalaureate as an alternative to A-levels, providing opportunities to study first degree modules linked to the Open and Reading Universities, enrolling students with the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth at Warwick University, structuring the provision of challenging extra-curricular opportunities including public speaking and residential courses).

Creating and establishing networks with other schools, colleges and service providers including leading the establishment of a Federation for Wokingham secondary schools to open up opportunities for all local students, developing shared courses with Bracknell and Wokingham and Reading Further Education Colleges

and working more closely with local social services, health providers and the LA.

Listening to and responding to our stakeholders by providing regular written and face-to-face opportunities for parents to let us know how we are doing and greatly increasing the encouragement for students to take an active and central part in their own learning and in the development of the College.

Greatly increasing the availability and educational use of new technology. We now have over 400 high specification computers for student use, our whole site is networked both wirelessly and by fibre optic cable, all students and staff have personal emails and can access the College and global internet from home as well as anywhere on site or off it, homework and learning resources are now available anytime, anywhere by all students and staff **Investing in our most valuable resource – our staff** by increasing the number of teachers, teaching

assistants and administrative staff, providing effectively for their on-going professional development needs and attending their well-being and work/life balance so that they remain committed and hardworking.

Developing innovative ways to timetable teachers and resources so that students can access the help they need when they need it.

Short-term reassurance and long-term gain

Although this list appears long and daunting, Waingels has a track record of success in managing change effectively, as is evidenced by our designation as a national centre of excellence for both staff development (Training School) and curriculum development (Specialist College for mathematics and computing).

Our work over recent years has positioned the College and its staff as acknowledged leaders in the field of school transformation with the

skills and the experience to move forward with confidence.

However, we don't want change for change's sake. Our approach is always to pilot possible changes and evaluate their effectiveness before taking key decisions. Our sole criteria for change is 'Will the education we offer our students be improved as a result of this change or not?' If the answer is 'No' the change doesn't happen.



“Waingels systems for the care and social development of its students are excellent”