Turner Schools

Strengthening Teaching Through Supportive, Visible Leadership

Written by Matt Tate, Director of Secondary Education, Turner Schools

Folkestone	**6 years**	**7**
multi-academy trust	since the trust was founded	academies graded 'good' or better

Context

Turner Schools has just turned six. The difficult early years of starting out, setting up systems from scratch and appointing leaders are now behind us. The initial vision to bring about sea change in the educational provision in Folkestone has now been well established.

Standards have risen over the last three years across our academies and currently seven of the academies are officially graded as 'good' or better, with one awaiting inspection after joining the trust recently. The Trust has worked with leaders, teachers, trustees, members and governors to reset our priorities.

The Challenge: Visibility Without Voice

At Turner Schools, leaders have long believed in a simple but powerful idea: every child deserves great teaching, and every teacher deserves great support. This belief shaped a culture of open doors, where senior leaders regularly dropped into classrooms to stay close to teaching and learning. But over time, a gap became clear.

While these visits demonstrated leaders' commitment to students and staff, teachers did not always receive feedback from them. Even when practice was strong, encouragement and guidance weren't consistently shared. Leaders, meanwhile, lacked a systematic way to capture what they were seeing was working well, what needed refining, and how leadership approaches were supporting teaching across schools and the wider trust.

There was also a crucial line Turner Schools did not want to cross. Any solution had to support teachers, not judge them. Lesson visits were never intended to be part of performance management or appraisal and preserving trust was non-negotiable.

> THE CHALLENGE WAS CLEAR
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> **How could leaders remain visible, supportive, and focused on learning, while also providing clarity, consistency, and meaningful feedback for teachers?**

The Solution: ProgressTeaching as a Tool for Support, Not Surveillance

ProgressTeaching became the bridge between intention and impact.

By giving leaders a structured but flexible way to record what they saw during lesson visits, the platform transformed informal drop-ins into purposeful opportunities for professional support. Leaders could

collate examples of effective practice, spot patterns across classrooms, and reflect on which strategies were having the greatest impact on students.

Crucially, ProgressTeaching was explicitly separated from performance management. Its role was not to evaluate individual teachers, but to strengthen teaching and learning by:

- Clarifying shared teaching and learning priorities through a clear rubric
- Providing a simple way to share brief, meaningful feedback after visits
- Ensuring that feedback celebrated what was working, while offering small, constructive tweaks where they could make a difference

For teachers, this meant that lesson visits no longer felt like fleeting observations. They became moments of reassurance, encouragement, and alignment, grounded in a shared understanding of what great teaching looks like at Turner.

For leaders, ProgressTeaching created visibility at both school and trust level, allowing them to see how effectively leadership approaches were supporting classroom practice.

The Results: Consistency, Transparency, and a Stronger Learning Culture

ProgressTeaching strengthened what Turner Schools already valued – trust, openness, and professional respect – while adding clarity and consistency.

Teachers now receive timely, focused feedback that reinforces school priorities and recognises strong practice. Leaders are able to gather insight across classrooms and schools, building a clearer picture of what is working well and where adaptations are needed.

Most importantly, students benefit from a system where leaders' presence in classrooms is clearly about learning and success, not judgement.

ProgressTeaching has helped Turner Schools turn everyday leadership interactions into a coherent, supportive approach to improving teaching, ensuring that great teaching is nurtured, celebrated, and continually refined.

Want to transform your school's teaching and learning like Turner Schools?
Call us on 0333 242 0393 or email info@progressteaching.com