



The Communication Trust
Every child understood

Case study - Horndean Technology College, Barton Cross

We have taken part in the *No Pens Day Wednesday* project for the past two years, beginning in 2012. In fact, as a result of the positive feedback that we received from both teachers and students, we ran a *No Pens Week* this summer for the whole of Key Stage 3. During the week, students did not know which subject would be running pens free lessons on which day – this definitely created an air of mystery!



We found that students loved the lessons and really looked forward to seeing how each department would creatively implement the 'no pens' rule. Not only did *No Pens Week* bolster our students' verbal communication, we also found that the project had a positive effect on their written work – they were far more enthusiastic about writing after having had a few lessons away from their pens! Clare Hancock, Governor, noted that students at Horndean Technology College were 'envied for their independence'. This was also reinforced by the Principal of South Downs and Havant College.



The project also boosted collaborative planning across the staff team. We had a group spreadsheet where each teacher would input information about their planned pens free lessons (these details would be kept secret from students in order to make it more of a surprise). This allowed other staff members and the Horndean College Leadership Team to drop in on the lessons in order to evaluate and photograph the different activities.

We used the posters provided by The Communication Trust, which were really useful in raising awareness about the event, creating a real sense of anticipation throughout the college.

No Pens Week created a real buzz around Horndean and everyone was talking about it. We found that running the event over a whole week really built up the students' excitement, which meant that they got so much out of the event - it also helped them to stay focussed on the real value of speaking and listening across the week and to not get over excited by it being the focus for just a single day.



Horndean Technology College is part of a Federation of eight secondary schools. We enjoyed the project so much that we presented the idea of having a joint *No Pens Week* in the Summer term to the rest of the Federation. We also shared the valuable resources supplied by The Communication Trust for the other schools to use and develop. Five of the eight schools across our Federation are now planning to take part in a *No Pens Week* and we already have plans to run *No Pens Week* again in the Spring term!

Andrew Gray, Assistant Head