



OTrack

Bespoke Pupil Tracking

3 Mindset Changes When Using PITA

...and how to implement them in your school

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OTrack have specialised in the field of tracking pupil progress and attainment since 2005. In that time, we have worked with thousands of schools across the UK and beyond.

The author

My name is Tom Parkinson. I co-established Optimum Reports Ltd (more commonly known as OTrack) in November 2005. Since then, I have led OTrack from a 'start up' to an award-winning company that currently works with, and supports, over 1500 schools in the UK.

I really enjoy helping schools, through the provision of software systems and support services, to easily record and analyse their assessment data. I believe that effective use of technology can allow school staff to use data to plan for what they really want to do... teach and develop the children in their care.

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This document sets out some key mindset changes to overcome when reviewing or implementing a PITA tracking model.

Teacher Assessment Codes

...and what they mean.

A PITA model reflects a pupil's understanding within the curriculum, based on what has been taught to date. So, if a pupil is keeping pace within the lessons that you have delivered and has no serious gaps in understanding of the curriculum you have covered, they are 'secure' or 'at standards' etc.

So, let's say your first assessment in the Autumn term is in October. You can, and will, have pupils working 'At Standards' or maybe even 'Greater Depth'!

If you are currently using a linear method for tracking and you want to move to a PITA model - you may need to change your assessment codes. The table below shows the most common codes used in a PITA model.

Code	Description
BLW	A pupil isn't understanding most things that we've taught this year, so we will be teaching things for a previous year's programme of study.
WTS	A pupil isn't understanding everything that we've taught to date – but he/she understands some and is working within their year groups programme of study.
EXS	A pupil is working at expected standards and has no serious gaps in understanding what we've taught to date.
GDS	A pupil is working at a standard of greater depth and has no gaps in understanding what we've taught to date.

TIP!

Speak with your tracking provider - they will be able to advise you on how other schools have converted from Linear to PITA. They should have worked with schools who use similar codes to you, so they will have specific knowledge of how to convert from your old codes to new ones.

Of course, you may need to change some data that you've recorded this academic year. Check with your tracker again, they should be able to help you do this.

Progress Measures

Empty your mind.

Forget everything that you currently think about progress, you need to start again with a blank canvas. Schools who have moved from a 'step' and points-based tracking method have told us that, they believe, there is a common obsession with using points to determine progress rates.

These schools have said that the use of points for progress twists assessments and turns it into something non-representational to the curriculum and disconnected from learning.



TIP!

Here are 3 tips that we have collated from these schools:

- **This is key:** Rather than using points to measure progress use **progress matrices** instead. These show pupils plotted from start points to current assessment. E.g. from EYFS, KS1 or last year's teacher assessments to your current teacher assessment or test outcomes). Check out our video on this here: <https://optimumotrack.co.uk/what-is-point-in-time-assessment>
- Remember points have nothing in common with the curriculum, and they are mostly used for purposes of accountability rather than teaching and learning. Progress is not linear.
- Veto the use of 'expected progress' as a phrase used in your school. It naturally assumes that if a pupil moves from working at expected standards last year, to above expected standards this year this is above expected progress. But what is above expected progress for pupils working at Greater Depth? And, possibly more importantly, is it right to assume that a pupil who is below standards last year and is still below standards now is making 'expected progress'?

What is Age Related Expectations?

This is nice and simple.

In a linear method Age Related Expectation (ARE) would work something like this: for a pupil to be at ARE in the Autumn term they need to be a Beginning (B), then they would need to be Developing (D) in the Spring term, and finally Secure (S) in the summer term.

In a PITA model you will basically set your ARE to be 'At Expected Standards' each term, because the target is for pupils to understand the lessons that you have delivered to date.



TIP!

Your tracker should be adaptable enough to change the ARE settings. This is a quick job and you only need to do it once. Check with your tracker how to do this, if you are unsure.

That's it, you're ready

You're ready to move to a PITA model.

The feedback we get from schools who use this method is amazing. They say that time spent on data and tracking tasks has been reduced and their data is more robust and reliable. The main benefit is that they can now spend more time helping the pupils learn and progress.

If you are unsure on how to implement this in your school, please check out my contact details on the next page.

Contact me

Get in touch.

If you need any help or advice on how to effectively implement PITA in your school, then please feel free to contact me. It's easier than you think!



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Thank you

I hope you've found this useful.

Tom Parkinson

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