



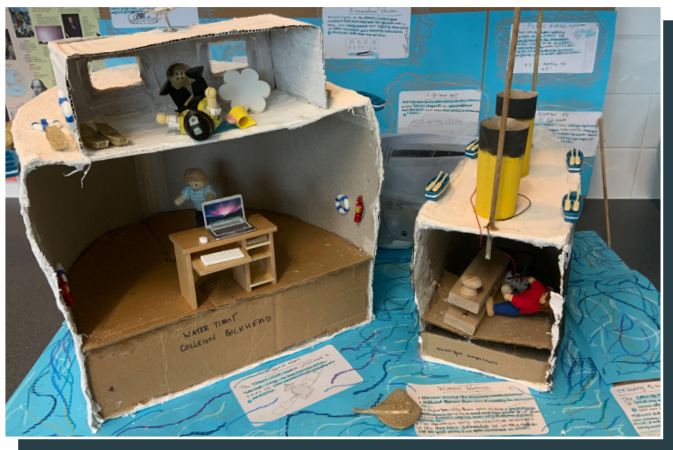
ISEB
Independent Schools
Examinations Board

CASE STUDY

iPQ AT ST. SWITHUN'S SCHOOL: EMPOWERING INDEPENDENT LEARNING

"The iPQ is a wonderful way to develop skills and learning whilst having fun. The children's passion for their subject is demonstrable throughout the project."

Allison Greenfield, Head of Assessment and Transition, St. Swithun's



find and validate sources and how to tweak their ideas to create a good question. They are then encouraged to apply this in an area that interests them. Pupils are encouraged to tackle the majority of the work in school rather than allowing project work to encroach upon free time that would otherwise be used for homework or extracurricular activities.

Following the completion of their projects, the school hosts an exhibition, which gives parents, teachers and pupils from other year groups the opportunity to see the completed work. This also gives Year 6 students an opportunity to share why they chose their topic and medium. Certificates are then awarded at a formal prize-giving.

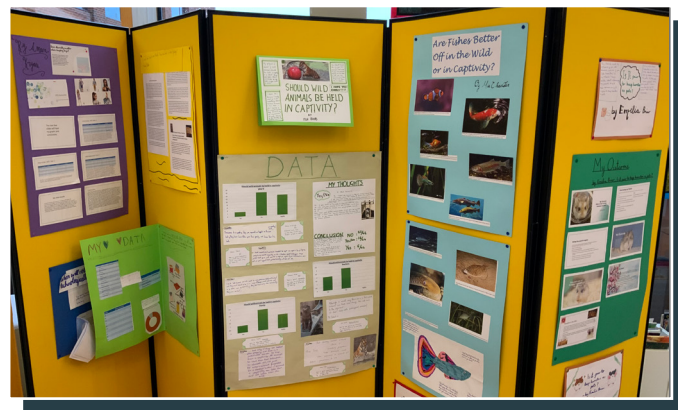
WHAT IS THE iPQ?

The iPQ is a research-based project qualification that is carefully constructed to teach and assess essential independent learning skills. It is divided into five sections: Define, Research and Review, Discuss and Develop, Reflect and Present.

HOW IS THE iPQ USED AT ST. SWITHUN'S?

St. Swithun's adopted the iPQ programme for their Year 6 pupils in the 2022-23 academic year. Allison Greenfield, Head of Assessment and Transition, wanted the children to take ownership of their learning and pursue a subject they were passionate about. St. Swithun's pupils complete the qualification independently, mentored by a member of staff, in groups of six. In preparation for the iPQ in Year 6, Year 5 pupils at St Swithun's complete a similar-style project in a group.

In Years 5 and 6, St. Swithun's pupils have weekly enrichment sessions used as project time. This starts with four sessions of study skills, teaching pupils how to



WHY THE iPQ?

"The project, particularly the final presentation, has been an excellent opportunity for the girls to develop their speaking and listening skills about a subject in which they are passionate".

Liz Norris, Head, St. Swithun's Prep

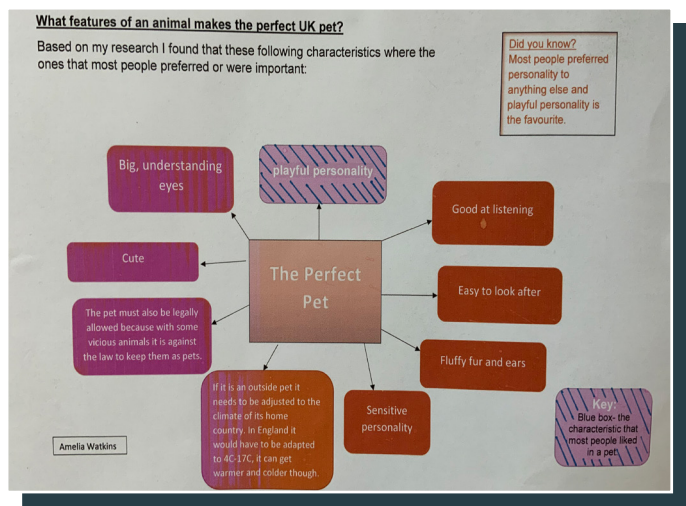
St. Swithun's is a High Performance Learning school that prioritises teaching pupils about the skills associated with being effective learners and encourages them to think about how they use these skills throughout



the curriculum and beyond. “The iPQ works alongside this really well,” says Allison.

Allison feels that the iPQ is perfect for Year 6 as it is a culmination of the skills they have learned up until that point and develops their intellectual curiosity. “Teachers have been wanting to facilitate opportunities for the children to extend and enrich their learning in areas of personal interest, and the iPQ provides this.”

“The children love it,” she continues. “They are passionate about their topics, and therefore, they are very interested. They are mentored throughout the project, but pupils are keen and happy to work independently.” She adds that pupils place more onus on the process than the outcome, an essential aspect of the iPQ, and that the cohort is encouraged to produce as much variety as possible in their final project. This has included a replica model of the Titanic, a set of Top Trump cards, a board game, and one pupil coded a video game using the web programming platform Scratch.

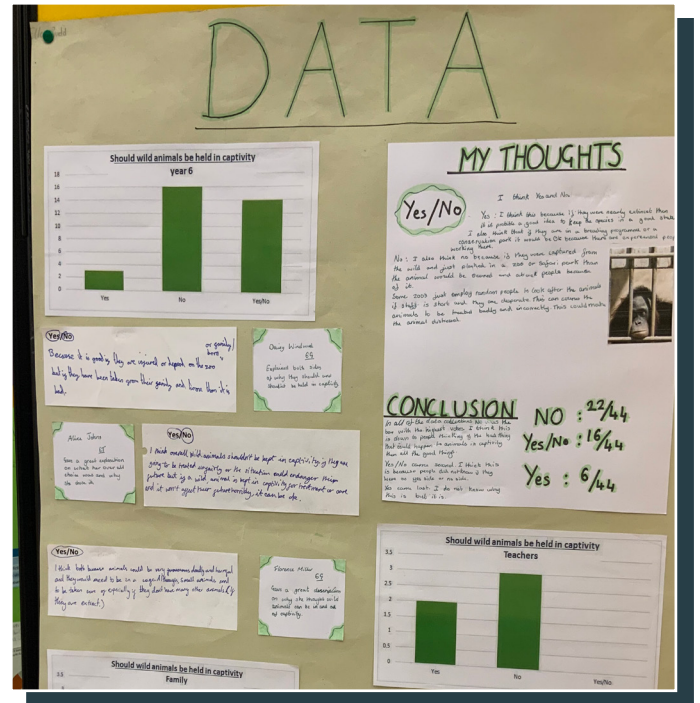


After experiencing the loss of a pet due to a road accident, one pupil created posters to display around her local area aimed at protecting animals on the road. “The best projects are the ones that start with a personal interest,” says Allison.



Allison sees that research is the aspect in which pupils need the greatest guidance. “The children are used to

just Googling an answer,” she says, “so we develop their skills by focusing on verifying sources and contacting experts directly. For example, if a pupil is exploring the issue of animals in captivity, we would help them reach out to an expert from Marwell Zoo”. Pupils have also been taught how to use Microsoft Forms to collect data; “they are good at recognising that the results might be biased and not 100% valid,” she continues.



Allison never underestimates how powerful it is to see the pupils’ passions come to life and what an impact this has on the other pupils and teachers. She is also aware of how much it is valued by parents and the pupils themselves. When asked if she would recommend the iPQ to other schools, Allison’s response was wholly positive, adding, “The iPQ prepares them beautifully for moving forward to senior school,” she says. “It allows them to develop their independent research skills and take ownership of their learning.”

“From a curriculum enrichment perspective, the iPQ provides wonderful opportunity and scope for pupils to broaden and deepen their own learning independently, giving pupils a sense of ownership and readiness for skills they will need to develop for their future studies”.

James West, More Able and Talented Coordinator

To find out more about the ISEB Project Qualification that is inspiring staff and pupils alike, visit the ISEB website, www.iseb.co.uk/iPQ

For the St Swithun’s School website, visit: www.stswithuns.com

To read about the success of the iPQ at Shrewsbury House School visit: iPQ Shrewsbury House