

BIG PICTURE LEARNING

WHAT IS BIG PICTURE LEARNING?

Big Picture Learning provides an inspirational educational model designed according to the following principles:

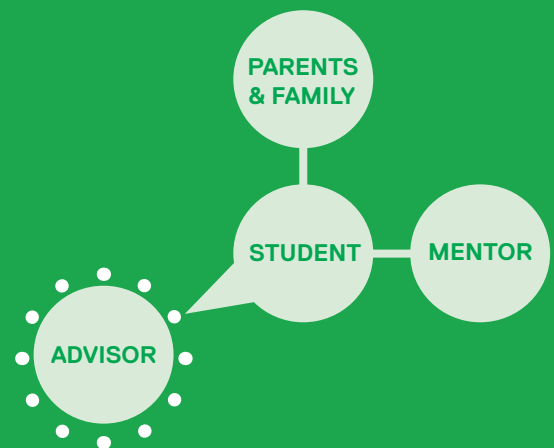
- **Individual Learning Plans:** every student agrees and holds responsibility for an individual learning plan aligned with their personal goals and interests, and this is put at the centre of their school experience
- **Learning Through Internships:** every student spends at least two days a week on an internship project, working with a mentor who is an expert in their field
- **Student Portfolios:** students create and present quality products (such as research reports, documentary films, business proposals and physical prototypes) to meet real world quality standards

Big Picture Learning is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the fundamental redesign of education. It was founded in the US in 1995 and now operates globally.

Big Picture schools are grounded in the philosophy of educating 'one student at a time' and building meaningful relationships with employers, parents and teachers.

Big Picture has five key learning goals for its students: **empirical reasoning, quantitative reasoning, communication, social reasoning, and personal qualities.**

Students at Big Picture schools take academic or vocational qualifications, progressing to college, university or work depending on the preference of the student.



For more information about Big Picture Learning in the US see www.bigpicture.org, or for Big Picture in Australia see www.bigpicture.org.au

HOW ARE BIG PICTURE SCHOOLS ORGANISED?

Students are not organised into classes or tutor groups. 'Advisories' are the key organisational structure at Big Picture Schools. Typically 15 students make up an advisory and each student works closely with their advisor to develop an individual learning plan that is both rooted in the student's interests, and also meets Big Picture's learning goals. The advisor acts as coach, teacher, manager and friend to the student; supporting them to achieve their academic and wider goals.

Students spend at least two days a week on their 'Learning Through Internship' project, under the guidance of their mentor and in a real place of work. Parents are partners in their child's education, and join a community of students, teachers and mentors who are committed to helping students learn and develop. Many parents are also mentors, and there is an expectation that parents are deeply involved in school life.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES?

Big Picture schools in the United States (of which there are over 60 across 15 states) consistently outperform other comparable schools. Nationally, they produce an 'on-time' graduation rate of 90% (versus 69.5% in regular high-schools nationally) with close to 100% of students gaining entry to university.

In Providence, Rhode Island (a state in which over 10% of the student population attend a Big Picture School) the results compared to local schools are as follows:

	BP Schools in Providence	District Schools in Providence
Graduation rate	95%	55%
College acceptance rate	98%	38%
Passing state-mandated English achievement test	89%	79%
Passing state-mandated Maths achievement test	45%	32%

Big Picture schools achieve better outcomes, yet they cost no more. They can do more with a smarter, more learner-centred, design.

We believe Big Picture Learning can achieve the following outcomes in the UK:

- Improved academic achievement and qualifications for all students
- Closure of the gap in educational achievement for deprived and minority groups
- All students achieving at least level 2 qualifications at age 16
- All students moving on to college, university or further training
- All students leaving school with improved work-readiness
- A reduction in youth unemployment and the number of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs)

THE PROGRAMME:

Innovation Unit is working in partnership with schools, providers and local authorities to develop Big Picture schools and practices in a UK context. We hope to work with our partners in three capacities:

1) Professional development

We will facilitate professional development for teachers and leaders to enable senior leadership to integrate Big Picture practice into current school models.

2) New school development

We will work with people establishing brand new schools or 'schools within schools' to design a Big Picture model of learning.

3) Alternative provision

We will work across a locality to redesign the services that provide young people not in mainstream education with routes back into education and employability.

If you want to find out more about how to get involved with Big Picture Learning UK please contact: Mark Blundell (mark.blundell@innovationunit.org)