

Flexible, e-learning approach helps to re-engage pre-NEET learners

Batley Girls' High School

Girls at the West Yorkshire school – who were at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) – are learning and achieving using online qualifications available through vision2learn for **schools**.

Senior teachers at the school were looking for an individualised approach that their skilled Learning Mentors could adopt and use to help vulnerable students to learn and achieve. Learning Mentors at the school aim to help remove students' barriers to learning. NEET Link Advisor Pam Smith explained: *“Vision2learn for **schools** offered us a personalised, tailored answer for a particular group of students and provided them with an opportunity to succeed rather than a continued experience of failure.”*

Students' reactions to learning using online courses, such as the **NCFE Level 2 Award in Nutrition and Health (QCF)**, have been extremely positive.

“The opportunity to use a computer and not textbooks in a calming environment has proved to be an essential factor in the success that we are having with the pre-NEET students. The girls have responded well to having all the information given to them without the need to write or sit through lessons in a “traditional” learning environment. Being able to log on from home or at the library has also empowered the girls to re-engage with the learning experience and grasp hold of it with both hands. They have really enjoyed this new way of learning,” says Pam Smith.



Nutrition and Health on vision2learn for **schools**.

So why does online learning work for pre-NEET learners?

Pam believes that online learning brings many benefits to the girls: *“Pre-NEET students are very hard to engage within education. One student in particular has not been motivated throughout Key Stage 3, due to various issues. However, online learning gives learners like her a chance to work at their own pace and be more in control of the way they work. This has shown results, as many of the students are currently working at home as well as at school. It has helped the girls to rebuild their confidence in the learning environment, which in turn has also had a knock-on effect in other aspects of their education.”*

*“The students enjoy the way courses are presented on vision2learn for **schools**. They look more inviting than the usual text book and also give them the opportunity to study in short sharp bursts. This makes the girls feel more empowered about their own learning.”*

The subject matter is especially engaging for this group of learners too, explains Pam: *“They gain more understanding of their own eating habits and nutritional needs. From a school perspective it has also raised many well-being issues surrounding eating disorders and the lack of understanding around the need to eat a healthy diet.”*

“During the school day there is a lunchtime club which is popular as many of the girls have been bitten by the online learning bug. They now enjoy spending the extra time asking questions to find out more on the subject of Nutrition and Health and this has greatly improved their work and their attitude to learning.”

What results are learners achieving?

Students are working well on the courses and some of the most vulnerable students are already getting back on track with their education, as Pam explains: *“One of our students, who was at high risk of becoming NEET, started to take Nutrition and Health on a two-sessions-a-week basis, with each session lasting one hour. This has helped her to develop and want to engage more with learning. Due to the experience of vision2learn for **schools** she has become re-engaged with attending school and learning to the point where she has now completed two further qualifications in Childcare and ALAN Level 2 and is currently working towards GCSEs in both English and Mathematics. All this from a student who at one time would not walk through the school gates – as a school we are extremely pleased with this positive outcome.”*

What else can vision2learn for **schools** do to help?

The School is planning to roll out further vision2learn for **schools** programmes over the coming months.

*“We are currently developing vision2learn for **schools** further by introducing the **Edexcel WorkSkills** package as an option in Year 10, and we have plans to incorporate the **NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Equality and Diversity** course to run alongside other pre-existing GCSE qualifications,”* says Pam.

Networking with other vision2learn centres through The PiXL Club – a collaboration of school leaders – has also proved influential, says Pam: *“The vision2learn for **schools** team were most helpful and able to provide the school with other new contacts, such as PiXL, who have been very useful in introducing new ideas to help us drive up achievement.”*

Batley Girls’ High School

Batley Girls’ High School is a Community Secondary school with over 1000 pupils, the large majority speak English as an additional language with around a quarter eligible for free school meals. It holds a number of awards including **Healthy Schools** and has worked hard to boost standards of education and achievement for all learners.

Its latest Ofsted report [March 2009] commented: *‘Vulnerable students, those at risk of disaffection or who face challenging circumstances benefit from a secure safety net of support and care. Pastoral staff work closely and coherently with a good number of support personnel and external agencies to ensure that students are able to make the most of all the school provides. Support, guidance and care are outstanding in all respects.’*

The PiXL Club

The PiXL Club (www.pixl.org.uk) is a collaboration of school leaders, headed by Sir John Rowling. The PiXL Club is about sharing new ideas with school leaders; it is a partnership of focused, determined and dedicated professional practitioners. It is a not-for-profit organisation that focuses on supporting and developing the GCSE results of thousands of students in many schools across London, the South East, West and the North.

Contact us

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