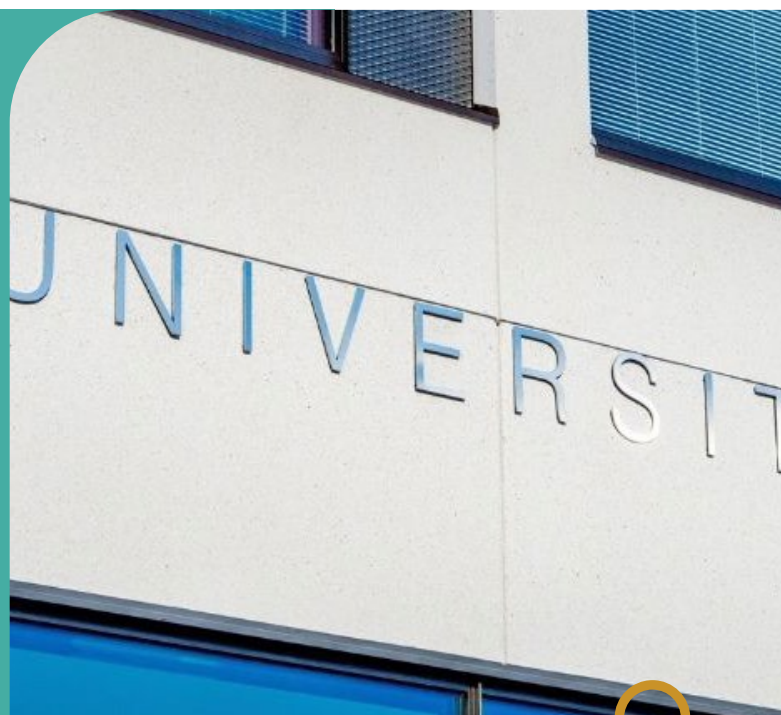


Championing HE at Littlehampton Academy

**Empowering young people to make informed
future choices**

The Littlehampton project had three main aims:

- to reduce the gap in higher education participation between the most and least represented groups
- to empower young people to make well-informed decisions about their future education
- to support effective collaboration among local HE providers working with schools, colleges, employers and other partners.



METHODOLOGY

As a school that met the benchmark of having a Uni Connect population greater than 20 per cent, The Littlehampton Academy received direct funding from Uni Connect and chose to allocate the funds to a number of projects, including appointing a higher education champion in the school to raise awareness of and aspirations to higher education.

Once the higher education champion had been appointed and the cohort of participating Uni Connect students identified, work began on seeing the students on a caseload basis, as well as engaging with external agencies and activity providers to support aspiration activities and provide information. These included the Speakers Trust, The Life Skills Company, Future First, Time to Act and Unifrog.

Having an HE champion at the school meant it was able to engage fully in activities and interventions offered by Uni Connect and other agencies including Get Career Confident, UCAS Discovery Days and the BAME Insights Programme.

Funding set aside for campus visits was repurposed to allow for Y12 and Y13 students (accompanied by at least one parent/carer) to book and travel to bespoke, individual tours at universities they were interested in applying to.

Resources were also purchased by the school including the Apply guides for all Y13 students to support their progression to higher education. The 2020 Apply guide covers in detail everything sixth-formers needed to know to make informed choices and outstanding applications as they prepare for life beyond school.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Context

The Littlehampton Academy is located in an area of deprivation on the coastal strip of West Sussex, with 340 students – just over 40 per cent of the total school population – living in Uni Connect wards. The school serves the Adur district, which scores highly on the Index of Multiple Deprivation and is one of the areas with both high levels of deprivation and a low uptake of higher education.

Duration

September 2020 to July 2021

Partners

The Littlehampton Academy

Funding source

Uni Connect

IMPACT

- 100 per cent of The Littlehampton Academy Uni Connect students were reached through either one-to-one or small group FE or career-focused interaction and guidance, with the aim of raising aspirations.
- 77 per cent of Uni Connect Y13 students have successfully applied and received offers for university places in 2021.
- Levels of awareness of higher education pathways were raised across the school – including among staff.
- Key findings and recommendations
- Having an HE champion with expertise in higher education in school had a profound impact on raising aspirations and encouraging students to consider going on to higher education.
- The HE champion enabled the school to engage with universities and other agencies to help raise aspirations.



TALKING POINTS

How can we raise awareness of the role of HE champions and how effective they are in raising the aspirations of all students in a school, not just those in sixth form?

How can we ensure that all schools have the capacity to work with universities and other agencies seeking to raise aspirations and access to higher education?

How do we communicate that HE champions have a very strong and vital role to play in social justice and in areas of deprivation?



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