

The Action Your Potential and Aiming for College Project at The Academy Selsey

Boosting learning skills, resilience and morale among vulnerable students



For this project, the Action Your Potential (AYP) team ran three workshops for all Year 11 students at The Academy Selsey, and supported college visits for Year 10s, with the aim of increasing attainment and raising aspirations. It also aimed to:

- support students to develop effective learning routines that work with the brain's long-term memory, such as easy revision and information recall techniques
- give parents/carers access to information to support their children's learning
- offer additional support to vulnerable students via coaching sessions support
- support Year 10 students' transition to further education by accompanying them to college taster days
- encourage Year 11 students to do their best through a session with a motivational speaker.

METHODOLOGY

Working with the school's ACE (a Champion for Every Child) and Year 11 teaching team, Action Your Potential ran three workshops for Year 10 and Year 11 students at The Academy Selsey. Some 193 students were involved, the majority of whom met Uni Connect criteria.

The AYP workshops included coaching sessions for Uni Connect learners to support the development of good learning routines, with learning resources provided to embed these. The resources have since been shared with the whole school and are included as part of its 12 Rocks practice. AYP also gave every student and parent/carers on the programme access to its NeuroNinja Learning Hub.

Year 11 parents/carers were invited to the AYP sessions to learn how to support their children's learning. This invitation was then extended to parents of Year 10 students. In addition, one-to-one tuition outside of school hours for Year 11s further enabled parents/carers to learn how to support their child's journey to exams.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Context

Successful learning strategies can have a considerable influence on academic success especially for vulnerable students who may have emotional, social and developmental barriers to learning. By learning how to use their brains more effectively, as well as engaging their parents/carers in the process, they can make better progress, become more motivated to learn and achieve, and transform their outcomes.

Partners

The Academy Selsey

Duration

1st November 2022 to 20th July 2023

Funding source

Uni Connect

Year 11 students also attended an extended workshop featuring motivational speaker Jim Roberson, a former American football player and coach, who encouraged them to aim high, try their best and develop their academic resilience skills.

The project also provided transport and staff to accompanying students so all Year 10 learners could visit a further education college and take part in taster sessions in a subject of their choice during summer 2023.

IMPACT

The project has had a positive impact on the 193 students and their parents/carers who took part. It has:

- raised awareness of effective revision and learning techniques
- helped parents/carers learn what they can do to support their children's learning
- supported trips for all Year 10 students to a college taster day; 96% of students who went said they found the trip worthwhile.
- boosted morale, resilience and aspirations among the students.

In addition, all Year 11 students have sat their exams and have a placement for September. In the longer term, the hope is that the project will result in all students attending their exams and achieving their best possible grades at GCSE and all next year's Year 11 students having a post-16 placement at college, a sixth-form college or an apprenticeship.

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

"The Jim Roberson motivational session was very influential for the year group. The students felt he picked them up when they were flagging in the cold January days and helped them review their successes so they were motivated to revise more effectively." Chris Willshire, Project Lead, The Academy Selsey

The AYP one-to-one tuition sessions taught some of the most vulnerable and anxious students useful strategies so that they were able to confidently sit their exams. At no point during the exam season was any student unable to sit an exam due to poor mental health.

Some disaffected students also engaged well with AYP. It came down to resilience and not being afraid to fail but seeing it as an opportunity to succeed. Reframing their thought process was invaluable for these students.

Recommendations

The AYP team should continue to evaluate the impact of the project over the next academic year, looking at GCSE results for Year 11s and post-16 destination data, and the ethos behind the well-being and resilience strategies should continue.

For the project to continue in the future, it will need funding for transport to college taster days, a motivational speaker and effective learning support and strategies.



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