

## School Case Studies 2010

### The Brakenhale School, Bracknell

This year we made great strides to make progress and improve standards. As a National Challenge school we felt that it was imperative to break the 30% threshold for 5 A\*- C grade passes including English and Maths.

We were not disappointed by our efforts with our overall pass rate of 5 A\*- C grade passes improving from 30% in 2009 to 72% this year and the 5 A\*- C grade pass rate including English and Maths improving from 19% in 2009 to 36% this year. Our average uncapped points score was 405.47 compared to 305.4 last year. We have used so many of the PiXL Club strategies including the introduction of new courses such as BTEC's in Science and Sport, Vision2Learn courses in Healthy Eating and Equality and Diversity together with level 2 ALAN. We ensured that teacher predictions were more accurate using sub grades. Vulnerable students were identified and individual intervention strategies implemented for each student. We entered students early in Maths thereby freeing up extra lessons for those vulnerable in English. We also implemented a programme of one to one tuition in both English and Maths. We introduced a full Study Support Programme including half term and Saturday morning revision sessions. We ran Breakfast Revision at the start of the day and the Night Club at the end of the day. Senior staff took on the roles of student mentors offering support and advice. Student rewards were linked to attendance at study sessions and a number of motivational assemblies were held for Year 11. On top of this, the work of The PiXL Club Associates proved invaluable in providing ideas, motivation and support to staff. All in all a great year!

### Oasis Academy Shirley Park, Croydon

Sometimes words cannot do justice to a moment or a feeling, so the figures below will do our talking:

- 5 A\*-C with Maths and English 46% - up from 24%
- 5 A\*-C without both Maths and English 91% - up from 48%.

Needless to say the whole Oasis Academy Shirley Park community was euphoric. It would be blasé and too simplistic to say that it was down to hard work, but this is not a bad starting point. What came next was a clear strategy, with the Intervention Grid central to all future decisions. Further, key to all decisions was that every pupil was an individual and that every pupil in the Academy had the right to succeed. Learning could be enjoyable if learning programmes were individualised and timetables flexible. What did this mean?

- BTEC Science was implemented across the whole of the year group.
- NCFE Level 2 in Nutrition and Health replaced option subjects where pupils were failing to achieve a grade.
- ASDAN Level 2 qualification was gained by over 50 pupils.
- BTEC Art was introduced to a cohort of EAL pupils who were failing in other areas.
- AST teachers were used to enhance our Holiday programmes, benefiting key pupils in Maths and English
- PiXL resources were used to our advantage to improve learning in both Maths and English.

Membership of The PiXL Club helped us to focus not only our thinking but our moral purpose too. Our students now have opportunities they would not have had and we, and they, are proud to have been part of The PiXL Club this year.

## The Douay Martyrs School, Hillingdon

This year The Douay Martyrs School celebrates its best results ever in the school's history. Students were ecstatic on results day. Headline figures are:

- 93% 5+ A\* - C from 60% in 2009.
- 62% 5+ A\* - C including English & Maths from 47% in 2009.
- 354 Capped Point Score from 310 in 2009.
- 502 Average Total Point Score from 413 in 2009.

The progress made across all levels of ability has been very strong, particularly for those students with special needs and bi-lingual students. Headteacher, Martin Rainsford, in thanking the staff for their work with students, reflected on two key questions: "How did we do it?" and "Is it sustainable?" He said, "We made the difference by having:

- strong performance in our core subjects of RE, English and Maths, Science and ICT
- a good range of GCSE options
- a good range of vocational options, including BTECs in Science, Engineering, Business Studies, Health & Social Care and Employability Skills.
- a Headstart Programme of early GCSE entry in RE, English and Maths.
- interventions for those falling behind, with additional intensive tuition off-timetable in courses in Work Related Skills, Vision2Learn courses and Literacy and Numeracy qualifications.

In creating this curriculum model, we have been inspired by the collective work of all those schools collaborating in The PiXL Club programme. Because of this, we know that these results are not only sustainable, but capable of being improved upon next year. Other PiXL schools in the partnership have demonstrated for us that whole-school transformation can be accomplished in a very tight timescale indeed. We are delighted to be active members of The PiXL Club programme. The shared moral purpose of encouraging students to set their sights ever higher underpins all that we do."

## Friern Barnet School, Barnet

When Jeremy Turner was appointed to the Headship of Friern Barnet School in September 2006 there were some significant challenges ahead. The school (an 11 – 16 mixed comprehensive) at the time was causing the local authority concern, had a budget deficit of £200k, had stagnated for many years at 37% for 5+ A\* - C grades and 28% for 5+ A\* - C grades including English and Maths at GCSE level and was in the lowest 15% of schools in the country for CVA. However, there were also many strengths – not least in the Performing Arts Specialism of the school – so much potential and, above all, a real desire from all stakeholders to improve the school. In just four years GCSE results have risen 52% to 89% for 5+ A\* - C grades and 51% for 5+ A\* - C grades including English and Maths. The school is currently one of the country's top performing schools for CVA and set to rise even further in 2011. The SSAT has recognised the improvements in both the overall results and value added progress and the school has received national awards year on year since 200 Without a doubt, The PiXL Club has been a key lever in this amazing journey. With very little money and an entrenched culture of underperformance, the school has really valued being part of The PiXL Club and recognizes it as wonderful, inspiring organization that is clearly having a national impact, helping schools like ours, all over the country, to literally, transform

## St Matthew Academy, Lewisham

St Matthew Academy is a 3-16 Catholic school in South East London. We recorded our best ever results this year. We achieved 44% 5 A\*- C including English and Maths, up 21% on our 2009 results and 64% 5 A\*- C, up 20% from last year. St Matthew Academy has been open for 3 years and with the introduction of BTEC Science, early entry, fine grade prediction and other top tips from The PiXL Club, we have made a massive difference to the future prospects of our pupils. According to FFTD, this cohort of pupils should have attained 25% 5 A\*- C including English and Maths and we received 19% more than that and FFTD predicted 52% 5 A\*- C and we achieved 12% better than that. Our pupils have done better at our school than they would have done at most schools elsewhere with a similar cohort and this puts us in the top 10% of schools nationwide for achievement. Working with The PiXL Club has allowed us to use tried and tested strategies to give our pupils a better chance at success. The methods we have employed, the excellent class room teaching and the support and guidance have enabled us to make significant improvements. We are now one of the most improved schools in Lewisham and in South London. Of course we will be building on that and continuing to use the PiXL strategies to reach even higher heights.

## Beechwood School, Slough

In 2008 I met Sir John Rowling at a meeting to explore a possible Independent State School Partnership in the area. As part of this work he told us about The PiXL Club and all the schools agreed that we would gain from joining this group. At the first meeting a colleague from another school stood up in one of the sessions and explained 'warts and all' a serious problem that they had encountered in Science and the radical solution they had put in place.

The honesty, openness and willingness to share the solution with others, hoping it would be helpful, was compelling. We have been working over a period of time to develop Beechwood into the highly successful school that the local community deserve to have. In 2002 Beechwood was at a low point and one of two schools who shared bottom place in the performance table with 4% of students gaining 5 A\* - C. The 2010 results stand at 93% 5 A\* - C with 41% achieving both English and Maths. Our CVA has been very good over a number of years and we always achieve significantly more than the FFTD but it has been a challenge to raise the raw results. Once we had seen the inspiring level of PiXL sharing and realised that colleagues were committed and passionate about changing young people's life chances, we knew we were amongst like minded people. Although we have had many effective strategies in place over a period of time we often came away from meetings with helpful reminders and frequently with ideas that were fresh for us. Last year as a result of PiXL advice, we held a mock results day and were grateful to use Jeremy Turner's assembly. The atmosphere was electric and added to the momentum of the Year 11 and their teachers. My Maths was run throughout the year in tutor times with Maths staff on hand to supervise and help. The Maths department attended a PiXL course which helped them to focus on the challenge they had. Will Smith provided the network with examination preparation and for us it has yielded great results. Our Associate visited us throughout the year and scrutinised our data and discussed our strategies. We found his visits refreshing as we tended to be very hard on ourselves. He was positive throughout the year that we would deliver the targets we had set and would often e-mail us things he thought might be of use to us. In challenging schools, it can at times, feel that the rest of the world of education does not really understand. However, the PiXL group do and the collective endeavour to help others is stunning.

## Redden Court School, Havering

Redden Court School is a mixed comprehensive school of 640 in the London Borough of Havering. Our intake covers the full ability range of students. However, the school has three times the national average of statemented students and a high percentage of SEN students. The school emerged from a notice to improve at the end of January 2009 and continues on a journey of rapid progress. Our strategy for raising attainment, which we call The Raising Standards Initiative, is an evolving process which encapsulates key strands advocated by The PiXL Club. The Raising Standard Initiative involves lots of exciting strategies along with rigorous target setting and tracking of pupils. These strategies include a Motivational Programme, Learning Enhancement Sessions, Holiday Learning in school, The Aim Higher Group, Mock Results Day, Targeted Form Groups, second mocks and early entry into some GCSE exams. We have also introduced various curriculum pathways, including the ALAN, OCR Nationals, BTECs in Sport, Work Skills, Science, Engineering and Vision2Learn Health and Nutrition. These qualifications have had a significant impact.

### **The Outcomes:**

- 2010 results have been the 'best ever' for the school.
- In 2007, 45% of students gained 5+ A\* - C, as against 94% in 2009, and 36% gained 5+ A\* - C including English and Maths in 2007, as against 57% in 2010.
- 100% of our students gained 1 A\* - G grade.
- Our average pupil point score was 485 with an average capped pupil point score of 350, both of which have significantly improved APS by 72 and ACPS by 51.

### **Looking Ahead:**

The school is looking at developing curriculum pathways further and continues to focus on raising standards in teaching and learning. We believe in engaging all our students at Redden Court School and particularly in developing their thinking skills. The Raising Standards initiative has been a success due to the hard work, commitment and determination of all staff and support we have received from The PiXL Club.

## **Student Case Studies, Tributes 2010**

### **Swakeleys School, Hillingdon**

One girl in the group of students who have just received their awards tonight came to the UK very late on in her school career and joined her school in year 11. Living in care, alone, in a new country and adapting to her new life. Since day 1 she showed great courage and drive to achieve her very best in all of her subjects. She became part of the "Reach for the Stars" cohort and strived towards her goals. Her hard work was rewarded with her achieving a string of A\*- C grades Including English and Maths. Determination was the key to this remarkable young lady's success.

### **Oasis Academy Hadley**

You may be interested to hear that one of the students tonight, although excluded from her previous school and subsequently spending 8 months out of mainstream education rejoined a secondary school in the PiXL group and with the help and support of some of the PiXL strategies started to turn things round. From a difficult situation, she rose to the opportunities provided to her and achieved GCSE results to be proud of – a Distinction in ICT, 3Bs and 5Cs. Another Star student here tonight!

### **Oasis Academy Hadley**

One of the students awarded a PiXL award this evening battled against the odds to achieve great things. Diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome and previously excluded from a local school, he studied hard in one of our PiXL schools to achieve superb GCSE results of 2A\*s, 5As, 2Bs and 3Cs. Now studying A Levels in Maths, Further Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Economics in the Sixth Form. He is an inspiration to us all!

### **Friern Barnet School**

One of the students receiving an award tonight was described as 'losing her way in year 10' and was beginning to lose a focus towards achieving at GCSE. The school reengaged her through offering her the opportunity to access one of the courses run and promoted by PiXL which she completed successfully during the half term holiday. This gave her the confidence to continue Key Stage 4 and complete her GCSE examinations. In the end she achieved 3A's, 3B's and 5C's and has gone onto to do a business studies course at a local college.