



SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2023

ASSESSMENT

Assessment has been the topic of discussion between Cygnet School leaders this month, so I would like to share a few words on this. The dictionary defines assessment as "the action or an instance of making a judgment about something," and in education this helps us make sure students are acquiring new knowledge and skills (i.e. learning).

For us it starts on admission by speaking to community schools, parents and students to get a picture of starting points. We move on to subject diagnostics in order to plan the specific knowledge & skills an individual student needs in order to progress. We then use formative assessment in lessons to find out if learning is secure, and if not, we do something about it. Summative assessment helps us decide the 'review' part of our graduated approach and beyond this, discharge outcomes help us assess impact of what we have done.

There are variables which influence which assessment methods we choose e.g. the student (literacy levels, EAL level) or the subject (what works well in maths might be different for geography) and attention must also be given to assessment design so that assessments are genuine in their intentions.

Collection of assessment data has historically created issues in some schools. It is therefore pleasing that in its most recent inspection framework, OFSTED recognised that there are many ways to see progress other than data and that includes quality of schemes of work, curriculum progression, acquisition of cultural capital, quality of work produced, national tests/exams, being prepared for next steps so that quality outcome destinations are reached, and reading well.

These are the most valid ways that we will see students progressing at Cygnet Schools so I encourage all staff to continue creating opportunities for them to show us this and also celebrate the successes.

Ed Hall
Head of Education, Cygnet Schools



**Phoenix School (Sheffield),
Excel & Exceed Centre (Bury)
and The Summit (Coventry)**
are DofE registered special schools, providing education for young people admitted to their co-located hospital services.

Our schools are regulated by OFSTED and were all rated GOOD at their last inspection.

[Excel & Exceed Centre](#)

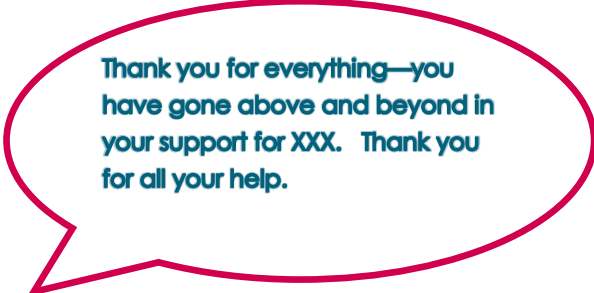
[Phoenix School](#)

[Summit School](#)

News and Recognition

Daniella our Education Officer at Phoenix School in Sheffield has received some great feedback!

Daniella received this from the Head of Year at one of the Young People's community schools:-



Thank you for everything—you have gone above and beyond in your support for XXX. Thank you for all your help.

In addition, Daniella is also a Coach and received the following feedback from a coachee who is also a member of Cygnet staff.



Thank you for helping me through a challenging time. I'm very grateful for all your support during the coaching sessions.



SCHOOL ACTIVITIES



What we've been up to this month.....



Excel and Exceed Centre arranged a **space-themed day** to conclude the Spring Term.

A planetarium landed itself on treetops where the Young People and staff were invited to lay down and explore space with our guest presenter, Dennis.

Following the trip to space, the Students were invited to come into school to complete Science based activities and an experiment. By, firstly, dropping the food colouring into the milk and then washing up liquid upon that, a reaction forms and the fat particles in the milk move and create swirls- which looks similar to the Aurora Borealis, better known as the Northern Lights.



Summit ran a session about **Earth Day** which was on 22nd April with each staff member taking ownership of one activity, and the students moving around each section.

We had a variety of exciting activities for the students to participate in. The themes were as follows:

- Bag decorating – Reusable plastics/Plastics damage to the environment
- Bug hotel Painting – Need for pollinators for food security and biodiversity
- Seed Bombs & Sun catchers – Rewilding urban environments/Use of green energy



Additionally, we developed a Summit School green charter on the day. During our sessions, we spoke to the students about how we, as a school, can be more eco-friendly. We collected feedback and then created a student-led charter for the school that we can display in the library.

We hope that the students enjoyed the day and that it helped them understand the importance of taking care of our planet.

Tayla Howard, an **Engagement Officer from Sheffield College**, visited Phoenix School at the end of April and gave a presentation on further and higher education to our students.

She covered a variety of topics, from student loans to mental health support. Students from all year groups attended the session and came away with a clear understanding of their options and what to expect from the next stage of their educational journey.



It's an exciting time at the Summit school as the much-awaited **ducklings have finally arrived!** The arrival of these cute little creatures has brought a sense of joy and enthusiasm to the school community, with both students and staff completely enamoured by them.

The arrival of the ducklings has also provided an opportunity for the school to teach students about the importance of caring for animals and respecting nature. Teachers have been using the ducklings as a teaching aid, discussing topics such as animal welfare, habitat preservation, and the role of animals in the ecosystem.

