

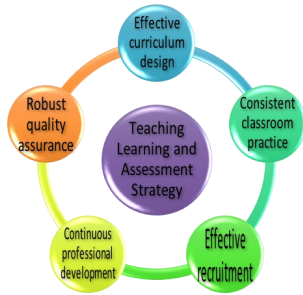
# SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

## JANUARY 2024



### Talking About Teaching and Learning

Our school leaders and subject ambassadors have been tackling the 'big questions' around teaching and learning recently, thinking about what we teach; and why and how we teach it; so that our students have experiences that are relevant, engaging, personalised to them, and help them to move onwards with their career pathway.



We've baselined our practice and talked about the barriers that students in our setting face, and we have identified the things that we do well to help students engage and make progress with their learning. We've also thought about what we don't currently do as well, and what we might need to change to improve things.

Subject Ambassadors have shared the work that they have been doing with their subject teams in maths, English, science, PSHE, options; presenting this to the head teachers, SENCo and Head of Education and feeding into our improvement planning cycle.

Head teachers have also been busy carrying out Quality Assurance activities, such as looking at books, planning, marking, the school environment, and students views about their own learning. We have invited other people to visit and review our schools, and encouraged teachers and head teachers to visit our other schools, and schools local to them to see what their approaches look like.

All of these activities are part of our Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy, and help us to plan improvements in our schools that support our core purpose, which is to make a difference to every student, and inspire them to succeed in being the best that they can be.



**Phoenix School (Sheffield), Excel & Exceed Centre (Bury) and The Summit (Coventry) are DfE 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](#)



### Staff News and Recognition

#### Welcome to:-

**Monica Davis** who has joined us as Teacher of Science at Phoenix School

#### Well done to:-

**Lauren Hoarty at Excel & Exceed** who was awarded Star of the Week in recognition of her efforts with Young People in school and on ward. Lauren was nominated and won on not one, but two wards during the week.

We are extremely proud of this achievement and it really goes to show how the Education Team makes a difference to the Young People's days and the recognition that individuals like Lauren receive is a great motivator for team morale.

**Staff at Excel & Exceed** who received fantastic feedback from a YP's parent which has been [added to their website](#)



Rachel Rix, National SENCo & Teaching & Learning Lead



# SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

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

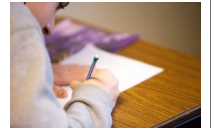


Speak Up Ambassadors >

Speaking up about any concern you have at work is key to upholding Cygnet values. **The Freedom to Speak Up Ambassadors (F2SUP)** are local points of contact for individuals who require advice, to inform them of their options and to direct them to the support available.

Jayne Rowlands at Excel & Exceed is a Freedom to Speak Up Ambassador. Within this role, Jayne presented why she became an ambassador for speaking up in her case study at the Cygnet Speak Up Conference at the back end of last year. This was attended by Cygnet Speak Up ambassadors in addition to our Group CEO, Cygnet Board Members and external staff from NHS England and Civility Saves lives. Following the conference, we're delighted that the National Guardian's Office has published [Jayne's case study](#). Well done Jayne!

Phoenix school facilitated **'mock' GCSE examinations alongside real Functional Skills** level 1 and 2 examinations during the last week of January to support the young people in our care. Sitting exams (as we all know) can be stressful and pose challenges, so we used this as an opportunity for the young people to experience sitting exams in the same environment as they will when they take their 'official' GCSE exams.



We're proud of all the YP who sat both real and 'mock' exams during the week showing resilience and commitment to their education, which we hope will prove beneficial when they sit their formal exams – Well done to them all! Of course, this week required planning, organisation and teamwork, so thanks to the education team and hospital support staff for their help during the course of the week too.

At Excel and Exceed Centre a new half-termly challenge has been set by the teaching staff for students. **This term's challenge focuses on 'space.'** Each subject has provided a task that relates to space within their subject- each task has been added to a grid to form a collection of 16 activities to be completed over the course of the half term. Tasks that have been submitted include exploring negative space in Art or finding the area of a range of shapes in order to calculate the space that they take up. On completion of the 16 tasks, students can be expected to be awarded with a prize- with spot prizes being awarded when exceptional effort is demonstrated by an individual.



Brian, Tyrone and Erika from **In2Change** visited the **Phoenix school** this month to deliver a workshop about this half-term's PHSE topic – the Criminal Justice System. According to their website:

*"In2Change is a not for profit charitable organisation that aims to prevent young people and ex-offenders becoming or remaining involved in criminal activities. This is accomplished through targeted interventions designed and delivered by ex-offenders and serving prisoners.*

*We hope to empower and encourage young people to make the right choices, form positive relationships and rebuild their confidence. We fulfil this aim by providing essential support and training to restore their attitudes towards authority, education, employment and the community. By providing sustainable, relevant, motivating and purposeful activities for adults and young people, we support our beneficiaries to fulfil their true potential and equip them with the skills, knowledge, and aptitudes necessary to succeed in life and work."*

They have delivered workshops to 40,000 young people in the South Yorkshire area, and provide a vast range of workshops around avoiding and escaping criminality.

Our young people were particularly fascinated by the stories of Tyrone, an ex-offender who used his time in prison to turn his life around. They were given insight from Brian, an ex-prison warden, into the day-to-day functioning of a prison.

The workshop was the first of what we hope will be a series of many, as young people and staff alike enjoyed the interesting, informative and interactive session.