

ISA Awards 2021 Case Study: Outstanding Provision of Learning Support

FREWEN COLLEGE

SEPTEMBER 2022



History of the School

Frewen College is a day and boarding school for students aged between 7 and 19 years, who have specific learning difficulties (SpLD): dyspraxia, dyscalculia and speech, language and communication needs. Based near Rye in East Sussex, within the beautiful Wealden countryside at Brickwall House, this outstanding location provides a calm and enriching environment for its students that come from all over the UK and abroad. The school encompasses 60 acres of playing fields and grounds, including listed gardens that were originally laid out in 1681 and secure access to another 100 acres of ancient deer park.

The school itself is housed in and around a Grade 1 listed Jacobean mansion that was the family home of the Frewen family for over 300 years. The Preparatory School is based in a Grade 2 listed Queen Anne farmhouse, and even the Art and Design block has its own Grade 2* listing. These historic buildings are supplemented by a number of modern purpose-built facilities.

Frewen College builds the confidence of all its students with an emphasis on generosity of spirit and kindness to others. With an aim to support students to reach their own personal best, each one is individually encouraged to find ways of learning that suit their particular needs and this understanding of and confidence in themselves is begun as soon as they join the school community. Life at Frewen is seen by staff and students alike as a journey, personalised to each individual who travels it.



Nick Goodman: Principal



The highly talented and experienced staff team, currently led by their Principal Nick Goodman, support the students in small classes, assessing individual needs and working together to enable each one to become the best they can be. Within boarding, there is a range of programmes designed to further students' personal development.

The school has worked very closely with the British Dyslexia Association and Patoss (The professional association of teachers of students with specific learning difficulties) to produce high quality media that demonstrates how to achieve best dyslexia teaching practice.

<https://www.frewencollege.co.uk>



Unlike most schools, which have significant intakes at the start of each phase and just a handful of 'casual admissions', children join Frewen College at all ages and throughout the year. A large proportion join the school following a 'crisis' in mainstream education. This will often manifest itself in low self-esteem, a reluctance to take risks and try new things, and anxiety. The move to Frewen may also be accompanied by a whole family relocation, with a move away from extended family members and established friends, job changes for parents and the need for siblings to change schools. This, understandably, exacerbates tension and anxiety, but this quickly diminishes upon joining the school, where their needs are understood and met by specialist staff in a reassuring environment.

AIMS

- To respond to individual needs immediately and effectively.
- To rapidly address any potential underachievement.
- To return the joy of learning to our students.
- To ensure the expertise of staff can meet the changing needs of students.
- To develop links with home that will further support individual pupils.

ACTIONS

- A whole-school approach is taken. Students are known very well by everyone who works at Frewen, from administration staff, housekeeping, maintenance, the catering team, and even the gardeners. As a result, the response to individual needs is rapid and effective.
- Class sizes remain small and students are taught in groups of no more than eight. This allows teachers to ensure lessons meet individual needs, progress is monitored precisely and next steps to ensure achievement is made are quickly achieved.
- Small tutor groups has meant that there has been highly successful personalised support. Students meet with their tutor three times everyday.
- Form tutors have built especially strong parental communication, which adds an additional layer of appropriate support immediately.
- Curriculum is remodelled each year to respond to the needs of different cohorts.
- All students are provided with an Individual Education Plan even if they do not have an EHCP, giving them targets, supporting the monitoring of progress and evaluating the efficacy of the interventions put in place.
- Provide onsite provision of specialist support for occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, counselling and family liaison.
- Offer a varied programme of extra curricular activities that will enable students to develop their own interests that can be adapted to meet demand.

OUTCOMES

- Students have consistently and quickly gained in confidence.
- Rapid and sustained progress has been achieved by all students. Data highlights that pupils are quickly catching up and undoing years of underachievement.
- Bespoke intervention programmes, with subject experts in place, enable each student to have specific needs met within the school as part of their normal school day and without any detriment to their educational journey.
- Students feel empowered as their own interests are valued.
- Students' engagement has increased and they express their enjoyment of lessons.
- All-round support is provided that links home and school.
- Needs of individuals and small groups are met through curriculum adaption and flexibility.
- Interventions are quickly adapted if they are not giving the desired outcome.
- Student relationships with their peers have been strengthened.

NEXT STEPS

- To continue to develop the work of our Student Support and Family Liaison Officer and so strengthen the wrap-around care of each individual student.
- To continue to strengthen our relationships with parents.
- Planning for a new building, to incorporate a Performing Arts centre, Sixth Form centre, and a therapy wing within the next few years.

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