

E-learning – boosting confidence and improving achievement: Swakeleys School for Girls

Vocational e-learning courses from vision2learn for **schools** are having a marked impact at Swakeleys School for Girls in Hillingdon. The flexible online programmes are improving results, enabling the school to offer enriched provision, and most importantly, boosting pupils' self-belief in their ability to learn and achieve.

The secondary school first discovered vision2learn for **schools** through PiXL, a collaborative network of more than 170 UK secondary schools. Assistant Headteacher Lawrence Hepner says:

"We quickly realised that as an ICT platform it was very easy to navigate, for both teachers and pupils. Moreover, we were really excited when we saw the spec of courses offered, in particular the Equality and Diversity programme. We're a specialist humanities centre, with RE as a lead subject. The Equality and Diversity programme enabled us to offer much richer provision in terms of our specialist status. It gave us great scope to ensure that as many students as possible could achieve in humanities."

"We also recognised that it would be a great resource to help motivate disaffected learners and help them to achieve."

Since January 2010, the school has introduced the Equality and Diversity course to a wide range of students in years 9, 10 and 11, with a number of learners also studying for the vision2learn for **schools** Nutrition and Health, Essential IT Skills Level 2 and Personal Money Management programmes.

Students' views

"Overall we've had a hugely positive reaction from pupils," says Mr Hepner. "At first, some were skeptical and resented the idea of having to study something extra, but as soon as we showed them the vision2learn online platform they were sold on it."



Students at Swakeleys School for Girls

Students can track their own progress as they work through the courses and they can see the results of their efforts very quickly, which really motivates them to continue learning. Lawrence Hepner continues, *"Being in control of their own learning has really driven them to succeed. They can backtrack easily to check through areas that they've already covered and work through the modules at their own pace. It gives them a sense of independence, if you like. The Equality and Diversity course in particular has also been excellent for encouraging group work."*

The Equality and Diversity programme helps to support work that students are already doing in PSHCE (personal, social, health and citizenship education). Teachers have used parts of the course very effectively to stimulate discussion and debate that the girls can identify with and that relates to their everyday lives. Mr Hepner says,

"We've used the Equality and Diversity course to help pupils develop a better understanding of how we run the school, how it's structured and the various policies and goals that we have in place. For the first time, the girls really understood the structure of their own school – they could actually reflect on their own place of learning."

Transforming outcomes for disaffected pupils

Vision2learn for **schools** has had a particularly notable impact on many of the school's most disaffected students; boosting attainment and transforming their self-confidence in their ability to achieve.

Says Lawrence Hepner, *"We recently had a group of pupils who had become very disengaged from the mainstream curriculum. After completing their mock GCSEs, many of these girls came out with only one or two passes, and, in some cases, no passes at all. These students have been studying on vision2learn's Equality and Diversity course, which they've really taken to and achieved fantastic results – the equivalent of a GCSE at grade B."*

He continues, *"For pupils who failed to achieve in their mock GCSEs, getting this one good result from the Equality and Diversity course has really boosted their confidence, in terms of giving them a sense of self-belief that they can succeed. They're also more motivated for their GCSEs – they now believe that if they focus and work hard they can realise their potential."*

Another group of students in years 10 and 11 have been studying on the vision2learn for **schools** Equality and Diversity and Nutrition and Health programmes, alongside an ASDAN vocational course over a two year period. These programmes combined will enable them to achieve the equivalent of three additional GCSEs.

A bright future

"Vision2learn for schools is helpful in terms of progression too," adds Mr Hepner. *"For some students, achieving extra qualifications could mean the difference between getting a college interview or not. It can enable them to reach the crucial milestone of 5 GCSEs or equivalent at grades A*-C. It's definitely having an impact in terms of helping them to progress on to future projects."*

The results speak for themselves. During the last academic year, more than 80 year 11 girls at Swakeleys School achieved additional Level 2 qualifications with vision2learn for **schools**. The school hopes to see at least 180 pupils achieve extra vocational qualifications this year. *"We're delighted with these results,"* concludes Lawrence Hepner.



Students at Swakeleys School for Girls

Swakeleys School for Girls

- Multi-cultural school for girls (11-18) in the London Borough of Hillingdon, with a mixed Post 16 Centre
- Specialist school in humanities
- Achieved 93% 5 A*-C at GCSE in 2010, with 68% including English and maths
- Ofsted 2009 judged the school to be 'outstanding' or 'good' in all aspects of provision

'The school is highly valued in the local community and is heavily oversubscribed. This is because parents know that Swakeleys' girls enjoy coming to school and benefit from the excellent range of activities which promote students' personal development and well being.'

Ofsted, September 2009

Contact us

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