

## GCSEs in action



### Finding success online with vision2learn for **schools**

At Fernhill School and Language College in Hampshire a group of Year 11 learners have joined a growing number of young people finding success with e-learning from vision2learn for **schools**.

This will be their second year studying towards a GCSE Leisure and Tourism qualification online. This in itself is a substantial achievement as all eight pupils, according to their teacher Chris Beeken, were some of the hardest-to-reach learners within their year group.

Chris, Tourism and Leisure Co-ordinator at Fernhill, said: “At the start of the 2012/13 academic year I began work with a mixed group of eight pupils that would definitely be classed as hard-to-reach for a range of complex issues. Working with vision2learn has been really beneficial to this group, as the course content contains appropriate material to provide any pupil the opportunity to progress regardless of ability.”

The majority of the sessions Chris taught were conducted online using the innovative vision2learn for **schools** platform. Since 2006 this form of e-learning has provided a digital classroom to help low attaining 14–19 year olds achieve more, boosting self-belief and confidence in the process.

The group Chris taught at Year 10 were using one of

four online GCSEs offered as part of a vision2learn for **schools** licence. In addition to GCSE Leisure and Tourism, there is also GCSE Statistics, IGCSE First Language English, GCSE Child Development and GCSE Religious Studies available.

Chris said: “One of the biggest skills they have developed through working with vision2learn has been an ability to effectively gather information. In the first few sessions their tactic was to try and get me to tell them the answers. As the sessions progressed they discovered that it was far easier to find the information using the vision2learn online material. They became far more proactive.”

All GCSEs from vision2learn for **schools** have been developed to help drive learners towards successful outcomes in exams and controlled assessments. Key features for each include clear learning goals and motivational tips to help pupils get ready to learn, as well as keyword spelling and sound files to help with SPaG (spelling and grammar).

### “Rebuilding their confidence to learn”

Chris and his group found the latter features particularly useful during their sessions. He said: “The group also improved literacy skills through the Leisure and Tourism GCSE online content, particularly using the Keyword and SPaG support tools. These two skillsets are crucial as they can be applied across all elements of the curriculum.



vision2learn for **schools** at  
Fernhill School and Language College

Hopefully the fact that they are now rebuilding their confidence to learn will give them an opportunity to succeed in other subjects at GCSE, such as English and maths.”

As with other e-learning qualifications featured in the vision2learn for **schools** licence, GCSE Leisure and Tourism is backed by tracking and management tools to help teachers pinpoint areas for improvement throughout the course. The comprehensive resources included also helped Chris work more quickly and efficiently with his Tourism and Leisure classes last year.

He said: “In terms of benefits from a teaching perspective, the fact that the resources have been so thoroughly researched and compiled is a huge plus. One of the key directives from the DfE is that it wants pupils to work more independently, and with vision2learn my pupils were able to do just that.

“The joy of vision2learn is that the content is right there. I can mix and match the resources quickly, rather than designing individual lesson plans for each pupil from scratch. After the first few sessions my pupils were able to study at their own pace, whilst I provided guidance when they needed it. This approach meant that they felt they had ownership over their learning for the first time.

“I can see potential to use vision2learn to teach larger groups than I taught last year because of the time I saved in planning and the independent nature of the platform. Time is such a precious commodity in the classroom. With vision2learn I found the time to give each of them the individual support they need.”

## “An effective intervention”

Over the course of the last academic year Chris has witnessed positive change within the group, and he credits vision2learn for **schools** with helping to enhance their collective academic aspirations. He said: “Essentially what vision2learn has helped us achieve is an effective intervention for a group of troubled pupils. Not only are they still studying in Year 11, they now have the confidence to believe that their education is worth more. They have a chance.”

Fernhill School and Language College is also the most recent recipient of the vision2learn for **schools** Outstanding Centre Award. This award is presented to centres of excellence that can be held up as best practice examples of what can be achieved to help hard-to-reach learners through e-learning.

Fran Williams, Deputy Head at Fernhill, explains the approach taken at the school: “At Fernhill School we have been using the vision2learn for **schools** platform to address the needs of learners from the cohort at risk of not gaining five A\*–C GCSEs. In terms of delivery, we have shifted our emphasis post-Wolf Report from Nutrition and Health and Equality and Diversity vocational qualifications to the new range of online GCSEs.

“Last year our first group from Year 10 began studying for GCSE Leisure and Tourism. After an initial period of acclimatisation, they have taken to the platform extremely well and enjoy the opportunity to learn at their own pace. The online GCSEs are ideal for this group of pupils, as they feel they are studying for a real qualification that will have a positive impact on their future. We hope that they will all find success they deserve when results day comes around.”

## Contact us

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