



Holyhead

engage | educate | enable

Sustaining outstanding progress using Alps at Holyhead School

Samirah Roberts,
Senior Vice Principal,
Holyhead School

About us

The growth of our sixth form from 100 to 250 students over the last three years, whilst maintaining excellent value added and seeing 95% of our students moving on to university, has been the result of the implementation of a number of PiXL and Alps strategies.

This has enabled the development of a clear vision; the implementation of a forward thinking curriculum; the establishment of clear roles and responsibilities with robust systems and processes and self-evaluation; the provision of outstanding teaching and learning and the building of a well-trained, motivated and valued team who put student life chances at the heart of every decision and where success is an expectation.

Forensic tracking using Alps

We use Alps to track progress at all levels. We identify our 'blue' students who are predicted to achieve less than their potential grade each half term. These students make up our sixth form 'war board' and are monitored on a weekly basis by the sixth form and attend a targeted parents evening to discuss reasons for underperformance and actions moving forward. This has ensured that underachievement is tackled swiftly regardless of the ability of the student and has ensured our value added is consistently positive.

Each half term departments with blue teaching groups and blue subjects are also identified and make up the 'subject war board'. The RSL meets with each Head of Department each half term to discuss any underachievement and consider the accuracy of assessment and implementation of PiXL principles such as PLCs and DTT. This then informs future appraisal targets, CPD and provides the focus for work sampling and lesson observations for sixth form teachers. All departments have targets which are red hot expectations and standards remain high.

Developing the whole student: The Edge

We have developed a robust tutor programme, which we have recently named 'The Edge', which is tailored to the demands facing students through their time in sixth form, as well as meeting their needs in planning for a safe and productive future. Year 12 students are provided with a transition programme for the first half-term which focuses on key study skills and

attributes required for success in the sixth form. Through the next 12 months, the focus combines promoting personal safety alongside CEIAG, which is designed to help students reflect on evidence and come to their own informed conclusions on key issues and circumstances. In the post-exam period of Year 12 and the first term of Year 13 the focus is on university/apprenticeship applications with students making use of Unifrog, university visits and dedicated support from their tutors to make the best informed choices for their futures. In their final full term at Holyhead, Year 13 students are encouraged to face the future in a variety of ways designed to improve their practical knowledge of life after school, geared towards giving our students the best chance of being financially literate and hopefully responsible!

Onwards and upwards

The ultimate aim of the work that is put in to support our students is to enable them to move on to follow their chosen pathway, be that higher education, high quality apprenticeships or full time employment. As the sixth form has increased in size we have met the challenge of providing support through CEIAG to help enable over 90% of our students to progress to university every year since the first cohort received their A level results in 2010. Students have become increasingly aspirational with over 30% of students attending Russell Group universities from the 2015 cohort, as well as seeing our first medical students and Oxford students begin degrees in the last two years,

and a clear correlation here can be made with the impact of the Competitive Courses Programme in recent years and the support provided by our partner organisations in working with our highest attaining students. Whilst supporting applications for Russell Group universities and competitive courses may attract prestige and make for good headlines, the most important aim is to ensure students move on to courses, apprenticeships or employment that best meets their interests and abilities. This lies at the heart of what we do at Holyhead, and will continue to do so as the range of opportunities increases year on year.

We are at the end of the telephone Monday to Friday
9am-5pm – **01484 887600**
or you can email us at:
info@alps.education

Please visit our website
for more information:
www.alps.education

