

CASE STUDY

**The Lady Jane Franklin School
Spilsby, Lincolnshire**

Winner of the Best LOtC Provision for Special Educational Needs in the LOtC Awards for Excellence & Innovation 2010, sponsored by TUI Education Division



Students at The Lady Jane Franklin School are disaffected, challenging, excluded from main stream education and at risk of social exclusion. The school's purpose is to provide positive experiences outside the classroom for all students as a sustainable addition to the normal school curriculum. As an integral part of an individualised curriculum, every Key Stage 4 student takes a practical vocational course, such as Construction, Motor Vehicle Mechanics, Catering, Gardening and Woodland

Management or Hair and Beauty, provided by the school or local colleges. In addition they also undertake one day a week work experience in a job related to their vocational course. The outcomes and benefits of this are huge. Students have real and clear choices to make about their future, they have increased opportunities, interact with the public, develop new skills and realise their potential, showing themselves and the world of what they are capable.

Every Monday for five weeks a different tutor group of students undertake an exciting outdoor education programme at Caistor Outdoor Pursuits, where they work on high and low ropes courses, zip line, quad bike buggy treks and team building exercises. Senior students can also opt to take a year-long outdoor education course which includes sailing and water sports, rock-climbing and mountain biking. These courses help to prepare students for an extensive programme of residential activities.

The school runs five outdoor, challenging, educational programmes which are outside the school curriculum and not in school time. All programmes are residential and designed to put pupils outside their comfort zone to allow them to learn from experiences which can be life-changing. The programmes are extremely challenging, educational and fun. Importantly, they develop new skills, extend the participants' personal development and are hugely character building.

Year 7 pupils have four days' outdoor activities youth hostelling on the Yorkshire Moors. Year 8 pupils take part in five days of outdoor education at a field centre in the area of Castleton, Derbyshire. Year 9 pupils undertake a 5 day camping expedition involving fell-walking, climbing and canoeing around Ullswater, Lake District. Year 10 pupils carry out a four day study tour to the Island of Corfu, Greece. Here the pupils study the culture and history of the island and, following in the "footsteps of Gerald Durrell" undertake an ecology

study and hike through the mountainous centre of the island around Mount Panokrator. Year 11 students go on a 5 day mountaineering expedition to the Bavarian Alps on the Austrian/German border. This illustrates the progressive programme of LOfC activities through the age ranges. The programmes are inclusive of all students, many of whom are normally excluded from this type of activity due to their learning difficulties. The students, their families and the various communities to which students belong, benefit from these projects, as do the staff of the school. The young people are fully involved in the organisation of the programmes, including obtaining passports, working out budgets, working out timetables for travel and agreeing activities to be included in the programmes. They are also required to have input into the risk assessments of the programmes and at the end of each programme they undertake an evaluation of the outcomes and produce written, photographic and video reports of the event.

The programmes have a positive effect on students' development. They benefit through the promotion of inclusive, positive behaviour and developing confidence and self esteem. They learn a host of life skills, including team building, character building, self motivation and respect, orienteering, map skills, camping skills, climbing, hiking, mountaineering skills, survival skills, driving skills, problem solving, planning, organisation, administration and leadership. They become better able to accommodate the needs of others and creativity is increased through completion of tasks using ingenuity. As the courses are often physical, the health and well being of the students is also improved.



In addition to residential programmes, the school runs a whole range of organised activities accessible to all students, which include working vegetable allotments and growing produce which is used in food technology lessons to make goods for sale through the School Council at the town's local weekly market. This is also linked to a Healthy School initiative.

Older students are involved in a bike project through which they build and renovate motorbikes and learn to ride them safely. Throughout the year and across the school there are a wide range of artistic and musical workshops and many students are actively engaged in charity work. Because of the wonderful opportunities afforded through the learning outside the classroom programme, the individual students' quality of life is improved through the raising of expectations and by being aware of what they can achieve by breaking down their individual barriers and taboos. This type of project remains in the mind for ever and its positive qualities remain as a reference for life.