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## Enterprise – the key to success: Treviglas Community College

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**URN:** 112038

**Region:** South West

**Remit:** Schools

### Provider background

[Treviglas Community College](#) is Cornwall's first enterprise specialist college. It is a secondary school serving the largely rural community of Newquay and the surrounding villages. Cornwall is an area of higher than average unemployment and much lower than average wages. More students join or leave the college at other than the usual times than in most schools.

### Brief description

There is little agreement on the definition of enterprise. Some see it as directly related to business activities; others see it as an approach that values opportunities to do things differently. Treviglas Community College has used its interpretation of 'enterprise' to provide its students with an excellent education leading to outstanding achievement and teaching.

### The good practice in detail

'At Treviglas, we believe that education through enterprise is the key to the well-being and success of society and therefore of the individual student. The leadership team's role is to take decisive action, grasp the initiative and forge the future.

For us, enterprise is not only about curriculum. We believe that all students must attain mastery of basic enterprise skills such as problem-solving, decision-making, the ability to work with others, to innovate, to take risks – attributes that will enable them to progress successfully in a challenging economic market place. The climate

for learning and expectation of continuous improvement is strongly motivational and rooted in an expectation of high standards at every level.

Progression to university is above the national average in our college in a community which sees significant deprivation and high mobility. Our students quickly grow in confidence and achievements through enterprising approaches and a relentless expectation of the highest standards for all learners. Teachers are encouraged to apply for discretionary awards and active research is an expectation for all staff upon appointment. For us, enterprise is in our blood and runs through every aspect of the college provision.'

*Karen Ross, Headteacher*

## Background

This case study captures what the school believes is key to its success in improving from satisfactory in 2006 to outstanding in its 2009 and 2012 inspections. The [2012 inspection report](#) states, 'students' progress in the main school is outstanding, whatever their starting point and irrespective of any disability or special needs.'

The context for continuous improvement has been the belief that through enterprise the young people, teachers and leaders of Treviglas can be creative and innovative, take risks and manage them, and do this with determination and drive. Karen Ross says, 'We adapted this definition of enterprise education to apply to everyone because of the conviction that only an integrated, systemic approach would deliver excellent outcomes'. This school believes that 'Everyone matters; everyone achieves'. The college has ensured relentless improvement through:

- high-quality leadership at all levels for staff, students and governors
- curriculum innovation and development with personalisation at the centre
- a structure that has four 'learning zones' (staff) and four 'houses'
- overarching 'tools for improvement' adopted by all
- coherence of systems and processes such as performance management, shared objectives and improvement plan
- rigorous, uncompromising self-review based on the highest standards and a shared language of learning
- encouraging and expecting innovation
- inclusion as a priority through the 'effective learning' ethos
- creativity valued and recognised through, for example, discretionary awards to staff
- deep learning, support, leadership and experience
- active research undertaken by staff, resourced by the college and supported by the governing body.

The governing body is involved in the quality assurance of the college activities through a rigorous curriculum-review system. Subject areas and the wider 'learning zones', where subject areas are grouped together to support collaborative work, are scrutinised through a planned cycle across the year. Other 'horizontal' reviews take place each year too; recent examples include personalisation, assessment, effective learning and post-16. The Chair of Governors, Theresa Frost is certain that, "the role of 'critical friend' has to mean that all aspects of college life are open to scrutiny."

## Inclusion and student voice

The Director of Effective Learning, Shirley Robins directs the effective learning assistants (ELAs) working closely with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator. She is clear that 'closing the gap' is essential: 'We are successful at this because we focus on each individual student at senior leader level'. Not only is a physical space provided for those who need personalised provision to access the curriculum but also that this 'can-do, will-do' approach is taken right across the college.

Student voice is canvassed regularly during curriculum reviews. They are encouraged to articulate their point of view. The 'head students' meet weekly with the senior leadership team. There is a comprehensive leadership programme for all students leading to recognised accreditation – the college is a 'V-involved centre'.

## Some elements of the enterprise approach

- The college has four learning zones – core, global, skills for life and creative. Subjects are grouped into these zones and this enables subject teachers to work collaboratively with colleagues across the curriculum
- Students from Years 7 to 11 are grouped into four Houses. Vertical tutor groups within each House ensure that targeted mentoring, target-setting and support can be planned. Form tutors are drawn from teachers and support staff.
- The leadership team took two years to research the move to a House system, and what makes it distinctive is that each Head of House is responsible for the academic progress of their students.
- The college has moved to 100-minute lessons. A shorter day for students on Fridays enables staff training and meetings to be held while students are offered an extra-curricular programme of sports, dance and study support.
- Traditional homework has been replaced with independent study projects at Key Stage 3 and a credit system that recognises students' talents and interests in the community.

## Tools for improvement

Karen Ross says, 'We say that if we all focus on the tools for improvement then none of us has to – it becomes the norm'. A clear set of expectations with accompanying rationale is reviewed each year and all staff adopt them. They include:

- assessment for progress as a whole-college emphasis
- boy/girl default seating at Key Stage 3
- meeting all students at the door of the classroom at the beginning of a lesson before being welcomed into the room
- 'dedicated improvement time' built into every lesson, where students can receive feedback, reflect on their progress and set targets
- a clear emphasis on high standards for uniform.

## Curricular innovation – the 'academies' model

The school has adopted an approach to areas of the provision which it calls 'academies'. This is different from the usual reference to academies as being a particular type of school. Through this model, the college has raised aspirations for learners making the transition from Key Stage 4 to 5 and instilled a 'can-do' attitude into its students. There are several 'academies' at Treviglas which enable personalised provision.

- The Enterprise Academy at Key Stage 4 – students are offered a curriculum which allows choice of vocational courses without detriment in the core areas of English, mathematics and science.
- The Teaching Academy at post-16 – those interested in moving into the profession receive an enhanced programme in partnership with Higher Education institutions.
- The Surf and Technicians' Academies at post-16 – bespoke and specific accreditation is offered, at industry standard.



## A closer look at the Technicians' Academy

The Technicians' Academy offers a chance to acquire the attitudes, skills and



*Students organising the recently rebuilt computers before they are used for the community*

knowledge to be successful in the information and communication technology (ICT) industry. Since the Academy's inception, the college has had students ranging from 16 to 30 years of age from all walks of life and locations. The programme of

study includes a double ICT qualification (Cambridge Technical in ICT, equivalent to two A levels) and an ICT Systems and Principles for IT Professionals (PROCOM) Level 3 diploma (equivalent to one A level).

The PROCOM qualification allows students to choose their own mix of vendor courses. Currently Microsoft and Cisco courses are offered. Treviglas has been a Cisco academy since 2001 and the Cisco courses – IT Essentials and Discovery – underpin the whole ethos of the course.

Students engage with the professional training materials and every opportunity is taken to introduce hands-on learning and to place learning in realistic scenarios. Students also take part in work-experience and there is a rolling programme of students shadowing and supporting the college ICT support team. The teachers delivering the courses have industry experience of both hardware and software development. The Cisco and Microsoft courses are delivered in a custom-built lab environment where students have the opportunity to experiment using professional level equipment. The vendor qualifications also add further credibility to the course as



*Former students who run local businesses return to support current students*

students feel that they are receiving professional training and qualifications that are both valuable and practical in nature.

Students recently had the opportunity to put these skills to the test when they refurbished over 100 college computers which were offered for sale to the general public at nominal cost. Many of the students start the course with little idea of what they will be doing when they graduate. Part of the ethos of the course is to develop a wide range of skills to ensure that students are exposed to as many aspects of working in the IT industry as possible. Students completing the course have followed a range of pathways, including self-employment (computer maintenance, web-design, computer retail and repair), armed forces (technical trades) and, of course, university study (computing, multimedia, web technologies etc).

## The Surf Academy in detail

The school founded the Surf Academy in response to an analysis of local employment opportunities. The surfing industry is one of the most identifiable aspects of Newquay life and provides significant employment opportunities for the local community. The Surf Academy equips its students with the equivalent of four A levels and professional qualifications. The core programme of study includes BTEC



Business, Travel and Tourism, Enterprise and Sport. If students prefer to mix their learning with more traditional A levels then they are encouraged to do so.



*Surf Academy Director, Ellis Attwell with ex-student's achievement in securing a start-up loan*

Effective links with higher education have resulted in a 'memorandum of understanding' with, for example, the University of Plymouth so that students have a clear progression on to the first year of degree programmes.

While the programmes and activities are specific to the industry, the attitudes and skills which create the foundations for students' development are transferable to

all areas of the labour market. The programme of study also offers the opportunity to acquire professionally recognised qualifications, which students can use as part of their work placement.

The good practice case studies that Ofsted publishes highlight specific examples of practice that providers of education, learning and children's services have used to achieve successful outcomes.

For education, the case studies do not recommend a single particular approach to teaching and learning. Ofsted has no preferred lesson structure or teaching style. We showcase and share a wide range of approaches that providers have found work well for them in achieving good outcomes for children, young people and learners.

Are you thinking of putting these ideas into practice; or already doing something similar that could help other providers; or just interested? We'd welcome your views and ideas. Get in touch [here](#).

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