

Restoring student confidence

Centre name:  Plympton Academy

Number of students:  850

Region:  Plymouth

School type:  Academy

Area type:  Rural, suburbs

Ofsted rating:  Good

Plympton Academy allows students to take control of their education and their future by giving them the chance to **prove their academic ability and to develop valuable skills** for further education or the workplace.

BTEC students are assessed with ongoing assignments and assessments, meaning that they know what level their work is at throughout the qualification, as well as having the chance to prove their practical ability in addition to academic knowledge. This gives them confidence in their ability, but also the motivation and ambition to push themselves to do better.

With BTEC, students who struggle with exam stress or anxiety **have a different way to prove their ability.**

As well as supporting academic achievement, BTEC qualifications also support students in developing transferable skills. They develop skills such as:

- independent learning and the chance to develop individual interests during research tasks
- confidence and leadership skills, for instance with the BTEC Sport at KS4 students are asked to create and run lessons for younger students in the school
- employability skills and knowledge of the workplace.



Student spotlight

Name: *Edward**

BTEC(s) studied: BTEC First Award in Sport

Edward is a KS4 student who has really struggled with his GCSEs, due to the style of GCSEs and to the pressure of a final exam. When his mum came to parents evening at the school, she kept hearing the same story, that Edward was unlikely to achieve in his GCSEs. However, when she went to talk to his Sport teacher, she heard a different story. In his BTEC First Award in Sport, he's achieving a Distinction, and is likely to finish the qualification on a Distinction* because he's able to learn in a practical, hands-on way that suits him and supports his individual learning style. She was so happy to hear that Edward was succeeding in Sport, and would therefore have a positive experience to leave school with, that she burst into tears.

**Name changed for confidentiality*



“ With BTEC you're doing the work that counts from the beginning. It leads to an instant maturity. ”

Martin Tinkler, Head of Hospitality at Plympton Academy

Student spotlight

Name: *Maisie*

BTEC(s) studied: BTEC First Award in Sport

I'm currently taking the BTEC First Award in Sport alongside my GCSEs. It's helped me to improve my communication skills and confidence, due to the practical nature of the lessons which means working closely with my peers. I've also been able to lead classes for younger students. I'm now involved with the Leadership Academy at the school, something I would never have known about or applied for if it wasn't for the skills my BTEC has given me.

“ The biggest thing I gained from my BTEC is confidence. ”

The BTEC also supports my achievement in my GCSEs. It's really helped me understand how to structure my writing, which has improved my GCSE English a lot, and **I've gone from achieving a D grade to an A**, which is really surprising - I wouldn't have thought other subjects actually help this much.

After school, I want to become a physiotherapist. My BTEC has given me the understanding of sport in real-life, and the roles and pathways open to me, that I need to progress in the industry.

“ I learnt how to structure my writing, helping my GCSE English go from a grade D to an A. ”*