

Written below is Ella in her own words:

I feel like I've been an all around better person since I've joined, not just in lessons do I feel like I've learnt a lot but in general. In all my other schools, I have felt like I have had to put a front on, especially my old school, but here I can be myself, constantly being around positive people and a less violent environment has impacted me and made me a happier person at school and at home. ...Being at TWT has given me hope and helped me relook at what my goals are and made me believe in myself. As well as helping me find my goals, I feel like I have Alton to talk to and I hate talking about my issues to people and find it hard, but Alton shows he cares and gives me the time to talk to him and helps me overcome these problems. They have been very supportive at TWT and I love going to school everyday now and that's something I thought I'd never say. Not only have they supported me but they have taught me to respect others and also showed authority. At my old school, I felt it was okay to walk out of lessons, school, and go out for a cigarette whenever I wanted to. Since being at TWT, I have learnt that that is not okay and is actually quite disrespectful. Before I joined TWT, I went missing all the time, doing drugs, came into school after being out all night and being rude to my Mum and thinking it's okay to do all of that, when really that's not what a 15 year old should be doing. My point is my school life has a massive impact on my home life as well and if I wasn't able to talk about those things with someone and realise how much I was messing up, none of those things would have stopped. I want to stay at TWT as I feel wanted and comfortable there... I have finally found a school where I'm getting a good education, and has had a good impact on me, and is helping me achieve my potential'.

In the views of Ella's Mum:

For a period of 18 months, things had steadily got worse with Student X and main stream school and the PRU only compounded the issues. For the most part, school simply didn't have the resource, the experience or the structure to deal with the issues. The act of excluding is no deterrent for a child who doesn't want to be in school and the system is fundamentally flawed in this respect. Whilst there were some positives, the PRU offered an environment where it was easy to shirk responsibility and flout rules, albeit the level of support and interaction was better. I also think her peer group in this environment had a negative effect.

Since starting at The Write Time, although we've still had some major difficulties from time to time, the impact on my daughter has been incredibly positive. She has enjoyed achieving in class and gaining recognition and reward from her teachers. She's been better behaved and happier in herself and she's started to talk about medium and long term goals including achieving good exam results and going to university. The team are motivating and are supporting her to achieve her potential. Also, she really wants to be there and has a great deal of respect for her teachers which is a massive step forward. Her self-esteem and sense of self-worth has also improved.

The main point of difference I have found with the team at Write Time, right from day one, is the focus on the individual rather than implementing a process or a system. Key observations include:

- The first two days Student X spent at The Write Time focused on testing to establish a gap analysis in her learning to create a personalised learning plan. From my perspective, this really set the expectation that the school was going to be 'different'.
- The expectation from the team of Student X has been consistently high with a continually reinforced belief that she is capable of far better than her track record implies. In the past, she almost gave up trying to be good because she was expected to be bad.
- Student X has also been challenged to achieve her own potential, not just that of the peer group.
- The consistent and constant communication between you and myself has meant that we have been far more joined up in dealing with issues.
- The daily text and calls have made me feel like the team really do care.
- At no point have I felt 'judged' for my parenting skills. I have felt supported and a lot of empathy from the team.
- Whilst there is clearly a framework with established procedures and structure in place, it has always felt like there is a willingness to be flexible in the best interests of the child.
- Because the culture is non-judgemental, it has felt easy to trust the team.
- Even though the team are busy they always have time to listen - I've never felt like an inconvenience.
- The time spent mentoring and counselling Ella has had a massive impact on her self-esteem.

Above all else, I have really felt like the school is supporting me to solve issues together, rather telling me what the problems are and expecting me to deal with them on my own.

I'm guessing it must be very hard going sometimes doing the job that you all do but please understand that Write Time and your team have been a lifeline for my daughter, myself and my family.

*In the views of The Write Time:*

Ella, a Year-10 student, arrived on our alternative provision in February 2018, having been excluded from one PRU for graffiti, and an offensive weapon. She then went to another PRU, before coming to us. It perfectly summarises things when we write that Ella has improved so much at The Write Time that her old provision have offered her placement back, and has recently just achieved a Level 1 Functional Skills qualification in English, and has also just sat a Level 1 Maths exam, awaiting the results with much anticipation. This is from a starting level of being at a Level 3a on her most recent assessment prior to arriving at The Write Time, a huge jump.