



A student story

Maisie

Maisie is a resilient young person who has faced significant challenges, including an eating disorder and sensory processing needs. She is eligible for Pupil Premium and receives SEND support. Historically, Maisie struggled with Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) which put her at high risk of persistent absence. Maisie really struggled with the transition from Primary to Secondary school and her attendance over the year was 38.5%.

Feeling that she is safe, seen, and heard is incredibly important to Maisie. Because she initially presented as actively disengaged and would only ever speak when spoken to, it became clear that she required a smaller, quieter, and more nurturing environment than a traditional classroom setting could provide. Maisie needed a more consistent routine to manage their sensory needs and provide her with a settled start to lower her anxiety while giving her the opportunity to build positive, trusting relationships with adults who understood her specific interests and identity.



The Open School facilitated Maisie's upturn in attendance by mapping out a bespoke provision that paid greater attention to her needs and personal interests. This included regular time for coaching and enrichment which gave her the opportunity to regulate at the start of the day through arts and crafts. The support and coaching from key adults has been the turning point for Maisie. Their positive relationships created a safe harbor where Maisie felt comfortable enough to articulate her feelings and opinions. Now in Year 8, the impact of this tailored approach has been transformative with her attendance surging from 38.5% to 78.4%. Maisie has shifted from being actively disengaged to a student who now regularly participates in learning and has even thrived during group projects, such as an enterprise challenge where she designed and marketed jewellery to the public - a feat that simply would not have been possible prior to her Open School experience.

Looking ahead, the future is now much brighter for Maisie and we are excited by her newly resurfaced potential to thrive!