



## **Spotlight on Tor Bridge High School**

*Tor Bridge High School in Plymouth was the winner of the Secondary School / College of the Year Award at the 2017 Shine a Light Awards.*

*Tor Bridge High resides in an area of social deprivation, where language and communication levels impact on pupils' development and attainment. Despite this its staff are dedicated to ensuring that each and every child that passes through its doors has the best chances in life.*

For pupils, at the start of Year 7 or on entry, the school undertakes relevant assessments to ascertain their speech, language and communication skills and from this a profile of their needs is created. From there on in, all staff are encouraged to continuously identify their pupils needs and gain support for learners in their classrooms through the inclusion panel meeting that takes place every term.

The school has its own Inclusion Department featuring a Speech and Language Support Base, a Learning Support strand and the Tamar Learning Centre, which provides support for pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. The expertise of staff in these three strands is shared across the school to ensure the best provision for each student.

Staff are invested in heavily when it comes to speech, language and communication, with compulsory whole-school staff training given regularly by the staff of the Language Support Centre with a focus on speech, language and communication in the secondary sector.

Initial Teacher Training students and Newly Qualified Teachers are also signposted to the Language Support Centre and given advice on how to differentiate in the classroom for speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). Their tutorial programme has a weekly activity that is centred on communication and discussion.

Teaching staff are supported by an in-house Speech and Language Therapist to whom they can refer for guidance and advice, while Heads of School refer to the Language Support Centre for ongoing assessment of language needs. Subsequently all staff are emailed strategies to support students who have been identified with needs in this area.

Tor Bridge High is wholly committed to implementing successful language strategies with visual teaching and learning promoted across all teams. Speaking Frames and Common Language for Literacy is displayed throughout and the staff planner highlights what detailed strategies are in place in the school.

It's not all about the staff, though! Pupils at Tor Bridge High are supported by their peers, with all students encouraged to deliver one tutor assembly a year, including those with SLCN. The school has also created a mental health café for students and staff, supporting a communicative environment with close relationships and lines of communication forged between staff and parents.

Tor Bridge High has been awarded the *Secondary School / College of the Year Award* for its innovative approaches, particularly how it has linked the importance of SLCN and mental health, its strong working partnerships with other local academies and schools, and the inclusion of parents.