

### What if every young person had the opportunity to fulfil their true potential?

When a student realises they function in a slightly different way, it is our duty of care as teachers to make adaptations in order to make them feel more comfortable and accepted. However, as they grow through their school life, the challenges they face become much harder. They often step away from society and as a result, start withdrawing from school obligations and struggle with day-to-day functioning. Before the Young Enterprise Programme, FW was doing just that. FW faced challenges as a **young person diagnosed with both ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder)**. FW's diagnosis has meant that, at times, she has struggled to cope with school life and has had to find alternative approaches to learning.



On a daily basis, FW struggles with making connections with people and reading “soft” cues, such as facial expressions, underlying tones in conversations and body language. FW sees things very much in black and white and cannot relate to the grey for herself but also when applying it to others. Her condition means she finds it hard to cope in new situations with different people, large crowds and loud noises. As part of an ASD diagnosis, the individual's reaction to pain is very much heightened along with sleep deprivation, causing exhaustion. At times this has meant that **simply attending school has been a huge barrier**, something that was worsened following the Covid 19 pandemic. However, the last two years have seen FW take huge strides forward to overcome these hurdles and she was encouraged, by her teachers, to participate in the Young Enterprise Programme as a way of leading her back into the school community. Nothing could have prepared us for the astonishing journey this young woman has experienced.

The Young Enterprise Programme has given FW **the motivation to attend school**, make contacts she wouldn't have dreamt of making, and to develop transferable skills that she can take forward for future employment. Most importantly, the programme placed her in a series of uncomfortable and challenging situations, especially socially, where she's learnt to overcome them maturely and in a way she wouldn't have been capable of handling before. This has led to tremendous personal growth for FW. The programme has allowed her to not only show her capabilities and maximise her potential but also use her skills untapped within the standard curriculum and to own the space. Most importantly it forced her to think and need others. **This was a difficult task to overcome and there were several potential flashpoints.**

Children who do not quite fit are often managed, which means taking away things that stress them. Unfortunately, this is giving them an unrealistic representation of life, as life simply doesn't work that way. From placing FW in these difficult situations, she came back stronger, used her initiative

**Chairman**  
Simon Lewis OBE

Part of Junior Achievement Worldwide

**Chief Executive**  
Sharon Davies

Incorporated in England as Company Limited by Guarantee No. 712260  
Registered Charity No. 313697  
Registered office: Young Enterprise, Coram Campus, 41 Brunswick Square, London  
WC1N 1AZ

**President**  
William Salomon OBE

and grew as an individual. **Young Enterprise brought her from the edge of school back into the community and set her up in the community beyond school.**

Witnessing the pure passion she has shown throughout this remarkable journey, and the dedication to developing her product has been astonishing. She identified a gap in the market and dedicated a substantial amount of personal time to producing a unique concept; *'Swimming Guides for Teachers'*. She produced her company logo and used this for networking purposes.

FW presented her idea of swimming guides to Dragons Den in December and was **named Team of the Day for her product idea**. FW took on feedback from the Dragons constructively to better develop and market the product. At the School's Christmas Fair and the Young Enterprise Trade Fairs, FW developed her confidence by learning to deal with the public and improving her communication skills. She achieved this through sales of products, and in particular, by explaining the concept to members of the public, who lacked knowledge in this area. Moreover, throughout the journey she developed confidence in her presentational skills, leading her to **win the best presentation award at the Lancashire Showcase**.

Whilst struggling with her own personal challenges, FW took on the demanding role of Managing Director. Although this was overwhelming, FW went above and beyond, taking every aspect of her role seriously. This became more apparent when the school's team unfortunately reduced significantly in numbers, ending with only three team members. **Proving she wouldn't be defeated, or let this bring down her spirits, FW stepped up and fulfilled multiple roles**, whilst also delegating individual tasks. As somebody who often struggles with communication, this placed her under a substantial amount of additional pressure. Yet she continued to show the utmost dedication, striving to organise and motivate her team, while keeping morale high.

FW also demonstrated high levels of leadership qualities when she assisted a competing team, in the absence of their Managing Director. She was extremely helpful and supportive, sharing ideas and assisting them during what alternatively could have placed them in a difficult position. Witnessing the support FW gave the other team as well as her own, shows just **how much personal growth she has achieved since the beginning of the programme** and seeing her solve problems and work amongst difficult social situations makes us extremely proud.

This journey has not been smooth sailing for FW. However, with a little support and encouragement, FW has been able to discover herself and reveal the endless possibilities life can present her with if she continues down this exciting path. From this experience, FW has learnt that nothing worth having in life comes easy, it requires hard work and dedication to make it successful.

For us, this is what a successful journey is all about. For many the cliché: *"It's not about winning, it's the taking part that counts"* holds true, and this success story is certainly not about winning. As a school, we continue to support the Young Enterprise Programme because of the difference it makes to the lives of young people. It's watching someone who may not feel like they always belong become part of something important. It's giving them a purpose in life and presenting them with such opportunities. It's about observing individuals blossoming into young adults. For FW this experience has been all that and much more, she has built up her confidence and learnt skills she will use in future life. **It has been inspiring watching FW thrive in this programme and we are so proud of what she has achieved**. For this reason, we couldn't think of anyone more worthy of the Journey Award.

**FW won the Journey of the Year Award thanks to this nomination from her school.**

We know there are many more young people like FW, who face significant challenges in achieving their true potential. In 2024-25, we aim to directly support over 13,000 young people at 190 Project

Inspiring Futures schools. This requires an investment of £680,200.

You can help us equip more young people like FW to experience the transformational change from Young Enterprise's support.

- An investment of £25 enables a learner to participate in an impactful Young Enterprise day programme, building their skills, confidence and employability prospects.
- An investment of £50 enables one young person to take part in the Inspiring Futures Journey and multiple programmes over an academic year.
- An investment of £3580 enables a whole Inspiring Futures school (reaching 70 young people) to benefit from multiple programmes as part of this impactful journey for a full academic year.

Thank you for your support for our work at Young Enterprise and the difference that this enables us to make.