

Agenda item 10 - Youth Skills Update (March 18 /April 18)

Overview

We have spent the months of March and April supporting our existing clients as well as the new influx of clients from the newly completed “Moving Towards Work Courses”. We have been working out of the Leiston, Bevan House and the Media Hub to ensure we offer a convenient service to all our clients.

We have continued to support a new and existing clientele of young people who are suffering from low mood and anxiety, via our Signpost Projects both adult and junior.

The apprenticeship project continues, we will continue to promote at every opportunity.

Dan Cooke, Apprentice to Youth Skills, has just completed The Theory of Youth Work Level 2. Dan is proving to be a fantastic support and is settling in to his role extremely well.

Apprenticeships

Our Apprenticeship Event took place on the 8th of March in the Auditorium at the Art Centre in line with National Apprenticeship week. It was well supported by local businesses from Haverhill. In addition, Addenbrookes and Greene King attended as big employers who run established apprenticeship projects from outside of our town. We had 88 attendees who were offered advice and guidance on all areas relative to their needs, apprenticeships, courses available to them locally and now and in the future. We also advertised part-time and full time local employment vacancies. Young people were also given the opportunity to sign up with local FE Colleges for further education courses

We have since the start of the project advertised over 251 apprenticeship vacancies.

Young people

We have supported young people with job searching, work experience placements, job applications and developing CV's for those looking for employment. We have had some success with securing positions for full time work this month. We continue to hold Job Hub sessions in the Media Hub on a weekly basis.

Schools

I am due to visit Castle Manor Academy next week to offer support to the students who are interested in Apprenticeship or need advice on future pathways.

We have had agreement from both upper schools that they would like to take part in the Rob Maidment Project. The schools have agreed to support this and will put forward four teams to take part from their schools. We believe this will improve the student's confidence and team building awareness whilst learning entrepreneurial skills. It will also

Dan and I supported with the mock interview day at Samuel Ward Academy.

Training Courses

Moving Towards Work -4-week course March / April:

The third “Moving Towards Work” course, designed to improve confidence and employability skills, commenced in March and will finish this week. We have had one early success story, a member of our adult signpost group who was referred to the course has managed to secure employment. A second member again an adult signpost member, who completed the last Standguide Course, has also secured work in the form of an apprenticeship.

A total of eight people signed up for the course we have a strong hope of eight completing. We continue to work with past attendees supporting and guiding them to take positive next steps. We

organised some CSCS Card training that has just been delivered and they have sat the test. We await the results on who will be granted a CSCS Card. We are looking at further courses to further equip our clients with skills that employers will see as beneficial in the work place. We are in the process of setting up some basic IT training via West Suffolk College in Haverhill.

Moving Towards Work Case Study

EF is a 19yo male. Intelligent and polite, EF suffered with a lack of confidence and was quite reserved. Before engaging with us and, our partners from Suffolk County Council, he was stuck in a rut – unsure of what he truly wanted to do.

Over the course of a few months, EF attended our Job Hub every week – building confidence and social skills. He then engaged in our Adult Signpost project and was referred on to the Stand Guide: 'Moving Towards Work' employability course that we support. Within a few short weeks, EF had used his new-found confidence to apply for and gain his first job. He is looking to use as a springboard in moving towards his dream job in business and administration.

We will continue to offer our support and guidance to EF, no matter what his future holds. But ultimately, EF's success is a testament to the importance of inter-organisational cooperation. And that, with the right support, young people can and will overcome their barriers in order to flourish.

Signpost Projects

Adult SP 18-24 years

The fair weather has bought upon the return to work on the Jubilee Allotment. The Town Council have been asked to take over the allotment lease from Community Action Suffolk, which will give us more freedom going forward to arrange sessions and make decisions. We have decided to add on a lunch club prior to allotment session, to act as a stepping stone to encourage participation as some people are hesitant about working outside on the allotment. We have witnessed that on meeting the other members and chatting over lunch, that it has helped to break down barriers and ease the participants into engaging with the project.

Up to week two we have engaged with 10 people so far, who are vulnerable for different reasons. We also have a volunteer who comes along to help who has valuable experience in this area.

Case Study Adult SP

AB is a young man of 19 years, who was raised by his grandparents as foster carers and who has engaged with us for the past 18 months. Throughout this time, he has participated with us, and our partners, in a number of projects, including: Adult Signpost, Jubilee Allotment Project, Inspire Suffolk: Fast Forward, Prince's Trust Team Programme and Stand Guide: 'Moving Towards Work', amongst others.

Despite his willingness to engage, he has long suffered from variety of wellbeing issues - depression, low confidence and self-esteem, anxiety and dyslexia. When we initially met AB, he was incredibly withdrawn, insecure and relied heavily upon others to speak for him.

AB has progressed and is almost unrecognisable from initially meet him. He is now an opinionated, eager and more confident young man, who has secured an

apprenticeship in welding. No longer does he rely on others, as he has forged his own path, and has overcome the struggles that he has faced – something we are immensely proud of him for.

In moving forward, we continue to engage with AB in our current projects and support him as he transitions into work – being there if his confidence falters. We wish him all the success in his future pursuits and hope that he will continue on his path of success.

Junior Signpost 13-17 years

Our current provision has its final session this week. We have worked with twelve students from Castle Manor School over the last eight weeks, who have a mixture of issues. The sessions have included art sessions, team building, cake decoration, and candle making. We have encouraged healthy eating and spoke about the importance of fresh air and exercise. We have had group chats on emotions and spoke of support organisations and techniques to help cope with anxiety. This week we will review our participants and decide how we go on to offer support to them and what follow-on sessions they will benefit from attending.

Case Study Junior SP

CD is a 15-year-old young lady, who is currently attending Castle Manor Academy. She first attended our Junior Signpost sessions by invitation of one of her friends (also currently attending Junior Signpost). CD was initially an extremely shy person, saying very little, whilst participating in our activities. It has only been in our most recent offerings that she has started to come out of her shell.

Despite her introverted exterior, CD has consistently acted with kindness and friendship to all, thoroughly engaging in all activities and not missing a single session. And although she is still quiet in voice, she now shares her thoughts and feelings with the group quite openly. She appears to be a bright and opinionated young lady, who will surely flourish if we continue to nurture her growing confidence and social skills.

As these are some of the most formative years of her life, it will be important to offer our support when she will be transitioning into further education, on top of our wellbeing provisions.

Looking ahead

We will continue to offer our Job Club on a Monday and support a case load of young people with various needs. We will offer 1-2-1 support to those that need individual attention. Our overall aim is to support these young people to reach their full potential and put them on the road which will eventually lead to them securing full-time employment.

Junior signpost programme begins a run of 8 weeks starting in June; we will be working with past referrals including some new ones scattered in. We have also booked to work with a forestry school in July, we need to ensure the right young people benefit from this valuable opportunity.

We support another “Moving towards Work” course being delivered between the 11th June/6th July. The final course will now start on Monday 16th July and finishes on Friday 10th August.

We will welcome The Prince’s Trust 12 Week Programme to Haverhill and will support where necessary.

The Rob Maidment Project will commence in the next few weeks and finish on the last day of term.