

Supporting young people to participate in education and training – further information

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Hackney Community College partnership work with Jewish Orthodox girls' organisations

Over the past four years, the college has been undertaking growing partnership work with organisations providing full-time study programmes for girls from the Orthodox Jewish Charedi community in Hackney. This is one of the fastest growing communities in the UK and has traditionally been isolated. This disadvantaged group has had low rates of participation in nationally recognised post-16 education. The college has funded accredited qualifications for these students that form a small part of their overall programme, which is mainly Jewish Studies delivered in seminaries within the community. The 16-18 study programme enables funding of the full-time programme. In 2012/13, 246 girls were funded; in 2013/14, the number has reduced because one organisation has fewer students this year.

Success rates on these programmes have been high. Most young women progress to employment within the community, working in community businesses and schools. There is also high emphasis on the family. The college has provided teacher education for teachers in the seminaries and is reviewing the possibility of delivering teacher education to young women planning to be teachers who currently do not take a nationally recognised qualification.

In addition to the above programme, the college is delivering an accounts programme for young adult males from the community. Young men as a rule undertake Rabbinical Studies rather than accredited qualifications. The voluntary organisation that provides this wishes to equip men from the community to be better able to seek employment outside the community through gaining recognised qualifications.

A similar programme is being delivered in 2013/14 with 142 students currently. The college has also entered a similar arrangement with a Muslim sixth form based in the Tower Hamlets Bangladeshi community, supporting predominantly science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects at A level.

Bexley College and New Horizons Federation

The college has developed a partnership with New Horizons Federation (NHF), which consists of the London Borough of Bexley, Oakwood School, Woodside School, Pathways (formerly a pupil referral unit), Connexions and several other local schools, including Blackfen School for girls, Breakthrough, Cleeve Park School and Northfleet Technical College. The NHF provision started to pilot an alternative curriculum in January 2011, working with an identified group of vulnerable young students (14–16-year-olds) within the borough. Year 11 students who were new to the borough and unable to be placed in a mainstream setting were also included in the programme.

The NHF alternative curriculum offers two 15-week tasters in the vocational subjects of construction, hair and beauty, catering, art and media, childcare and English for speakers of other languages. It provides a differentiated, practical and hands-on approach to re-engage young people who might otherwise be permanently excluded from school/education.

Project-based learning is used to engage the students, set in the vocational subjects of construction and art and media. The students develop their practical skills through real projects that embed essential skills (mathematics and English), problem solving and employability skills. The projects include building bedding planters and picnic tables with seats, creating digital images to be used for advertisements and creating an image for a fashion show.

Evaluation

The college shows students' positive experiences of project-based learning below:

- 'The students really warmed to having hand-on experience and investigating and problem solving.'
- 'The project-based learning has proved more popular with the students – it allows them the opportunity to be creative and work in small teams.'
- 'We got an overwhelming response from the students. They all said they preferred it to previous education experience.'
- '[Project-based learning] gives the student the chance to undertake a variety of disciplines from brainstorming an idea, to design and then producing their end product.'
- 'Some students enjoy the independence and job satisfaction that project work promotes.'
- 'All of the students enjoyed the additional freedom which comes with project-based learning.'
- 'Project work allows students to do a variety of things and fully engage in their work.'

The college sees the following as the greatest achievements of the pilot:

- 'Creating an environment where the students are treated like adults, where their voice is heard and they are respected.'
- 'They all got to grips with the cameras and image-editing software and produced some really effective designs.'
- 'Students with learning difficulties, and students that started with behaviour issues worked side by side without any issues and produced a piece of work they were all proud of.'

Bexley College partnership working with Charlton Athletic Community Trust

Bexley College has a unique partnership with Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT). They work together to engage young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) within the community. Using the power of football, CACT's ground-breaking and innovative programmes are delivered through a regular presence in schools and working with disadvantaged or socially excluded groups in society, through crime reduction initiatives and community-based football coaching sessions.

The partnership began in August 2010, with CACT using their community experience and skills to engage and inspire young people. The programme is skills-based and also offers a BTEC in sport and an award in football coaching. In 2012, CACT introduced work skills alongside the vocational courses, which had a very positive impact on participants progressing into employment.

Teaching is very individual and flexible to student need. The teaching team meets monthly to discuss new or improved ways of teaching to apply to differing groups of students to create an inclusive learning environment. Lesson plans include extended tasks for the more able students to ensure that all are challenged. Each student has individual SMART targets for social and educational need so that they are always aware of what is expected from them in order for them to achieve.

Bexley College works with CACT, providing the quality framework to enable the young people to study towards nationally accredited qualifications. The College also mentors CACT staff, giving them the skills and expertise to be able to internally verify the qualifications to awarding body standards. Additional expertise is shared such as the safeguarding of young people and developing self-assessment and quality improvement plans. Marketing to young people is integral: CACT appears on the college website and staff attend college open days. The college ensures that students with CACT receive the same level of support as any college students, including full access to student-support funds.

On joining the CACT programme, nearly 50% of students had never achieved a level 1 qualification and 100% of level 1 students were NEET. On exit, 95% of students rated the support they had received while training as 'outstanding'.

On completion of the programme, many students had developed skills essential to working in the sports industry. From 63 qualifications taken throughout 2012/13, success rates are good at 89% and achievement rates excellent at 100%. The positive impact this flexible, innovative programme has had on the students means that 76% have gone on to positive destinations. Thirty six per cent are now in employment, 32% have progressed onto further learning, 4% are in an apprenticeship and 4% are working as volunteers.

Bexley College – supported internship

Overview

Supported internships were trialled at 15 colleges around England during 2012 to provide intensive support for young people aged between 16 and 25 years who have complex learning difficulties or disabilities. The course provides a structured study programme, based at an employer and at college and tailored to the individual needs of the young people. It equips students with the skills they need for the workplace, including on-the-job training and aims to secure paid employment at the end of the internship. Students learn employability skills through classroom-based activities and in the workplace. Learning support assistants support students with mathematics, English, motivation, time keeping and employment skills. This may be in the classroom or in the workplace. Job coaches help to seek employment for students and support students and employers in the workplace.

Bexley College has 100% success rate on accredited work skills qualifications and 67% of students retained in paid employment.

College structure

- The college provides 320 hours of teaching, 72 hours of tutorial and 144 or more working hours (teaching contact hours reduce if more hours are in place of work).
- The qualification is the Pearson (Edexcel) Certificate or Extended Certificate in Work Skills Entry 3/level 1
- Students spend Thursdays and Fridays in college learning skills required for work, preparing for interviews, confidence building and sharing experiences.
- Work for the students is looked for on the other days (including weekends).

Staffing

- The college has one member of teaching staff who is supported by two learning support assistants.
- The employability and placement coordinator looks for work for the students, also acting as a job coach in the first instance. They go to the workplace, support and assess student and employer needs. If further support is required for the students, they will then go to an agency for job coaches.

Impact in 2012/13

- One hundred per cent success rate on accredited work skills qualification.
- Sixty seven per cent of the students retained in paid employment.

Impact in 2013/14

- Fourteen students enrolled on the programme.
- Currently, 100% retention and on track to achieve accredited work skills qualification.
- Thirty per cent of students have started an internship with an employer.
- Companies that students have had internships with include: Bexley College, BHS, LA One Hairdressing, NHS Trust Erith, Bexley Library Café, Savers, Blue Inc.

Case Study – Student A

- The supported internship began in October 2012 and has allowed Student A to benefit from on-the-job training. He is becoming accomplished in answering the telephone, helping students with IT knowledge and reporting IT faults, processing newspapers and magazines among many other library and clerical duties. This is in conjunction with classroom-based learning that incorporates topics on the use of formal and informal language as well as highlighting dangers within the workplace.
- This role complements Student A's desire to work in an office-based job and enabled him to put some of the skills he acquired on his media production course into practice, particularly those on the computer, as there are many college systems to use. His job coach agrees and says, 'He came into an appropriate job for his skills.'
- Student A has found the internship enjoyable and his confidence has grown in many areas, particularly with taking telephone calls. He works independently, with a couple of minor adaptations to the equipment he uses to accommodate his disability – for example a headset for taking telephone calls, a trackball mouse for the computer and left-handed scissors. He has integrated well as a part of the team and said, 'If there is anything I need to know, I'm not shy about asking.'