

## THEME **Transition**

**Other themes referenced in this work:** Learner Voice / Collaborative Working

## **Salford Cluster NORTH WEST REGION**

**Cluster group** Oakwood Academy Salford (Lead)  
Fujitsu UK & Ireland  
Oasis Media Academy Salford  
Irlam & Cadishead Sixth Form College (I&C) Salford

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### **A College Taster Week**

#### ***Background***

Oakwood Academy is a secondary day special school catering for pupils 11-16 with a range of complex learning difficulties. It is a barrier free school and takes pupils with different types of physical disabilities. The school has Arts, Technology and Sports Specialist Status. The academy is very keen to broaden the opportunities for young people and forge links that will allow transition to the world of work and college placements.

#### **Project Aims**

- to address issues around transition,
- to develop individualised learning programmes and future goal setting.
- to co deliver activities and programmes including drama workshops, extended visits and subject 'tasters' in a college environment.
- To encourage students to consider future aspirations and gain insights to future learning opportunities
- To build skills and confidence for the working world and Further Education (FE).
- To develop the identified cognitive skills and integrate student voice in raising the aspirations around employment and FE, addressing the concerns of the young people themselves and challenging assumptions.

#### ***Project Summary***

Oakwood Academy is very keen to broaden the opportunities for young people and forge links that will allow transition to the world of work and college placements.

Oakwood Specialist Academy works in partnership with post 16 organisations to create a curriculum that includes activities for Key Stage 3 & 4 young people with complex learning difficulties, who are recognised as having poor goal setting skills. The project explored methods which can be used to develop the identified cognitive skills and integrate student voice in raising the aspirations around employment and FE, addressing the concerns of the young people themselves and challenging assumptions.



*'We wanted to capture ideas and plan for future work that will broaden horizons and harness opportunity for further education and employment, and allow students to have 'hands on' experience of possible post 16 destinations.'*

**Liz Cappell Transitions Advisor Oakwood Specialist Academy**

Oakwood Specialist Academy worked in collaboration with Irlam and Cadishead Sixth Form College to develop a transition programme for disabled learners. The first part of this programme was to introduce students from Oakwood Academy to college life. Irlam & Cadishead Sixth Form arranged a full week of activities for the students in a variety of subject areas to build confidence and aspirations and to give pupils work experience taster sessions. One of the highlights of the week was a full drama workshop that explored transition issues and supported students in their planning for the future.

## **The Process**



In the run up to the taster week staff from Irlam & Cadishead Sixth form College visited Oakwood academy to meet with ten Year Eleven students who requested sessions in Information Technology (IT), Sport, Textiles and Catering and Drama. It was decided that the visitors would work beside Year twelve students in classes. Lesson plans were developed and drama workshops was organised to top and tail the visit.

A Personal Advisor from Salford Careers Solutions was closely involved with students to develop a diary of the week including 'before and after' thoughts. The students also produced a video of the drama workshop, a display of their work and their learning outcomes.



## **Drama workshop 'A Rehearsal for Life' – Exploring Transition**

'A thought-provoking journey of theatre and presentation around the themes of transitions and aspirations.'

Students from Oakwood Academy and the college participated in a drama workshop to explore transition and highlight feelings and thoughts about leaving Year 11 and embarking on a post 16 education programme or entering the world of work. The workshop was run by 'So Many Words', a north west theatre company, working with young people aged 12 – 21 who have learning disabilities. This work:

- provided an opportunity for students to communicate their concerns and fears, hopes and aspirations around the transition from high school to further education
- encouraged realistic goal-setting, challenged low-expectations and enhanced aspirations.
- raised awareness about specific issues and particular concerns e.g. the college environment, timetables, workload, transport etc.
- developed a dialogue between young people about to embark on the transition and mainstream college students. (The contribution from college students and staff was supportive and reassuring).
- increased student' confidence to make informed decisions about their future learning and share strategies for decision-making and problem-solving.

The workshop created scenes of 'School Life' and 'College Life' and supported a discussion about the differences between the two learning environments. Using image theatre, students worked together to create frozen pictures of issues/concerns/fears relating to these changes. The group were encouraged to come up with strategies for addressing issues and engage in problem-solving. The aim was to dispel some myths around leaving school, and finish on a positive note about the benefits/positives of moving on. Students spent time sharing aspirations, looking at the broader options that further education can provide.

*'This is a unique opportunity to hear directly from young disabled people about their futures, their needs and desires, and their perceptions of the world around them.'*

**Jamie Patterson Artistic Director 'So Many Words' Theatre Company**

## The Taster Sessions

### Catering 'Making Pizza'

#### Key Skills:

- Health & Safety in the kitchen
- Knife Skills
- Dough Making
- Baking
- Teamwork
- Healthy Eating / Balanced Diets
- Food Groups



*'The Catering taster lesson with Oakwood was fantastic. On the day they made homemade pizza and the pupils demonstrated some excellent food preparation and cooking skills and they had a real passion for catering. The pupils really enjoyed the day and were a real pleasure to teach. I would be more than happy to welcome them back for future collaboration.'*

**Adam Howarth Tutor Irlam & Cadishead College**

### IT 'Creating games' Introduction to Scratch, [www.teach-ict.com/programming/scratch/](http://www.teach-ict.com/programming/scratch/)

- What the programme does (Create Games)
- What type of games could be created from the use of Scratch.
- Introduction to the Maze game
- Creating a Maze Background for the game.
- Creating a cross and spin programme
- Creating a moving Block –to bounce off the walls in order to create another obstacle.
- Programming the Cat
- Reviewing the final game

SCRATCH



### Textiles

- Learners developed their cutting skills
- Learners gained knowledge on fabrics and materials
- Learners gained knowledge of the printing process
- Learners developed their own designs
- Learners screen printed their own final piece

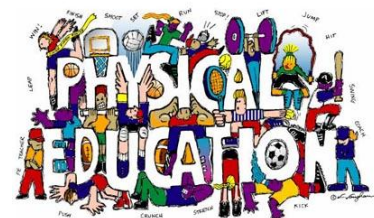


*'Oakwood came into Textiles and we worked on some screen printing. I personally found all the students hardworking and well mannered. They were eager to learn and created some beautiful work. The Oakwood students received some guidance from our own 6th formers and I know some friendships were made. Overall it was a good experience for me and our students and I hope it was interesting for the Oakwood pupils. I would be pleased to run a small taster lesson again for Oakwood in the near future.'*

**Dominique Marsh Tutor Irlam & Cadishead College**

### PE

*'I'd simply like to say that I was amazed by the pupils from Oakwood. They were so enthusiastic to participate in PE and did so with huge smiles on their faces. They were quick to grasp concepts and progressed with their learning and skills. I would personally be both*



*keen and delighted to take part in more events like this at I&C and Oakwood. I learnt so much about myself as a teacher and as a person by working with the pupils and teachers from Oakwood.'*  
**Paul Rigby Tutor Irlam & Cadishead College**

## **Extracts from Irlam and Cadishead Sixth Form College website**

### **Oakwood Academy Visit - Day One**

22 April 2013

Seven Year 11 students from Oakwood Academy have come to ICC for a taster week to see what Sixth Form life is all about, as Oakwood are looking to set up their own Sixth Form in the future.

#### **Day One**

##### Meet & Greet

In the morning, the Oakwood students met with some of our Sixth Formers, who made them feel welcome and have them a tour of the school.



##### Drama Workshop

During the week, the students will be taking part in a variety of taster lessons, today was a Drama Workshop day. They started with Ice Breakers, so the students from Sixth Form and Oakwood get to know each other.

Games during the workshop focused on their expectations, fears and hopes of the transition from Year 11 to Sixth Form College.

Both sets of students really enjoyed getting to know each other

**GREAT FIRST DAY!!!!**

*Written By: Rebecca Foster & Clare Gleave*

### **Day Two of the Oakwood Academy Visit**

23 April 2013

#### **Day Two of the Oakwood Academy Visit**

##### ICT & Sports Day

The students started the day with a taster ICT lesson, they had the chance to make their own interactive puzzle game.



After lunch a Sports lesson was delivered by some of ICC's PE staff and Sixth Form students. Oakwood got the chance to play a variety of games and trampolining.

**ANOTHER GREAT DAY WAS HAD BY ALL!!!!**

*Written By: Rebecca Foster & Clare Gleave*

## **Achievements**

The pupils enjoyed the independence the sixth form offered, allowing them to wear their own clothes and being treated like an adult. (Something that the drama workshop highlighted was important to the students) The lessons were perfectly pitched for the students to be able to take an active role in. Working alongside the sixth form students allowed the staff to observe the pupils and how they interacted within a main stream environment. By the end of the week the pupils were completely self-sufficient in accessing the classes and environment. The pupils were questioning the courses the sixth form offered. It was a very refreshing experience.

The success of the program has enabled further meetings with the sixth form college to design a rolling program which will allow the students access to taster sessions in year nine again, allowing pupils to be inspired and have ambitions at an early age.

The project has been invaluable to the academy, the college and all involved. The pupils have gained valuable experience, the parents have seen aspirations and confidence raised the staff from both organisations have gained themselves experience.

## Transition

There is now a new transition program incorporating whole school policy. The advice and guidance given will now incorporate the whole school. The idea of inspiring young people from an early age will allow them to access as many careers as possible.

The work done to improve transition programmes will help the school gain the Silver Advice & Guidance Award through the Connexions Service.

*'The extended placements at Irlam & Cadishead College gave the Year Eleven students an invaluable insight into college life and open up post 16 opportunities. The drama sessions that opened and closed the week helped our students to express and develop their feelings and emotions and consider their futures. They were to talk about their hopes and fears with a Year Twelve mentor who is already enrolled within the college. The students were enthusiastic and fitted in well.'*

**Liz Capell Transitions Advisor Oakwood Specialist Academy**

## Learner Voice



*'The day was brilliant; I was excited about the visit. The sixth form students were really nice to us. I made this pizza, I had it for my dinner, it was delicious! "The IT teacher showed us how to use a program to make our own game, it was brilliant!"*

**Jake Collins Year 11 Oakwood Academy**

*'I had fun today doing PE, my team won. I could do all the activities they planned.'*

**Vivienne Year 11 Oakwood Academy**

*'The PE staff were so funny, they came into school to see us before our visit. I enjoyed the trampolining best.'*

**Jordan Year 11 Oakwood Academy**

*'I think I might apply to the Hair and Beauty course there, I didn't think I would be able to manage but after talking to the staff and the students I think I would be fine.'*

**Shanice Anderson Year 11 Oakwood Academy**

*"I thought the printing looked brilliant, the teacher was really nice, the classroom was so interesting with loads of things to look at".*

**Shannon Year 11 Oakwood Academy**

*'The work done in the week with I&C has been a breath of fresh air, the staff are so positive and the building has a family friendly feel to it. The students were relaxed and left feeling confident. The program will be incorporated into the careers / Transition planning and will be a wonderful experience for the students. This will be a yearly program.'*

**Liz Capell Transition Adviser Oakwood Academy**



## **Working Collaboratively**

The partnership that has been built up between Oakwood and I&C has allowed pupils to experience main stream courses in a safe environment. Links have been built with other departments within I&C, so from a week's transition project other initiatives have evolved.

*'The LSIS project has been the catalyst to develop an outstanding work experience and transition programme within Oakwood Academy. Through excellent partnership work from Oakwood, Connexions Salford, Fujitsu and Irlam & Cadishead Academy we have built a legacy to ensure that Oakwood students with learning difficulties and disabilities will have access to a wide range of employment opportunities and feel better informed of vocational options as they move towards adulthood.'*

**David O'Sullivan Personal Advisor Salford Connexions**

## **Key Learning Points**

The pupils have grown in confidence and have looked at their options with fresh eyes. Pupils are willing to try other new experiences and have also fed back information about the week to their peers.

## **Advice to others**

- Never doubt the ability of the pupils, they always surpass expectations.
- Having the sixth form students mentor the pupils really broke the ice.
- The use of drama to explore feelings allowed the sixth form students to put right these fears and pre conceptions
- Through collaborative working twice as many options are available for the young people

## **Next steps**

Through the work completed with the college, there will be a rolling programme with Oakwood and the Academy to provide taster sessions in subjects offered within the sixth form college. There will be

consultation with Oakwood staff and students as to additional taster lessons and planning for a thematic approach with a showcase finale hopefully collaborating with Oasis Academy MediaCity UK colleagues.

The sixth form college has students who are interested in becoming teaching assistants (TAs) or teachers. Oakwood will give these students the opportunity to come and work shadow experienced TAs within the school and also allow the sixth form students to run some drama enrichment sessions giving the I&C students valuable work experience.

### **Resources & information to support this work**

- Transition - Case Study Report - Salford
- 'So many Words' Drama Workshop Planning
- New Directions: 'My Future In Education & Employment' diary for young people

**These documents and resources can be seen at:**

[www.oakwoodhighschool.co.uk](http://www.oakwoodhighschool.co.uk) OR [http://www.iccollege.org.uk/news\\_article.php?NID=132](http://www.iccollege.org.uk/news_article.php?NID=132)

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