

Southampton City College City Horizons Case Study



Southampton City College

Southampton City College is a medium-sized, general, further education college based on a main site in central Southampton. It also offers courses from a range of other local venues. Southampton, a unitary authority, has a population of nearly 240,000. Unemployment, at around 3.2%, is above the regional rate but below the national rate. Southampton is judged the 91st most deprived local authority according to the economic deprivation index. Around half of the college's young students come from the city's Priority Neighbourhood Areas.

The LSIS Project:

This LSIS funded project required us to identify and share effective practice relating to the Green Paper "Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability." One of the themes allocated to our cluster was: Excellent Teaching Practice including work around ITT and CPD; focusing on how teachers are supported to work inclusively with disabled learners. The common denominator of all themes would be to consider 'challenging low expectations'

Our approach

City Horizons is the Foundation Learning tier of Southampton City College provision. It is a new department formed to improve the progression and achievement of 16-18 year old learners at pre-entry, entry and level one, including those with specific learning difficulties. In 2010/11 we had approximately 519 learners studying across a range of 13 vocational areas encompassing a wide range of practical and work related skills.

As a result of substantial changes made to the way provision is delivered, Foundation learning provision is no longer attached to separate vocational areas, rather it is offered through the new City Horizons programme delivered by a team of selected and dedicated staff.

Learners are be offered a bespoke learning programme and whilst the majority would come on programme in September others would join throughout the year.

Students learning in City Horizons are no longer doing 'courses' as we previously understood them. Nor are programmes linear with fixed starting and finishing points.

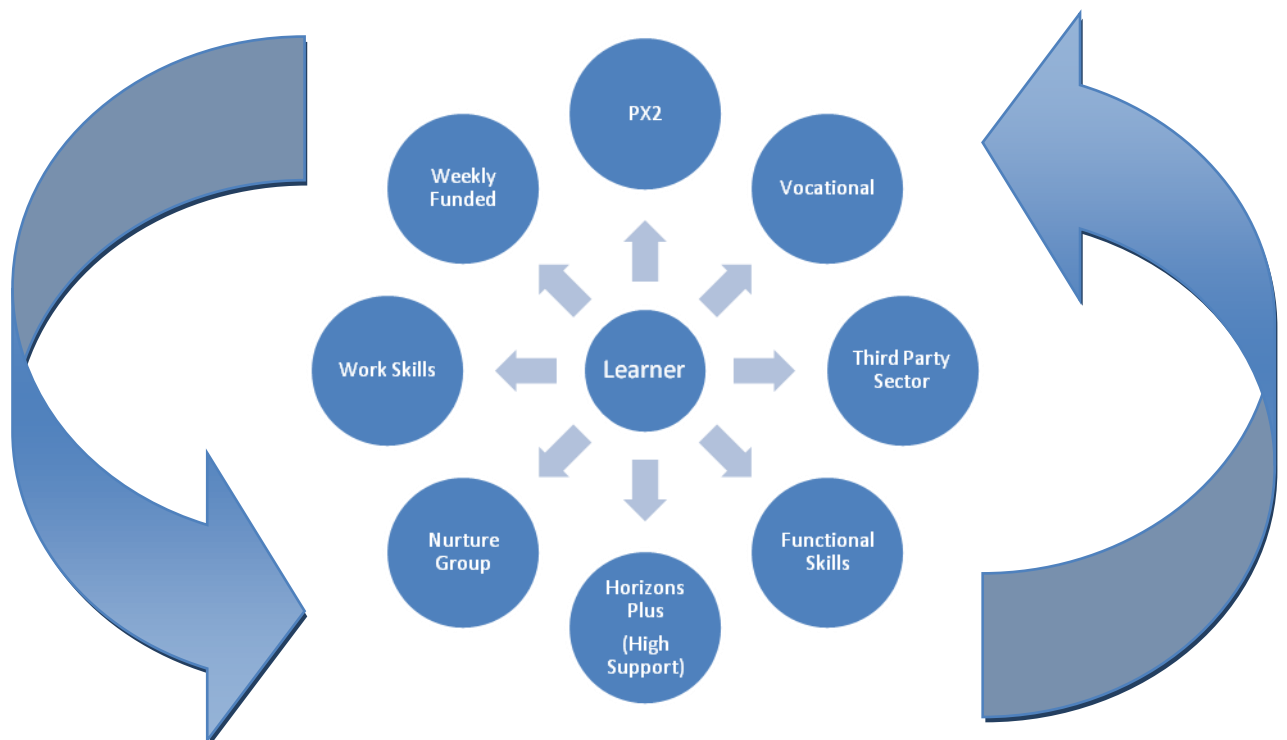
Instead, students are guided through a pathway of opportunities which meet their individual need and prepare them for progression into an appropriate next stage of their adult lives. It offers truly, personalised, destination led learning.

The introduction of the new foundation learning curriculum has facilitated a different approach. Students are able to mix and match units of learning in four main themes; vocational, personal, functional and employability skills. This has presented the opportunity to re-model our offer for these students.

The curriculum is now segmented into six week blocks, with five weeks of curriculum delivery and a sixth review week. During the sixth week all students (and those who support them, where appropriate) meet with their learning coach to reflect on their performance over the past five weeks and agree the curriculum that the student would follow in the upcoming six week block.

The following diagram illustrates the range of provision learners are able to access.

NB: PX2 is a 5 day motivational course that learners can access at any point during their learning although the majority attend prior to coming on programme.



More information about the programme can be found on the [College web page](#) which includes clips of City Horizons students commenting on their learning experience.



This personalised journey is supported by a range of strategies to enable learners to complete their programme of study and succeed. Three core strategies to support this are:

- A rigorous review process
- An extensive in-house support system
- Strong links with third sector providers

1. Rigorous review process

The review process is an integral part of the learner experience and it is essential that these are conducted in both a supportive and empowering way. All tutors are initially trained in the review process and exemplars are readily available.

The following documents are used for review purposes. During this in-depth 1:1 meeting (approximately an hour in length) between learner and their allocated tutor both parties have the opportunity to discuss progress and consider appropriate pathways to determine the next half term of learning.



Student Name:	Tutor:	Date:		
Personal Stability				
Attainment				
Attitude				
Attendance: Vocational Programme Workskills Functional Skills	79% or below	80 - 87%	87%+	
Clarity of Vision				
Work Experience – Readiness to proceed? No				
TOTALS				

Tutor Feedback	Action Points/ ILP

The following guidance is available to inform completion of the review template above

CITY HORIZONS STUDENT REVIEW

Student Name **Date**

Personal Stability

- Do they have consistent adult support?
- Are they caring for another person?
- Are they a parent?
- Do they have part-time work paid or voluntary?
- Does their personal life impact on their learning?

GREEN	AMBER	RED
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Attainment

- Is there positive teacher feedback?
- Are they on target with work?
- Are they hitting deadlines?
- Is there quality of effort?
- Are they applying thinking?
- Are they completing units?
- Do they have the equipment they need?

GREEN	AMBER	RED
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Attitude

- Do they behave in a safe way?
- Are they respectful to their peers and teachers?
- Do they portray the college values?
- Are they showing a level of maturity?

GREEN	AMBER	RED
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Attendance

- Have they shown good attendance at 87% or above – Green
- Have they shown satisfactory attendance 80 – 87% - Amber
- Have they shown unsatisfactory attendance below 80% - Red
- Do they phone in to the absence line if they are absent?
- Are they punctual?
- Are they attending Functional Skills?

GREEN	AMBER	RED
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Clarity of Vision

- Do they understand what they want to achieve?
- Can they articulate where they see themselves in 2yrs / 5yrs?
- Do they have an understanding of the world of work?
- Do they know what their next steps will be?
- Do they know what to do to get to level 2/employment?
- What progression potential do they have?

GREEN	AMBER	RED
Action Points:-		
Tutor feedback:-		
Student feedback:- (To be completed before Review)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did they like? • How do they think they have done? • What are they concerned about? • Are we agreeing any change of programme in next 6 weeks? 		
Student signature..... Tutor signature		

Prior to the review meeting students are encouraged to reflect on their performance over the past five weeks and this informs the meeting. We also give learners a range of opportunities to give us feedback on their learning experience through our learner voice activities.

2. Extensive in-house support system

The new structure includes a variety of roles to ensure individual needs are identified and resources allocated to meet them in a flexible and responsive way.

The learning coach role is central in facilitating access to a more diverse and bespoke curriculum offer. A range of targeted interventions are offered to improve behaviour and engagement with learning.

The following interventions are employed to keep students on track:

- Success Centre- students can access additional support outside of their formal timetabled activities to empower them and encourage independent learning. During our last inspection Ofsted identified this model as outstanding and we are working towards national recognition.
- Nurture/Pathways- a team of support staff are readily available to work with students as required. All of these have attended attachment theory training
- Horizons Plus /Behaviour Coach on call-if a learner is being particularly challenging, the Horizons Plus team is available to either work with the student in the session or where appropriate take the student away for a period of time before returning.
- 1:1 coaching meetings to discuss progress once a week or fortnightly

- Behaviour coaches in classroom-when at all possible learners are encouraged to stay on task and discrete support strategies are implemented to achieve this.
- Breakfast Club-available in line with attachment theory best practices
- Horizons Workshops
- Counselling sessions are available for learners to work on any identified issues including anger management.
- Enrichment activities-there is a range of enrichment activities and community projects including a drama club

More information and video clips about the community project and enrichment activities provided can be found on the [college website](#).



3. Strong links with local third sector

The City Horizons team works closely with both third sector providers and other agencies. Work with the third sector is co-ordinated and managed by the senior learning coach of the Horizons Plus team. Regular meetings are held with these agencies to assess progress of referred learners. Learners are fully involved with the decision making process regarding these referrals. Alternatively the referral may be used as a compulsory element of a disciplinary contract of behaviour. All information is shared with individual's tutor as appropriate.

Learner engagement with the third sector will vary depending on individual circumstances. This will range from intense 5 day provision to more extensive application that will explore how the learner can show development in line with our core values; Personal Stability, Clarity of Vision, Attendance, Attainment and Attitude.

We also share best practice and work closely with local specialist schools and invite them to share their expertise and deliver training sessions for our staff. For example, a local pupil referral unit delivered training in team teaching techniques.

We are involved with the University and College Lecturers Union (UCU) /LSIS project that is looking at managing behaviour in Further Education provision.

One team member is working nationally with the Men into Childcare initiative.

An example of the outcome and impact of the work

The learner journey is bespoke and identifies and works with individual strengths. Learners enjoy their programme and are making good progress as the following learner comment demonstrates:

“The City Horizons programme is good because you do a mixture of subjects, such as practical, theory and Maths and English and don't get bored. My tutor has been really supportive and gives us lots of support. Everyone gets on really well and we are all going onto Level 2 next September which is brilliant.”

Examples of further learner comments can be viewed on the [college website](#).



All City Horizons staff complete an induction that is student focused and identifies a range of appropriate strategies to use when working with challenging behaviour.

Every opportunity to share good practice is fully utilised. We are currently introducing a teaching squares matrix across the City Horizons programme and linking this with our level two provision. We are working closely with the quality management team to ensure consistency of approach and in our most recent internal observations we had 86% of lessons graded good or outstanding, 39% outstanding, 47% good 14% satisfactory.

The Impact?

The change in structure has improved confidence and created a clear identity for both learners and staff. Learners are proud to be a City Horizons learner rather than the 'poor relation' in the vocational areas. It also ensures the right programme is quickly identified for all students.

Similarly teachers feel more confident in their approach and have a real sense of identity and being part of a team.

As 47.38% of the 10/11 cohort had a declared disability and many presented challenging behaviours we are particularly proud of the success of this cohort with 94% of them achieving a positive progression.

Next steps and future plans

It is the intention that this model is expanded and grown.

“City Horizons is totally committed to supporting every young person to achieve their full potential, regardless of background or prior academic success.” We also plan to further develop strategies in partnerships we have formed through this project cluster

March 2012