

Phase 2 Green Paper Project: Support and aspiration

Study programmes: how partners (including mainstream and special schools) have developed their curriculum programmes building on an existing supported employment partnership in Surrey



Key learning points

- Working together on mapping progression pathways for particular students helps flag up generic challenges – in this case a lack of post-education opportunities for young adults who will not be eligible for adult social care support but who currently make up a significant proportion of ‘NEETs’.
- It is good for partners to work together on curriculum development, trading ideas about how to achieve a stronger focus on preparing for adulthood.
- Mainstream schools can really benefit from working with special schools and colleges on this, with the potential for ‘win-win-win’ benefits for the students, their current school and future college placements.
- Partnerships between education and supported employment organisations don’t need to be ‘either/or’: they can embrace job coaching from the supported employment organisation and the development of home-grown job coaching capacity by colleges and schools.
- Local areas should consider accessing training programmes, or developing their own, to familiarise educational staff with job coaching and employer engagement principles and practices.
- Educational and supported employment partners could usefully work together to ensure that progression into paid employment is a key focus of education, health and care plans.

Who we are and what we did

The project partners were the local further education college (Nescot – North East Surrey College of Technology); two special schools (Linden Bridge and West Hill); two mainstream schools (Therfield and Epsom & Ewell High); and Surrey EmployAbility, the supported employment organisation run by Surrey County Council.

The primary focuses of the project were:

- progression into paid employment through joint working on individual student progression plans;
- sharing knowledge and expertise to develop our curriculums, making the most of the opportunities presented by the introduction of study programmes; and
- further developing an existing supported employment partnership between Nescot and Surrey EmployAbility.

Why we did it

We had a shared desire to improve young people’s progression pathways. Previously, over-attention to qualifications had meant some students coming to college with unrealistic expectations of upwards progression, rather than seeing themselves as having successfully completed the first stages of preparing for adulthood. The partners agreed that planning needed to start while students were still at school and wanted to identify the best possible progression pathways to maximise their chances of getting into paid work.

The partners also wanted to contribute to Surrey’s SEND Pathfinder development programme. Nescot and its

students were already contributing to the development of the Surrey Local Offer and we were also keen that pathways to paid work should feature strongly in education health and care plans.

How we did it

(1) Progression pathways

We recognised early on that it would be useful to work together on individual progression pathways for a pilot group of young people to ensure that the project was well grounded. We worked together to map pathways for 22 school and college students. Outcomes to date for these students have been:

- **Nescot** (college): all 6 students undertook external work placements; 3 are now being supported by Surrey EmployAbility; one is on an Apprenticeship programme with Surrey County Council; 5 are in employment (one of whom has been named 'employee of the month').
- **Therfield** (mainstream school): 5 students have been accepted for college in the autumn and one for a Caring for Children course with a local training organisation.
- **Epsom & Ewell High** (mainstream school): 3 year 9 students are enthusiastically moving on to year 10 study programmes with a focus on employability, one of whom is aiming to become a car mechanic.
- **Linden Bridge** (special school): one accepted for supported employment by Surrey EmployAbility; one going to Nescot to do a sport and leisure course; one with a choice of college or Surrey EmployAbility.
- **West Hill** (special school): 4 students accepted for college, including one going on a construction course.

As well as identifying ways of improving individual pathways, this process identified a number of key challenges, including a lack of post-education opportunities for young adults who will not be eligible for adult social care support but who currently make up a significant proportion of 'NEETs'.

(2) Curriculum development

The value of involving mainstream schools was borne out by the fact that, through being part of the cluster, both schools identified the need to develop alternative provision which is more clearly linked to preparation for adulthood. All the education providers have developed their curriculum for the 2013/14 academic year as follows:

- **Therfield** (mainstream school) wanted to improve the achievement of qualifications targets by incorporating work skills which are better tailored to students' future needs and centred round individually timetabled activity. We have focused particularly on what might be termed as 'high A+' students who do not quite meet statementing requirements but remain needy and vulnerable and very much in danger of falling between two posts. We saw benefits in reducing the number of GCSEs taken so as to increase grades in those remaining. 'The Golden Eight' was critical in selling this idea to senior management, given that schools are graded on how many points a pupil gains for his or her best 10 GCSEs (or recognised equivalents), with English and maths possibly counting twice. The 'Golden Eight' allowed us to focus on a student's best 6 subjects plus English and maths. This meant we could focus on a smaller number of subjects, with students having a much better prospect of gaining better grades, and could remove students from classes where they were despondent, disaffected and often disruptive. We developed bespoke timetables based round a well equipped room, staffed by very strong, experienced and well qualified teaching assistants and with scheduled teacher sessions involving tutorials and small group sessions. Students all had different timetables with small groups and individuals working on their 'focus' subjects during the times that they had dropped other GCSEs. We also targeted a small number of previously very disaffected pupils who had been out of school for periods of time. We helped students write applications for college and apprenticeships and arranged a programme of college visits to help facilitate smoother college transfer and increase student motivation. We are now planning new level 2 programmes of study to meet the needs of SEND pupils going into our 6th Form.

- **Epsom & Ewell High** (mainstream school) wanted to improve the attitude of students towards employability and future destinations through study programmes which are better tailored to our students' needs and ability. In the short term, we have developed better ways of achieving existing results-based performance measures through pre-teaching of maths and English and piloting a Life Skills programme which includes CV writing, completing application forms and interview skills. After extensive discussions with Therfield School, we adopted their programme centred around 'The Golden Eight', but with 2 additional lessons centred on employability. This has allowed us to focus on students who would not necessarily qualify for a statutory assessment but still need additional support. Students concentrate on English and maths, with additional lessons on Employability and Life Skills. We are also offering Careers as a timetabled subject to our 6th Form students from September 2013 to be delivered by a Teacher with a Masters Degree in Careers. The programme to date has enabled our students to gain the confidence to write their own CVs and apply for summer jobs and it was clear from the initial pilot that this approach had the potential to be life changing for our students through improved confidence and becoming independent learners. Longer term, we aim to shift to destination-based performance measures and to have a curriculum which is driven by outcomes in terms of how it prepares our students for adulthood.
- **Linden Bridge** (special school) has, as a result of the thinking behind study programmes, taken a more global approach to our curriculum offer across the 14-19 age range. We have introduced a Personal Progress Programme for students at Entry Level 1, accredited by Laser (14-19 years). In Key Stage 4, we have introduced an Independent Living qualification at Entry Levels 1, 2 and 3, while retaining a Step Up Route to Progression Entry Level 3 and Level 1 which focuses on vocational areas. From September 2013, all functional skills will be embedded throughout the week into vocational areas and will not be taught discretely. Study Programmes will also include travel training and work experience opportunities. We have negotiated a partnership with Surrey County Council to be our employer for work experience placements, enabling some students to be out in the workplace for three days a week. We are also involving staff in the job coaching training provided by Surrey EmployAbility (see below) which we see as an important step forward. We have arranged for a benefits adviser from Surrey County Council to have surgeries for parents to familiarise them with the new benefits system. We intend to maintain and strengthen transition arrangement with Nescot and other further education colleges and to visit Abingdon & Witney College to see how Oxfordshire partners are building independent living experience into the curriculum.
- **West Hill** (special school) is extending its vocational learning programme to include more preparation for independent living, including the further development of functional skills and supporting post 16 transitions, by giving all Year 10 and Year 11 learners the opportunity to participate in our school/college link programme. We will also, in partnership with East Surrey College and two other Surrey special schools, provide opportunities for learners from another Surrey special school to participate in the school/college link programme. This will reduce the cost of the programme to all schools involved, while at the same time allowing the college to offer more vocational choices to learners from four different special schools. All learners and their parents/carers will have access to a travel trainer, including during the time between leaving school and moving on to post 16 destinations. Drawing from the model already operating at Nescot, we have also established a community café in a local church to enable lower ability Year 10 and Year 11 students to contribute to and work within a local community in preparation for active community involvement in adult life. We are hoping to extend this opportunity to other students in the school.
- **Nescot** (further education college) has developed a range of study programmes which, for students with learning and other disabilities, contain significant elements of work experience and preparation for paid work. This builds on previous development of our programmes linked to supported employment which began with an initial 6 students in 2008/09 and have grown to over 40 students in 2012-13. Our Transition into Employment (TIE) programme is for Entry Level 3 students and our Progression into Employment (PIE) programme is for Level 1 students (details of our 2013/14 programmes are included in an Annex to this case study). As a next step for 2013/14, provision at Entry Level 3 will expand from 15 hours to between 16.5 and 17.5 hours a week over 4 or 5 days, with individualised work experience on and off campus, breakfast club activities and weekly sessions of social time working with external organisations. At Entry Level 1, we are

including group work experience activity and a bespoke personal social development (PSD) programme developed by the College. Our long term ambition is to enable all these students to access work related programmes within the college and then move into work and independent living. The supported employment activity in the TIE and PIE programmes was previously paid for from *Action for Inclusion* 'discretionary' funding but, more recently, Nescot has been paying for it through 'mainstream' educational funding. This year there will be four groups engaged on external work placement programmes building on our partnership with Surrey EmployAbility. This supported employment partnership involves job coaches from Surrey EmployAbility supporting Nescot students while they are still at college, working closely with their tutors. Nescot are now also appointing their own staff as employment support assistants and training them to provide job coaching. Surrey EmployAbility will continue to work with the lead tutor at college to source employers for work experience placements, and also some permanent jobs coming directly out of the work experience placements. We will also be working closely with Reed Employment, which has a base at the college campus, to source additional employers. The new study programme curriculum will include internal work placements within new production, retail and café outlets in the department, and external work placements in two community cafes set up by Nescot with local churches, in the local library, and at the nearby churchyard for horticulture and conservation experience. We will also be developing our parents and students events in 2013/14 drawing on what Linden Bridge School are doing. Another dimension is that some students still at school have been able to infill to full time groups at Nescot with a view to promoting successful transition. This worked so well with a trial of 6 students that in the 2013/14 academic year we plan to have 21 students from different schools infilling to our provision.

(3) Job coaching training for our staff

In parallel with this curriculum development activity, Surrey EmployAbility (the supported employment organisation run by Surrey County Council) saw the potential for developing a training programme to familiarise education colleagues with job coaching and employer engagement. We arranged for someone from the British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) to run two taster courses which were attended by 19 school and college staff, focusing on:

- The values and process of supported employment
- The role of the place and train model in education
- Planning on-the-job support to meet the needs of both learners and employers
- Prompts and reinforcement when delivering on-the-job support
- The importance and basics of developing natural supports
- The basic principles of working with employers.

In feedback, 100% of participants rated the event as 'excellent' and learning points included:

- *'How to support people in the workplace. I have a much better perspective of how to carry out this role.'*
- *'Techniques, how to support people in supported employment and how different it is to support people in work experiences.'*
- *'How to support learners and employers in supported work placements.'*
- *'Useful techniques; new information about how to teach as a job coach'*
- *'National Occupational Standards; instructional assistance; what works in finding jobs was very useful'*
- *'Do not get in the way of the stimuli/response process. Positive learning/on-the-job learning'*
- *'A different approach to interacting with employers'*
- *'Lots of interesting examples'*
- *'I have learnt a more in-depth knowledge of my roles and responsibilities as a job coach'*
- *'I have learnt a lot about job coaching; very interesting course; more knowledge on how to use in work experience.'*

Drawing from this experience, Surrey Employability itself now plans to offer a training service from September 2013 for colleges, schools and other organisations across Surrey and beyond.

What impact we've achieved so far

During its 8 month time span, the project had the following benefits:

- It has developed a new level of understanding between the partners in the project of what each organisation does and how we can help each other.
- It has encouraged all the educational partners to develop our curriculums to focus on preparation for and outcomes in adulthood and has enabled us to share ideas about how to do so.
- It has identified the potential for developing a training programme to familiarise education colleagues with job coaching and employer engagement. Feedback from our 'taster' sessions included the following examples of lessons learned:
 - *'The need to "stand back" when job coaching; the difference between supporting in the learning environment and job coaching.'*
 - *'How to fully coach a young person into employment; it has taught how different the role is than expected.'*
 - *'That job coaching is very different to supporting students on work experience; that a job coach is doing a good job if they are not there at the work placement.'*
 - *'Sometimes less of 'you' is better for those we support; stepping back and leaving those we support, learn, believe and make mistakes in a realistic situation.'*
- It has had immediate benefits for our students, as illustrated in the following comments about the impact at the two mainstream schools:
 - *'The impact has been huge and a great success not only in terms of target grades, but in the re-engagement of learning and self-esteem.'*
 - *'Our Head is pleased about progress with a group of students we feared would be failing.'*
 - *'Staff perceptions have changed completely.'*
 - *'Previously disaffected students are wanting to come to school.'*
 - *'I think I'd like to be a [car] mechanic – I don't just want to sit at home and live off benefits'*
 - *'I now want to do something with my life; I never knew that I could be "someone" one day'*
 - *'They'll be able to come to College at a higher level.'*
 - *'Oddly the greatest impact was on students who had been our most disaffected: the 'part-timers'. Several suddenly started coming to school on extra days as they realised they could get some GCSEs and even gain Bs and Cs. They have become highly motivated individuals who are keen to work hard and progress to College, taking courses they see as valuable and useful to them.'*
- It has gained a positive response from Surrey County Council to supporting the dissemination of good practice and to continue to work together to achieve sustainable outcomes.

We plan to assess the longer term impact of the project through tracking the progress of the pilot group of young people and how successful they are in getting into paid employment. This will be against a baseline set by last year's Nescot leavers from the existing Transition into Employment programme, 95% of whom are in work – but currently mostly unpaid, with only 9% so far in paid jobs.

How we plan to maintain progress after the end of the project

On curriculum development, we would like to include a stronger element of preparing for independent living

within our curriculums, drawing on Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire experience. We plan to work on this with commissioners in Adult Services to ensure a good match between the preparation and the options actually available (including options for young adults who live at home and for those who are not eligible for adult social care). Our ambition is to develop a Surrey ‘young adults offer’ as part of the SEND Pathfinder programme.

We want to link curriculum development with a strong focus, with parents as well as students, on the realities of adult life. In particular, we are arranging for Adult Services colleagues to talk to students and parents about the new welfare benefits arrangements, including Universal Credit.

We also saw it as important to brief strategic partners on the achievements of the project and to discuss with them arrangements for wider dissemination around Surrey. To this end:

- The mainstream school partners have worked together on a business case for curriculum development which they have presented to a Surrey Primary Heads meeting and plan to present to a Secondary Heads meeting in the autumn. The case is based on the short term benefits (better ways to achieve existing results-based performance measures) and the longer term ones (the shift to destinations-based performance measures).
- Towards the end of the project, we made a presentation to Surrey’s Transition Strategy Group which is jointly chaired by senior staff from Children’s and Adult Services. Feedback was very positive, with the minutes describing the project as ‘very successful in looking at creative ways to support young people with their transition from school to college’. Senior stakeholders wanted to know how our progress could be replicated by schools and colleges elsewhere in Surrey, linking this closely with the SEND Pathfinder programme, and made a commitment to support (and, in principle, fund) further development and dissemination activity. Our project lead was invited to become a member of the Transition Strategy Group.
- As our next step, we plan to work with Surrey County Council colleagues to develop a costed Action Plan, as part of our overall legacy plan for continuing the work of the project.

For further information, please contact:

Contact	Organisation	Topics	Email address
Lynn Reddick	North East Surrey College of Technology	Project overview and curriculum development	lreddick@nescot.ac.uk
Zelia Munnik	Epsom & Ewell High School	Mainstream school curriculum development	munnikZ@eehs.surrey.sch.uk
Jeannette Clark	Linden Bridge School	Special school curriculum development	jeannetteclark@linden-bridge.surrey.sch.uk
Steve Pugh	Therfield School	Mainstream school curriculum development	Steve.cassa@live.co.uk
Des Dealey	West Hill School	Special school curriculum development	ddealey@west-hill.surrey.sch.uk
Christina Earl	Surrey EmployAbility	Job coaching and employer engagement training	christina.earl@surreycc.gov.uk
Julie Pointer & Penny Easton	Surrey County Council Council	Wider developments in Surrey including the SEND Pathfinder	julie.pointer@surreycc.gov.uk penny.easton@surreycc.gov.uk

Transition into Employment (TIE)

Award: Diploma in Skills for Working Life Entry - Level 3

Awarding Bodies: NPTC

Course Length: 1 year

Course Summary

This course is intended for those learners who need support to prepare to transition into work. You will generally be referred by your tutor after discussion about your destinations and targets. However you may also be referred by Advice and Recruitment staff or other members of staff. On this course you will spend two days a week in work placements and one day a week in college.

It enables them to spend time in the workplace while studying for a qualification that will enhance the skills they are learning. The learners will be supported in the workplace by Job Coaches from Employability and a Nescot Tutor.

The learners will be based in college for one day a week to complete the theory units on the course and run an enterprise activity and spend two days a week at work. The learners will receive tutorials in their group at the end of each day to help with any issues that may occur at work.

Course Details

These qualifications will be delivered through workbooks used in the workplace and in college over three days a week. You will be supported to learn about the standards required for the workplace. The course will provide two 10 week placements of two days a week during which time you will be expected to be on time and in work on all occasions unless there otherwise agreed with your tutor. The remainder of the time will be in college reinforcing your maths and English skills, completing theory lessons and taking part in work/enterprise activities where you will run a small business on college campus.

Learners will have to opportunity to work with two large employers in the Epsom and Ewell area. Learners will be allocated job roles appropriate to their interests, experience and skills. The course does not guarantee to provide paid employment upon leaving college but gives learners the tools they need to search for/be successful in a work environment. There is potential for learners to achieve permanent employment if they perform well.

Course Modules

- Managing social relationships at work.
- Introduction to the hospitality industry.
- Customer Service in the hospitality industry.
- Introduction to using the internet.
- Selecting info on the internet.
- Plan and make a journey.
- Prepare for and attend an interview.
- Introduction to word.
- Working towards goals.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work safely. • Introduction to handling stock. • Introduction to keeping work area clean. • Introduction to email and text. • Introduction to photo processing. • Introduction to graphic software. • Dealing with problems. • Basic cooking. • Basic food preparation. • Serving food and drinks. • Introduction to ICT. • Introduction to desktop publishing. • Introduction to spreadsheet.
<p>Entry Requirements</p> <p>Potential learners will be those who have already completed an entry level 2 or 3 course. They will need to have good attendance above 87% and a good report from their tutor. Learners will be expected to show commitment and enthusiasm in the work place.</p>
<p>Career Progression</p> <p>The long term intention would be to secure a permanent job either paid or voluntary and delivery will be based around this target. Learners will be supported to identify possible employment support agencies in their local area to help them secure work after the course as finished.</p>

<p>Progression into Employment (PIE)</p>
<p>Award: Diploma in Workskills – Level 1</p>
<p>Awarding Body: Edexcel</p>
<p>Course Length: 34 weeks</p>
<p>Course Summary</p> <p>This course is intended for those learners who have achieved at level 1 in their vocational areas but who are not able to progress onto level 2 courses as employment is a more appropriate destination. You will generally be referred by your tutor after discussion about your destinations and targets. However you may also be referred by Advice and Recruitment staff or other members of staff. On this course you will spend two days a week in the work placements and one day a week in college.</p>
<p>Course Details</p> <p>These qualifications will be delivered through workbooks used in the workplace and in college over three days a week. You will be expected to maintain the standards required for the workplace and will be supported to make the progression into work after the course as finished. The course will provide two 10 week placements of two days a week during which time you will be expected to be on time and in work on all occasions unless there otherwise agreed with your tutor. The remainder of the time will be in college reinforcing your maths and English skills, completing theory lessons and taking part in work/enterprise activities where you will run a small business</p>

on college campus.

The aim is to place the learners into an environment that will be compatible to their interests and previous experience. The course does not guarantee to provide paid employment upon leaving college but gives learners the tools they need to search for/be successful in a work environment. There is potential for learners to achieve permanent employment if they perform well.

Course Modules

- Managing own money
- Managing other people's money
- Searching for a job.
- Applying for a job.
- Preparing for interview
- Interview skills
- Self-management skills
- Self-assessment
- Career progression
- Practising leadership skills with others.
- Positive attitudes and behaviours at work
- Working in a team
- Learning from more experienced people.
- Building working relationships with colleagues
- Building working relationships with customers
- Investigating rights and responsibilities at Work
- Solving work related problems
- Taking notes at meetings
- Summarising documents
- Contributing to meetings
- Preparing for work placements
- Learning from work placements
- Safe learning in the workplace
- Planning an enterprise activity
- Running an enterprise activity
- Producing a product.

Entry Requirements

Potential learners will be those who have completed a level 1 course but who do not have the English and maths skills to progress to a level 2 course. They will need to have good attendance above 87% and a good report from their tutor. Learners will be expected to work independently and professionally throughout this course.

Career Progression

The long term intention would be to secure a permanent job either paid or voluntary and delivery will be based around this target.