

# East Norfolk Sixth Form College

## Supporting the transition from school to college



### Rationale

In the academic year 2011/12 East Norfolk Sixth Form College decided to produce a DVD for Year 10/11 students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Physical Disabilities, Mental Health Needs and Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) who were transitioning from school to college.

In any given year there will be approximately 125 such students. The college wanted to make sure that the transition process is as personalised as possible however we were also keen to measure the impact of the transition process and as such wanted to develop a standardised system, whilst not losing the personalised system. The DVD would allow for easy access for potential students and family/carers with an immediate visual effect. We were keen for the DVD to challenge low expectations. We wanted potential students to hear of the successes and achievements of other students at the college first hand and as such got students involved in the process from the beginning as script writers and role models. We were also keen to be able to use the DVD to build new links with specialist educational providers locally.

### Who uses the DVD?

- Learning Support staff with students with disabilities on entry.
- New students with disabilities applying for September 2012.
- Professionals in Education, Social Services, Health, Residential provision.
- Pastoral and Welfare Teams with other colleagues in Schools and Colleges.

### How learners were involved in both the development and the use of output:

- 10 current students with disabilities
- 3 former students with disabilities
- 1 student with ASD wrote script, planned production and filmed walk through of college by himself.

### How the output ensures challenge to low expectations of learners:

- Some students with disabilities require a way to “get to know” a new college without visiting it. This virtual tour led by student with disabilities enables them to engage and relate to the experience without being present. Summary feedback from a parent of a high functioning 19 year old with severe autism states that

*“...she was scared of coming from a private education setting with less than 5 in class...to a larger college with 15 in class...unfamiliar classrooms and corridors...bullying had caused a move from mainstream education in Year 7...though (name) is gifted in (subject) with A grade profile in GCSEs... the move resulted in a smaller number of GCSEs than expected...her confidence is low especially with big changes like this...one of the reasons she stayed on at the specialist provider’s sixth form centre...the DVD really put her at ease and has excited her to visit...I have not seen this before....”*

### Impact of use of output (actual or potential):

- Between 1 March and 15 March 48 students have used DVD for information, advice, guidance and preparation for college, this is estimated to rise to 150 approximately by 1 September 2012 and 350 by 1 September 2013
- The DVD has also supported staff to begin to challenge how they view students with disabilities. Staff have felt more comfortable in challenging what they consider to be inappropriate terms used to describe learners.

### Lessons learned from use of output:

- Always include students with disabilities, disadvantage and difficulties. They are best placed to develop, extend and make “user friendly” information, advice and guidance for them.
- Plan well with likeminded colleagues. From concept to finished product it took 8 weeks.
- Pay for quality services in the editing and final production.
- Trust staff can work on their own initiative and be flexible on how to pay staff during a project such as this.

### Any planned extension of use or further development/changes/refinements of output

Using the same format and film company we aim to produce a DVD for Apprenticeships and Internships across different vocational sectors for professional training/trainee supervisory or management programmes.

### Proposed applications of output for other users/providers

- Share format, resources, methods and contacts with other 5 schools and colleges.
- Plan new versions of DVD after consultation with statutory and third sector providers in Norfolk and Suffolk.
- Build a special relation with an independent education provider.
- Introduce a University Version.
- Look for commercial sponsorship.
- Apply for Henry Winkler Award in Education Awards in May/June to fund proposed applications

Copies of the DVD are available on request from

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