

The Manchester College

HMPYOI Hindley

Implementing a Functional skills programme in vocational training



Our organisation

HMPYOI Hindley is a closed Young Offenders Institution which can hold up to 440 young males between the ages of 15-18. The Manchester College holds the contract as the main provider of Learning and Skills.

There is a Learning and Skills Manager, a Deputy, 3 Senior Team Leaders with responsibility for Functional Skills, Vocational Learning and Personal and Social Development.

A Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator manages 29 Learning support practitioners (LSPs) who work to support learners with a range of LDD needs.

85% of YP's have not completed their secondary education. 40% have identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities and 15% have been statemented in a previous educational placement.

Around 1500 YP's pass through Hindley in any one year and the average length of stay is around 3 months, but YP's can be with us for up to 3 years.

Hindley offer a curriculum which includes Maths, English, ICT, Personal and Social Development courses including Citizenship and Healthy Living, Vocational courses including Bricklaying, Fitted Interiors, Plastering, Painting & Decorating, Bench Joinery, Catering, Fork Lift Truck driving and Warehousing.

Hindley have worked with a number of employers and mainstream providers to ensure curriculum meets the needs of the learner and that learners can progress from Pre-entry to L3 or on to Further Education, Training and Employment on release.

Our approach

The Manchester College, within HMPYOI Hindley is committed to providing high quality Functional Skills and Skills for Life programmes to support progression, achievement and resettlement. Hindley are committed to improving the quality of the teaching and learning of Functional Skills and Skills for Life both in the core classes and in vocational areas. The team strive to improve the quality of the learner experience by developing the individual's ability to apply the fundamental skills that underpin most vocational and academic work. Developing learners Functional Skills and Skills for Life should improve the learner's personal effectiveness and employability.

Functional Skills are essential for individuals to function in everyday life, work, leisure & education. It is necessary to develop a commitment to lifelong learning in order to enhance the lives of individuals, improve employability in a changing labour market and to create the skills that the economy and employers need. Functional Skills can also help individuals survive in the 21st century, as well as help towards meeting the Government's World Class Skills 2020 literacy and numeracy targets.

Outcome and impact of the work

Functional Skills are an integral part of all Vocational Learning. For all students on vocational programmes at HMPYOI Hindley, Functional Skills are included in their learning programmes, and all

learners have access to appropriately trained and qualified Skills for Life/Functional Skills tutors and Learning Support Practitioners.

Each group of learners in Kitchen Fitting, Vocational Catering, Bricks, Plastering, Practical Crafts and the Staff Mess have access to dedicated Learning Support Practitioners who work with the learners either on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Each group of learners has access to 2 sessions a week of English and 2 sessions a week of Maths.

As well as this, each group of learners has two 1.5 hour taught sessions of Functional Skills with a Functional Skills tutor who prepares interesting and engaging lessons which are related to the vocational course they are enrolled on. The Functional Skills tutor and LSPs work together to plan lessons depending on the strengths and weaknesses of each particular group.

The learners are expected to work with the LSPs to attain their Functional Skills in both Maths and English. The learners are told that this will be expected of them on commencement of their course, as any Vocational Programme in mainstream education will have Functional Skills as part of the course. They do this at the same level as the Adult Literacy/Numeracy qualification they already have gained in Education classes, as Functional Skills puts into perspective the skills they have learnt in class and apply them to 'real' (Functional) scenarios.

The LSPs are also working with the learners who have not gained Adult Literacy and Numeracy qualifications for whatever reason, and ensuring that this is achieved prior to commencing their Functional Skill.

Next steps and future plans

The Functional Skills in vocational areas has been in place for 12 months. Initially it started with LSPs working with learners, but Hindley have found that there also needs to be tutor input and 'whole group' lessons, therefore the Functional Skills tutor role was implemented a short time ago.

The feedback from learners has been very positive. They enjoy seeing how 'boring' Maths and English can be used in a productive way in real-life situations. As lessons are related to the vocational course they are studying they see the importance of acquiring their English and Maths Functional Skills qualifications. They also know the advantages of already having these qualifications when they apply for college places on their release.

Following the LSIS project peer visits, the Hindley team had very positive feedback from the colleges that visited our Vocational Learning areas. They spoke admirably of the provision on offer and how well the tutors and learners work together with mutual respect. They also said that they would like some of their Vocational tutors to visit Hindley to learn from the good practice.

The impact of the Skills for Life and Functional Skills policy has been that each and every person employed to work at HMPYOI Hindley is aware of how the team are striving to increase the opportunities on release for the young people by improving their Maths and English skills in a functional way. The team also have a commitment to employees by offering Functional Maths and English courses as part of our Continuous Professional Development offer.

Overview prepared by Eleanor Daniels, Senior Team Leader (Functional Skills), The Manchester College @ HMPYOI Hindley