

Rethinking transition- listening to learners – navigating the system

This commentary aims to illustrate the contribution a specialist college offering person-centred programmes of study made towards the future life aspirations of a young man with complex needs, between 2008 and 2013.

Follow the journey of learner R from specialist school to mainstream college, this case study highlights the person-centred approaches and promotion of learner voice that R experienced whilst studying at Beaumont College in Lancaster. The skills learnt and confidence gained through this college experience has enabled R to pass an assessment to gain access to his local mainstream college and then gain acceptance for a mainstream Level 1 course for his second year.

The Beaumont College approach offers students the opportunity to **design their own programme of study** that will clearly lead towards their future life aspirations. The curriculum offers a range of practical courses in Creative Arts and Personal Development through which Communication, Skills for Life and therapeutic services are threaded to support the development of the whole person. All the subjects are taught through projects which are designed around the individual learners within the group. Every project is unique to each group; no two projects are the same or repeated.

Project based learning ensures that the learners are able to direct their learning in line with their Aim of Placement and future life aspirations; this promotes choice and greater personal autonomy.

The learners work is evaluated and continually assessed via a goal and target system, and progress is recorded daily through the college management information system.

Each learner begins their personal journey by making a person-centred PATH with their parents and friends; this concentrates their thinking towards their future life aspirations and from this their Aim of Placement and Annual Objectives and personal timetable.

The Story starts -Student R – His journey

R attends Mayfield Specialist School in Kirkham and has completed a range of Asdan Towards Independence modules. R has been in special education since the age of 2 and aged 19 is considering his post school options.

October 2008

Application to Blackpool and Fylde College – assessment indicated that R cannot be offered a place due to his medication requirements.

Application to Beaumont College in Lancaster a specialist college: detailed assessments undertaken by specialist team of educationalists and therapy professionals.

January 2008

Beaumont College is able to meet R's needs and he is offered a place.

Initial Assessment and pre-entry PATH meeting:

R attends Beaumont for his initial assessments and PATH meeting which leads to his Aim of Placement. R's funding bid is submitted based on his Aim of Placement

Aim of Placement

During his pre-entry PATH meeting R and his family identified that he would like to develop his independence skills with a view to looking in to the possibilities regarding supported independent living in the future.

In order to achieve this outcome the college will support R to:

- Develop a range of strategies to support his comprehension and expressive communication. This will include increasing the range of functions for which he communicates.
- Have the opportunity to develop peer relationships in a variety of settings.
- Demonstrate his ability to carry out practical independent living skills to include; money handling, travel, food preparation and personal safety.
- Become equipped to make future lifestyle choices by participating in creative arts and community activities.

Annual Objective for year 1:

- Will independently follow his daily routine.
- Will demonstrate an understanding of a sequence of events.
- Will make simple requests in a range of settings with a range of communication partners.
- Will express preferences in group activities.
- Will make independent choices within daily living activities.

September 2008

R starts Beaumont College, examples of timetabled subjects:

Performance



Building an issue-based performance to support his transition from college. R is participating in translating memories from the past and ideas for the future into his personal performance sequences

Music

Participating in a music event at Mayfield School – taking his work to the school R was able to demonstrate how he had developed his skills through music and singing

Personal Development

Work placement at Matalan



R unloads stock and places it in the correct sections within each bay ready for distribution.

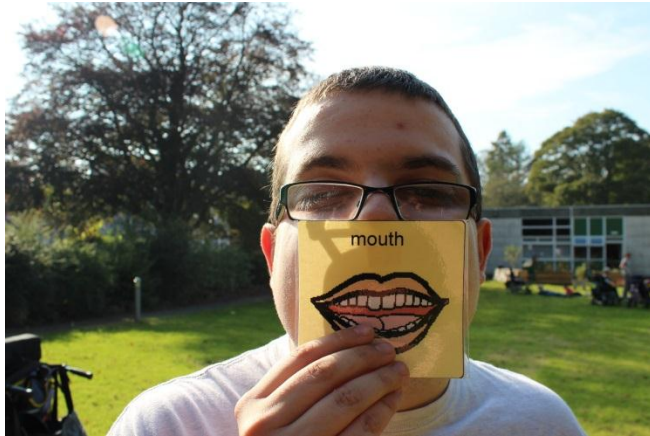
September 2009 - Year 2 Funding agreed based on the following Annual Objective Year 2

- Will use support strategies to follow instructions, such as written prompts, verbal instructions and/or copying a model for work tasks.
- Will begin to order events in a familiar sequence – both doing & beginning to talk about it using words like 'first', 'next', and 'then'.
- Will recognise the need to ask, and will formulate an appropriate request in a range of settings with a range of communication partners
- Will initiate and respond within social interactions for a variety of communicative functions e.g. to greet, comment, explain, direct, ask etc.
- Will gain an understanding of money transactions within natural contexts.

Dance

Directing others by giving them a physical prompt and or a verbal direction

Film Making



My new film is about laughing and being happy. This is a photo of me in the garden with a different mouth.



Working out the Order of each scene



Using laminated cue cards and a live-feed LCD display to direct a scene:

Personal Development



Using the checkout at a local supermarket

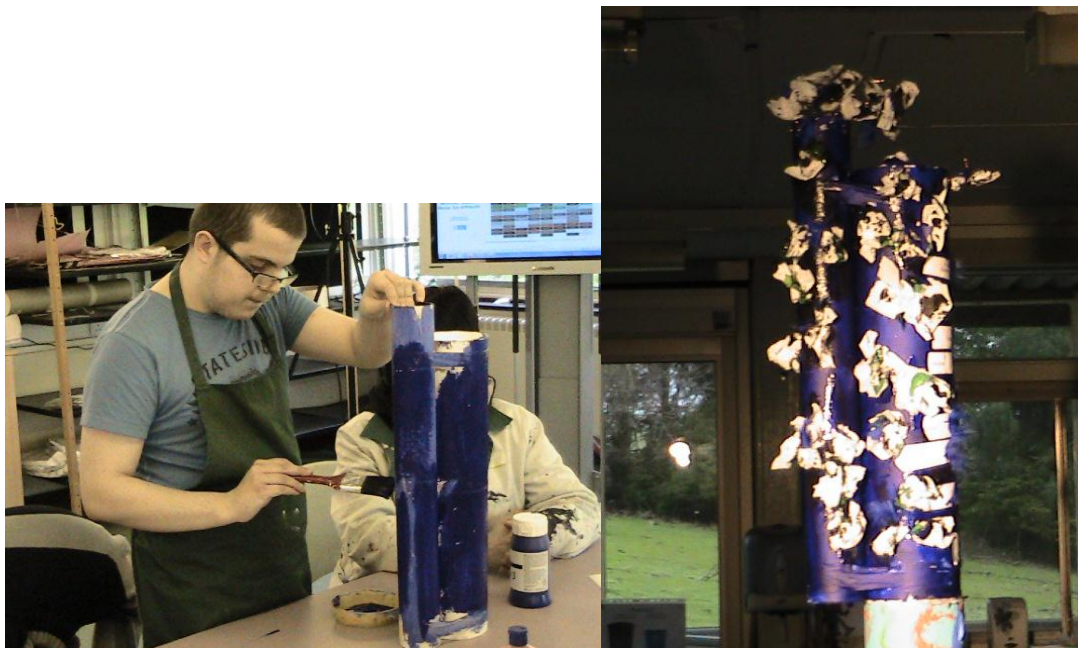
September 2010 Year 3

Funding agreed for 3rd Year based on Annual Objectives

- Will continue to use support strategies to follow instructions, such as written prompts, verbal instructions and or copying a model for work tasks.
- Will continue to expand his ability to talk about events.
- Will continue to work on formulating an appropriate request, in a range of settings with a range of communication partners.

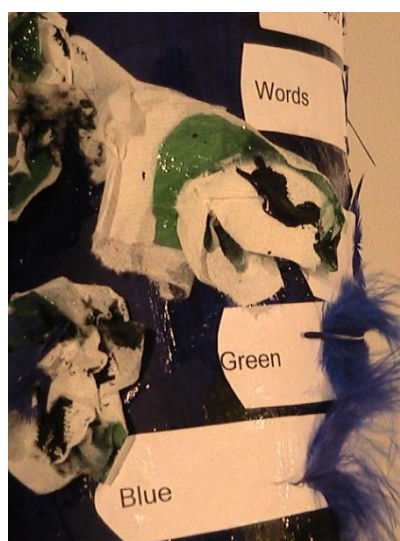
- Will continue to initiate and respond within social interactions for a variety of communicative functions e.g. to greet, comment, explain, direct, ask etc.
- Will continue to develop his skills for working with money within natural contexts.
- Will develop his functional work skills across a range of college activities and within an external work placement.
- Will develop time awareness skills within his daily routines.
- Long Term – for R to recognise when he does not understand.

Fine Art Leading to Bronze Art Award



R based his sculpture on the symbolist paintings of Chinese artist Wang Gang. This painter includes magpies (which are symbols for words in Chinese) in his images. R liked the idea of making magpies part of his sculpture and decided to use feathers, wire and tissue paper to make them.

Birds are Words and Words are Birds – work in progress



The finished work exhibited in a college exhibition during Arts Week
Close-up of the finished sculpture, showing the words R had chosen to include.

Film Making:

3rd Year final film project - The Delivery

Work in progress of 'The Delivery' 3rd year film project. Filmed on location inside a cardboard box.....

Household Skills



Using a microwave



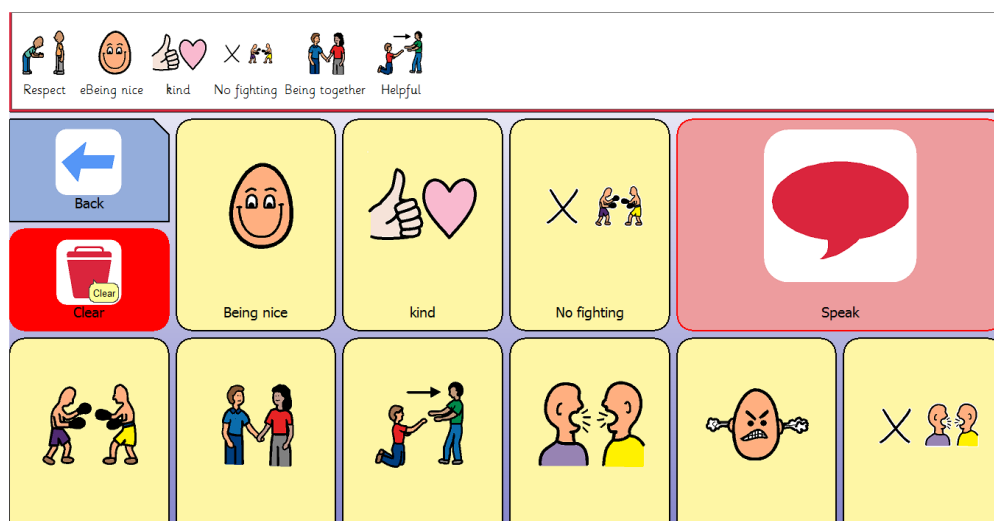
Chopping vegetables



Working with a team

Self –advocacy

Used symbolic language to express ideas about working in a group.



Moving forward

January 2011

R applied to Blackpool and Fylde College and gained a place on the Pathways course.

May 2011

Interview at Blackpool and Fylde College

R was able to demonstrate that he is able to take responsibility for his personal medication, recognise when to take it, and self-medicate as required.

The interviewing staff remembered R from his previous interview and remarked at how well his skills had developed during his time at Beaumont College.

R is therefore he is offered a place at the college

May 2011

R supported to make visits to Blackpool and Fylde College by his keyworker to get to know the campus better

June 2011

R undertake a taster week at Blackpool College in readiness for his transition

September 2012

Starts Blackpool and Fylde College he is now able to access mainstream education for the first time

May 2012

Visit by Programme Manager from Beaumont College to collect video material for LSIS Cluster project to illustrate the learner journey

Film footage shows R at work in the cookery session at Blackpool & Fylde College. This can be found on the Beaumont College website.

When asked R stated that he “likes” Blackpool and Fylde College and he is “happy” at college.

June 2012

R successfully passed his pre-entry course and has accepted a place on the Level 1 Food Preparation Course – a mainstream course.

July 2012

R left Beaumont College with certificates in the following subjects:

LARA Ref	Programme Title	Level	Awarding Body	External Provider	Start Date	Expected End Date	Stats	Outcome	Achievement	Reason for Change
2011/12 5010486X Date 01/09/2011 Created	Entry Level Award in Independent Living - Accessing Community Facilities (Entry 1) (QCF)	Entry Level 1	NOCN	No	01/09/2011	31/07/2012	Ended	Achieved	Achieved	
2011/12 50104858 Date 01/09/2011 Created	Entry Level Award in Independent Living - Household Skills (Entry 1) (QCF)	Entry Level 1	NOCN	No	01/09/2011	31/07/2012	Ended	Achieved	Achieved	
2011/12 50104901 Date 01/09/2011 Created	Entry Level Award in Independent Living - Personal Development (Entry 1) (QCF)	Entry Level 1	NOCN	No	01/09/2011	31/07/2012	Ended	Achieved	Achieved	
2011/12 50104913 Date 01/09/2011 Created	Entry Level Award in Independent Living - Rights and Responsibilities (Entry 1) (QCF)	Entry Level 1	NOCN	No	01/09/2011	31/07/2012	Ended	Achieved	Achieved	
2011/12 50072973 Date 01/09/2011 Created	Entry Level Certificate in Personal and Social Development (Entry 1) (QCF)	Entry Level 1	Asdan	Yes	01/09/2011	31/07/2012	Completed	Achieved	Achieved	
2011/12 50101717 Date 01/09/2011 Created	Functional Skills Qualification in Information Communication Technology (ICT) at Entry 1	Entry Level 1	Ascentis	No	01/09/2010	31/07/2012	Ended	Achieved	Achieved	
2011/12 01/09/2011 Date Created	The Learning for Living Programme	Programme 2		Yes	01/09/2009	31/07/2012	Ended	Achieve	Achieved July 2012	

September 2012

R will be able to attend a mainstream education course for the first time in his life.