

Staff Support

Seashell Trust (ISCP) Learners and staff developing ideas together



Background

Successful learner voice is not just about a bespoke framework for gathering learner views and engaging learners in the review and development of their learning – the *champions* of learner voice have just as an important role to play. As well as dedicated practitioners for learner voice, who have a responsibility to advocate its value and potential impact on the learning environment, the overall success of any approach is reliant on the support, promotion and belief from *all staff* that learner voice matters. The examples in this section highlight the importance of staff support, the effect of positive influencing relationships, as well as the mutual benefits that effective learner voice brings to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

About Seashell Trust

Seashell Trust is a charity based in Cheadle Hume, near Stockport in Greater Manchester, for children and young people and adults with sensory impairment, profound and multiple learning difficulties, and profound communication difficulties.

Their Story: What has Happened and How

Through creating and articulating a culture that embraces learner voice and trusts learners' contributions, Seashell Trust has increased learner participation in a wide range of the activities within the college. Learners were initially involved in small projects but this is consistently growing and developing, and learners are continually supported to take on greater responsibilities. Learners have been encouraged to demonstrate their potential as co-producers of their education, but always with the awareness that learners have individual communication needs, and require support in different ways.

Learners are now involved in staff recruitment, social activities, regional learner voice forums, and consultations on facilities, and teaching and learning. The students' council is taking a lead, in partnership with the college, to develop ways in which they can effectively influence the writing of lesson plans - an exciting venture for any organisation! As a member of support staff says "it's a learning experience for everyone".

Impact, Successes and Ideas for Action

Being trusted and supported to independently engage with learner voice activities tells learners that not only do they have a valued opinion, they are really able shape their education. This

leads to a more enjoyable college experience and provides invaluable personal development opportunities; improving interpersonal communication skills, and increasing individual's confidence and independence.