

Working towards independence; A local post 16 offer



What is being developed and by whom?

City College Southampton, Itchen Sixth Form College and City Limits are collaborating to develop a local post 16 offer for young people with a range of sensory, emotional/behavioural and learning disabilities or difficulties.

The offer is particularly innovative as it includes alongside college provision supported employment services delivered by City Limits (funded by Southampton City Council). As well as mapping current and planned provision, the work will, through partnership working, identify where new provision/curricula, services and collaboration can be developed to enrich the offer.

Why is it being developed?

Partners identified that young people and parents tend to have only 'feeder school limited' or single college information about provision, rather than a picture of all the potential choices available. Even where an appropriate course is chosen, if it's on offer at more than one institution it's important to make the right choice, for example, to experience a new environment, learn about travel etc. – 'for each student – the right course in the right environment'. If the information and support isn't available to explore this, the choice can't be made.

In addition, information about the vital role of supported employment (including work experience) in pathways to adulthood is not widely or consistently known about across delivery organisations, young people and their families. Employers working with colleges may not be aware of the help that supported employment can provide and college staff (along with young people and parents/carers) may not realise the essential role that these services play. The solution was to work together to develop a local offer that could provide coordinated information and support, thereby improving transition from school to college and college to work, or school to work.

How is it being developed and taken forward?

Establishing a **robust partnership of trust** is at the heart of the local offer. Whilst partners had some experience of working together, this had not been consistent or well developed. The success to date rests on each partner being actively involved in the tasks to develop the offer and a commitment to share information and develop joint promotion. Importantly, the development benefits from **high level buy in** from the college Principals and the Manager of City Limits, as well as a direct link with the 16-25 Task & Finish Group of Southampton City Council's SEND Pathfinder. The link with the Pathfinder enables information to be fed in at this strategic level, maximizing the potential to contribute to key strands including ensuring the place of employment in Education, Health & Care Plans, as well as the local offer. This will form part of the project legacy plan, embedding the work so that it continues after LSIS funding ceases.

Mapping existing and planned provision/services is underway and will result in joint information and marketing materials in May 2013. This will be followed by events for young people, parents/carers and employers, as well as new collaborative delivery, including City Limits providing work preparation

sessions in the colleges. Joint marketing materials will be made available across all partner sites as well as being distributed more widely. As the 'core' offer is established, partners are exploring how other institutions can be involved. Small cohorts of 2-3 students will be tracked to assess how transition is improving and how this is contributing to more effective and sustainable destinations in further learning and employment.

The Portswood Teaching School Alliance, also represented on the SEND Pathfinder 16-25 Group, is working with the partners on elements including transition planning, curriculum development and movement into work experience and employment, strengthening the reach and impact of the development. This includes tracking a cohort of 10 young people who are mental health services users, some of whom will not have a single Education, Health & Care Plan because they are not statemented and are in danger of falling through the net. They will be tracked through the transition from Year 11 to further learning and/or supported employment to assess new partnership arrangements and identify where further development is required.

What's the intended impact and how will it be assessed?

- **For young people:** clearer and more effective pathways into working life and adulthood. It is expected that a greater number of young people will make a successful transition into post 16 training and into employment.
- **For employers:** a high quality supported employment process that matches the right employee with the right employer and contributes to business success
- **For parents:** confidence in pathways that can help their child move into work and become independent
- **For partners:** improved curriculum, co-delivery, better use of resources
- **At strategic level:** contribution to strategic planning, improved co-ordination, reduction in duplication

Impact will be assessed through a variety of means including student progress and destination tracking and analysis (further education, employment, volunteering etc.), employer feedback, parent/carer feedback, partnership development plans, SEND Pathfinder feedback and involvement.