

Support into Employment

Newham College

Newham College is a Further Education College in East Ham, East London within one of the most richly diverse and deprived Boroughs in London. With a disproportionate amount of families living in multigenerational homes and temporary accommodation, 48% of residents are living in poverty. The consequences of poverty and inequality has had a huge impact during the Covid 19 pandemic, with the London Borough of Newham being one of the worst affected areas in England and Wales.

East London is also characterised by lower qualification levels, lower employment rates, and lower salary levels than other parts of the capital. With all these factors in mind there is a huge need to prioritise independence and successful employment outcomes for Learners within the borough and help shorten the poverty gap. One of the core objectives of our SEND provision is to help learners to be job ready so that they can eventually secure paid or voluntary employment. We are extremely proud of our Employment Curriculum and work hard to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to progress learners prior to progressing into our Newham Supported Internship Programme (known as NSIP) and into sustained paid employment.

Our dedicated employer liaison and internal job coach team at Newham College currently liaise with 15 local employers such as Morrison's, Boots, the British Heart Foundation, Shoe Zone, BHF Furniture and Electrical, Angels Hair and Beauty Salon, Coffee and Bean and a local Car Mechanic amongst others. They specifically support our STEPS into Employment students on our Pre-Supported Internship Programmes to provide Work Experience opportunities and to prepare students for the Newham Supported Internship Programme.

They do 1-day weekly work experience with external employers as well as working internally in various departments within the college and our SEND shop. We also have a college led 2-day Internal Supported Internship Programme in Ground Maintenance and our allotment within the College with some very exciting business and enterprise elements that form part of our STEPS Pre-Supported Internship Programmes planned for next year which will further develop students for NSIP. The Newham Supported Internship Programme is a business led venture led by the London Borough of Newham, Newham College runs the Newham Supported Internship Programme, in partnership with committed key local employers, within the

London Borough of Newham, Our Newham Work, Generate Opportunities and the Local Authority.

We are one of the largest providers of Supported Internships in the country working alongside 5 host Employers; Project Search at Newham University Hospital, SEND Coffee shops across 9 sites, Asda Beckton, London Borough of Newham libraries and John Lewis /Waitrose Westfield Shopping Centre Stratford. Interns work fulltime for 5 days a week at the host Employers premises.

Our Newham Work provide ongoing training and Support for Interns on and after the programme is over to help them look and apply for suitable employment through their Employer Liaison. They also provide ongoing Job Coach support whilst the Interns are in a new job to help them sustain employment.

Generate Opportunities is commissioned to provide us with highly skilled Job Coaches who support Interns on job tasks, job profiling and job analysis and to support in funding through Access to Work. The employers assign work” buddies” in their organisations to be mentors for the Interns and help job coaches learn the tasks before the job coaches guide the Interns through systematic instruction. Generate Opportunities also provide support when Interns get into jobs and to help support them to travel to work safely.

Evidence of going above and beyond

During these very difficult and unprecedented circumstances with Covid-19, some members of staff in the Supported Internship team at Newham College were able to physically go into work every day to support the rest of the team that were working remotely. We had to adapt our traditional model quickly and creatively, by implementing alternative employment methods that went above and beyond expectations, for the college partnership as well as for the Interns and their families. This change needed to be implemented to help support Interns to work remotely whilst still working for our host employers, as well as supporting Interns and their families through anxieties around Covid 19.

Newham College ensured that Interns and STEPS students were given laptops that were delivered to their homes. Tutors and Job Coaches were consistently in contact with families which was essential to enable a smooth transition into remote learning. We also checked that Interns were learning at the appropriate level and were able to access remote learning correctly, even through 1:1 sessions. For those that were unable to access the internet, or struggled remotely in any way, we also delivered learning packs to their home, which allowed for welfare checks for both Interns and families at a social distance and to give them the opportunity to voice their opinions,

concerns and solutions on any matters regarding their son/daughters anxieties and independence.

Before the 2nd lockdown was announced we ensured that parents/carers and Interns were prepared for remote learning by giving parents MS Teams sessions as well as sending them step by step picture illustrations so that everyone would be able to access classroom and employability sessions and learn how to communicate as a group online.

Appendix 1: Attached

Our key goal during the pandemic, as a partnership led approach during lockdown, was to ensure the wellbeing of Interns as well as their families were receiving the external support they needed. Through our partner at Our Newham Work, we linked up with other external agencies such as SCOPE, Talking Therapies and Our Newham Work's Supported Employment and Benefits Agencies who worked with families in sessions around benefits, mental health, Covid anxieties and specific employment skills sessions such as "Keeping Safe on the Internet", "Confidence Building" and "Breaking Barriers in Employment".

We were also in contact with external agencies to ensure that other enrichment activities were accessible. Newham's Youth Participation Services embarked on the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme with the college on the Asda Supported Internship as a pilot scheme in November 2020, linking activities to employment skills, exercise, and travel training. These Interns are now on their way to successfully completing the Bronze Award in June 2021. This project will now be implemented as an ongoing scheme within all our Supported Internship Host Employers at NSIP.

Appendix 2: Attached

The Newham Supported Internship Team worked tirelessly during lockdown and went above and beyond to provide additional round the clock support for distressed Interns and families to help them cope with the anxieties of lockdown and remote learning.

Evidence of innovation

Due to Covid restrictions and lockdown, we adapted work experience tasks within their specific job rotations, that delivered an employment-based curriculum accessible from home. Tutors and Job Coaches, with the support of dedicated host employers, successfully adapted their critical thinking and creative skills to further develop role plays online. The Interns also completed job tasks around the house

that were specifically creative and interesting, as well as employer related and included support from Parents.

- A great example of this was when Interns worked in conjunction with Harry George, one of our Host Employers, at SEND Coffee shops. Through Ocado deliveries, Harry would send Interns food packages home with the idea that they would replicate menu items sold in SEND Coffee shops. Job Coaches would work with Interns on video tutorials, working alongside them and their parents/carers to help create recipes. They also had a competition where they created an entirely new menu item that incorporated nutritional value and vegetarian ingredients. Interns submitted photos to Harry, College SI Team and Generate Job Coaches to judge a winner. The winning menu item was then introduced across all of Harry's coffee shops throughout London.

Appendix 3: Attached

- Interns at SEND Coffee Shops also helped to run a campaign for "Save SEND coffee shops". Interns supported their programme by creating posters and setting up a "Go Fund Me" page on Instagram and other social media platforms to help raise awareness and raise over £6,000 to help pay for SEND Coffee shops to stay open during the pandemic.

Appendix 4: https://www.gofundme.com/f/save-send-coffee?utm_campaign=p_cp_url&utm_medium=os&utm_source=customer

- Project Search Interns at Newham Hospital simulated various tasks at home that they would have been doing at the hospital to help them achieve their employment targets as well as Independent Living targets. For instance, if an Intern was working in the linen department as part of their rotation at the hospital, they would simulate the same task at home by washing household laundry, drying, folding and putting away. Interns on a catering rotation would cook food and clean up for themselves and their families. Other individual targets such as personal hygiene was also met by one of the Interns tying up

her own hair rather than her mum doing it for her. Various Independent skills targets were also met such as shopping, decorating their bedrooms and doing art projects.

Appendix 5: Attached

Exercise and Social Skills were one of our aims to help Interns cope throughout lockdown. Every morning, all the Supported Interns as well as Supported Internship Tutors and Job Coaches came together online to partake in daily exercise classes led by one of the Supported Internship Tutors. This was a great way for Interns as well as the SI Teams, to stay fit and focused for the day. The SI tutors would regularly come together with their teams to work collaboratively. The aim of this was to help all Interns get to know each other, help improve their social skills, combating isolation and building a support network.

All groups linked up with the Youth Participation Services and they took part in weekly online sessions after work with Shipman Youth Centre. They played games and had discussions on wellbeing and mental health and discussed future activities they would like to get involved in to help motivate and inspire them.

As a partnership we used innovation to overcome difficulties during the pandemic. An example of this was when the London Borough of Newham (LBN) Employers and all their staff closed down the libraries from March 2020. This affected us greatly as our Interns were unable to attend their work placements. We had to really think outside the box to come up with something that was going to work for the Interns in gaining employability skills while their placements were unavailable. We came up with an online business model, centring on digital skills and using our SEND shop within the college. Interns learnt how to use Canva, WIX and Sway websites to create an online shop. The rotations were broken up into creating and designing the website, making extra products for the shop and sales and marketing. The overall benefit of this for the Interns was to help them adapt to change and to continue to progress along their employment journey, during uncertain times.

Appendix 6: Attached

The work experience for STEPS student was also adapted to simulating work experience tasks at home. The students embarked on a great project called “A Day without Technology” to help them adapt to change, help them come out of their comfort zones and to help them not become reliant on technology. They used creative thinking skills to come up with a diary of work-related tasks with no

technology being used except for parents taking photos for their presentations. The presentation diaries were judged, and a winner was selected.

Appendix 7: Attached

At Newham College we are very strong in embedding enrichment into our Supported Internship and Pre SI and Work Experience Programmes and we have very strong employer liaison skills within the team and within the partnership as a whole. Along with the support of Generate job coaches before lockdown in March 2020, we embarked on several exciting projects to help the Interns with job related skills such as going to Credit Suisse Bank in Canary Wharf. As part of their enrichment, a group of Interns visited Credit Suisse where the Senior Management Team offered to practice interview techniques with the Interns in a live corporate environment. The Senior Management Team were very much involved in setting up and conducting mock interviews to help support Interns to gain a better understanding of corporate interview methods. Subsequently this helped Interns to become more confident to apply for interviews because they were then more aware of employer's expectations, rather than the interviews techniques they learnt in the classroom.

Appendix 8: Attached

We also embarked on an enterprise project at Asda where Interns upcycled materials to make and sell candles. This was created with the aim to encourage transferrable skills to the community and other settings and with the intention to promote building confidence in different employment settings for the future.

Evidence of sustainment over two years

All of the support and innovation given during lockdown is now ongoing to help break down barriers and support Interns and families with new changes in learning and employment methods. This will help to educate parents more around the benefits of coming off benefits and gain sustained employment. Our Newham Work has no time limit on how long they continue to work with and support families into employment after the Newham Supported Internship Programme is finished at Newham College.

Through our Partnership with Newham Council, we have built and sustained great relationships with local employers over time and to sustain Supported Internships for potential future Interns. Many of them receiving training through Our Newham Work and becoming "Disability Confident" employers themselves. We are always seeking to further expand employment opportunities for young people with Special Educational Needs and disabilities as well as physical and mental health and learning difficulties, with other key Employers within the London Borough of Newham.

The reputation of the Newham Supported Internship Programme is expanding and is recognised in a positive light which has caused more interest in the programme and further collaborative work with other external organisations. We were invited to speak at the Inclusive Ed International Conference in March where Kauser Patel spoke about her Supported Internship Journey with Project Search at Newham University Hospital in 2020. We already have a few exciting ventures in the pipeline for further expansion with Greater Anglia, Kickstart initiatives and further Traineeship and Inclusive Apprenticeship plans as well as designing an exciting new curriculum for next year that include further business set ups within Newham College that will also encourage inclusivity with mainstream learners.

Appendix 9: <https://events.techedmarketing.com/inclusiveed/>

We are extremely proud of all the work that we do to for our learners in the SEND department at Newham College and especially so during the Covid 19 Pandemic. The Newham Supported Internship Team within SEND, aims to help families as a holistic approach and to help bridge the employment and poverty gap in Newham. Our outcomes are over 50% for Project Search Newham University Hospital, John Lewis and Waitrose and over 70% for SEND Coffee against the national average of 5.6% for young people with SEND. These achievements are a testament to the Newham Supported Internship team's commitment and dedication to developing solutions as a collaborative partnership and in co-production with employers, local communities, Interns and their families, in order to deliver sustainable employment outcomes.

Appendix 10: Metro article indicating 70% employment outcomes at SEND Coffee
<https://www.newham.ac.uk/news/send-coffee-and-the-send-department-helping-the-disabled-into-work>