

Examples of Inclusion for Young Adults with Down's Syndrome

Further Education and Employment



A Down's Syndrome Association Publication

CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Case study 1: Jack | page 4 |
| Case study 2: Tom | page 9 |
| Case study 3: Chris | page 14 |
| Case study 4: Morwenna | page 19 |

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the work of the contributing authors Jane Beadman, Independent Specialist Educational Psychologist, David Cudworth, Education Officer and Specialist Advisory Teacher for Ups and Downs Southwest and Bob Black, DSA Education Officer. The contributing authors are all members of the DS UK Education Consortium.

We thank Jack Hale, Tom Sewell, Chris Dowall, Morwenna Black, their families and the professionals who support them.

Parents

Ronnie Hale (Jack)
Veronica Dowall (Chris)
Lyn Sewell (Tom)
Bob Black (Morwenna)

College staff

Leo Richards TA, and staff at King Edward VIth CC (Jack)
Bev Taylor STARS speech and language group leader (Chris)
Graham Deane, Support worker (Chris)
Mark Hodges PLUSS (Chris)
Roger Hulstone Rainbow Hotel Torquay (Chris)
Nancy Wilson and Michelle Hewald lecturers, Exeter College (Tom)
Malcolm Coad, Tamsin Merritt: Truro College (Morwenna)
Mr Guard, Mrs Brierly, Mrs Druce, Mr Head: Falmouth Community School
Martin Mann, Loraine Atkins, Sue Stenhouse: Foxes Academy
Nick Hill, Sally, Tim, Jack and all the duty managers at Wetherspoons Falmouth
Emma Cracknell, Florist Falmouth

CELEBRATING SUCCESS:

Examples of Inclusion for Young Adults with Down's Syndrome in Further Education and Employment

Introduction

The Celebrating Success series of booklets give examples of the experiences of young adults with Down's syndrome in real FE college and employment settings. Using the words of the students, teachers, teaching assistants, and parents they demonstrate how good practice can benefit not only the inclusion of a young adult with Down's syndrome but also impact positively on the whole community.

Since the 1981 Education Act, a succession of parents have placed their children in their local mainstream schools and colleges, and while it took about 20 years for the practice to extend to over eighty per cent of primary aged children, it is remarkable how commonplace it has since become. The expectation of many parents and children is to continue inclusive education throughout their school lives. An increasing number of secondary schools, and FE colleges, as well as employers, are now learning to make the necessary adjustments required to enable the inclusion of people of all abilities. Such education establishments are improving in the same way that primary schools did during the last 25 years.

Some teachers still find the thought of including a young adult with Down's syndrome in their lessons daunting, but almost all already have the skills needed to understand and address their individual needs. The case studies show how guidance in the DSA Education Support Pack for Further Education look when put into practice.

The school or college with the positive attitude towards meeting the needs of all students is always the one that has the least problems. Although the young person with Down's syndrome should be treated on his or own merit, as other students are, there is a specific learning profile that helps teachers to focus on their strengths and put strategies in place to overcome their difficulties. Given a little training in avoiding difficult or immature behaviour, engaging the young adult in meaningful activities and understanding the specific learning profile of individuals with Down's syndrome, schools and colleges all over the country are making reasonable adjustments to the way that they work.

We hope the case studies will encourage schools and colleges to take a socially inclusive approach to meeting the needs of young adults with Down's syndrome.

The DSA continues to work for improved and better focused provision to ensure that young people with Down's syndrome emerge from education with the skills to make the most of their adult lives.

CASE STUDY 1:

Jack, aged 17. King Edward VIth Community College, Totnes, Devon. South Devon College, Paignton, Devon.



Jack lives at home in the centre of a small village with his parents and two sisters Polly and Liberty. He attended his small local village primary school where he was very well included, then went on to attend the feeder comprehensive school of 1700 students, King Edward VIth Community College. The school hosts bi-annual support group meetings for staff supporting children with Down's syndrome in the area, and manage a resource library stocked by funding from the local authority. At King Edward's Jack was supported and included along with nine other students with Down's syndrome from different year groups.

Jack was faced with a number of serious challenges during his last two years at secondary school. From the age of two Jack has suffered sudden attacks, which until recently has had no definitive diagnosis. During these attacks he can't talk or walk, has difficulty breathing and his neck swells. He has carried an epi pen with him at all times as the doctors felt an allergic reaction could be causing the attacks. He has always had a Health Care plan in school about what to do when he has one of these attacks.

Until year 9 Jack had been a highly motivated, happy and popular student but in Year 10, studying for GCSE's and BTec courses, he began to experience panic attacks. These were partly due to the stress of school work but mostly to the realisation that his Down's syndrome made him different and he was unable to change this. It was also at this time Jack's granny died on his birthday and although she lived a long way away they were very close and Jack was greatly affected.

A number of meetings were held at the school between all those involved in Jack's care to try and resolve the situation. In March 2012 Jack was diagnosed with Idiopathic Angioedema. This is an internal disorder that causes 'allergy type' reactions but is related to stress – Jack experiences laryngeal oedema as his neck, throat, tongue and lips swell.

Eventually his mum kept Jack out of school with the consent of the SENCo as he was near to a breakdown. The SENCo suggested Jack withdraw from some of the GCSE and BTec courses that seemed to be worrying him most. A flexible time table was arranged so that Jack could come into school and work 1:1 with a teaching assistant (TA) in a room alone if that was required. Jack became very aware he was no longer really involved with his peers and entering a classroom created anxiety for Jack. He became phobic about school and peer relationships and could not physically walk into the canteen or any areas where there were large groups of students without having a panic attack. It took 7 months before Jack was confident enough to return to his normal timetable and regular classes. He now receives support in managing the attacks from a Learning Disability nurse.

The turning point for Jack's recovery came after he had returned from a skiing trip with a special school – he announced to his parents 'I am going back to school,' which he did!

Once back his confidence returned and this prompted his parents to look at sixth form provision within the school. Jack achieved 2 GCSE's – English – grade F and Art (pottery) grade D. He also achieved Entry levels and ASDAN Bronze awards.

He is now in the first year of sixth form for two days a week. The other three days are spent at the local FE college (South Devon College) where he is completing Life Skills, ICT, Cookery and PE courses at Entry Level 2. The transition to college was implemented during Year 11 to ensure that Jack became familiar with the new environment. Jack has expressed a preference for sixth form as it offers him both the opportunity to work with more able students and a more varied choice of courses.

Jack has always enjoyed skiing and since year 7 has gone skiing with the school. His mother has gone with him to provide support, paying for her own ticket. Seeing Jack in a different setting enabled staff to appreciate skills they were not aware of. Although Jack has been unable to access the group ski lessons he skis with a special school group every year, choosing to socialise with them in the evenings. Over the years he has become good friends with members of the group.

Jack still spends time with his friends from school who did not progress into the sixth form. They have sleepovers, go out into town, and to the cinema just like other teenagers. All his friends either have Down's syndrome or additional needs. He does not socialise with any of the sixth formers out of school.

A lot of Jack's activities in the evenings and weekends are geared to making him as independent as possible, for example, going to the dry ski slope every week means that he keeps his skills ready for the next skiing holiday. Jack also attends a fantastic youth club, run by dedicated volunteers for typically developing teenagers, which is split into age groups. Here he can dance, play pool and go on trips.

Jack also plays football, and wants to have drumming lessons. He was doing regular gymnastics but is just starting a new football club run at a local Community College for students with additional needs. He also starred in the BBC programme 'Moving on' aired on March 13th 2012.

Inclusion:

I love working with Jack – he's very enthusiastic and a great poser with a camera in his hand. He is very personable and eager to engage in conversation. I wish that there were more students in the sixth form with SEN so that he could have a peer group as well as the current sixth formers – there is one student that makes a point of including Jack in the lessons – he is a friend now. There is also a problem in sixth form in that if a teacher is away there is never any set work left as the other students know what they need to do.

(TA who supports Jack in Photography and Art)

Sixth form provision: (2 days a week)

Jack's studies with the A/S level and A level photography students – he has to be with both groups for his timetable to fit. He has five sessions of photography a week and two sessions of Art; Jack also has one study session and one session working on his communication and speech and language skills each week. Jack is spoken of as a charming, polite student who converses fluently and clearly, but sometimes needs support with comprehension. He has a tendency to try to please all the time and it is difficult to know what he really thinks or feels. Staff are helping him to become more confident and are encouraging him to say what he feels using role play and other strategies. Recently Jack told me: 'I like it at KEVICC; South Devon College is fun but it's very big.'

Jack's TA reports he is making fantastic progress in both his Art and Photography, producing excellent work with three different teachers. He recently went on a successful trip to London with the group and they are all due to go to Tuscany soon. Jack

Jack is doing really well with his radio show and his speech has improved since he has been accessing the speech and language work at school.

He is a lovely lad always well organised and it has been a pleasure to work with him and I wish him Good Luck in the future!

(TA who supports Jack)

is working on a bronze/silver level (ASDAN) award for Art and an NVQ 1/2 for photography.

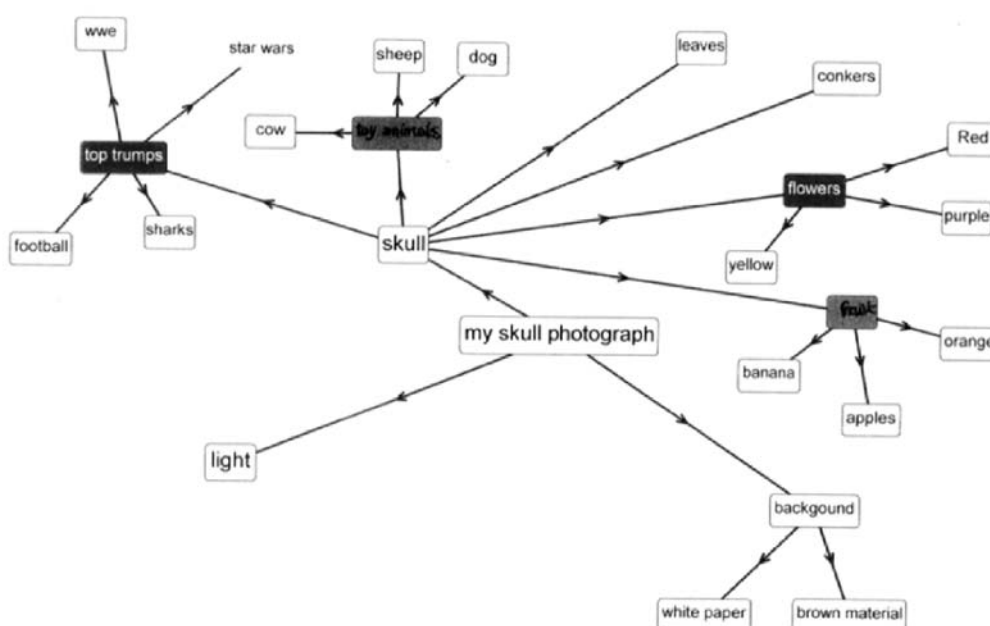
As part of his sixth form provision Jack goes to a local radio station at Dartington (Sound Art 102.5) for two sessions on a Tuesday morning where he DJ's and produces his own show. This involves choosing the music to be played, operating the machinery and providing his own commentary. One of Jack's TA's takes him to the radio station which is only a few miles from school and a support worker from the radio station is on hand if required. Jack would love to do this forever!! Currently he is learning the skills needed to catch a bus from home to Dartington.

Observation of photography A level lesson March 2012:

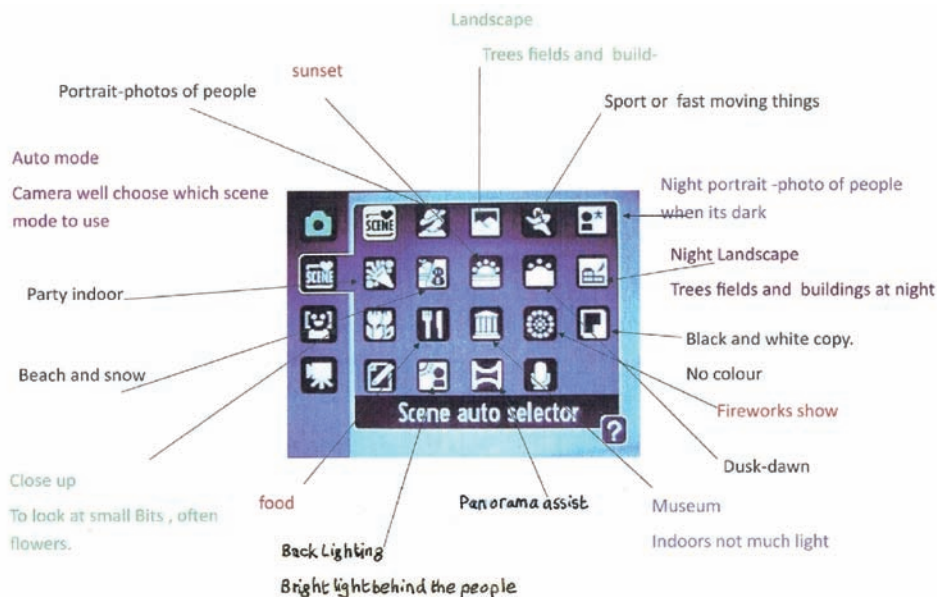
Jack was part of a group of 13 students busy finalising their portfolios for their A level exam. He was working with TAs developing his photographs in the dark room. The process had been differentiated for him into small achievable steps by a TA enabling Jack to be almost independent in making his images and selecting the photographs he wanted to use for his piece of work.

Jack showed me his portfolio and his TA explained the task – they used terms from the A level course e.g. 'golden triangles' and worked on a collage of tree photographs Jack had taken and cut up for a collage. He then decided where the pieces should go following the rule of the golden triangle. The piece was stunning and sorted into shades of colour. As his TA commented 'I personally feel that Jack is very intuitive about composition' – his interpretation is individual but within the remit. The completion of the task entailed Jack and his TA looking at Photoshop using the same photograph but changing the colour cast. Each picture was then cut up in exactly the same way and Jack designed it all.

The pace of the lesson is too fast for Jack as it is at A level and work has to be completed for the A level students within deadlines, however Jack is included because the TA determines the aspects Jack should follow and differentiates the work accordingly. For example when the class were discussing an animal skull and how to develop colour both within the skull, and in the background for them to reproduce, Jack made a mind map with his TA.



The mind map is a tool which enabled him to develop his ideas about what was colourful, triggered by the skull. The task was initiated by thinking about which animal the skull might have come from and this led Jack on to think about toy animals and then Top Trump games because one of his Top Trumps was about sharks. Jack went on to develop his photographs of skulls – he is very good at using all the software.



Jack made an excellent start to the year. He has worked on developing digital photography and worked in the wet room on photograms and black and white film photography. He seems to really enjoy the lessons and has developed a sketch book and a few mounted sheets. He has a good relationship with his TA, and is also supported by another TA when he develops his photos in the darkroom. We plan to have an exhibition of his work both in photography and Art at the end of his course.

I am very pleased with his progress in photography where he has worked on new techniques and skills such as understanding aspects of how the camera works, focus and composition.

(Teacher of photography)

I have worked with Jack since Year 8. It is such a pleasure to work with Jack – he always tries his best and loves to please people. To see him now coming into his own is fantastic. His behaviour is so good and he's so polite and charming. He doesn't always understand although he says that he does. It's been absolutely lovely working with Jack.

(Jack's lead TA)

South Devon College:

The College at the moment has little flexibility for students to move between courses with support although it is being reviewed. There are strict course requirements so students need to have the correct GCSE passes for the level of course. Life Skills is offered to those students without GCSE grades.

At his Annual Review which was attended by Jack, his mum, Careers South West (previously Connexions), Jack's personal tutor and one of the TA's, Jack's future at the College was

discussed using the Helen Sanderson format of writing responses on flip chart sheets to the following questions:

- What's important for Jack now and in the future?
- What's working well/not working?
- Questions that Jack has; Issues to resolve.
- Action Plan.

The careers officer was very knowledgeable about the developments within the College and this helped Jack and his mother in making decisions about the future. Jack would like to do Dance, Art, Photography, Child Care and Catering, instead of his current course. The College is developing a vocational taster course within the Life Skills department but this is currently at a level Jack is unable to access. Hopefully this can be resolved as it covers many of the things he is interested in, offering sample taster days for Child care, Performing Arts and Catering.

Discussion also centred on whether to use Jack's free place at College which could continue until he is 20 or to explore placement at a college that could provide Jack with a Performing Arts course e.g. Chicken Shed or the Orpheus Centre, away from home.

My preferred choice of school would have been a school which doesn't exist – somewhere between a mainstream and a special school. At KEVICC where lessons maintained Jack's interests and where the group is smaller, the work is made visual, the teacher understands Jack's learning needs and the TA is very good then it is successful. It is always good when communication works and staff have a good working relationship with the family. The Home – School diary has given us detailed information and we have had a really good key worker TA.

There are pros and cons to mainstream provision – would Jack have had his breakdown if he was at a Special school? But then would he have been stretched enough? Friendships as he has got older are an issue – he still has a great social life in school but it is now from adults rather than students. Nonetheless Jack has had a really positive year in the sixth form.

Jack, since he was 16/17, knows that he has DS and that it can't be 'mended' – he doesn't want to be patronised when he is being taught but he still needs support because he can't do all the things that he wants to do. He needs to build a career that is possible – at the moment he wants to be a lawyer in Los Angeles.

Actually he is a brilliant dancer and performer in Performing Arts which he did at school – I would like to explore the possibilities of Jack continuing with his DJing and radio work, his photography but most importantly dance at a Performing Arts College – I have found the ideal placement but I am not happy with the boarding side – it is several hundred miles away from home – if I could find a respite family that he could lodge with this would be ideal and Jack is keen to do this.

(Parent's views of sixth form placement)

CASE STUDY 2:

Tom, aged 19.
Exeter College,
Exeter, Devon.



Overview

Tom lives at home with his parents and two sisters on the outskirts of a small country village near Exeter. His older sister Lauren has now finished university and is working and his younger sister Helena attends college. Tom attended mainstream primary and secondary schools, where his experience of inclusion was positive.

Throughout Tom's life he and his family have had a number of challenges to overcome. He was born with an atrioventricular septal defect (AVSD) of his heart and at six months he suffered a respiratory

arrest and was in intensive care for four weeks. When he was eleven it was discovered he had a heart murmur which may mean he will eventually need a valve replacement. Despite being born with no digits on his favoured right hand he learned to write with his left. He wears digital hearing aids for mild bilateral hearing loss and has learned to use predictive texting when he is in situations where he cannot hear speech on his mobile phone.

None of these issues have deterred Tom from developing an active social life and a variety of interests. He attends ROC Active, which is part of the Robert Owen Communities based in Totnes, where he can take part in activities as different as Zumba, boules and football. At secondary school he was part of the gymnastics club and won awards for his skills. On alternate Saturdays he uses his direct payments to join a local social group that offers trips to local attractions and activity parks. Saturday is his time for working on an allotment. He also finds the energy to have weekly tennis lessons and trains for a local swimming club, where he has won awards for swimming.

Inclusive Practice

During his time at secondary school Tom was included in all mainstream lessons with his typically developing peers. In his final year he was in mainstream lessons for 85% of his time accessing a broad curriculum. He studied English, maths, biology, physics, chemistry, French, P.E., history, ICT, ASDAN and took part in gardening group work.

Tom gained qualifications in Entry Level English, maths, history and ICT: he has also achieved GCSEs in combined science and French, as well as an ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness.

During his final two years at secondary school plans were put in place for his transition to college. Tom began attending Exeter College for one day a week initially, but this became two days once he had settled in. He followed courses in catering and drama during that time and in addition he had the opportunity to complete a two week work experience placement at Tesco.

Exeter College is a thriving college of further education situated in the centre of the city. It offers a wide range of courses in entry levels 1, 2 and 3 as well as Skills for Living courses and Vocational Studies. The latter two have no entry requirements and students attending these courses can move on to Vocational Studies Extra or a level 1 or NVQ during their time at college.

Tom worked with an 'enabler' learning the skills required to catch a public bus into college and by the time he was ready to become a full time student, he was independently catching the local bus from his village into Exeter and walking to college, navigating busy roads safely.

Tom attends the Skills for Living course which is a full time placement for 16 to 19 year olds. Students study maths, English, cooking, community orientation, ICT, and life skills, as well as attending tutorials. Each year students also go away on a residential, have a Prom and a Christmas dinner, take part in sports competitions and become involved in a lot of volunteering. There are many options to choose from each term as well as enrichment courses which are open to all college students such as art, choir, sport, drama and gardening.

I enjoy College better than school. I think my course is very good because I like the members of staff because they can be quite helpful. I like my friends – Catherine, Fraser, and James. (Tom)

Students are placed in one of five sets according to ability and can progress through the levels and on to other courses with support if necessary.

Tom is currently in his third year at college working at Entry Level 2 with a varied timetable of maths, English, ICT, drama, community orientation, life skills, cookery, urban gardening, exploring art and group tutorial. During 2011 Tom gained Diploma 'Skills for Working Life' Entry Level 2, Level 1

'Certificate of Personal Effectiveness' and Entry Level 2 'Certificate in Life Skills'. All tasks are based on functional and age appropriate skills which lead to independence in adult life. All are modular and twelve units are studied per year. Qualifications achieved will be an Entry Level Diploma in 'Independent Living'. The students are also working on a diploma in 'Skills for Working Life' – level 2 'Skills for Living'. Tom has been on a residential trip to London with the college which went well and he enjoyed.



In textiles the group were following a Healthy Eating idea to design and make their own T shirt involving stitching, printing etc.

College is good for Tom and he has gained a lot more independence compared to school. At school he had a lot of teaching assistant (TA) support. I am pleased with College for Tom. It is different to school though as they don't use National Curriculum levels so it is hard to quantify progress e.g. vehicle maintenance turned out to be washing cars when I had hoped that Tom would learn about parts of the engine or how to change a tyre. Horticulture turned out to be weeding. It is difficult to know educationally what progress is occurring.

The college feel that Tom is placed on courses which are the right level for him and life skills are good practice for him. Tom now has real friends as opposed to the students at school who were just nice to him. When we were in Exeter shopping Tom bumped into some friends from college who were really pleased to see him and they went off together for about 15 minutes going around town – that never happened at school. Mainstream students at secondary school said 'Hello 'to Tom but never spent time with him. At Exeter College all his peer group are operating on the same level as him.

(Tom's mum)

Tom's success at Exeter College is based upon the college's commitment to providing a safe inclusive environment. Each student has an individual action plan and a personally-negotiated timetable. Students are taught in small groups with in-class support. Assessment is continuous with regular reviews built into each individual student's programme. The college reporting system provides full subject and tutorial reports giving opportunities for monitoring progress and individual achievement which can be shared on a regular basis with students and their families. Observations of two of Tom's lessons show evidence of this commitment.

Maths Lesson

A group of eight students were being taught in a bright, well equipped, modern classroom with two support workers providing assistance when needed. The aims of the lesson based on going to the cinema were: to learn about analogue and digital time, to make a 24 hour clock to aid their learning and then to put this learning into practice in a functional setting.

The teacher had prepared relevant accessible materials and Tom's placement in this group was appropriate as there were many students that were more capable than him and they were able to provide positive role models for learning and behaviour. Tom tends to interrupt and staff were aware of this and were quick to reinforce the need for good social skills.

Each student had to pick a film from the work book, circle the time that they wanted to view it and then work out the length of the film in minutes, from the time given in hours and minutes. The strategy was to write down 60 then add on the remaining minutes and Tom managed this task without support.

The interactive whiteboard was used in a group activity on time representation. Two different times were written and students had to decide whether they had enough information to conclude that they represented the same time, e.g. 7.30 and 7.30pm, 09.45 and 9.45 am. Individual students made their choices with their explanations and the group gave their suggestions, especially if the choice was wrong. The group then discussed what price they would pay for a ticket, one student noticed that the student concession was £3.50. They had to work out the cost for themselves and two friends, and then use coins to find two different ways of making the amount. Tom needed much more support with this, which was quickly recognised by the staff and provided.

Drama Lesson

The group of twelve students sat in a circle and in turn evaluated the play that they had performed the previous week, describing their roles and the plot. Tom was very clear in his descriptions of the play and his involvement in it. Drama is Tom's favourite subject so he was fully involved and connected with all the discussions and feedback.

A parachute game called 'cat and mouse' was played. Students volunteered to be the cat – standing on top of the parachute in the middle, or the mouse, running around underneath the parachute as the rest of the group shook it up and down. The cat then had to get hold of the mouse with clues given by the group. The teacher explained the safety rules and even the most reticent of students were actively encouraged to take part. Tom was quick to volunteer and have a turn at each role.

The next activity, 'find the keys' involved a student volunteering to sit on a chair in the middle of the room wearing a blindfold whilst a set of keys were placed under the chair. Students volunteered to get the keys by putting their hands up. The skill of the game was to be as quiet as possible and then to return to your seat, although the participants were also encouraged to confuse the blindfolded student by making the noise of a false route by jangling the keys in the wrong direction. Tom was the only student who remembered to do this, which is proof of how engaged he was with the activity.

The blindfolded student in the chair was then allowed to remove the blindfold and was asked to guess which student had the keys, as each member of the group had their hands behind their backs. The teacher had reminded the students who were blindfolded that they had to use their remaining senses and listen carefully to locate who had the keys. Again Tom participated well and was both blindfolded and the taker of keys.

The final activity after break was called 'park bench'. The teacher reminded students that the point of this activity was to have conversations that you might have in a café and so to try to avoid arguments. A table was placed in the centre of the room with three chairs around it and the students were invited to go and sit in the chairs, improvise a conversation scenario of their choice and then develop it. At any time another student could come up to a chair and say 'freeze' and replace the student in that chair. This proved to be a very stimulating and interesting set of scenarios.

It became apparent from the start that there were four students who liked to be at the 'bench', one of whom was Tom. He would sometimes be the only one on the bench but several of the female students rallied to be part of the scene and this continued throughout the session. Tom often went back onto the park bench too soon, giving other students a chance to only say one line which caused some friction among the students. When this happened the teacher would remind the group about fair turn taking. Similarly she would intervene if scenarios seemed to lose direction. She would take one of the seats and in character ask questions which led the acting back onto task.

One of the college's great inclusiveness strategies I think is the drama across several courses that Tom attends. When he was in his first year I went to see a joint drama and fashion show produced by students taking these options in Skills for Living but not only was it attended by parents of Skills for Living students but a large number of the textiles students from the non-skills for living courses attended too and enjoyed it.

(Tom's mum)

As with any educational setting there can be unforeseen issues which arise. This has been the case for Tom on occasions, but as his mother said 'Tom has to get used to being with people and what happens is part of everyday life.'

I'm quite a sensible person – other students from College mess around – they call me over to do things; one took stuff out of my bag; someone slapped me on my face; they put all my stuff in the boys toilets; one was really rude to me. The students got into trouble with the staff – I told them about it – pretty awful life I had then. It's got better!

(Tom's view)

Tom initially had some problems with a newspaper vendor who tried to coerce him to buy papers at the bus station and use up his money. Tom soon learned to say 'No' and is very clear about how to handle the situation. He also needed to learn to queue giving enough personal space between people in front and behind him at the bus stop.

In college a few students attending courses in the same building bullied him this year, sending him threatening texts and messing around with his belongings. The college dealt with the issue promptly and listened to Tom, and the ringleaders were excluded for five days.

The Future

Just as Exeter College were involved in supporting Tom in his transition from school to college, they are now working with Tom and his family in planning his next steps. The family have recently contacted 'PLUSS' who are employment consultants for people with a wide range of disabilities. However there are currently funding issues and as Tom really enjoys college they are also considering 'APEX' which is an adult provision for 19-25 year olds at Exeter College focusing on employment and life skills.

Tom hopes to attend a Work Skills course to help him find out about working life and how to progress into a job. It will involve two full days a week towards gaining 'ASDAN' qualifications in PSD (Personal and Social Development) and in Employability, as well as work experience.

Tom is also exploring the possibility of attending Dawlish Gardens Trust which is a provider of Quality Training and Meaningful Work Experience in horticulture, hospitality and catering, floristry, woodwork, ICT and conservation for people with learning difficulties. It also offers arts/crafts and music.

CASE STUDY 3:

Chris. Work Placements, PLUSS, Devon.



Overview:

Chris lives at home with his parents and throughout his life has had a number of health problems that have affected his ability to attend school full-time. Chris wears a hearing aid for mild hearing loss and he wears glasses. He is long sighted and has nystagmus in addition to this.

Chris is very quiet and shy amongst strangers, but is highly sociable with his friends.

Chris attended the local Primary school where he was placed into the year group below his own. He then attended a large mainstream comprehensive school.

Chris's learning levels remain between P6 and P8 for all subjects and his reading is functional – he doesn't read books, but he can read the TV guide. His writing is very neat and he can find the words that he needs for spelling, which he then copies.

Chris is passionate about WWE wrestling and writes lists of every fight and each victor. If he hears a piece of music he can tell you in which year it was a hit and which wrestler won the championship that year. He is also very good at texting on his iPhone.

Inclusive practice:

At secondary school Chris achieved ASDAN awards at bronze and silver level. Chris also achieved an OCR award in computing skills and a 'John Muir' award for forestry skills. His parents considered a residential placement and Chris attended a week long trial which confirmed their decision to look for local placements so that he could continue to live at home.

At this time (2008) a 'family led jobs project' was initiated, which his mum became involved in. This then inspired the family to look at Chris's strengths, as well as his weaknesses and encouraged them to think about local work opportunities that would meet Chris's aspirations, as well as supporting his needs. At the same time the local authority started a 'Getting a life' project and his mum became the parent representative. A care manager was also involved in the project and this proved invaluable in securing funding.

Chris, his family and school also began working with an organisation called 'PLUSS' which is a social enterprise that supports people with disabilities into employment each year. Its vision is 'People of all abilities are inspired to achieve a career.'

The family led jobs team and 'PLUSS' encouraged the use of a person-centred plan to make a 'Discovery Profile' in order to help everyone focus on what Chris could do and the things

that were important to him. Using this profile, they then created a plan designed to support Chris in his move from school into employment.

In Year 10 Chris undertook work experience, one day a week, at the local Co-op supported by one of his school TAs, who was also paid to support him during the school holidays using direct payments (DP). This was increased to two days a week in Year 11. During sixth form Chris had work experience in a local hotel for one day a week. He loved working in the hotel, especially in the restaurant, until it became really busy during the summer. After trying a number of different tasks the acting manager decided that Chris was happiest in the kitchen.

Chris completed a 'work right' project during his training experiences with 'PLUSS' and his school used Chris's funding from 'PLUSS' to pay for his TA to go with him making the transition from school into work very successful. Once Chris left school he started one day a week work experience at Waitrose and was offered the possibility of paid work in the future.

During this time Chris had fewer activities in the evenings and was beginning to be over-dependent on his play station. His mother used DP to organise support in a local supermarket for one evening a week. The support worker worked on the till whilst Chris stacked the shelves independently. Working in this local shop helped him to learn how to walk by himself from home to work – a skill previously denied him as he was always taken by taxi to school. He also talked to neighbours that he met en route and through this has been helped to overcome his fear of animals – he now rides horses and has three dog friends.

Extra-curricular activities:

When Chris was 18, he received an individual budget which he used for personal job coaching to support him into paid work once he had left school. Chris now uses it to pay for a supporter to take him to night clubs, a special needs disco where his friends go and to the gym twice a week. He has attended a surfing day and goes on adventure holidays with his support worker and on holiday to Spain with his brother.

Every fortnight, Chris attends the 'STARS' group for young adults with Down's syndrome. This is a language group, which is run by 'SYMBOL' trained staff who concentrate on functional and social language. It was founded by the local parent group for children with DS. Chris is totally focused on his tasks, and is one of the fastest in the group to complete their activities.

I feel Chris benefits from the group because it allows him to practice new skills at his own pace to 'have a go' in an environment that he feels comfortable in. It allows Chris to reinforce work introduced to him some years previously (albeit in a more age appropriate way). It also presents challenges within the group which can be adapted to personal tasks that Chris needs now he is in the workplace. More importantly, it allows Chris to demonstrate his skills and to experience self-esteem in a group of peers that are special in his life.

The STARS leader has also been able to provide support for Chris's work placements through the activities of the group. Chris finds it hard to answer questions and is too ready to just answer 'Yep' to any question. Work is being done to help him make appropriate choices and give appropriate answers, both in the work place and at 'STARS'.

Employment:

Chris now has a broad range of skills that he takes with him into employment. Through his supermarket work at the Co-op Chris can now: stack shelves across all departments of the store; face up produce and products; clean shelves, windows and glass; mop up spills; rearrange displays and price tickets; recycle packaging and make tea.

Chris's kitchen work at the hotel has meant that he can now: stack items and restock the store room and fridge; chop and sort vegetables; tray up food and open tins; clean work surfaces; and he is also able to make jelly, trifle and cheesy cabbage. His work placement at the hotel has led to Chris being offered paid employment for two half days a week, with the possibility of more days in the future.





Ongoing employment issues are solved by staff remaining vigilant in their support of Chris. The team that he works with are aware of not only Chris's successes, but also how to problem solve in accordance with his awareness. The key to success has been having a six-weekly person-centred planning employment meeting attended by; the 'PLUSS' development manager, an employment consultant, his mum, Chris and his support worker. The meetings are held in order to plan strategies and implement them and these meetings are pivotal to Chris's success.

The format that they use in these meetings is, 'What is working? What is not working?' and Chris's mum chairs the meetings and scribes. His parents would love to involve his employers directly in these meetings, but realistically the feedback is sufficient for good practice to continue.

At Waitrose Chris has achievement cards and is rewarded when a job is successfully completed. If he receives five cards then he is given £10. 'STARS' provided a mind map to teach Chris what achievement means and a book for Chris with clear statements in language that he can understand about the work process and the health and safety rules and fire drill. This book is kept at work so that he knows what to do and understands the codes used for different skills, and also so he knows which staff member to contact for which job.



The team that he works with at Waitrose also have to use the same language and statements with Chris so that he does not become confused. Any extra work done by support staff is funded either by DP, or additional Access to Work funding.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Things to be aware of: I have no hearing in my right ear. Noisy environments make it difficult for me to hear and understand. <i>please check that I have understood</i> I am a visual learner and learn by seeing things rather than through words. <i>use symbols, colours and diagrams.</i></p> |  | <p>Self help skills. I can read and write and I have a note book with some useful phrases in please let me use it. <i>Write in this book; instructions or words you think may be helpful.</i></p> |
| <p>Things I Like Neatness and order. Clear simple instructions. No more than 3 instructions at a time(<i>first , next, then</i>) I also like ..beer..wrestling..the Simpsons ..my I-pod & Wii</p> |  | <p>Communication Skills Please speak clearly and naturally, face me and use my name. I know Makaton signing <i>but general gestures are okay.</i> Questions asked with <i>who, what, why where and when</i> will generate a more productive answer. Words that you cant understand I can write in my notebook.</p> |
| <p>Things I don't like. Loud noises. dirt and disorder, some animals</p> | <p>I live in Torquay In June I will be 20 years old</p> | <p>Motor Skills I find small fiddly tasks difficult. Learning a new task will take longer <i>Please be patient, allow me more time.</i></p> |
| <p>Devised for Chris Dowall /Waitrose by Bev Taylor betaylor@talktalk.net</p> | | |

Chris is not yet paid for his work at Waitrose as he needs to be able to complete the fire drill independently. Initially Chris could work for an hour without adult support, now he works for a whole day without the need for support.

For his work at the hotel Chris had been paid from the age of 19. Initially this reflected his work pace, so to begin with he was paid for two hours out of the six, and then for three out of six, and he was soon paid for all six hours. He has rarely had time off or been ill and always arrives on time. His confidence has increased greatly and he always has his bag ready packed for work.

Chris gets on very well with all of us. We enjoy working with him. He is part of our team – working with all nationalities. He's been great and we want to continue to have him working for us. He puts as much into work as anyone else. He's one of the staff and no different from anyone else. He does lots of basic duties – preparing the vegetables and making the desserts. He follows our rules and gets things exactly right – he's very good!

(Roger Hulstone)

While at work Chris used to have a book of laminated cards that stated the order in which tasks needed to be done and contained recipes for all the dishes that he prepared. He is able to read all of this and uses it as an aide-memoire. It is also available for all the staff to see. Currently Chris has learned how to do all the tasks and no longer needs to refer to the book to remind him.

Chris's weekly routine involves spending one day at home, two days of work at the hotel and one day at Waitrose. He spends one day learning new skills and he is learning how to catch a bus back. He has a tendency to fall asleep on the bus so his iPhone alarm is set for every three minutes to keep him awake.

What was different about my support was that the school allowed me to explore work opportunities with Chris and with PLUSS. This continuity, I know, is crucial to successful transition from school into after school provision whatever that might be for any student. It needs to be resourced and, luckily, school resourced the transition to work during term time and PLUSS/direct payments sorted the holiday work days.

My most important role is to fade my support and to know when is the right time to let Chris do his job independently of my support. This is always our long term target. For example, when Chris started at Waitrose I supported him full time, now I only support for the first hour and he has just completed his first day without my support.

(Support worker)



Chris now has an evening and weekend social life. He meets up with friends to have a beer, go to the cinema, bowling, sleepovers with friends (parent supported). He is a member of a gym and a swimming pool, which he goes to twice a week. This year he has funding for a weekly health/fitness group through Heathtex, which encourages young adults to think about what they eat and what exercise they do.

Chris has gained so much through all this experience. He recently spoke to an audience of forty professionals at a conference held in Spain about the work of PLUSS and employment

for young adults with disabilities attended by Spanish, English and Finnish delegates. And in February 2012 the Hotel was awarded an Inclusive Employer Award.

The future:

Chris has Down's syndrome – he doesn't need to change.

Inclusion is about Chris being accepted both at school and at work whilst trying to get paid work as a young man with Down's syndrome within his community and work place, and that he is valued for all the things that he can do as well as flexibility and support being available to help with his areas of weakness.

(Chris's mum)

Chris's current goal is to be able to get to work independently. He has learned to cross the road independently and to lock the front door when he leaves the house for work. Chris can now walk to Waitrose. His dreams are to be able to ride a bike, drive a car and have an allotment, All of which are happening – he is currently learning to ride a tandem as a first step and had his first off road driving lesson

The aim for Chris is to be paid for 16+ hours a week in one job. His team have found resistance to his current employers increasing his hours. His parents fear that Chris might be made redundant one day, and worry that his current funding to pay for support may be cut. They want Chris to continue to be able to work at the jobs that he loves and to continue to gain skills whilst living in his home town.

CASE STUDY 4:

Morwenna, aged 24.
Truro College, Truro,
Cornwall. Foxes Academy,
Minehead, Somerset.



Overview:

Morwenna attended a variety of early years education establishments until she eventually settled into local playgroups and then the Montessori nursery close to home for the last year before school. Her parents felt it offered the most structured environment, closest to a school setting and would serve as a good preparation for the more formal setting of school.

Morwenna attended the local primary school and here there was little provision for a child with Down's syndrome (DS). Throughout primary school, while the teaching assistant (TA) changed

three times, each TAs approach to planning and differentiation was fairly consistent, with or without support from the class teacher. Expecting to remain with her friends and peers Morwenna wanted to attend the local mainstream secondary school, which was situated on two sites.

Morwenna's parents remember Year 7 as the most stressful year in her education. It took two terms for staff to create a productive package of inclusion and agree on what level to set her work at. Year 8 was more straightforward as teachers and TA's got used to working at P levels in many areas; there was some confusion about expectations around support and access to nurture groups at break times and what expectations to have regarding timekeeping and transitions from one activity to another. Moving into the larger site in Year 9 was not difficult, as it had more resources, more staff used to children with additional needs and a broad range of activities and clubs.

Morwenna has conductive hearing loss complicated by glue ear and has suffered from regular chest infections throughout her life. She has worn a hearing aid and glasses from the age of two.

Inclusive practice:

In Year 10 Morwenna started accessing a local FE college where they offered a Skills for Life course. This was successful in addressing a few issues, especially emerging social needs, mixing with peers working at a similar level and encouraging self-directed and independent learning away from the constant support of her TA. At school, choices were made to drop a selection of subjects, and she set about working for entry level maths and English, a school certificate in science and entry level 2 AQA food technology. Additionally, she was certificated on the Prince's Trust XL network programme, gained a silver award on the ASDAN programme, attended work experience in a local cafe and supported children in an under 5's group attached to the school. During her one day a week in college she took part in taster and enrichment activities.

Mr Guard was the first person who did maths I didn't hate, he gave me stuff at a better level and I did days of the week, months of the year and shopping games as well as musical times tables and some board games with dice and dominoes. He showed me number lines and rods. I hated Geography but Mrs Brierly made up maps of the school, the town and shops and places that I knew, we did some trips and I helped show some Year 7s how to get around the school. Mrs Druce was head of English and we did story telling on the computer and I made books on "using magic words" and did some diaries of school trips and my favourite holidays. Tony Brown did ASDAN and made a poem about 'Grumpy Enna' about a stubborn girl with the same name as me. I did work experience at a cat rescue centre and the Jam Pot Cafe, Lynn at the cafe let me do a bit of everything, it was a great place to work.'

(Morwenna)

Full-time transition to college was arranged in Year 11 as Morwenna had chosen the only course available to her in Cornwall, which was at a different college to the one she had sampled via day release from her secondary school.

Morwenna was unable to study at the college where she had done her day release and the only local option available was at Truro College 12 miles from home. The college provided a minibus for students who might not manage on standard public transport and the course was full-time and had start and finish times to link in with the transport provision.

The college prospectus seemed to offer quite a broad range of options, sampling different areas of work and opportunities to try and develop skills in more creative areas such as photography and jewellery making. At her interview it was agreed that Morwenna's curriculum could be individualised to encompass work placements outside of the college and opportunities to dip into mainstream courses with some support, though this was clearly a new area for the college, more theoretical than practised.

On arrival Morwenna was pleased to find three or four students on the course that she had met previously. Two were from the other college that she had attended and one or two were from holiday activity groups that had been run in the summer holidays. Her parents were surprised by the fact that, for a discrete SEN course, the staff knew very little about the learning profile of young people with DS and, like at secondary school, they spent a good deal of time in the

first two terms liaising with staff regarding behaviour issues and low expectations in terms of basic skills, literacy, numeracy and general knowledge.

There was a lot of time available for social interaction, which was probably time well spent, but that had the appearance of loosely arranged art and craft activities with little focus or vocational relevance. In her first year Morwenna had the opportunity to work in the college sandwich bar, and while this was an area of work that appealed to her, the staff in the facility did not have the skills to teach new skills to a diverse group of learners.

Teething problems persisted in the second year when Morwenna tried to access the NVQ catering group on the main college site. She suffered incidents like the theft of her jewellery and unauthorised use of her mobile phone by more able students, which caused the college to undertake some rethinking of the way in which she was supported. Agreements were reached and systems were changed to make it a safer and more welcoming environment for her.

Morwenna enjoyed the coursework and found the catering environment comfortable and enjoyable. She continued this element on a two half days a week basis, but at no time was it considered that she would be able to move on to this as a vocational choice at this college.

Her favourite teacher at the college was the basic photography (City and Guilds level 1) tutor who enjoyed her quirky look at things to use as subjects – discarded clothing, parts of furniture etc – and was encouraging in every aspect of the work that she did. Morwenna also enjoyed the Skills for Working Life course, which was fairly innovative in its use of role play and video

playback of situations, verbal and photo/video supported tests on safety in the workplace and watching and analysing both voice and video recordings of workplace scenarios.

Her last year was adjusted to incorporate as much real world work experience as possible and four cafes, a pub, one charity shop, a chain bookstore and others were found through a combination of local and family networks supported by the overstretched team from the college tasked with this area of work. Morwenna's favourite workplace environment was the local Wetherspoons pub/restaurant where she went once week as part of the unpaid work experience programme.

Morwenna progressed from using the discrete SEN minibus to travelling on the ordinary service bus and walking to and from the bus stop independently, and she also tried to develop her friendships made at college by meeting up at weekends and during holidays.

Morwenna left Truro College with a Level 1 City and Guilds in Basic Photography and an entry level Certificate in Skills for Working Life.

Malcombe Coad taught me photography and enjoyed all my pictures, showed me how to download them onto the computer and send them to people. Tamsin Merrit showed me loads of things to make and do and we sold things at Truro market sometimes to raise money for the college. (Morwenna)

It was clear that no accredited vocational courses would be offered to her at the end of college. Morwenna and her family explored all of the local college options available and none would offer a place on NVQ or Diploma courses for someone with below level 2 literacy and numeracy. None of the colleges would consider adjusting criteria or offering a level of support to enable her participation. The family tried to work with social services, Connexions and local colleges to try and emulate a specialist residential college provision, but without Morwenna having to leave the area, and nothing was available in terms of either part-time residential accommodation or linking it with a genuine vocational option at a local college.

The Foundation for People with Learning Difficulties had set up a pilot scheme offering person centred planning and Morwenna signed up to try and bring together people who might be able to help her discuss her strengths and achieve her goals. Reluctantly, the family explored the possibility of vocational training in a residential setting and matching her wishes and skills to what was on offer. Morwenna agreed to try out Foxes Academy, which offered a range of well known accredited courses alongside experience in a working hotel.

The residential aspect was clearly well managed to raise the young peoples' expectations to live more independently. The planning proved really useful, not just in allocating different tasks to different people, but also in evidencing her current situation and hopes and aspirations for the future. To help maintain links within her local community the pub was approached to keep her work experience opportunity open for her during college holidays and other links were established with people she knew locally to maintain contact.

The specialist residential college was the place where Morwenna stopped being a passenger in her own life and started making her own decisions. The high expectations with regard to living and working away from home were apparent from the beginning and this was the first setting where they already knew and understood her learning profile and developmental issues. Her maturity and independence blossomed over the three years and progressing in small steps, with individualised support, she developed a clear expectation of moving on and in her third year started to look at all the options for living away from home.

Morwenna continued with her person centred planning in her holidays and linked the plans into her college work and vice versa. Over the three years Morwenna gained the experience of living in different houses with different personalities and varying levels of support. Her

first choice would be to share a house or flat with one other person who had left the college a year before her, but eventually the other family chose a larger, shared house environment and Morwenna opted to get her own place close to the family home, if the right place and support could be put in place.

Morwenna left Foxes Academy with: City and Guilds level one in Hospitality, Food and Drink service; entry level Certificate in ICT for Skills for Life; entry level Certificate in Adult Literacy; entry level Certificate in Adult Numeracy; English Speaking Board level 1 Speaking and Listening Skills for Adult Learners (Pass); entry level 2 Certificate in Oral Communication Skills; Chartered Institute of Environmental Health: level 2 award in Food Safety in Catering and College Certification in Sexual Health Awareness.

At Foxes Sue P and Kerry made me learn to do housework and look after my stuff, they made me do it again if I didn't get it right. I didn't get away with much at Foxes, I had to do things myself. Martin Mann did food prep and food hygiene and helped me with my NVQ work. I showed him how the Disney film Ratatouille could help people with food hygiene. (Morwenna)

Independence:

Transition planning was complicated with Morwenna being in two different places. The transition team at the college were aware of her goals and targets, but had not worked closely with the person centred planning going on at home. Morwenna left Foxes before accommodation could be identified and it took another three months living at home again to get her housing and support in place. Morwenna was fortunate to access some transitional support in order to maintain her independence skills while living at home for this period and kept her determination to go it alone, albeit within walking distance of the family home.

It was necessary (for a variety of reasons) to put in 24 hour transitional support when Morwenna moved in to her own flat (shared ownership with a housing association) and then work with an agency to develop a more tailored support package around her actual needs and personal choices. The implementation of personal budgets hugely assisted in making that a reality and Morwenna now employs her personal assistants with one acting as a key worker who works to develop them as a team, working flexibly around her changing timetable and ensuring that she maintains her networks and finds out about opportunities that suit her. Her dad does the admin and liaises with a firm that works out the payroll, PAYE and national insurance etc., so that he simply has to check the hours worked and pay people once a month from Morwenna's dedicated bank account.

So now 18 months after leaving formal education, aged 24, Morwenna's typical week has a structured and comprehensive timetable. Mondays are spent on housework tasks with a break to attend the local gym. Some of the housework is done with support but some is unaided now, with prompting and monitoring. Morwenna travels to the gym in a taxi and is met afterwards by a member of her support staff who will help her with shopping and get back to help her cook enough for two evening meals. On Tuesdays she works at the pub for two hours in the morning (paid work now), supported at a distance by the local employability team. She then walks home and makes herself some lunch, often using a microwave independently. In the winter she goes swimming in the afternoon. Every other week, in the evening, she is a volunteer at the local art centre, collecting tickets and clearing up after a film.

On Wednesday she currently takes part in an inclusive dance group in the morning, grabs lunch and attends an Adult Education programme for an entry level 2 maths course which she chose from the list. Thursdays she gets support to do her banking and budget for the week and works in the local florist from 13.00-3.30 as a volunteer, with support. Fridays she works in the florist again and tries to do something social with other young people in the area if someone coordinates this. Saturdays she alternates between a singing group for adults

with learning disabilities and housework/decorating/walking.

When she has a boyfriend, which can be a bit off and on, they often meet up on Saturdays, shop and cook for/with each other. Sundays she usually goes to her parents for lunch and dinner, but sometimes cancels if she gets a better offer elsewhere, such as lunch with a friend or trip with work etc.

Morwenna has a variety of other interests and takes part in a singing and song writing group, helps out occasionally with a local person centred planning HUB and, with support from her staff, has also given some presentations to social service staff and managers on using her personal budget.

Morwenna spends a good deal of time on YouTube exploring her interests and making calendars and PowerPoint slides on things that generally interest her. She often asks for help with time management and managing her 'routines' which can take over large parts of her free time and which can be a hindrance to her in getting on with the rest of her life.

Positive outcomes:

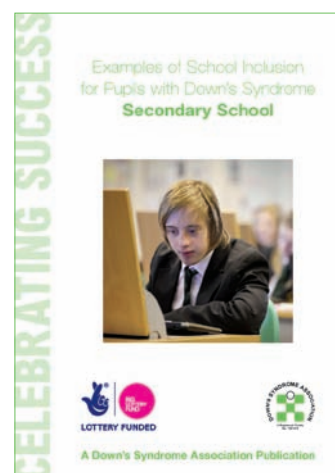
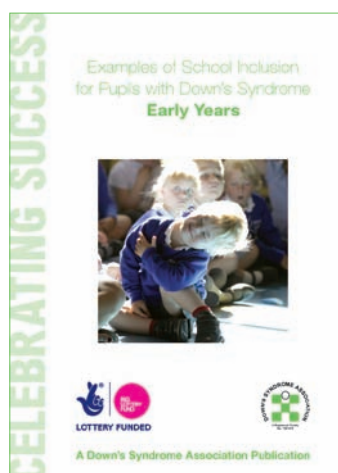
There are many positive outcomes that are directly linked to Morwenna's mainstream education. These include the fact that two of her current PA's went to the same secondary school as she did, just a few years ahead of her, one other in the same year group. Two of them cite knowing her as the reason they chose this as a career path.

The lady who runs the florist where Morwenna works was in her class at primary school and they went to each other's birthday parties and sometimes played together. One of her relief carers knew her at primary school when she was a dinner lady there. Four of the lads who now act as duty managers in the pub where she works also went either to the primary, secondary school or local college with her. Staff where she does her banking, the son of the receptionist at the gym, the checkout staff at the supermarket all share these same links back to school.



Morwenna's love of singing can be directly linked back to Mrs Marsden; her enjoyment of photography and DTP, presentation skills and storytelling with PowerPoint can be linked to her enjoyment of ICT and her supportive photography teacher. Her renewed interest in number and maths (the single most difficult area for her to master) has to be linked directly to Mr Guard who was the first maths teacher who encouraged her to enjoy learning in this area, and her love of language and humour have developed through all the positive approaches to reading that she's been supported with throughout her education.

Also available in this series:





LOTTERY FUNDED



Down's Syndrome Association

National Office

Langdon Down Centre, 2a Langdon Park, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 9PS
Tel: 020 8614 5100 Fax: 020 8614 5127 E-mail: info@downs-syndrome.org.uk

Wales

Down's Syndrome Association, Suite 1, 206 Whitchurch Road, Heath, Cardiff CF14 3NB
Tel/Fax: 02920 522511

Northern Ireland

Unit 2, Marlborough House, 348 Lisburn Road, Belfast BT9 6GH
Tel: 02890 665260 Fax: 02890 667674