



NORWICH CITY FOOTBALL CLUB

The following case study is an example of daytime provision at a *PfS* centre showing how the ethos of Study Support was used to support an Alternative Curriculum programme

DEVELOPING A MEANINGFUL INTERVENTION PROGRAMME FOR DISENGAGED YOUNG ADULTS.

January 2010

Target Group / Key Stage Key Stage 4 students 14-16 year olds. Target group- disengaged students, students at risk of exclusion or not attending school.	
Local Authority Norfolk County Council	School /Centre Norwich City Football Club Study Centre

What was it like before the work and why was the work undertaken?

This programme was established as part of the Key-Stage 4 Engagement (KS4E) programme set up by Norfolk County Council. The Centre was approached as 1 of 5 venues that was deemed suitable to deliver education sessions to Key-Stage 4 students. The Centre's success at engaging the hardest to help through *PfS* was a big contributory factor in the centre being chosen to take part.

Starting before the revised 14-19 framework, this was a dynamic approach to providing students with inspirational and relevant alternatives to school, something the Centre was very keen to support. It was involved in the initial planning sessions and in an open day event for schools to find out more about the programme.

What was planned and what happened?

Starting in January 2007, the Centre ran its programme on a Thursday. It delivered two units of a Nationally Accredited personal and social development qualification called *Getting Connected- Handling Relationships* sessions in the morning and *Changing Beliefs* sessions in the afternoon. Organisation of the project, liaison with schools and transport were all organised by the dedicated Getting Connected coordinators through Norfolk County Council. The Centre provided a member of staff who planned and delivered the qualification and collated the portfolios.

What was delivered?

The project was run this way for 2 terms. However, despite a number of students being allocated places on the programme, only a small number were turning up each week. The other KS4E venues could all offer practical activities as part of their programme - car mechanic training, film-making workshops, outdoor activities, theatre prop making- and it was felt that the Centre's programme was less exciting to practical learners because it lacked this element. We approached *Football In The Community* (FITC) and asked them to lead part of the day in the hope that a practical football element might encourage more students to attend.

The tutor took the decision to make the course entirely practical based. He sourced a nationally accredited qualification - the ASDAN short course Sports & Fitness Award - and approached the Study Centre at North Walsham Rugby Club to deliver the practical elements of the programme (the Study Centre can have unlimited access to the main rugby pitch, the training pitches and the wooded areas around the Centre).

The new programme had a wholly practical focus. It required the learners to complete the following over a minimum of 20 hours: to take part in a range of sports both indoor and outdoor; take part in at least ten hours of coaching of one particular sport; record their progress over time in the development of one particular sports skill (e.g. perfecting different kicking techniques in rugby); develop their level of fitness overall.

It became apparent that the course was now meeting the needs of the client group: non-academic students with a keen interest in sport were being given the opportunity to develop a more focussed approach to sport and fitness. Attendance and retention of students improved - from September to December 2008, ten students signed up for the course, the largest number to engage with the programme since it began in January 2007.

What is delivered now?

In January 2009, the decision was taken to deliver the project only from Norwich to reduce transport and running costs. FITC was asked to become involved again, but this time as a joint partner. It was agreed that the sports coach would stay with the group all day - a chance to get to know the group well and plan delivery closely with the tutor from Centre. Local sporting organisations were engaged to provide the group with a range of half-day sporting activities which challenged them to develop new skills and work effectively with others.



Students taking part in football and rugby coaching sessions.

The project now has all the vital elements for success: a nationally-accredited qualification that is appropriate for students' key-skill levels and relevant to their interests; a coordinated delivery approach between the Centre Tutor and the sports coach so that pastoral support and skills development go hand in hand; a varied and interesting range of sports activities that encourage students to attend each week; complete ownership of the programme which enables the Centre tutor to maintain close links between school staff, support workers and students' families to ensure everybody understands what is happening; an ethos built on the core *PfS* values of achievement, enjoyment and success.

The academic year 2009/2010 has been our most successful year ever. All of the students who were referred signed up for 3 terms' of provision. 20 young people are due to successfully complete their programme and receive their Sports Award. (For many this will be their only formal qualification as they have been permanently excluded from school or are long-term absentees). Partnership work has also strengthened: a number of students receive 1 to 1 support from a local youth counselling service during the sessions; sexual health talks have been organised and the lead tutor has registered to offer guidance and distribute contraceptives.

The programme has been successful in helping the learners to identify positive destinations – some have used their success on the course to secure places on further sports or football courses at local colleges while others have secured long-term employment. A number of the young people have voluntarily agreed to become peer mentors within the Study Centre and have joined *PfS* sessions or chosen to join the Study Centre for their work experience placement. Former

learners regularly return to the centre to request references from the Sports Award tutor.

2010/11 promises to be as successful: all of the current year 10's are set to return in year 11 with a number of schools and Pupil Referral Unit staff desperate to secure additional places. Students will complete a more intensive personal and social development *Award of Personal Effectiveness* that will ensure that the training we deliver supports the requirements of the new Foundation Learning curriculum.

What has been the impact and how is that verified?

The continual evaluation of the project and the openness to try new things has led to oversubscription and the need to start a second day of delivery. This is, in itself, a huge indication of the project's relevance and success.

The achievement of the young people also demonstrates the impact of the project: between January and July 2009, 22 young people successfully completed the programme and received the ASDAN Short Course Award. In April 2007, only 2 students successfully achieved 2 units of the *Getting Connected* qualification.

As a result of continually reflecting on the relevance of the programme, young people have become involved in the ownership of the project. They are asked to give ideas for skills they would like to develop and incorporate into the programme and take complete ownership of their portfolios.

The impact of the project is demonstrated by the feedback of Alternative Education providers who hold it in high regard as it offers valuable opportunities to young people who can be hard to engage. The head of *Education Other Than At School* (EOTAS) recently contacted the Centre to say that a number of meetings she had recently attended, colleagues would mention the programme and the positive impact it was having on their students.

The number of students who maintain links with the tutor and the centre is a clear measure of its impact. A number return for additional support with CV writing and college applications.

The fact that as centralised funding for this project decreases, schools are keen to pay for it out of their own budget, is also a clear indicator of success. Other providers that started KS4 Engagement at the same time have only recruited 1 or 2 students in 2009 and have been unable to run.



Students now get to try out new sports and use professional equipment

What has been learnt and what are the next steps?

What has been learnt on the journey towards making this project sustainable mirrors the learning journey that has taken place within our core *PfS* programme:

Flexibility - The desire to try out new approaches and change established practices in order to fully meet the needs of young people has been a big feature of this programme. We have made this learner centred focus a feature of our work across all core programmes in the Centre.

Evaluation - Reflecting on our practice and learning from others, has been a key success in this project. These are some of the things that have now become standard practice, but which weren't done before this course started: talking directly to young people about how successfully the programme is meeting their needs; closely monitoring attendance; asking for advice on what to deliver; recording how many people achieve an Award. We are now confident in being able to provide qualitative evidence to show our work is having a sustained impact.

Sustainable Leadership - In just under three years our Key-Stage 4 Engagement provision has gone from being a 'bolted-on' programme organised externally to a sustainable programme that is entirely planned, organised and delivered by the Centre. The tutor has undertaken professional development in order to budget and market the programme, as well as take on responsibility for networking with a number of stakeholders to ensure the Every Child Matters agenda is being fully met.

Partnership Delivery - In order to fully meet the needs of a diverse and complex target group, we have realised that linking up with other experts including FITC, KS4 Engagement Team, Social Services, YoT, The Armed Forces, Connexions

and School Extended Service Coordinators are either currently or have at some stage been involved in the programme's delivery.

Next steps

The tutor will investigate whether schools would be interested in sending students for additional literacy and numeracy support sessions; using the enthusiasm they have for the Sports programme to re-engage them with the core subjects.

In 2010, an Evaluation report will be produced. It will contain impact data, testimonies from young people, schools and other stakeholders as well as good news stories about successful students. This will be used as a marketing tool for new schools.

The Centre will investigate whether there is interest in running a similar programme for young people who have left school and are not in employment or education (NEET). The aim would be to base this on the programme offered by Pompey Study Centre and *Activ8*.



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