

Liverpool Invest to Change 2009 – 2010

Case Study 3

Work Experience in Employment and Hairdressing Training

Context

Student J from a Liverpool special school undertook a 4 half day work experience and a further 5 days employer work experience in a hairdressing salon under the guidance of Training Plus Merseyside (TPM) during April & June 2010. This is the first time such a placement has been undertaken.

Diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Student J is an introspective individual, who has trouble expressing himself and his opinions. He can lack focus and requires support for most academic tasks, though he is striving to work more independently. J believes his level of attainment to be higher than it actually is, and this does lead him to reject help when he is offered it, even though he will then struggle with his work. J's inability to do things independently can lead to him becoming frustrated and this can then lead to him being rude to staff.

J has developed over the past year socially and is friendlier to other students in class. He is showing more of his sense of humour and is participating in jokes and banter with classmates. J will however reject any classmates that he believes to be further along the autistic spectrum as he strives to be mainstream. This can again led to him being frustrated at their behaviour, and on occasion rude. J is interested in boxing and the Russian language and these at present are his two main passions.

J needs help in writing reports, essays and can struggle with his reading. J is not yet an independent traveller but is making more journeys on his own which he and his mother have planned in advance and he is almost able to walk home on his own.

Planning

An initial meeting was held with staff from the school, TPM and J and his mother to plan the activities that J would undertake on his hairdressing work experience at TPM and Hair Tech Salon in Wavertree. It was agreed that J would work with a specialist hairdressing teacher at TPM and she would accompany him to the salon on each occasion and support and guide him through each of the tasks agreed.

The training planned for J was undertake the practical elements of a unit of Hairdressing NVQ Level 1. These activities included learning to wash, shampoo and condition hair using a mannequin. It was also agreed that J

would learn to set hair using rollers. Initially these tasks were to be practiced in the training room at tpm in preparation for his placement at Hair Tech.

“Before I went to Training Plus Merseyside I felt a bit nervous. Even though I had been the day before with my mum to meet everyone. I was still worried that I wouldn’t know what to say to people. But it was ok because the people were all really nice and polite to me. We got on well and they were very helpful” Student J

Delivery

The first day of J’s work experience was based at TPM J was spoken to informally about his interests and hobbies, likes and dislikes and how he prefers to learn. His preferred way is systematic instruction. This enabled TPM to build a rapport and helped him to relax.

J spoke about types of hairstyles he likes, particularly corn rows, plaits and dreadlocks. Research was undertaken on the internet for various pictures of the above styles. J printed them and created a collage.

TPM tutor Tricia spoke to J about the shampooing and conditioning service and demonstrated three main massage movements used (effleurage, petrissage and rotary) on a mannequin head, then helped J to perform the massages. J then performed them independently. It was agreed that his long-term target would be to shampoo his Mum’s hair on his fourth week.

Week 2 was based at Hair Tech salon, J travelled to the salon independently in a taxi. He was introduced to the staff and had a health and safety induction. J assisted the stylists by passing rollers up, brushing floors, cleaning tools and equipment as well as watching demonstrations of shampooing and setting. He shampooed a mannequin head. J communicated very well with staff and clients and was singing along to the radio while he worked. TPM tutor Tricia demonstrated a set on a mannequin. J learned the setting technique very quickly and set the mannequin perfectly after only one demonstration.

“Before I went to Hair Tech I knew it was important to listen to what Tricia had to say. She had lots of good advice for me and I was very busy all afternoon. It was hard work but I enjoyed it” Student J

In Week 3 J undertook similar tasks and performed a shampooing service and conditioning treatment on a staff member. He did this with confidence and stated he preferred working on a human head.

“ Another busy day in the salon! I learnt a few more techniques and it was good to wash someone’s hair after learning to do this on the mannequin”
Student J

Week 4 was the final day at the salon and of the placement. J independently shampooed and set his Mums hair. He did very well and his setting sections were most accurate and precise. He was pleased with the end result as was his Mum. J exceeded all expectations. J was offered the opportunity to attend

a further 5 days work experience at Hair Tech and made really excellent progress in all areas of practical work.

“From this work experience I went back for a second placement – I was shy the first three and a half days but during that week I started building my confidence” Student J

Achievements

J responded very well to the training given and the work experience. He seemed to enjoy the working environment and communicated very well with staff from tpm and professional peers. The staff at the salon commented on his smart self presentation, impeccable manners and willingness to learn. These qualities and skills are very important and a good basis for an Apprentice employee who needs to be ‘Work Ready’.

J clearly has the ability to master some requisite aspects of hairdressing e.g. shampooing, conditioning treatments, setting, foiling and assisting a stylist. J currently demonstrates that he has the ability to complete a Level 1 award and would be employable in the right salon. The Manager at the salon agreed with this.

“I had fun working in Hair Tech. Tricia was great and she taught me lots of different hairdressing techniques. There was a lot to learn but I really enjoyed it. Sandra the salon owner was really helpful.”

I came up with my own phrase for my work experience – “I might be a slow worker but I’m a quick learner” Student J.

Plans for the future

“In the future I want to pursue a career in hairdressing – I will be completing my NVQ Level 1 in college”

The school is examining college courses in year 14 for J at NVQ Level 1

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