

# CASE STUDY:

West Oaks SEN Specialist School and College

National Careers Week

# NCW

 @CAREERSWEEK

# FUTURES WEEK

Raising aspirations across an outstanding SEND school and college!



## SCHOOL/ORGANISATION

West Oaks SEN Specialist School and College

## REGION OF THE UK

West Yorkshire

## TYPE OF SCHOOL/ORGANISATION

All through (2-19) special school/college

## INTRODUCTION

West Oaks SEN Specialist School and College have shown a real commitment to preparing students for adulthood through their extensive careers and 'Futures Week' (part of National Careers Week) programme. Linking with senior managers at The British Library, Lush and Wetherby Fire Station, students engaged in a wealth of careers-related learning that raised students' aspirations for the future.

## GATSBY BENCHMARKS



A Stable  
Careers  
Programme



Learning from  
Career &  
Labour Market  
Information



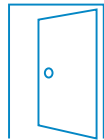
Addressing  
The Needs of  
Each Pupil



Linking  
Curriculum  
Learning  
to Careers



Encounters  
with Employers  
& Employees



Experiences  
of Workplaces



Encounters  
with Further &  
Higher  
Education



Personal  
Guidance



## OVERVIEW

Two classes undertook a soap and bath bomb concept to market enterprise activity. They carried out surveys for fragrances in maths, wrote packing labels in English and produced the products in science. Lush and the British library both delivered workshops. A Jobcentre Plus Schools Adviser delivered an interview skills workshop and mock interviews. There was a 'Futures' coffee morning for parents/carers. The week culminated with a whole school assembly where students learnt about their teacher's aspirations. Some younger pupils dressed up for the professions they wish to work in and older students dressed up for a job or college interview.

## CONTEXT

West Oaks SEN Specialist School and College is an outstanding 2-19 maintained day special school for students with special educational needs and disabilities and has sites situated in the village of Boston Spa (Wetherby) and Meanwood, Leeds. The school specialises in SEND communication, interaction, and applied learning. The school has achieved Ofsted 'outstanding' status three times since 2007, most recently in 2017. Last summer the school also achieved the National Autistic Society's Autism Accreditation highlighting the school practices as autism friendly. This academic year the school celebrates its 40th Anniversary.

## RESOURCES

We recommend utilising the resources and contacts you already have. We found the 'Inspiring the Future' website useful to broker employer contacts and also worked with organisations such as Mencap and LEP. The NCW resources were useful e.g. utilising the staff door signs allowing students to learn about the different career pathways of staff.

## BENEFITS

We have valued taking part in NCW and this is an excellent addition to the curriculum. Students are becoming future destination led and parents informed how they can work with the school in preparation for adulthood. We have more organisations wanting to develop opportunities for students including internships and apprenticeships. During 'Futures Week', the SMT noted, "There was a buzz around the school developed from the involvement of parents and external organisations. This evidences the importance of a well-planned and embedded careers programme. We have some exciting ideas to take 'Futures Week' and our careers programme to the next level."

## ISSUES

It was important that the Careers Leader shared the vision across the school and highlighted how to embed careers in the curriculum. Planning was important so that employers, parents/carers and staff had enough time to plan and meet and discuss any requirements before the events.

## EVALUATION

The school held a coffee morning focused on 'Futures' for parents/carers to learn more about transition planning. This was useful for feedback from parents on what they'd like to see us do next.

Planning was crucial to reaffirm the schools strategy and utilised staff time to evaluate and share the practice happening in classes; this allowed staff to identify new opportunities and ideas to deliver during 'Futures Week'

National Careers Week

# NCW

## RELEVANT ARTICLES

[www.westoaksschool.co.uk/careers](http://www.westoaksschool.co.uk/careers)

