

Careers Fair Case study: Tunmarsh School, Newham

Introduction

My role is the Work Related Learning Teacher at Tunmarsh School; which is a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) based in East London. Students who attend are either permanently excluded, at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream school, or attend here for medical reasons. The school is mixed with students aged between 11-16 years (year groups 7-11).

How it worked

We held a careers fair here at Tunmarsh School on Tuesday 15th July 2014 from 9.30am - 12.30pm. The careers fair was targeted at Years 7-9 (Key Stage 3) and Year 10 (Key Stage 4) students.

The aims and objectives for the careers fair was promote and educate students about the world of work, teach them about their post 16 progression opportunities, reiterate the new legislation about young people having to remain in education or training up until the age of 18 and help them to make informed decisions about planning their future career aspirations and researching potential job/career opportunities.

The careers fair was set up to run as two workshops; which focused on working with the different key state groups individually, students alternated between both workshops. The first workshop involved the volunteers from Inspiringthefuture giving a presentation on careers insights. The volunteers were excellent in talking to students about their career paths and how they got into those jobs. The second workshop involved colleges and training providers (who I had contacted through networking opportunities) who set up careers advice and information stalls, which students could then walk around and collate information and talk to the professionals about courses and training opportunities in preparation for leaving secondary school.

This was the first time that a Careers Fair has ever been organised at Tunmarsh School, however we felt that the event was extremely successful and hope to run another one next academic year and include Year 11 students.

I was made aware of the great work that Inspiringthefuture does from a colleague; who had used the service when organising a similar event at the school in which she works. That school is actually one of the other Pupil Referral provisions attached to Tunmarsh School.

In total we has 5 volunteers who attended, all were in different careers and all gave a careers insight presentation. Inspiringthefuture was an excellent resource and it is amazing to know that so many professional volunteers are willing to give up their time to talk and empower young people to think about their next steps and future career aspirations.

Evaluation

Feedback from students has been very positive, students have said that they found the careers fair very informative, it has helped them to think about and explore their options after leaving secondary school.

Students also valued being able to meet real professionals in real jobs; and have first hand experience of what is it really like to go out to work and what that work may entail.

I think the careers fair was very successful and met the intended aims and objectives, Tunmarsh School students have all had a disaffected education somewhere down the time, some do not enjoy school and feel let down by the education system. This opportunity gave them an insight into what the future can hold for them; in terms of moving into the world of work and becoming a responsible adult.

On reflection I would have liked to have more students attend; to take advantage of the wealth of knowledge and experience of all the professionals present. If we do organise another event next academic year, I will ensure that the event is set up in the autumn term, when the Year 11 students are present as they will benefit greatly from this; in preparation for moving onto further education, employment or training in Year 12.

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