

Inspiring the Future Case Study

Orchards Academy Careers Talk

Orchards Academy is a coeducational secondary school and sixth form with academy status, located in Swanley in the English county of Kent. The school also operates a vocational sixth form, where students have the option to study from a range of further BTECs. In its 2012 inspection Orchards academy was awarded a rating of 2, good, “Orchards Academy is a good and rapidly improving school. Students’ achievement has improved considerably since the previous inspection and is now good. GCSE results have risen substantially in recent years. Students throughout the school, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, make good progress from their starting points”¹.

Introduction to the event:

The idea of the event was to help young people better understand apprenticeships. Research is consistent that young people’s knowledge of apprenticeships is often limited, especially in terms of how they can best prepare themselves to get onto one when they leave education. One of the best ways to give them access to such information is to give them the chance to hear directly from people in work with first-hand experience of apprenticeships. Students involved were age 14-15 years.

How it worked

We hosted an apprenticeships careers talk. Peter Cobrin volunteered through Inspiring the Future and delivered an interactive presentation on what an apprenticeship involved and how to apply for one. Peter is a leading educationalist and apprenticeships advocate, previously the director of Not Going to Uni, he set up Employment Pathways a “campaigning organisation working with employers, educators, training providers and policy makers to ensure that talent is given a chance in the workplace”².

Evaluation

The event was very successful, all the students were participating asking questions and using their hand-out sheets for guidance on what to ask. Several students were very interested and determined taking advantage of the talk. I feel that they made the most out of it. It is a great opportunity as it opens their eyes to what apprenticeships can offer. Peter was very happy at the end of the session and enthusiastic to come back and talk to the students if possible

Feedback from the students

Students found the experience informative and has given them an insight into further opportunities available through apprenticeships.

School website

<http://www.orchards-tkat.org/>

¹ http://www.orchards-tkat.org/uploads/asset_file/Ofsted%202012.pdf

² <http://www.employmentpathways.org.uk/about/4566736454>