

Individual case studies:

Project SEARCH

Overview

Project SEARCH helps young people aged 18 to 24 – from Derby City and the surrounding areas with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and autism spectrum conditions - make successful transitions from school to productive adult life and gain the skills they need to achieve meaningful paid jobs.

We – Derbyshire Education Business Partnership - are very happy to be involved in this unique one year supported training and employment internship. It is delivered in partnership with St Martins School and referral partners Fountains High School and Royal School for the Deaf Derby.

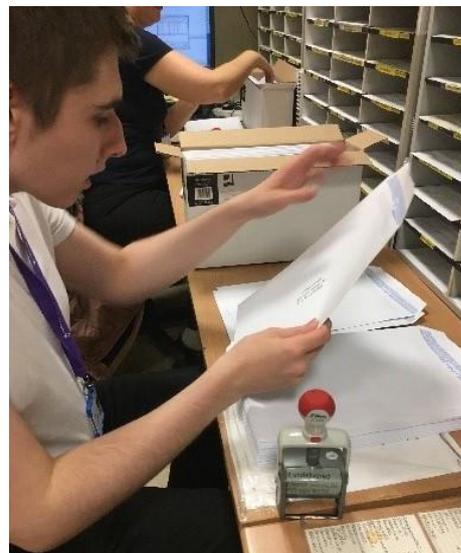
In September 2019, nine interns started the programme at Royal Derby Hospital, but it had to be paused due to COVID-19. Motorpoint stepped in to support the scheme and offer space for classroom-based learning.

Individual case studies

Callum

Callum did one of his placements in the Medical Records Team at Royal Derby Hospital and it quickly became his ideal job. He learnt how to carry out much of the role independently and had demonstrated some great skills such as attention to detail, accuracy, resilience and teamwork - all key attributes of a successful Medical Records Clerk.

The placement was unfortunately cut short due to COVID-19 but ever since then Callum has been job searching. In January 2021, a part-time position came up in the Medical Records Team. Callum and his Job Coach worked together to prepare and submit an application. He was shortlisted and invited to attend a four-panel interview.



Sarah Cutler, Project SEARCH Job Coach said, "Although he was nervous, Callum had done lots of preparation and had gained confidence from the previous interviews he had attended. This was in fact his 3rd interview and ended up also being 3rd time lucky! It is very well deserved indeed!"

Callum looks forward to starting his working life and enjoying all the benefits that sustainable employment has to offer.

Jack

Jack began Project SEARCH after having previously been a student at Horizons 6th Form and Access Training where he completed some practical based courses including brick laying, painting and decorating and outdoor skills. Jack knew he wanted a job that involved hands on work as he really enjoys being active and busy.

Jack applied to Project SEARCH and was delighted to be offered a place starting in September 2019. Jack is full of life and does not let his barriers to learning and work get in his way. He is a proactive and well-liked member of the group. It was clear from the beginning that he wanted to do his rotations at the hospital in areas that would give him a variety of skills and experience.

The Facilities Management department at the hospital is vast, and covers everything from car parking and grounds maintenance, broken door handles and fire safety right up to maintaining medical equipment and doing ward audits. The team were delighted to have Jack on board and his weeks were split between various teams, including one day a week at London Road Community Hospital where he is involved in receipt of deliveries, domestic cleaning room audits, restocking and general duties to keep communal areas safe.

Jack has learnt so much over the last 6 months and he is determined to secure employment ideally within the Facilities Management team either at London Road or Royal Derby Hospital.



Feedback on Jack's journey so far is fantastic:

"Throughout his time with us Jack has shown consistent high levels of enthusiasm and engagement and I have received nothing but good reports from the team members he has worked with. He has adapted to each area of the service with ease and has shown excellent levels of interaction with everyone in the department. It has been a true pleasure to have Jack working with us."

Jack was offered the opportunity to attend an interview with the Receipts and Distributions (R&D) team - within ISS at the hospital - during the Summer 2020. He jumped at the chance, made a fabulous impression, and started work as an R&D Assistant 2 weeks later, where he is responsible for receiving and tracking parcels and making deliveries to various departments around the hospital.

He has developed an impressive number of transferable skills, his attitude to both work and learning is commendable and he will without a doubt be an asset and an inspiration to his employer.

Imogen

Imogen, ex-student from Royal School for the Deaf, started her Project SEARCH work placement with the Patient Experience team carrying out a range of tasks including office administration, promoting the team's new patient pledges, and even teaching her colleagues some basic sign language.

Upon joining the team, Imogen was mentored by Judith Payne, Patient and Public Engagement Lead at University Hospitals of Derby and Burton.

Judith said: "Imogen has been a delight to have in our team - very friendly, polite and always smiling. Imogen's confidence has grown throughout her time with us and it has been fantastic to see. She is an asset to the team."

Imogen and her twin sister were born at Derby City General Hospital (now the Royal Derby Hospital) 26 weeks premature. Her mum, Sarah said: "As the girls were growing up, it was difficult to imagine what sort of future Imogen might have. Before Project SEARCH she was bored out of her mind and did not know where she was going in life which had a big impact on her health and wellbeing. She was experiencing low moods and constant headaches and it was difficult to see her upset. Project SEARCH has been life changing for Imogen - we can finally picture a possible future for her."



Paul, Imogen's Dad said: Imogen has spent a lot of time at the hospital receiving treatment. She had always wanted to work there, and it is amazing to see her achieving her ambitions. We've already seen such an improvement in her health and wellbeing; she's waking up with a smile and has found a purpose in life."

Imogen started her second placement as a Ward Hostess, serving drinks and food to patients on the Renal Ward before COVID-19.

Ryan

Ryan, a student from Royal School for the Deaf, started his Project SEARCH work placement with the Restaurant Team. Unlike some of the other students, Ryan also has the additional barrier of being Deaf.

Ryan said: "I was so nervous on my first day, but the team have really helped my confidence grow. This is my dream job and goal to work here. Everything about the role has been brilliant!"

The team supporting Ryan on his placement in the restaurant have helped build his confidence when interacting with customers and the Job Coach and Tutor have created picture aids and resources to support communication. These picture aids help both the customers and Ryan as they not only include prompts for the orders they would like to place, but also basic sign language on them.

Within the Restaurant Team, Ryan was partnered up with mentor, Jennifer Dennis, Catering Assistant. Jennifer supported Ryan through his journey at the Royal Derby Hospital.



Jennifer said: "Ryan's attitude towards work and learning is fantastic; he has bags of enthusiasm and motivation. He is in his element working on the jacket potato stand. Before having Ryan in the department, I had never heard of Project Search, I think it is a brilliant idea. Ryan has been an

absolute pleasure and joy to work with and get to know. I hope other establishments and businesses across Derbyshire consider getting in touch with Project SEARCH. Everybody deserves a chance.”

Sarah Cutler, Project SEARCH Job Coach, said: “Ryan never fails to impress us with his positive attitude towards work. Ryan joined not knowing any of the other students and quickly made friends with everyone. We are so proud of how far he has come in such a short space of time. He has made such a fabulous impression on the catering team and seeing how much he is loving his role is just inspirational.”

Impact

Disabled young adults are significantly underrepresented in the nation’s workforce and are far less likely to secure employment than the general population. Only 3.5% of young adults with a learning disability known to their local authority in Derby are in paid work (around 6% nationally).

There are 69 Project SEARCH schemes internationally and 60 per cent of the young adults involved have secured employment.

Future plans

The hope is that Royal Derby Hospital can resume work placements soon and discussions have taken place with Motorpoint about the possibility of them offering placements too.

The young people are taking part in a series of Reverse Job Fairs. At a traditional job fair, job seekers learn more about employers but at a reverse job fair, the role is quite simply reversed! The employers are invited to take part and see first-hand what the young people can contribute and offer to their organisation. It is hoped that this will lead to some of the employers offering internships.

More information

DEBP are a Social Enterprise and work with employers to develop bespoke programmes to support young people. For more information on DEBP and Project SEARCH go to www.debp.org and follow our:

- [Twitter company account](#)
- [Project Search twitter account](#)
- [LinkedIn company page](#)
- [Instagram company page](#)

For more information about Project SEARCH please email sarah.cutler@@debp.org