

INSPIRE

OLASS LEARNING SUPPORT NEWSLETTER

'TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH LEARNING' Summer 2016

Welcome!

We are delighted to introduce the first edition of the **OLASS Learning Support Newsletter**. As well as providing updates on Learning Support, we will share the success of our learners and how you have inspired and supported them to achieve. Have you initiated or discovered something new in the world of Learning Support: a useful support method or resource? How do you work effectively with other college staff to support learners? Have you supported a learner who has been 'outstanding'?

Tell us all about it, including any Learning Support events you have been involved in or have coming up.

In the meantime, read about award winning learners at HMYOI Glen Parva; the achievements of a learner at HMP Drake Hall; and how peer mentors have become the 'eyes and ears' at HMP Stocken.

We look forward to receiving your stories of innovation and inspiration. Please email us at: OLASSALS@mkcollege.ac.uk



Dylan accepting his award at the City & Guilds ceremony

City & Guilds Medal of Excellence - Do you have an 'outstanding' learner you would like to nominate for a medal?

The City & Guilds' Medals for Excellence 'recognises the achievements of our learners, lecturers and trainers who have achieved great results by producing exceptional work - going above and beyond what is expected to achieve their goals. It recognises not only excellent results but also those who show a true journey of progression throughout their qualification.' (www.cityandguilds.com/what-we-offer/learners/awards/medals-for-excellence)

Two previous winners, Dylan and Richard, were supported by the Learning Support Team at HMYOI Glen Parva. Amanda Stevenson and Nisha Gandhi, Learning Support Practitioners, nominated the learners and attended a C&G ceremony to see Dylan receive his award. "Dylan improved his skills on each course he did" they said, "and progressed from Stepping Stones and Functional Skills in Literacy and Numeracy to a NVQ Level 2 in Rail Engineering and Trackworks."

"Dylan also completed a mentoring course and became a Listener on his Unit following the completion of a Samaritans Listeners' Course. Dylan matured a huge amount in the time we worked with him and that is all credit to him for wanting to change for the better. We watched him grow in confidence, raise his self-esteem and take pride in what he has achieved. He always gave 110% to everything and had a positive attitude to his time here, making a determined effort to plan his future outside of Glen Parva."

On winning his medal Dylan said, "Education in prison is really good for young people who have been down on their luck in some way and haven't had much education. It can give you a boost, make you want to take your education further and give you a good start for your future outside jail. I am really happy about it and am very proud of myself. I hope I can tell my story to others and help them to achieve new goals in life."

Nominations for 'outstanding' learners who have completed a C&G qualification between 1 August 2015 and 31 July 2016 will be invited from Autumn 2016. Visit the City & Guilds website to find out more. Don't forget to let us know!

Who's Who in ALS

**CENTRAL TEAM:
ALS CO-ORDINATORS**
Aimee Hawkes
& Lisa Thomas

REGIONAL LEADS:
South Central - Mark Fisher HoC
East Midlands - Alison Stewart HoC
West Midlands - Gail Lomas HoC

REGIONAL SENCO:
South Central - Lorraine Cesar
East Midlands - to be appointed
West Midlands - Sarah Leigh

Did you know?

We have supported over 2,500 learners so far this year. That's nearly 10% of the total number of learners in education

Latest News

- Please send trackers and all ALS queries to the new Central Learning Support email address: OLASSALS@mkcollege.ac.uk
- We would like to welcome Lorraine Cesar to the Learning Support Team in her role as South Central Regional SENCO.
- The 2016-17 academic year starts on 1st August so look out for your new tracker and Learning Support updates to be circulated in July.
- Learning Support training and workshop sessions will be starting in the autumn term.

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Learning Support: A Case Study at HMP Drake Hall

Learning Support Practitioner: Antony George Prison: HMP Drake Hall, West Midlands Learner: ‘A’

Learning Difficulty/Disability: Dyslexia and emotional and behavioural difficulties

Key Learning Support strategies/methods used:

· Allow time-out from sessions when required · Break up work/text into more manageable chunks · Help with clarifying/rephrasing work · Spelling strategies and techniques, including use of Useful Information booklet · Provide a yellow overlay/paper

‘A’ initially refused to engage in any form of education and group work. When I first started working with her she was on Basic a lot and was constantly receiving IEPs for her behaviour. I initially started supporting her in 1:1 sessions and she would find various excuses not to attend and would become very vocal and disruptive. Through getting to know how she worked and when she did and didn’t want to engage, I was able to learn when to challenge her to do more in these sessions and when to take time out. Finding common ground also helps with a lot of learners I support. In ‘A’s’ case it was television, especially American dramas. I also learned how important it is to take baby steps and celebrate the tiny victories!

We explored many techniques and strategies including ‘Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check’ and leaving visual clues around and breaking words down into syllables. I also adapted and introduced a ‘Useful Information’ booklet which was produced by our SENCO, Sarah Leigh. The booklet includes information on basic Maths and English rules, as well as days of the week and a number square. ‘A’ came to use it as a spelling book for words she struggled with and it became her own mini dictionary.

‘A’ was initially hesitant about working with classroom assistants but I managed to pair her up with a fantastic classroom assistant for the times I couldn’t support her. Over the next year, through these 1:1 sessions and consistent support, she increased in confidence in her abilities and when working with others; and when she was able to work more independently, I gradually started to decrease the time I would spend in each session.

‘A’ progressed on to Level 1 English and Maths and then Level 2 Hairdressing. She has started an ITQ course and is eager to enrol on Level 2 English and Maths. I still support her, when required, and I liaise with tutors and classroom assistants to discuss any concerns and ongoing support. ‘A’ also tracks me down in between sessions to excitedly tell me about her mock exam results and how pleased she is. She also had a ‘Useful Information’ booklet which I had tailored for her Hairdressing course.

‘A’ passed her Hairdressing course and is now enhanced and working in a privileged position at HMP Drake Hall. She would not have been given this opportunity without achieving her English and Maths Functional Skills. Learning Support gave her the time to grow in confidence and gradually integrate into full-time education. Now that she can see a reason behind her learning she is able to think about the bigger picture, and her long term goals, and she is much more motivated to achieve. - Antony George

You can find Useful Information booklets for a range of courses on the staff intranet as well as the Learning Support Guide and associated documents (distributed previously), including guidance leaflets for supporting a range of learning difficulties and disabilities. Or email your request to OLASSALS@mkcollege.ac.uk.

Peer Mentors, the ‘Eyes and Ears’ at HMP Stocken

Caroline Border, ALS Practitioner at HMP Stocken, wanted to increase the opportunities for learners to be able to disclose learning difficulties and disabilities. By giving presentations to learners on a peer mentoring course, which runs every six weeks, she has raised awareness of the challenges learners can face in the classroom. *“By discussing learning difficulties and disabilities with peer mentors, when they go on to support learners in classes and on the wings, they may be able to recognise signs that a learner might have an additional need. They can then have an informal chat with the learner who may be more willing to disclose something to the mentor that they are otherwise reluctant to in a formal setting or interview. The mentor can then refer them to us and we’re able to follow it up. It’s great to have another set of eyes and ears in the classroom.”*

Have you introduced a new referral process or other way of working that has worked effectively? Please tell us about it.



Next newsletter...featuring an update on the City & Guilds Level 3 Certificate for Learning Support Practitioners course, guidance for Ofsted, your stories and more about our regional SENCOs.

If there is anything you would like to share in the autumn newsletter, please email OLASSALS@mkcollege.ac.uk by 29th July 2016.

Have a great summer!!