

The Stone Soup Project



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Alternative Education 2009/10

The Stone Soup Project is a Nottingham based Social Enterprise offering a variety of vocational courses tailored to young people who, for various reasons are not able to access full time mainstream education. We work closely with Local Authorities, Schools, Families and a range of external agencies to assist disaffected young people in overcoming barriers to their learning and to reach their full potential.

The company is committed to a holistic enabling approach and is flexible enough to respond to the individual needs of each young person. Established in 2002, we have over 7 years experience of working with young people in this sector, our staff team are highly qualified industry professionals in their individual fields, and are committed to offering a positive learning experience to the young people in our care.

Direct Referrals

We welcome direct referrals from schools and alternative learning services for:

Part Time Exclusions

Working alongside existing school programmes to enhance basic skills and offer accreditation and practical experience in a range of vocational courses.

Short term Exclusions

Similar to part time exclusions but also working with schools, families and other key stakeholders to assist reintegration into mainstream education.

Full Time Exclusions:

Providing a full time education covering basic skills and accreditation in a range of vocational subject areas of interest to the young person.

All engagement in these referral programmes encompass:

- Enhancing access to vocational learning and relevant work experience
- Modifying behaviour, teaching of thinking and problem solving skills
- Promoting and assisting towards work experience, employment or further education
- Encouraging reintegration into mainstream education if appropriate
- A focus on team working and understanding the workplace environment

All courses are carefully designed to make activities as practical as possible in order to interest and motivate students. Emphasis is placed on preparing the young person for further education or the workplace and we employ a vocational, project based approach.

Any of the above can be designed as a term or yearly programme and tailored to meet the needs of the student.



Our current programme of courses include:

- Music Production
- Video/Film Production
- Graphic Design
- Web Design
- Business & Enterprise
- Information Technology
- Construction
- Craft Design Technology

These programmes offer students the opportunity to gain level 1 & 2 NCFE qualifications using Industry Standard software and equipment. During the course students will have the opportunity to work on real world projects which will involve direct liaison with professionals in the field.

Alongside these courses students are taught literacy and numeracy skills and have the opportunity to gain NCFE Level 1 and level 2 qualifications in both these subjects. PSHE also forms a core part of any curriculum we offer.

This list is not exhaustive and we welcome enquiries about our bespoke service which can design courses in a variety of subjects to meet the needs of the referrer and students. Currently we are working with associates to create courses in Horticulture, Cookery, Theatre Design and Drama.

Added to the academic content of the programmes, referrals also include:

- Attendance Tracking
- Home visits and parental liaison, agency liaison (Connexions, YOT etc.)
- Parents evenings
- Celebration events & reward systems
- Work experience and employment opportunities
- Apprenticeships
- Life skills and wellbeing
- “Setting up for life” - which involves, opening a bank account, CV writing and interview skills.
- Assistance with college applications and entry
- Streamlined entry process into Further Education through our college partnerships.

Beyond Year 11 we also offer a range of further education opportunities including Pre E2E, E2E and post E2E courses run in conjunction with local Further Education Institutes.



Costs

Placements are charged per day and include provision of a lunch, for bulk placements (5 or more) bespoke prices and programmes can be arranged. Construction courses incur an additional charge for materials of £5 per day. Please contact us for a tailored quote specific to your needs.

How to access the Service

If you would like to work with us, a call to our Head Office is enough to start the process. An appointment can be made for the referrer and young person to visit the project and meet the team. This is followed by a meeting between the student and a project worker to ascertain what the young person's requirements are and their suitability for our programmes. Once a placement has been agreed, we will issue a referral form to be completed, after which a start date is arranged and the programme commences. Placements on these programmes can be made at any time of the year.

For more information about this service or to discuss our range of programmes please contact our Head Office on: **0115 958 1122**, alternatively you can email us on referrals@thestonesoupproject.com



Our Philosophy

It is recognised that many of the young people referred will have Emotional and Behavioural difficulties which may inhibit their ability to access learning. All members of staff are therefore given training to understand the potential barriers to students' progression.

All aspects of the young person's experience with Stone Soup are underpinned by the 5 outcomes of the Every Child Matters legislation and the work is tailored to the expectations of the Government White Paper "Back on Track". Our experience has shown that behavioural problems start at a much earlier stage than the point of our involvement. When Exclusion from main stream school becomes necessary it is a destructive process for both the young person involved and the members of staff who instigate the process. It is with this in mind that The Stone Soup Project can offer a collaborative service or "behaviour partnership" directly to schools to work with the young person whilst they are still in mainstream school and to try to

prevent exclusion. In the case of a young person who is already excluded the Project recognises the benefit of reintegration where possible.

There is a strong emphasis on Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), along with encouraging students to be more flexible in their thinking. As part of the overall learning experience students are encouraged to place their new found skills into the context of real life experiences and are taught how their skills can be utilised whilst in a controlled and safe environment. This provides opportunities that contribute effectively to preparing students for their futures beyond school. For those students who show an interest and aptitude, we offer a mentoring service in business management to help students utilise their skills in the commercial world. We have the very satisfying experience of having students return as adults for further advice and guidance in their chosen subjects and sometimes in the businesses that they have created.



Company Details

The Stone Soup Project Community Interest Company
The Oldknows Factory
St Anns Hill Road
Nottingham
NG3 4GP

Tel: 0115 958 1122 (9am to 5pm)
E-Mail: referrals@thestonesoupproject.com
Web: www.thestonesoupproject.com

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What qualifications can students achieve?

We are a registered centre for NCFE and ASDAN and offer both level 1 and 2 qualifications. Completion of a level 2 qualification is regarded as equivalent to a GCSE. Students placed with us can achieve level 1 & 2 in the following:

- a. Basic skills in Literacy & Numeracy
- b. In their chosen core subjects (Graphics; Music; Painting; Joinery; Enterprise etc.)

2. Can you work with students who have severe EBD and/or who have statements for ADHD and such like?

Yes, our staff are trained in working with these kind of students; to spot warning signs and employ de-escalation techniques where necessary. Our team also have a wealth of experience working with these types of students. Many of our students come to us with statements and successfully engage with the main group. We can also offer tailor made one-to-one programmes if this is required.

3. What added benefits are students offered?

Beyond the opportunity to gain real qualifications and enterprise skills. Students get to work alongside industry professionals and are encouraged and assisted in progressing into further education or the workplace. They are offered support and advice on a personal and professional level with assistance being given to set up bank accounts, write CV's etc... Students also have the option to apply for apprenticeships when offered. Our organisations objectives are much wider than just education; we want to affect real social change and have a keen interest in helping disadvantaged people and communities.

4. How do the students respond, do we actually affect change?

Students generally respond positively to our approach. We often stay in touch with them even after their placements have finished and offer advice and support. Some of the relationships are advisory and in others we take a more proactive approach. Over the years many have come back and completed apprenticeships or gained experience working for us; some have actually gone on to become employees whilst others have set up as sole traders and/or gone into further and higher education.

5. If a student is to be placed part time alongside his school work. How many days would this be and can these days be decided by school?

The school can decide how many and which days are most appropriate depending on the individual students preferences, ability and need. A key strength of ours is the adjustment of the teaching process according to the learning needs of the pupils. One size does not fit all and we always accommodate individual differences and specific interests/skills/needs.

6. What constitutes a full time placement?

10am – 3pm, 5 days per week equates to the 25 hrs required for full time engagement.