



Project | SEARCH

Helping students with learning disabilities find jobs



**FOSSE WAY
SCHOOL**
A SPECIALIST SCHOOL

Royal United
Hospital Bath
NHS Trust



Introducing Project | SEARCH

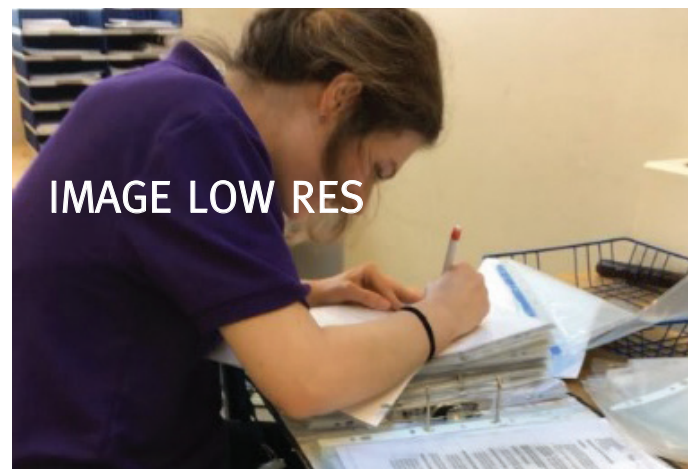
Project SEARCH is a one year course for students in their final year of education, enabling them to spend a year on site with an employer. This provides them with the skills, experience, knowledge and confidence to find paid employment at the end of the year. It is a programme that has been developed in Cincinnati, USA and is now successfully replicated in many countries. Fosse Way School was the first school in the UK to offer the course.

During the year students learn a variety of jobs and other employability skills, such as completing applications and attending interviews. The students spend a small proportion of every day in a classroom and the rest of the day they are out working in various departments as trainees. During this time they learn the transferable skills needed within the current job market. The aim of the course is employment. The course includes the Ascentis Award in Employability and functional skills in English and Mathematics.

More than half of the students from Project SEARCH'S first four years have already found paid employment.

The partners working with Fosse Way School are the Royal United Hospital in Bath (employer) and Virgin Care (job development and job coaching).

The collaboration with the RUH gives the pupils the opportunity to be supported during their introduction to the workplace, with a real prospect of gaining employment by the end of the year. Students can be employed either in the RUH or any other employer in the area.



Each year up to 12 students aged 18 - 24 from B&NES and surrounding local authorities enrol on the programme. There is an equipped classroom on site at the RUH, and students are supported in the classroom by teachers and Project SEARCH coordinators, a job coach and staff throughout the RUH.

“ Project SEARCH provides young people with learning disabilities the skills they need to succeed in the work place. ”

Tony Kelly, Project SEARCH teacher



The project is designed to give students experience in both general and task-specific job skills. Students receive regular instruction in the workplace and are supported with independent living skills. A job coach is based here at Project SEARCH to offer continued support to the students.

Pupils also learn valuable skills such as interview techniques and writing CVs, which prepare them with the skills required for the job market.

“ I now work full time in the RUH and love it. Without Project SEARCH I wouldn't be here. It's the best thing I ever did! ”

George Bowden, Project SEARCH graduate

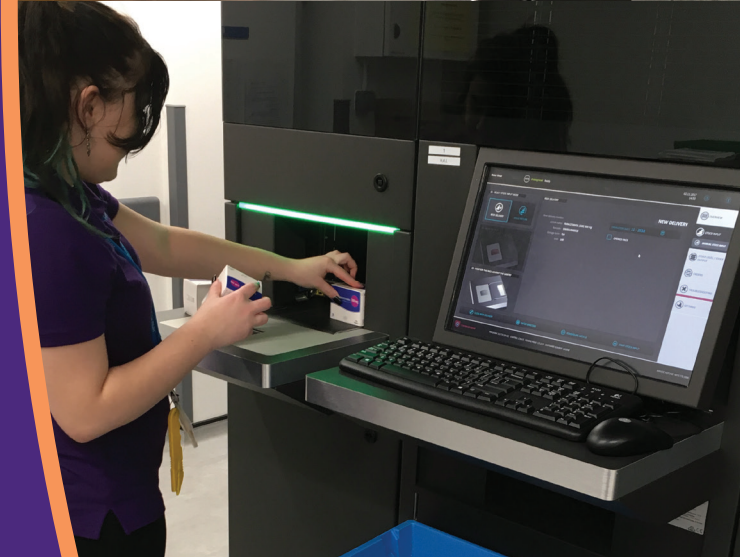
Students at work

From physiotherapy to the pharmacy, from maintenance to the restaurant, each day the students spend time in the workplace. Their placements are rotated which allows them to learn and develop new skills in different areas. This allows each student to develop a broad range of skills needed for employment.

40 departments now want to have a student in their departments as the students' reputation for hard work is gradually spreading.

“ Students have supported pharmacy staff, and the roles depend on the individual student and their abilities. It's very rewarding to see students' progress with the tasks, and we miss them when they are not here. ”

Lynda Clark, Purchasing and Distribution pharmacy



Project | SEARCH - Results

What past students have achieved since graduating

2014 - 2015

- 8 Students have graduated
- 7 have moved into paid employment
- 1 has moved to another Further Education provider

2015 - 2016

- 9 students have graduated
- 4 have moved into paid employment
- 3 have moved to another Further Education provider
- 1 has moved to Residential Further Education
- 1 has joined an Apprentice Programme

Where are some of the students working now?

- In the Facilities Department as an Environmental Groundsman at the RUH
- At a university
- As a Patient Support Assistant at the RUH
- In the Medical Records Department at the RUH
- In the Pharmacy Department at the RUH
- At a private company

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Project SEARCH has really built up my daughter's confidence. It is an excellent scheme and it focuses on the things we want for our children – for them to learn, to experience the world of work, and to develop the skills they need to get a job and find their place in life.

Mother of a Project SEARCH pupil

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For more information about Project SEARCH

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