



## WELCOME

What a busy summer we've had here. We hope you all enjoyed yours.

We said goodbye to our post-16 and traineeship learners who are off to bigger and better things we hope. A fantastic celebration BBQ was held for them at Merley House, on the hottest day of the year no less, and all centres were in attendance, including new joiners. A particular highlight was the Zorbs - great fun.

We've welcomed almost 100 new joiners in total, and I'd like to extend a special thanks to the existing students and all the staff for helping them to settle in so well.

Of course, we were all saddened by the news of Her Majesty The Queen's passing and with such extensive news coverage, it was important we gave learners the opportunity to discuss any feelings they had around it. Maria Fincham worked hard to create a structured lesson on the monarchy and grief management which was ready to be delivered the next day.

We are currently working on a smoothie bike project too, which is exciting! It's basically an exercise bike that liquidises fruit when pedalled, combining fitness and nutrition at the same time. We'll hopefully have one in Boscombe and Dorchester soon and we can't wait to give it a go.

Finally, I'm delighted to announce that we're expanding. A SEND provision has been set up in Liverpool which will support around 20 students initially, with plans to accommodate up to 80 and offer a post-16 programme too.



During our Board of Governors annual strategy meeting, we have also discussed opening such provisions in Southampton and Portsmouth as well and look forward to updating you on this in the near future.

In the meantime, I hope you have a fantastic few months and I look forward to updating you on the autumn term after Christmas - not long now!

*Adrian Gunner*

ADRIAN GUNNER  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

## PROJECT SEARCH LAUNCHES!



Finally, our supported internship, Project Search, is up and running with Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council - the first in Dorset.

The 10-month programme started mid-September with 10 people on the programme.

So far, they have been through a three-week induction programme that runs through how to conduct yourself in a professional environment, values of BCP, bank accounts and budgeting and labour market research.

This involves understanding what jobs there are internally but also in the local area. We have visited the High Street and job fayres as well as online.

We're now working with the interns to help them create one page profiles that will lead to them selecting which council departments they would like to work in based on their interests and skill sets. Myself and the job coach will support them in matching their strengths and expectations to a job profile and help them formally apply in the same way they would for any job.

Behind the scenes, we've been doing lots of job brokerage within the council to see what is available.

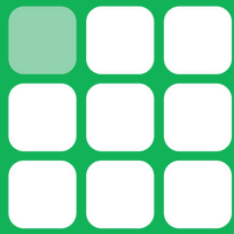
Once on their chosen job rotations, they will last three months, so each intern will therefore experience three departments, with plenty of time to find their feet and really get stuck in. It could be an outdoors department or heavily clerical and everything in between. The interns will be involved in all day to day work tasks as would any employee, so they will get the full working experience.

Every day, interns will independently arrive at 9am, spend an hour on employability skills under the City and Guilds programme before working 10am until 3pm in their chosen department. We'll then have a debrief at the end of the day.

The overall outcome is for our interns to transition into further education or a paid job, either within the council or wider community. Nationwide, the success rate is 60%, and we're hoping to surpass that.



**CHRISTMAS CLOSURE**  
**Monday 19th December - Tuesday 3rd January 2023**



## BOSCOMBE CENTRE UPDATE

Kerry Pedder

Following a great summer here at Boscombe, it's been lovely to look back on what we have achieved as a centre.

The sports day that we mentioned in the last update went down a storm and was really well attended by existing learners across all provisions as well as some new joiners. Staff and students enjoyed a range of activities including tug of war, mini football games and slalom obstacle courses.



The Lap of Hope was a great success too, raising over £800 for Sport Relief - more than three times our £250 target.



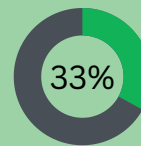
Inside the centre, we're planning on creating an indoor garden room in one of the spare classrooms. It will feature artificial grass, garden benches, hydroponic plants and lovely nature-inspired art. As the more urban centre in the organisation, we wanted our learners to have somewhere calming and light to enjoy and know that the benefits include improved concentration, productivity and mood while reducing stress.

With some 60 new learners having joined in August, we're now looking ahead to November when it's one of the busiest changeover times for our SEND provision. As well as helping our current learners successfully plan and navigate their next steps, we're preparing new joiners so the transition is as smooth as possible.



## WELL DONE 2021 LEAVERS!

### Traineeship



Have gone to college to study



Animal Care



Art



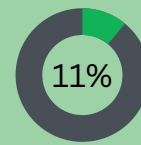
Carpentry



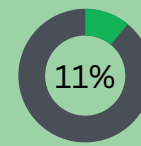
Childcare



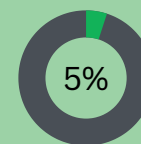
Motor Vehicle



Have secured apprenticeships

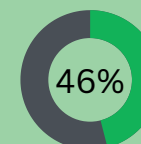


Have gone into employment

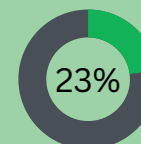


Are on other courses

### Vocational course



Are on a Traineeship course



Have gone to college to study



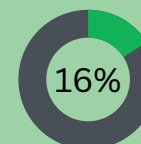
Childcare



Music

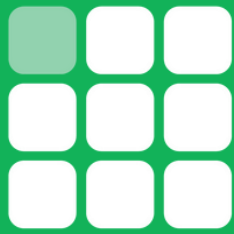


Care



Have secured employment or are on other courses





## **DORCHESTER CENTRE UPDATE**

Tracy Perren

We've had a fantastic start to the autumn term here at Dorchester and are the busiest we have ever been. There are 15 new joiners on our SEND provision, nine on the Vocational Post-16 course and two new THRIVE learners.

Over the summer, we hosted a couple of transition days for the young people due to start so they could meet everyone and get to know their way around the site. Table tennis tournaments were set up, we made pizzas, worked with the animals and got creative in the arts room.

Safeguarding training has been a focus, but with a twist. Natalie, our Prep for Life Tutor, has held some walking and talking lessons in Thornicombe woods. Together, the groups discussed safeguarding issues and what they should do if they are concerned about themselves or other people.



Over at the RSPB Café, at the Swannery car park just off Radipole Park Drive, Weymouth, we have increased the Prep for Work hours to get the learners ready for a 35-hour week supported internship. It's going amazingly well already and has made a huge difference to confidence levels. They are now happy to talk to the public, ask questions and take orders. the Swannery Car Park,



We also have an upcoming team day with RSPB, where staff will be taking part in the Pull a Pine campaign. It's to open up some of the forest as part of conservation efforts and is always nice to spend time together outside of our usual environment.

On the farm itself, we have a few sustainability projects going on. In an effort to be more green, we have invested in solar panels for our outdoor log cabin classroom. It is completely off-grid and self-sufficient, using solar energy and windmills for power!

## **GOLF CATCHER**

Maria Fincham

We're thrilled to announce that our supported internship for SEND learners is now live with local business, Golf Catcher.

The year-long programme is 35-hours a week and gives young people ages between 18 and 25 to work across the various departments of the business from reception and ground keeping to restaurant and kitchen.



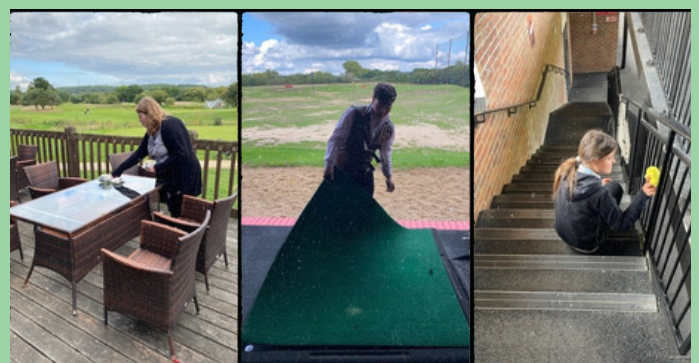
The golf centre has both indoor and outdoor golfing facilities featuring simulator bays and a driving range as well as a sports bar.

The aim is to teach the interns transferable skills like team work,

communication, problem solving, customer service and health and safety that can be used in any work environment. When the programme ends, we will be helping them to find paid employment, either within the business if there are vacancies available or with another employer.

Currently, the feedback from learners has been great. Jade Bennett said: "I am really enjoying my internship where I have improved my confidence when speaking to customers." Kymberley Jones commented: "I work in the restaurant as part of the supported internship. I have learnt new skills like pot washing and polishing cutlery. I really enjoy this and the staff are friendly and supportive."

CEO, Paul, is hugely enthusiastic and passionate about promoting SEND-friendly employment, and said: "It's fantastic and everyone has settled in really well and they have been a help to our business. It has helped our staff learn more about themselves which, in turn, develops our staff community. We are looking forward to continuing working with SWRAC to offer young people the chance to thrive in the workplace."





## THRIVE UPDATE

Rachel Rainsbury

Here at THRIVE, we've welcomed five new learners to the Merley House programme, including our youngest at 16.

In addition, our new activity assistant, Kate, has joined and is working wonders.

One of the major projects we've been working on is the renovation of a few rooms. A trendy new games room has been created, featuring an inflatable sofa, TV and X Box which one of the learners has kindly lent us. It's now the favourite room among the group.

We've also refurbished the quiet room and created a sleep room as one student has Narcolepsy and needs to sleep during the day.

DIY is now a more regular feature as we have managed to get our own tool set and the gym visits are still going great. The learners have actually started creating their own workout plans tailored to their own needs and favourite exercises and are starting to really sweat! Personal hygiene is fantastic, with most learners choosing to shower after a workout or take deodorant and a fresh top.

The agreement with AFC Bournemouth is now in place and we will be visiting the stadium in October for a careers tour so the learners can find out more about the jobs in the setting.

There may also be some free football tickets given in the mix, which the football fans in the group are hugely excited about!

We're also linking up with Lounge 1, a small café in Canford Heath, to set up work experience in the kitchen and front of house.

In the next few months, we have Halloween to look forward to, with a buffet, fun games and fancy dress. We're hoping to go pumpkin picking at Sopley Farm too. Beyond that, the learners will be preparing to make and serve a big Christmas dinner for around 40 people, so we are working on getting ready for that.



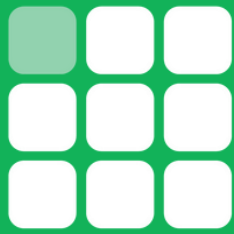
## FEEDBACK

Thank you to you all for everything you have done to support Luke during his time at Thrive. He has achieved so much and he has made some great friends.

We feel very fortunate that Luke was given the opportunity to join Thrive, it has been the best thing to have happened to him on his journey so far and you have become like a second family to him. We have enjoyed hearing about everything he has learnt and the experiences he's had over the past two years.

Thank you for the difference you have made to Luke's life and to our family too.





**PARENT'S VOICE**



Josh, now 21, joined us three years ago on our Pathways programme. Within that time, he has progressed from a young person who wasn't willing to try anything new to someone who is now ready to take on new challenges and give something a go.

He was anxious, quiet and would not participate in anything that took him out of his comfort zone. He has absolutely thrived at work experience with the RSPB who have now asked him to join them at Arne to take on some new duties.

He told us when he first joined that he wouldn't take another English exam ever! But 18 months later he passed his Level 2 Functional Skills English.

He is going to be joining our new Supported Internship in November as he feels that he is now ready to take on a full time course and is really looking forward to the new challenges.

***"SWRAC has supported my son all through the courses he has done with them. They have given him space when he needs it, worked in small groups which has helped him achieve his English (thank goodness).***

***He has begun to open up to them more and has more confidence in talking with them and his peers. Even in lockdown his tutor supported and worked with him.***

***He gets on well with the staff that he has encountered. He has been treated as the individual that he is and accepted for who he is.***

***He enjoys seeing the animals on his arrival - how many colleges have a peacock to look at? They give him the time to understand what has been asked of him and the chance to achieve and succeed."***

**NESS**



Spotlight on...

**ADVISORY BOARD**

Following a 30 year-career in further education, Karen Dyke has been on the Advisory Board at SWRAC for a year now and brings with her a wealth of insight from her experience running colleges all over the country.



She already knew Adrian through their shared passion for education, but also classical music, and was thrilled to be invited to join the organisation when time allowed in her busy consulting career – and when she's not practicing her art, which is being sold and exhibited to buyers from as far away as Spain.

For Karen, working with SWRAC is unique. She loves that the various sites are adaptable to individual needs, have an informal and welcoming feel and actually addresses the needs of local learners and employers.

Karen said: "The learning environments here are very different to the norm – smaller, more inclusive and very approachable. The organisation makes sure it is very responsive to local needs too, not just of the learners, but the local job market, making sure people have the skills that give them the best chance of getting a job and that's hugely important."

Having specialised in OFSTED inspections, Karen is currently working with the team to prepare them for a change in some of the framework and helps to oversee the quality of education generally.

**SAFEGUARDING**



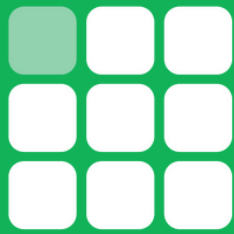
The wellbeing of our learners is at the heart of what we do. Should you have any concerns for yourself, your young person or anyone attending SWRAC, please contact us.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead:**

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**OUT OF HOURS: 07720 737876**

The contact details for the rest of our Safeguarding leads can be found on the next page.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

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**THANK YOU!**