

A review of Project Search at St George's Hospital, Tooting, London

Review commissioned by Cricket Green School 21st June 2013

The purpose of this review is to identify the key strengths and areas for development for the Project Search initiative based at St George's Hospital, Tooting. The evidence used for this review is taken from a broad range of sources available during w/c 17 June 2013, including: interviews with all 5 students, 2 parents, all staff, 7 mentors, and managers from key partner organisations. In addition, observations of reviews, job coaching, lessons and shadowing students at work. Students' course files were reviewed along with project documentation and recent audit report. At the time of writing this report destination data are not available but this is intended to follow in October 2013 as an addendum to this report.

Key Strengths

Current students make very good progress from their individual starting points

Outstanding development of students' skills, experience and confidence are well evidenced

Highly motivated students who enjoy working and learning

Enthusiastic staff and managers with high aspirations for students

Outstanding job coaching

Students' behaviour is very good and appropriate in all settings in the hospital

Highly effective mentoring arrangements are in place and evident in all placements.

Outcomes for students

- All students are achieving very well and are making better than expected progress given their starting points. They learn exceptionally well and, as a result, acquire knowledge quickly and develop a thorough understanding of a wide range of different aspects of their learning programmes. Their attendance and punctuality are consistently good as they develop high levels of commitment, positive attitudes and increased responsibility. Students provide high standards of work in the hospital and demonstrate good understanding of the importance of effective patient care, such as offering reassurance to patients during journeys to and from the X-ray department.
- St George's Hospital provides a rich source of learning opportunities and two students have increased their employability by achieving accredited qualifications in food preparation. However, the majority of students do not gain accredited qualifications because arrangements to do so are currently under-developed.

- Students' self-confidence increases significantly during their time on Project Search. They demonstrate their raised confidence levels through increasingly effective social interactions with staff and patients. Students' understanding of how to solve problems is particularly good as they increasingly use their initiative to discover new ways of successfully completing their jobs. For example, making accurate, independent decisions to replenish food trays in the hospital canteen. One parent commented: 'my son has done so well on Project Search.....beyond my wildest dreams'.
- Students develop a good range of transferable skills which significantly improve their chances of finding suitable employment, such as travelling independently and better time management. They practice and improve these skills very effectively during their work placements and at home. One student working in the post room reported 'If I listen carefully and watch my mentor then I know where the parcels go. I can read and recognise addresses'. Students enjoy their time at Project Search and they value the very good support they receive.

Teaching, learning and assessment

- Project Search staff are well qualified and have good levels of relevant experience, which they use very effectively to ensure all students make particularly good progress towards improving their personal and vocational skills. They ensure that teaching, coaching, mentoring and assessment comply closely with the prescribed Project Search curriculum and delivery model. Staff motivate students well because they are enthusiastic and have high aspirations for them.
- Staff know the students well and ensure learning activities are well planned to match individual interests and preferred learning styles. However, arrangements for initial assessment of literacy, numeracy and computer skills are not fully developed and it is unclear how results from previous assessments and skills scans are used to inform individual learning plans. Setting of targets for students is not yet fully developed.
- Lessons are planned effectively and delivered at a pace matched to the students' individual needs. However, the classroom is too small for the whole group to learn together. The teacher gives very close and effective attention to using a variety of methods and approaches to ensure students remain engaged. For example, in a lesson on working in ways to fulfill the hospital's values for excellence in patient care the students used peer assessment to identify each other's individual contribution for that day; such as demonstrating responsibility by following health and safety instructions in the hospital kitchen by alerting staff about a wet floor.
- Staff make sure students know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Instruction is clear and scenarios are role-played very effectively to help students prepare for anticipated situations in their work. In one particularly good example, a student working as a porter rehearsed informing the responsible nurse that he had arrived on the ward to take a patient to the scanning department. The student was informed that the nurse might be busy and he should wait for a quiet moment before announcing his arrival and asking for the patient.

- Assessment and monitoring of students' on-the-job progress are effective but the systems used to record, track and monitor progress and achievement of short, medium and long term goals are fragmented and do not provide a sufficiently thorough overview of individual progress.
- All staff, including mentors provide effective support to enable students to make good progress developing their functional English, mathematics and computer skills. For example, a student working in the staff canteen is helped to successfully prepare the correct number of desserts (200) by counting in multiples of ten. The teacher frequently introduces new words which each student learns to identify and use appropriately in the workplace, such as 'experience' and 'account information'. Students' written work is of a good standard but is not always presented well because their files don't appear to be organised as clearly as they could be.
- Very effective behaviour management strategies enable students to participate fully in all activities and to develop the skills to manage their own behaviour. This results in reduced support arrangements as learners develop appropriate coping skills.
- Project Search provides very effective workplace learning experiences. Staff use intensive and highly structured approaches to blend instruction, experience, assessment, coaching and support. The curriculum is extremely comprehensive and used flexibly to ensure students' individual needs and interests are well met.
- Job coaching is outstanding because staff ensure tasks are clearly and accurately identified through detailed step-by-step guidance. There is a very good source of stimulating experiences reinforced with highly effective advice and very clear recognition of progress. Students learn very effectively from this process and use the coaching as a platform for further, more independent thinking.
- Workplace mentors and their managers provide students with highly effective support which ensures they remain engaged, stimulated and continue to make good progress. In the early stages of each student's placement the mentor provides highly effective and intensive on-the-job supervision which is gradually reduced as students become more familiar with their tasks and begin to demonstrate increased confidence and competence. However, several of the mentors interviewed explained that they would welcome and benefit from receiving more information, training and support for their roles, including more detailed initial assessment information to help them fully understand the student's needs, interests and the progress they are making.

Leadership and management

- Arrangements for leadership and management of Project Search are becoming increasingly well-established. The project receives very strong support from all of the key partners who provide generous encouragement not only to the project itself but also to each student. The project has an active steering group which meets each month to discuss progress and agree new strategies to ensure the smooth running and long-term success of the project. The Project Search national advisor has recently audited the local arrangements at St George's Hospital concluding that there has been good progress and close compliance with the internationally recognized and intended

model of delivery.

- The project has been successfully implemented and its first full operational year is now almost at its conclusion. It has been particularly beneficial for the students and immensely rewarding for everyone involved in supporting them. The next phase of Project Search at St George's Hospital will involve the staff in a process of self-evaluation, reflection and planning to consolidate the lessons learnt in the first year and to measure future progress and success. The project would benefit from a detailed development plan to help establish its priorities, reinforce key strategies and to measure progress and improvement. In addition, the project's quality assurance arrangements require further development. To aid this process a list of prompts for discussion and several recommendations can be found below.
- Staff work very effectively to ensure students are adequately safeguarded at work. Compliance with health and safety regulations is given high priority and students develop increased awareness of how to work safely and effectively. For example, students know when and how to apply sterilization solution to their hands as they move around the hospital. However, the project's written safeguarding procedures require updating and staff require refresher training in safeguarding vulnerable adults.
- Mentors are highly committed and enthusiastic in their support of the students. All of the mentors who contributed to this evaluation said they found the experience of supporting students very rewarding and are keen to remain involved in the project. They value their involvement in Project Search because they can see the progress made by students. One mentor reported 'It adds a new dimension to my job which I really enjoy'.
- Project Search provides students with very well coordinated and highly effective vocational learning experiences. The project compares very favorably against other projects with similar aims because of the intensive programme of individual and specialised support available to students.

Areas for improvement

Arrangements for initial assessment of students are incomplete. Information about students' functional skills, abilities, aspirations and interests is not used effectively enough to inform individual learning plans. Setting of targets for students is not yet fully developed.

Assessment and monitoring of students' on-the-job progress are effective but the systems used to record, track and monitor progress and achievement of short, medium and long term goals are fragmented and do not provide a sufficiently thorough overview of individual progress.

Mentors and workplace managers do not receive sufficiently detailed initial assessment information; and do not always receive sufficient information about students' progress.

Too few students gain accredited qualifications.

Students' written work is not always presented well because their files are disorganised.

Several of the mentors interviewed said they would welcome and benefit from more information, training and support for their role.

The classroom is too small for the whole group to learn together.

The project would benefit from a detailed development plan to help establish its priorities, reinforce key strategies and to measure progress and improvement.

The project does not yet have arrangements to assure or improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Safeguarding arrangements require review.

Recommendations and prompts for discussion

1. Introduce a broader range of accredited qualifications for students and consider introducing and offering qualifications for mentors too. See <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/> See also <http://qcf.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/qcf-funding/InnovationCode/> for possible qualification and future, bespoke funding information through the Government's (SFA) Innovation Code initiative. (CGS/AB)
2. Ensure initial assessment is comprehensive and provides accurate and detailed information for individual learning plans, including setting of targets. (AB/SM)
3. Improve the arrangements used to track and monitor students' progress. (SM)
4. Where appropriate, ensure mentors receive sufficiently detailed initial assessment information on students, such as results of a skills-scan, to help provide a more detailed picture of their abilities and potential. (AB/SM)
5. Ensure more information, training and support are available to help mentors prepare for their roles. (AB/SM)
6. Ensure relevant managers and mentors are better informed of students' progress and that reviews are sufficiently focused and frequent.
7. Help students to better organise and present their written work. (SM)
8. Explore rooming arrangements to identify an available space in which the group can learn together effectively. (CGS/AB)
9. Introduce a detailed development plan to establish priorities, drive improvement and measure progress. (CGS/AB)
10. Consider the merits of introducing quality assurance arrangements including self assessment/evaluation, quality improvement plan, and lesson observation processes to ensure teaching and learning continually improves. (CGS/AB)
11. Ensure safeguarding arrangements are updated and include actions to safeguard vulnerable adults, through: refresher training for staff, a review of the safeguarding policy, nominating a safeguarding champion within the project team. Support to

implement this should be available through the local authority officer with responsibility for safeguarding vulnerable adults. In addition, consider the benefits of introducing personal safeguarding plans for each student that detail vulnerabilities and specific action to follow in the event of an emergency. (CGS/ AB)

Dr Dan Grant
PhD Safeguarding,
Registered Social Worker,
Independent Education and Training Consultant in LLDD,
Lead Inspector of Learning and Skills on behalf of Ofsted.

21 June 2013

Addendum (October 2013)

Outcomes for students

A review of Project Search at St George's Hospital, Tooting, London

Review commissioned by Cricket Green School 21st June 2013

Outcomes for students

- All six students from the 2012-13 cohort of St George's Hospital Project Search completed their traineeships in July 2013. They were the Project's first group of students who in many ways helped the staff plan, deliver, develop and review the programme. The students' eagerness and enthusiasm to learn has been one of the central driving forces in the Project's foundation year. They have helped to motivate the Project team and inspire the wider hospital community.
- The main body of this report contains many references to, and examples of, students' achievement. In brief, they progress exceptionally well and develop a good range of valuable knowledge, skills and experience. They have moved on from the Project having greatly increased their employability. Teaching, coaching and mentoring are highly effective and ensure outcomes for all students are outstanding. Learning from the odd mishap and mistake is facilitated very constructively by staff and key partners because of the safe environment and well structured individual programmes.
- All six students continue to receive specialist support and guidance from one of the Project's key partners (HAFAD) to help them continue to progress, become more independent and improve their opportunities for securing paid employment.
 - ✓ All six students successfully completed the programme and achieved their learning goals.
 - ✓ Two students achieved accredited qualifications in food preparation.
 - ✓ Three students progressed to college courses.
 - ✓ Three students attended a total of five interviews for paid work.
 - ✓ Two students received job offers.
- Strategies for measuring the success of the Project have been reviewed following the first full year. Comprehensive arrangements for recognising and recording progress and achievement of individual students have been introduced.