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CEIAG Case Study: The Limes College, Sutton, Surrey

*“The Careers Impact System & the Quality in Careers Standard”*

This Case Study provides testimony of the benefit The Limes College has seen from its participation in the Careers and Enterprise Company’s **Careers Impact System**.

Previously lacking the confidence to seek external accreditation through the national **Quality in Careers Standard**, after participating in the Careers Impact System, the College shared its experiences and the outcomes.

**Lucy Conrad, the College’s Careers & Destinations Officer:** *“I had looked into the benefits and process of gaining the **Quality in Careers Standard** some years ago and having looked at the criteria and structure, my first thought was that it was probably inaccessible for us.”*

**Laura Wareing - Assistant Head Curriculum:** *“This experience has given us the confidence to make one of the 3 key areas for our strategic development to achieve the national **Quality in Careers Standard** for The Limes College.”*

**Lucy Conrad, the College’s Careers & Destinations Officer:** *“Having taken all this into consideration, and having the greater confidence about our Careers provision, we feel that now is the right time to begin the process of working toward achieving **the Quality in Careers Standard**.”*

## SCHOOL CONTEXT

The Limes College is a large **Pupil Referral Unit** in Sutton offering support to children and young people who have found themselves unable to access mainstream education at some point between Year 1 and Year 11.

The College promotes and embeds the core values of **Belong, Relationships, Move On and Achieve** into its everyday practice, all staff working together to ensure that these values are consistently at the heart of every child’s learning journey.

## CURRICULUM

### The aims of the College's curriculum are:

- To offer a relevant, balanced and accessible learning experience.
- To develop students as learners who grow in confidence and are able to continue into relevant and positive destinations post 16.
- To support its students with the most up to date information, advice and guidance on opportunities that they will have after leaving, using in house careers guidance, mock interview day and through the work of the Transition Coaches.
- To offer an enhanced and individually bespoke PSHE/SMSC curriculum which involves both tutor and group work as well as 1:1 work targeting the behaviours that have led to children not accessing mainstream environments.

### The aims of the Key Stage 3 curriculum are:

- To prepare students for a reintegration back into a mainstream school or to assess and prepare them for a move to another more appropriate school
- To give students an opportunity to address the reasons why they are no longer in their previous school and to demonstrate that they can return to a mainstream environment.
- To work with families to support their child's education.
- To support schools and students to give them the best opportunity to make a successful transition.

### The College's Key Stage 4 Offer:

- The College reviews its Key Stage 4 Curriculum annually and aims to develop a curriculum which maximises the chances of students gaining relevant qualifications which enable them to move onto a positive destination post 16. The College believes; *"If we get this right then students stand a significant chance of being able to engage positively in education, employment or training."*
- In developing its Key Stage 4 curriculum the College's main aim has been to maximise the chances that, after having left the College, its former students would be equipped to engage positively in education, employment, or training. Having been assessed as part of their induction, all students are placed on a pathway that is either vocational, academic or a combination of the two.

### "BOOST":

- The "BOOST Group" is a long-term specialist unit situated at The Limes College. Students have a range of complex and diverse needs. The aim is to provide a nurturing environment alongside therapeutic interventions to ensure that all students leave with a well-rounded and balanced educational experience.
- The provision allows students to explore a broad range of educational, emotional and social experiences through the form of academic and non-academic subjects, one to one intervention, trips, guest speakers and outdoor education.
- Staff at the provision work collaboratively to create a nurturing and caring environment which allows students to feel confident in expressing their needs, and

as a result, students develop and learn in an environment that encourages growth, resilience and respect.

## CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

**The careers programme is overseen by Careers Lead - Laura Wareing - Assistant Head Curriculum.** Laura said:

*“The College is committed to a CEIAG programme which follows national frameworks for good practice and other relevant guidance, including relevant sections of the Education Act (2011), the DfE’s Careers strategy, and the January 2023 DfE updated its Statutory Guidance to schools on fulfilling their statutory duty and its guidance to FE Colleges: Careers guidance and access for education and training providers (publishing.service.gov.uk) as well as guidelines from Ofsted, the Career Development Institute and the Gatsby Benchmarks for good career guidance.*

*The College’s CEIAG provision promotes the personal and social development of its students with a particular emphasis on:*

- *Achieving economic well-being;*
- *Making a positive contribution; and*
- *Staying safe.*

*In doing so, the College provides guidance for its students in a world of ever more flexible pathways into further education, training, or employment.*

*In ensuring that its CEIAG programme is effective, the college:*

- *Is currently in the process of training its in-house careers adviser.*
- *Ensures that impartial information is made available to students about educational choices, careers options and employment and training opportunities.*
- *Provides a planned programme of careers education and information, advice and guidance (IAG) for all students in Years Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Consult with students and involve them in evaluation and monitoring of the programme.”*

## THE CAREERS AND DESTINATIONS DEPARTMENT

**Laura** added:

*“The Careers and Destinations Department at the College has grown and developed into a key strength of our school over the years through our development and upskilling of existing staff members.*

*The responsibility for Leadership of Careers is held by a member of SLT ensuring the support from the wider Senior Leadership Team and the Local Governing Body. Fundamental to the growth of the department has been the professional development of the team.*

*This year the Transition Coach has undertaken the Leaders in Careers training from the CEC and the Careers and Destinations Officer is due to complete the level 6 qualification in Careers Information Education Advice and Guidance.*

*Investing in the development of staff has widened our knowledge of theories, models of practice and pedagogy of careers education which has informed our practise and influenced the strategic plans for further development.”*

#### **SEEKING EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE?**

**Lucy Conrad, the College’s Careers & Destinations Officer, said:**

*“I had looked into the benefits and process of gaining the **Quality in Careers Standard** some years ago and having looked at the criteria and structure, my first thought was that it was probably inaccessible for us.”*

#### **PARTICIPATING IN THE CAREERS IMPACT SYSTEM**

So when the College was invited to participate in the Careers and Enterprise Company’s recently developed Careers Impact System, **Laura Wareing** explained their reaction and the outcomes:

*“We were approached to take part in the Careers Impact Review by The South London Partnership as the CEC were keen to gather the experiences and views of Alternative Provision.*

*Initially, we were hesitant due to the short time frame and our capacity to give the process the appropriate amount of time and attention needed for it to be meaningful.*

*We came to the decision that this opportunity could be valuable CPD for the department and would ensure we were more prepared for the impending OFSTED.*

*The review was conducted by The Careers and Enterprise Company and our reviewers were accompanied by an observer from The Gatsby Foundation.*

*The skilful questioning by the team conducting the review allowed us to share not only what experiences and learning we are providing our students with but also explored with us the rationale to our approach to Careers Education. The most transformative conversations we had were around not what we are doing but why we are doing it.*

*The review team took the time to speak to a range of staff, SLT and students to gain a solid understanding of the nature of our setting and of the needs of the students we are working with. In taking the time and encouraging us to really reflect on the values driving the work we*

*do we were able to revisit our strategic 3 year plan to centre the needs of the students attending the Limes College.*

*This experience has given us the confidence to make one of the 3 key areas for our strategic development to achieve the national **Quality in Careers Standard** for The Limes College.*

*The report from our careers impact review and positive feedback from The Careers and Enterprise Company and The Gatsby Foundation about their experiences at The Limes College provided external validation of our work and raised the profile of the Careers and Destinations Department across the school and wider Trust.*

*As a result, we have been invited to undertake reviews, provide guidance and support for other schools within our Trust on further developing their own Careers Provision and going forward we will be leading this area for the trust.*

*Our experience of the Careers Impact Review has been overwhelmingly positive and has given us the confidence to further develop Careers Education in The Limes College in formalising our intention to achieve **The Quality in Careers Standard** within the next 18 months.*

*The wider impact the review has had on the regard for the department across the school has ensured we were able to secure the commitment needed from the staff and our Local Governing Body to support us in achieving our aim.”*

**Lucy Conrad** added:

*“As part of the growth of the Alternative Learning Trust, we have had the opportunity to work with other PRUs and share resources and best practice.*

*We have recently welcomed the opportunity to work more closely with Saffron Valley collegiate which consists of 3 cross borough sites. SVC has received funding to operate a ‘Taskforce’ as part of a national programme.*

*There are 22 Taskforces across the country which have been introduced by the Government to specifically help support young people who are most at risk of serious violence and gang affiliation.*

*The ‘Taskforce’ consists of a collection of professionals: YOS Worker, Educational Psychologist, Mental Health Worker, Speech & Language Therapist, Family/Youth Worker and Post 16 Co-ordinator.*

*As a result, I have been asked to share best practice and support young people referred to the Taskforce, one day per week, with a range of post 16 activities.*

*Most students referred to the Taskforce have had little post 16 intervention and have poor attendance, but it has been an opportunity for me to familiarise myself with them and build relationships.*

*This is only in its infancy and most discussions have been around their thoughts about leaving school, aspirations, the range of post 16 pathways available to school leavers and target setting. It has been important to outline the kind of support they can expect from me and that I operate an open-door policy to encourage open communication about a range of career related topics.*

*Outcomes from this support is not evident yet but the aim is to provide targeted support to help young people in making positive and balanced decisions about their future.*

*Being part of the pilot has enabled us, as a department, to become more confident in our practice and more creative with our interventions to address the different needs of our students. We have built strong links with the Careers and Enterprise Company and the South London Partnership, who have supported us with the resources and expertise to help develop the service further.*

*Having taken all this into consideration, and having the greater confidence about our Careers provision, we feel that now is the right time to begin the process of working toward achieving **the Quality in Careers Standard.***

#### **CONTACTS**

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