



# Aspirations Day

How to ...

Guide

## Aspirations Day

### Set Up

Aspirations Day is a Careers and Future Planning day set up to give the students of Bradstow School the chance to have a say and make choices about their future. The students will be asked questions about their likes and dislikes and ideas about the future dreams using photo cards to make choices. There will also be the opportunity to try out different activities to find out what their skills are and what they like to do. Through 2-3 sessions of work and retesting through questioning and observing reactions we hope to be able to get a really good idea of the students hopes and dreams for the future in order to help them plan a transition when their time at Bradstow comes to an end.

There are a number of question packs which need setting up at the beginning of the day along with a variety of activities for the students to make a choice from.

The reactions to the questions and activities will be written in a specially made career book which will record all relevant information and can then be used as a way of expressing the students' point of view during transition reviews and meetings.

The students will also be videoed during the sessions and the videos will then be uploaded onto their Wikis. This will then enable this important information to be shared with all relevant people and the students can show everyone what they really want in the future.

So here's how to do it:

To begin...

Students are welcomed into the room and encouraged to sit at the table. On the table will be a big green felt mat and 2 Velcro symbols which say 'I want to leave' and 'finished' for the student to indicate when they have finished the activity.

Also on the green mat will be a photo of a drink and a photo of a sandwich, which the student is encouraged to make a choice from. If they choose a drink, they will be shown a menu of drinks to make a choice and will then be encouraged to help make the drink. If they choose a sandwich, they will be shown 2 recipe books, one for tuna and one for cheese, to make a choice. The student will then be encouraged to make the sandwich, following the recipe instructions.

Whilst the student is eating or drinking, they will also be shown and read the 'Discussing your future' social story, which explains what will happen during the session.

We are then ready to start the questions.

## Questions

The student will be shown their own careers book and will talk about the questions inside. The first question, 'which is what I like to do' will be placed on green mat. The student will be shown and told

about the photo card choices one at a time, as they are placed on the green mat. The student will then be encouraged to choose their favourite activity from a choice differentiated according to ability and understanding. Their choice will then be placed on the smiley face on the 1, 2, 3 answer sheet. The student's choices will be marked and noted in the student's careers book. When finished the cards are then packed away.

There are six more questions which the student will be encouraged to make choices about. These can follow question one or can be broken up with a number of small working experience activities (explained further on).

The further questions are:

- What food do you like?
- Where would you like to visit?
- Where would you like to work?
- Where would you like to live?
- What is important to you?
- What are your dreams?

All the questions will be asked in the same way by introducing the question and showing the choices one by one and placing them all on the green mat. The student will be encouraged to make their choices with support as necessary and all choices made will be marked and noted in the student's careers book.

### Working Experience

The student will be shown a variety of photo cards with different types of working activities on them. There will be a choice of as many or as

few as are suitable for the student and they will be encouraged to make a choice of which activity they would like to try. The possible activities are:

- Lego building
- Making a mosaic
- Brick building
- Sewing/weaving
- Using tools
- Jewellery making
- Post-box activity
- Weighing scales
- Measuring jugs
- Washing Line
- Box packing
- Ironing
- Litter picking
- Hairdressing
- Window cleaning

All equipment needed for each activity will be clearly labelled and stored in boxes ready to use. Once the student has chosen an activity to try, collect the equipment needed and let the student explore, encouraging them to use it appropriately and complete the task.

Use this as the chance to see what they can and can't do, what they understand of the task and whether they like the activity. Ask questions, prompt them to explore what they can do with the equipment and see how long they engage in the activity for. This is

**your chance to let the student show you their skills and guide you towards what they like to do – you may be surprised!**

**The chosen activities, engagement and interactions within the activity will be noted in the student's careers book. Once the student has finished with the activity, encourage them to help put the equipment away and remove the choice cards from the green mat.**

**The student may then be encouraged to try another working experience activity or another question may be introduced for the student to engage with.**

### **To Finish**

**The session is timed to last about 45 minutes but student's engagement time may vary and some students may come in and out of the room to join in activities for short periods at a time over the 45**

minutes. It is best to see what suits each student and to change the length of each activity to suit the time the student is engaged for. Similarly it is important to let the session end and the student leave if they are using the symbols to ask or if they are becoming bored or unsettled. If there seems to be a natural end the session it may also be beneficial to stop and let the student leave rather than push on and make the experience unpleasant. It is always best to try to get as much engagement as possible out of the students but also to make the experience enjoyable and something they would like to come and join in with again the next time.

Once the student has left the room, tidy away the equipment and prepare for the next student.

### Session 2 or 3

When the student is returning for a second or third session, a similar set up will happen but this time you will be recapping the previous questions and activities. This will enable you to see if the student is making the same choices and if they are engaging in the same activities for as long a period as before. This is your chance to see if the first answers were consistent or whether they were random choices. Also you can see if the activities the student chose the first time are the activities they still want to engage with the second and third time, giving concrete choices and answers to be written in the careers book to be shared with the student's family and other professionals as well as on their Wiki.