

DWP Support with Delivery of 'Careers' at STFCH

At the heart of 'Careers' education here at Sir Tom Finney Community High school are the 3 'E's . . .

- Enterprise
- Employability
- Economic understanding

Careers is delivered as part of the school's PSHE programme in Key Stage 3 whereas in Key Stage 4 and in the FE (Further Education) Department it is delivered in discrete timetabled sessions. However, no matter where or when taught, it is delivered by non-specialist teachers.

It was precisely this fact that led to the school's Inspira Enterprise Coordinator putting myself (as Careers Lead for the school) in touch with the DWP as they have specialist knowledge of the local labour market, particularly in respect of the arenas of work which particularly suit individuals with additional needs.

My first point of contact was David Taaffe (Support for Schools Adviser). From the moment we first spoke we gelled – especially given our mutual student-centred approach to learning. We were quick to meet with the intention to formalise plans for a credible and coherent scheme of work to be delivered one morning per month across the academic year to a group of 10 mixed-ability FE students, as part of their weekly 'Careers' studies.

To maximise the effectiveness of these sessions delivery was planned to encapsulate the following crucial progressive elements -

- Team Building
- Customer Service & Employability skills
- Budgeting
- Job Roles (within an Enterprise)

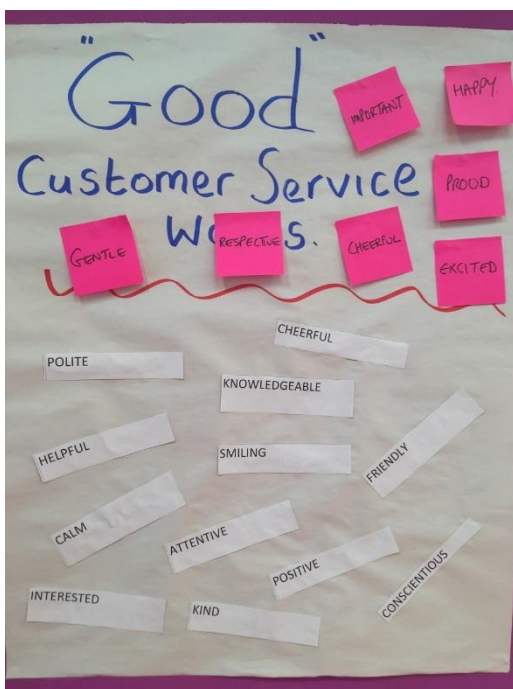
- CVs and Applications
- Interview Preparation (with a 1:1 mock interview)
- Concluding Celebration Event

The above was implemented over the course of the 2018-19 academic year by David and Della Machie (School Adviser) and subsequently Helen Smith (Social Justice Manager), who together delivered 11 three hour sessions to the FE students.

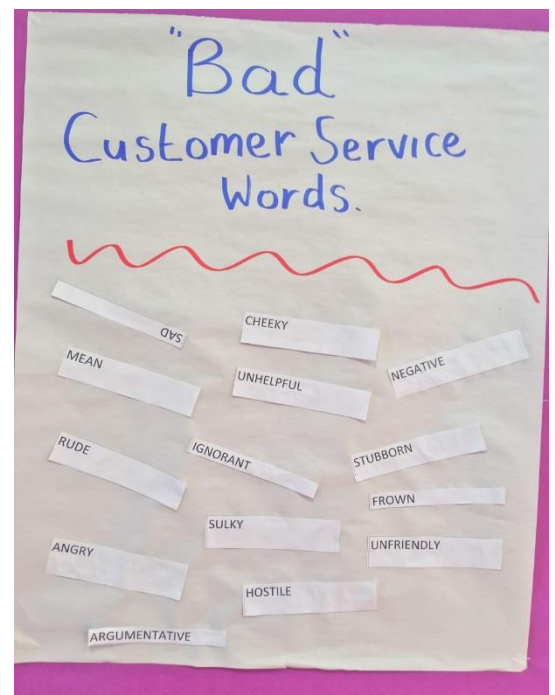
The impact? Well to say these sessions were an instant hit with the students is an understatement – they quickly became the most eagerly anticipated in-house teaching and learning experiences of the month.

Why was that? LW described the DWP's approach as a *"different way of learning"* which meant that JH was *"interested and never bored"*.

Team work and communication were at the core of all these sessions to emphasise the point that both of these key skills are central to successful workplace practise. This focus led DT to note that the sessions had a *"good (school) community"* feel to them.

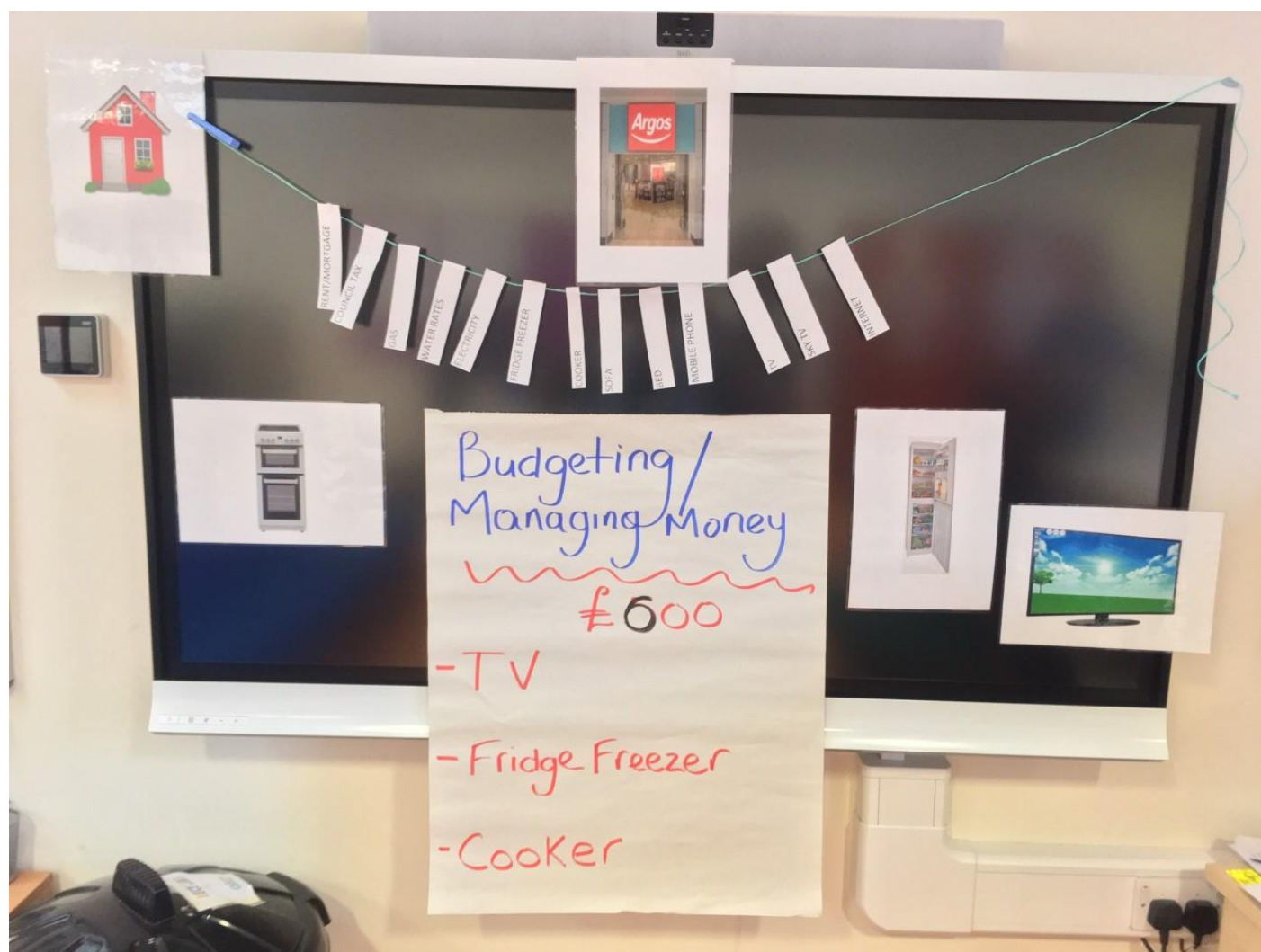
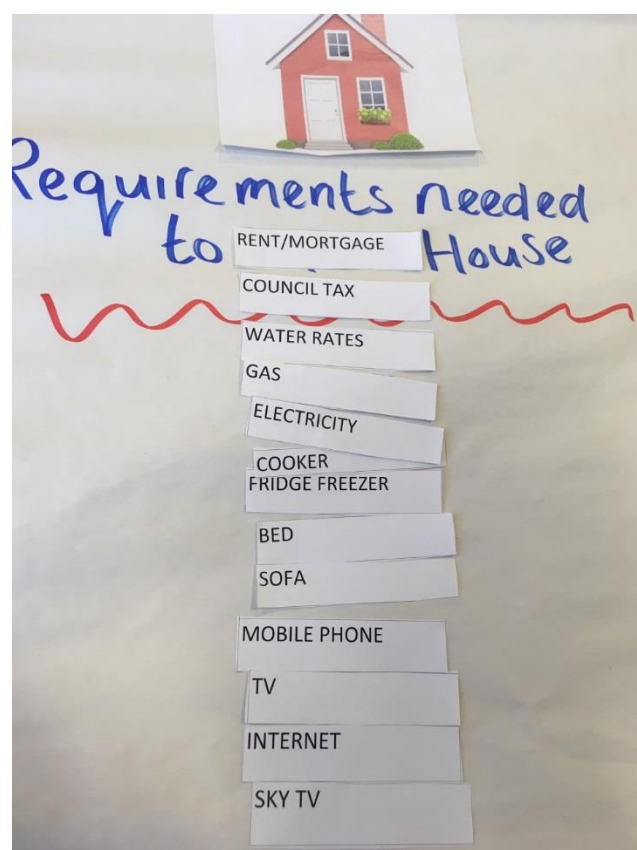
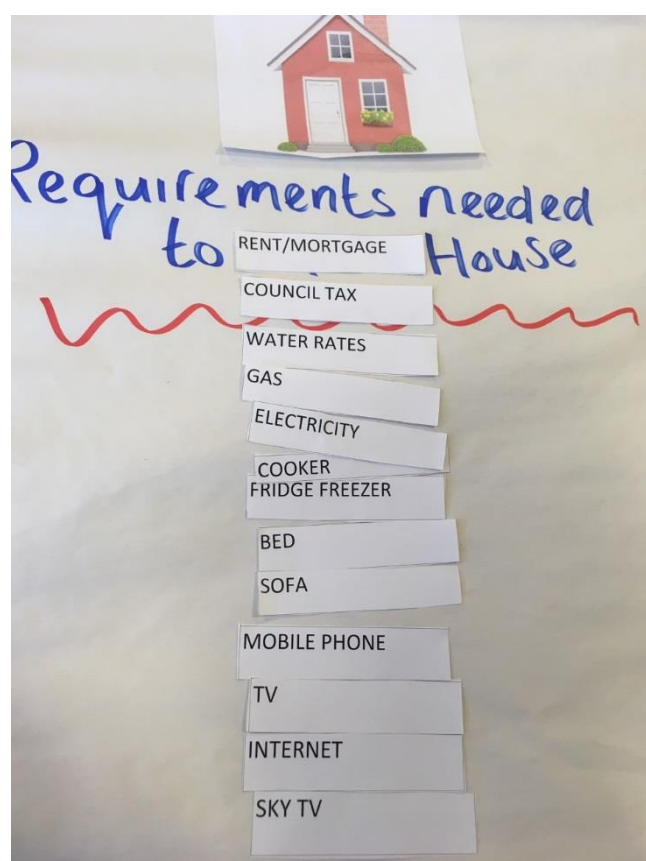


Tasks were always engaging and inclusive – in which any student could participate whether independently or with the support of their peers or staff.

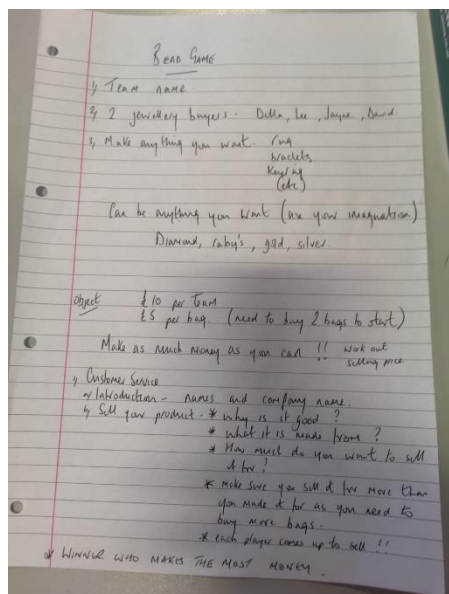


All activities felt like *"game-playing"* (EW) and as such ensured a high degree of engagement and hence subsequent learning for all those involved.

Scenarios were very real and appropriate for youngsters preparing for adulthood and a transition out of STFCH at age 19 into local colleges and possibly supported living settings . . .



Mini-enterprise challenges demonstrated just how competitive our young people could be when put into arbitrary teams tasked with making more money than each other!



Many students appreciated being exposed to the more ‘business end’ of applying for jobs – HH felt that the main benefits of the work for himself personally was *“completing forms and learning skills for interview”*. Whereas LW genuinely appreciated the 1:1 mock interview he’d prepared for with the DWP staff as he felt that the whole process had *“built up”* his confidence generally – a real positive for a young man who has struggled with his self-esteem.

As the academic year drew to a close the DWP staff kindly treated our students with ‘goodies’ which EW recalls were *“rewards for hard work”*.

The final session was a Celebration Event where our lucky students were presented with ‘Certificates of Achievement’ to certify that they had successfully completed the Jobcentre Plus Support for Schools Employability Award .

