



The Disability Rights UK newsletter co-edited with and for young people

**Stay informed with news and information on your journey through education, training and work**

## T Level update

T Levels uniquely combine classroom study with industry placements, generating the skilled workforce that businesses need for the future.

The government has launched an Industry Placement Employer Incentive. As part of this scheme Employers will be able to claim £1000 for every T Level student they host on a high-quality industry placement. Employers will be able to claim £1000 for up to 20 students they host on a 45 day (315 hour) industry placement, from now until July 2022. The incentive offers businesses an excellent opportunity to tap into the emerging talent pipeline, whilst supporting the skilled workforce of the future.

Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills  
Gillian Keegan said:

*“T Levels are a game changer for young people, providing a fantastic high-quality technical alternative to A levels and helping to produce the skilled talent pipeline of tomorrow as we recover from the pandemic.”*

For more information go to link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cash-boost-for-t-levels>



# The perception of autism is outdated; a large percentage of people with autism can study, work and live independently



Diagnosed with autism at eight years old, Harry has been surrounded by disabilities his whole life. Like him, his sister has autism and lives a normal life, despite assumptions she may need care. With an estimation of 700,000 people with autism and 5% of people in employment in the UK, Harry wants to challenge the negative stigma that surrounds it.



Undertaking an Adult Care Worker Apprenticeship at East Kent Mencap, with **Qube Learning**, Harry is keen to expand his skill set, while understanding how to do his role more efficiently and to evolve into a better Support Worker.

At a primary school level, Harry experienced sensory issues and found echoes, lights, and sound levels overwhelming. Faced with a negative prediction from one teacher, who unfairly judged him and said he would not amount to anything, Harry was determined to prove them

wrong. This, and the lack of understanding around autism, resulted in him being taken out, halfway through year six.

Harry's mum worked hard to get the support and with the help from their local MP, found a place at a school that was dedicated to working closely with those with learning disabilities. It was a small school that has two students to a tutor and with a total of 25 students, which allowed for a more concentrated style of learning. Now, with a degree in Commercial Music from Canterbury Christchurch University, Harry is incredibly proud of this merit and hopes to set an example for people with autism that they can do it too.

Harry says: *"With or without autism, everyone deserves a chance to prove themselves and with backing and belief from others, this can make a huge difference. Living with dyslexia and dyspraxia, I have gone against the grain of a traditional student, and hope I am setting a positive example of what is possible. With a degree and now completing an Apprenticeship, it didn't come easy. I taught myself to learn and I am very driven to shine a light on what I, an autistic person, can do. I have studied, I am increasing my skills and earning a salary and coping very well! I really hope the perception changes and that people avoid assumptions that individuals with autism can't do everything that others can do."*

Once afraid of 'owning his autism', Harry didn't declare his disability when he worked for two butchers and throughout his first year at university, but eventually, when he addressed his needs, he found he was given more time to complete work tasks and assessments. Now comfortable with autism and being outspoken about it, Harry is enjoying his role at East Kent Mencap, and the great support from his two coordinators and his Qube Learning Tutor has given him more confidence in areas he never imagined possible. He looks to continue his good work at the organisation and wants to install belief in those who share a similar disability. Harry is passionate about driving change on some of society's outlook on autism and their stereotypes.

Qube Learning is a proud to be an OFSTED grade 2 (Good) Recruitment and Training Solutions Provider that works with hundreds of Employers across the country to deliver a range of training and qualifications to a multitude of Students. Website: [www.qube-learning.co.uk](http://www.qube-learning.co.uk). For more information, please email [mollie.whichello@qube-learning.co.uk](mailto:mollie.whichello@qube-learning.co.uk)

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## **How I feel about Coronavirus in my day-to-day life**

*By Chayse*

I wish COVID-19 never existed because it ruined a lot of people's lives and put the whole world on lockdown.

The thought of COVID-19 is scary in the first place because, if you get it you would feel like your lungs are not working. It inflames the air sacs and then fills up the air sacs with fluid, it is just bad!

This new coronavirus is similar to MERS-CoV and SERS-CoV which caused illness and death in the past, which sucks knowing this type of virus has showed up before.

I feel sad, COVID-19 resulted in many deaths of good people who are no longer with us. What is worse, a lot of people have not listened to the rules causing this pandemic to still be very active in 2021, making me very angry knowing this could have ended sooner.

Standing here today, there have been 3 lockdowns in the UK alone and over a million people are gone, dying of coronavirus. It may not be as bad as it was in 2019 because of the new COVID-19 vaccines, though it still leaves me wondering, when is COVID-19 going to end?

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## **Invitation to join the Disabled Apprentice Network!**

The Department for Education, together with Disability Rights UK have launched the Disabled Apprentice Network to gather feedback and ideas to address any issues, barriers and solutions to make apprenticeships more accessible and inclusive.

Members of the group are appointed because of their personal experience, and desire to champion apprenticeships for Disabled people. The group will discuss, identify and share experience, advise on key issues for Disabled apprentices, suggest solutions and support the development of practical resources and toolkits.

The group meets every month for one hour.

If you are a Disabled apprentice or have done an apprenticeship in the past and would like to join the network, then please contact us at [getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org](mailto:getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org)

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### **Smile**

*A poem by Ella Sanderson*

**A small action to him was a big one to her.**

**Brave.**

**The bravest thing she had done all day.**

**A smile.**

# Award night success for Daventry Hill



On Friday 26th February 2021, brought well-earned celebrations knocking on the door of Daventry Hill School!

Despite Covid, the 2020 NEA awards were able to go ahead 6 months later than originally planned and were held virtually in Northampton.

Daventry Hill school was one of seven nominated finalists all competing for the converted title of SEND Team or School of the year category.

Newly built and opened in 2016, the SEND school for cognition and learning, was nominated by outside agencies in recognition for the school's leadership team, Pastoral team and Employability curriculum.

Gareth Ivett, Headteacher of the school said:” *Great things are never achieved by one person, they are achieved by a team of people, which is why I am so proud of this award, and more importantly, the team at Daventry Hill School. We are proud of our Vision and Values and our purpose is to deliver aspirational outcomes for adulthood for all our pupils. I am proud of my team at Daventry Hill School and the journey they have been on to improve outcomes for the students”.*

The NEA awards aim to shine the spotlight on hard working and talented teams around the county and recognises everyone who works hard for the community and inspires others.

Congratulations to the students and staff of Daventry Hill School for their hard work and resilience during one of the most challenging of years in education!



# Derwen College wins at TES FE Awards 2021



Shropshire's Derwen College has scooped a highly prestigious award in the further education equivalent of the Oscars.

Derwen College has been named as Specialist Provider of the Year in the TES FE Awards – one of the UK's top awards for recognising those that work in further education.



Staff and students at the college are over the moon to receive such fabulous news during what has been an incredibly challenging year.

Judges praised the college for 16–25-year-olds with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), for doing everything in its power to continue its mission to create a world without barriers even during a pandemic.

When the pandemic hit, the college didn't just survive: It thrived. Staff across curriculum, care and support came together with parents, carers, supporters and industry partners to ensure work, independence skills, health, fitness, sports and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award all continued, despite the challenges.

Throughout online delivery, the college constantly sought feedback from students and learners, and adapted resources and delivery to ensure their needs were met.

The college also set up an on-site charity shop, an online eBay shop and a new staff and student takeaway service to ensure that work placements for students continued. Staff also worked tirelessly to host annual events virtually, including open days, a prom and graduation ceremony.

As result of staff commitment, the college even opened a new Telford campus as planned in September 2020. Today, it delivers much-needed provision to students with SEND in the area.

Derwen College Chair of Governors Kathleen Kimber said:

*"We have long been proud of how Derwen works with its students and their achievements never fail to amaze us. Recently the staff have gone above and beyond what could have been expected of them. Their commitment and creativity during long periods when students were having to isolate in bubbles here or spend time at home have been outstanding.*

*"What has been striking is that student engagement and enjoyment have been very evident. There has been a sense of fun. New ventures have been successfully launched, either to offer an alternative to work experience off-site or to bring to fruition a planned development, such as the opening of the new satellite at Telford. And virtual events, such as the graduation ceremony, open days, fund-raising walks, and skills competitions have ensured our wide-ranging activities continue - and with an additional dimension. Thank you to all the staff; well done to all students. We know we shall build further on this."*

Derwen College Principal and CEO Meryl Green said:

*"I would like to say a huge thank you to every single member of staff at Derwen College. This award recognises the commitment, imagination, passion and resilience of staff across College campuses. It has been a year of triumphs for the college during some challenging times. We are honoured to have been recognised by judges who are experts in the field of education. The Specialist Provider of the Year category has many contenders of an impressive calibre who have all worked tirelessly to support people with SEND in further education. We couldn't be happier to have received an award of such high esteem."*

To find out more about Derwen College, or to register for the Summer Open Day on 26th June go to [www.derwen.ac.uk](http://www.derwen.ac.uk)



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**Fantastic opportunity to learn new work-related skills to add to your CV!**

### **Co- production project**

DR UK is interested in young people who would like to participate in our fundraising.

We'd like to sound out your thoughts on a youth-led project which we would make funding applications for, directed and steered by young people themselves, which means we would co-produce it together.

Anyone who is interested in attending - or who would like to know more - is warmly invited to email Rebecca on [rebecca.clarkson@disabilityrightsuk.org](mailto:rebecca.clarkson@disabilityrightsuk.org)

# Upcoming Free Webinars - Online Meetings



Free lunchtime walkthrough webinar

## Funding for disability-related support in education and training

July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – 12:30 to 13:00

This webinar briefly introduces the duty on education and training providers to make reasonable adjustments and will cover how funding works in further education, higher education and apprenticeships to meet the needs of disabled students and apprentices. The session will focus on:

1. Funding for disability support in further education for students aged:
  - 16-19 or up to the age of 25 with EHC Plan
  - 19-25 without a EHC Plan or aged 25 or over
2. Funding for disability support in higher education
  - Disabled Student' Allowance
3. Access to Work in apprenticeships

Please register [here](#)

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## Webinar summary: Entering and Working in TV and Film Post - Production with An Invisible Disability

In our latest DR UK webinar we were joined by Nigel G Honey, who has over 25 years of editing experience in both TV and film. He now runs Ability Academy, the UK's first online affordable, inclusive and accessible film editing academy inspired by his invisible disability and his desire for more inclusion in tv and film post-production.

### Early Experiences

Nigel shared anecdotes from school years - where he was deterred by school advisors to not in fact follow his ambitions and consider factory work. Neither Nigel or his family were satisfied with this response and did their own research.

### No one route and passion goes a long way

There is no one route into the industry and a degree doesn't always mean success. Nigel claims he would often achieve a role thanks to his passion paired with practical experiences - whilst competing candidates held a relevant degree.

### The time is now

Now is good time for Disabled people to consider joining the sector - with top channels such as Channel 4 and BBC announcing diversity charters and pledges.

**Nigel is very passionate and open to helping people - he also hopes to see more apprenticeship opportunities for Disabled people in TV and film in the very near future.**

You can contact Nigel by email: [honeynigel@gmail.com](mailto:honeynigel@gmail.com)

# Get Yourself Active



**Our Get Yourself Active (GYA) programme, which is led by Disability Rights UK, is all about reducing barriers and improving opportunities for disabled people to get active in a way that is right for them. Liddie Bone, one of the programme managers for GYA, talks below about the work the team are involved in to make physical activity more inclusive for disabled people.**

When we talk about physical activity, we don't just mean competitive sports or running marathons – which people often think of. Being physically active does not have to be complicated – it simply means moving our bodies more in any way we are able to so that we can break up long periods of not moving with some activity. Think about what you may be involved in on a daily basis - you may walk or wheel into town, do gardening, gone bowling with friends, or danced around the living room. These are all examples of physical activity!

Physical activity is important for everyone. However, disabled people may find it more difficult than non-disabled people partly because they experience more barriers. Activity Alliance reported that four in five (81%) disabled people want to do more activity than they currently do. However, just four in 10 (40%) feel like they are given the opportunity to be as active as they would like.

The Get Yourself Active team work on various projects with the aim of reducing these barriers alongside a range of organisations. One of these projects involves working with the sport and physical activity sector to ensure they are working in partnership with disabled people in the design and deliver of physical activity – otherwise known as co-production. We believe this should be a key underpinning component of inclusive practice.

We've been working with a range of organisations over the last few months to deliver co-production training, including some larger organisations such as Sport England. We were also really pleased to link up with AoC Sport, who are the lead organisation for college sport and physical activity.

AoC Sport are already doing some brilliant work around inclusion in sport and physical activity at colleges. For example, they have launched 'Inclusion Hubs' – colleges that are committed to making sport and physical activity inclusive to all disabled students. They are also working to up-skill staff and students to be able to deliver inclusive activities.

We presented a co-production workshop at an Inclusion Hub Network Meeting and were also invited to speak at the AoC Sport National Conference 2021. The conference was attended by a range of staff members from various colleges across the country and was a positive way of introducing co-production as an approach. We had some positive feedback and hope that it got colleges thinking about what more they can be doing to ensure young disabled people are really involved in the design and delivery of physical activity.

What are your experiences of accessing physical activity at your sport/college? We'd love to hear from you. Email [lydia.bone@disabilityrightsuk.org](mailto:lydia.bone@disabilityrightsuk.org) to tell us more.

# Get Yourself Active: Reducing barriers in physical activity for Disabled people.



Facilitated by Liddie Bone – Get Yourself Active Programme Manager

## My Ensafe Work Experience

*By Dylan*

Currently, I'm in year 13 at Daventry hill school and enrolled on a 3-day work experience with Ensafe consultants.

Ensafe consultants provide a lot of health and safety in workplaces, and they provide occupational health, safety environmental services nationally. They also remove different types of asbestos, which can cause a deadly disease.

Since I started Ensafe on November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020, I have worked in the following departments, Admin, Facilities, Construction and Surveying and since turning 18 I was introduced to the Asbestos Lab.

The skills I have learnt while working at Ensafe are to work collaboratively with my Ensafe colleagues. I have also learnt to self-direct in different situations, manage my time effectively and efficiently, and have begun to enhance my knowledge of health and safety by taking short online courses.



# Young Disabled people tell Minister what's wrong with employment support



Earlier this week, a group of young Disabled people spoke to Justin Tomlinson, Minister for Disabled People, about how employment support needs to change. The meeting, organised by Disability Rights UK was held in the lead up to the Government's soon to be published Green Paper on disability, benefits and work.

The Minister wanted to hear views on support into employment and the Access to Work Scheme. The young Disabled people spoke about the need for careers advice to start early, for Job Centres to have better links with employers, and for more practical assistance to be provided with job search. Whilst they acknowledged that Access to Work could work well, they also pointed to the many instances when it failed, leaving people in new jobs without the equipment and support they needed.

Get -Ahead co-editor Roxanne who attended the meeting says:

*“As always it is great to see politicians speaking to real people, but I think it would have been good to hear more about what they were planning and able to do - as well as timeframes to be able to not only hold them accountable but to be able give constructive and supported ideas with measurable and transparent expected outcomes.”*

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## Upcoming Events and Activities for your Diaries

### July 2021

- July - Plastic Free, Good Care & Sarcoma Month
- June 27 - July 3 Deafblind Awareness Week 2021
- July 02 -11 National BBQ Week
- July 03 - International Plastic Bag Free Day
- July 07 - World Chocolate Day
- July 15 - World Youth Skills Day
- July 17 - World Day for International Justice
- July 17 - World Emoji Day
- July 25 - National Schizophrenia Awareness Day
- July 30 - International Friendship Day

### What is Learning Disability Week?

Celebrated 14th June 2021 – 20th June 2021 Learning Disability Week is a great way to raise the awareness of Learning Disability across the UK.

What is a Learning Disability?

Learning Disabilities (some prefer the term learning differences under the social model of disability) is an umbrella term – for a non-exhaustive list of neurodiverse conditions.

There are many different types of Learning Disabilities, some of the more well-known are dyslexia, attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyspraxia and dyscalculia

This year's Learning Disability Week's theme is Art and Creativity!

# Making Young People's Voice Heard!



Would you like to take part in a research project?

**Educational Pathways and Work Outcomes of Disabled Young People** is a 3-year research project funded by The Leverhulme Trust. We are based in the Department of Sociology at the University of Warwick. Our aim is to explore the factors that lead to disability inequalities in educational and occupational attainment in England.

There is increasing awareness surrounding the social barriers that prevent disabled young people from fulfilling their potential. Yet, the vast majority of existing research relies on information provided by parents and teachers. Disabled young people are rarely given a voice in research. This is due to long-standing assumptions about the ability of young people to take part in research studies and discuss their conditions/disabilities.

Our project challenges this assumption. We want to hear young people's views about their experiences of disability and schooling, and their plans and aspirations for the future. We aim to interview 60 young people with autism/dyslexia/mobility difficulties twice over the course of our study. The first wave of (online) interviews will take place between April-August 2021, and the second wave approximately one year later.

The banner features a dark purple background with white text. At the top, there are logos for Warwick University and the Leverhulme Trust. The central text reads 'RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED'. Below this, there are three columns of text. The first column contains two questions: 'Are you finishing Year 11?' and 'Do you have autism, dyslexia or mobility difficulties?'. The second column contains two paragraphs of text describing the research team and the study. The third column contains two paragraphs of text describing the reimbursement and contact information.

 **WARWICK**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

**RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED**

 **LEVERHULME TRUST**

**Are you finishing Year 11?**

We are a team of researchers at the University of Warwick who are looking into the post-16 educational transitions of disabled young people.

All expenses will be reimbursed, and a £20 'LovetoShop' voucher given for each interview to thank individuals for their time.

**Do you have autism, dyslexia or mobility difficulties?**

We are looking for disabled young people to take part in two 1-hour interviews, one year apart. We will ask you questions about your school experiences, future ambitions and plans for after your GCSEs.

If you would be interested in taking part or would like to find out more, please contact Dr Angharad Butler-Rees at [disabled.transitions@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:disabled.transitions@warwick.ac.uk).

Our research team has substantial training and experience in interviewing young people with different conditions.

Should you want to take part and/or discuss more, please get in touch with Dr Angharad Butler-Rees at [\*\*disabled.transitions@warwick.ac.uk\*\*](mailto:disabled.transitions@warwick.ac.uk)

# Research shows people with vision impairment lack support to gain quality education and employment

A Longitudinal Transition Study just published by the Vision Impairment Centre for Teaching and Research (VICTAR) at the University of Birmingham and Thomas Pocklington Trust (TPT) shows one in five people with vision impairment did not gain quality employment despite earning qualifications in line with the general population. Get the report [here](#)

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## Why I like the Sugababes

By Tyler

Sugababes



Sugababes are one of my favourite pop groups of all time since I was little here are my reasons.

- Their songs never fail to get me up and start dancing
- They released their debut single the year I was born
- Their tours included going to Swindon oasis leisure centre
- The band have 7 studio albums which have all done well
- I love all their songs
- Sugababes are in my top 5 girl bands
- The band have several line up changes over the years
- Heidi range used to be in atomic kitten

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## DR UK Student Helpline

- Opening hours: 11am-1pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- Telephone: 0330 995 0414
- Email: [students@disabilityrightsuk.org](mailto:students@disabilityrightsuk.org)



# Contact Us

 Email: [getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org](mailto:getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org)

 Twitter: [@GetAheadDRUK](https://twitter.com/GetAheadDRUK)

 Instagram: [@GetAheadDRUK](https://www.instagram.com/GetAheadDRUK)

 Videos: [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/GetAheadDRUK)

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[DR UK website](https://www.dr.uk)



**We like to hear from you!**

Give us your feedback and contact:

**[Get-ahead@disabilityrightsuk.org](mailto:Get-ahead@disabilityrightsuk.org)**

**For a text-only and large-print version of the Get Ahead newsletter:**

**email: [getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org](mailto:getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org)**

Access the Get Ahead newsletters and magazines on our **[Get Ahead webpage](https://www.getahead.org.uk)**

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## Disability Rights UK

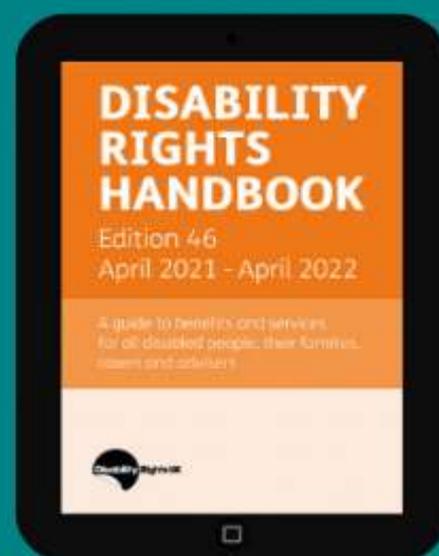
**We are Disabled people leading change, and the voice of young Disabled people has to be central to that change.**

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### Disability Rights Handbook ONLINE

**We are delighted to announce the launch of a new digital version of our handbook. Created to support remote working, this new format for our flagship publication sits on the well-established AskCPAG platform.**

**Order your copy now!**



**<https://cpag.org.uk/shop/subscriptions/disability-rights-handbook->**