



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

Hundreds of free qualifications to boost skills and jobs

Almost **400 qualifications** are available. The qualifications offer a range from engineering to social care to conservation and are available to any adult who has not already achieved a qualification at Level 3 (equivalent to A-levels).

You will be able to train full time for up to 12 weeks, or up to 16 weeks on a full-time skills bootcamp in England, while receiving Universal Credit to support your living costs. This will allow access to more training options and provide a better chance of finding work, while continuing to receive the support you need.

19- to 23- year-olds can access additional courses for free. 19-year-olds and over, who have not previously attained a GCSE grade C/grade 4 or higher, to be fully funded if they study for a qualification in English or maths, up to and including level 2.

For further information, go to: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/free-courses-for-jobs>



Find out about
Inclusive Apprenticeships
in
Get Ahead magazine
and
Into Apprenticeships Guide



My Education Experience *by Ella*



I found that senior school was hard for me because of my Asperger's.

People with a disability can't fit inside a box and no amount of pushing them down will make them fit. When in school this is what I felt happened. I would be made to do things the way they wanted me to do, in the way they wanted and not the way that fit my needs. I would then struggle to ask for help to change this. So this would affect my mental health and would then lead to meltdowns at home.

I also found at senior school that it was hard for me socially too.

In year 9 I got bullied by my own friendship group. One girl would control the group and tell them to run away from me or not include me in things. I didn't always act how they expected me to and did things the girl didn't like and one time she even wrote down the things she hated about me in a letter.

Because of this I would often go to the library on my own at lunchtimes or look for friends I had met on Facebook that I could chat to in person. I would often be crying at the bus station after school as a consequence. I really wanted to be wanted. I wanted something more than what I had with my family. I was lucky that in lessons my friends individually, when not in a group, would be ok with me.

I got through senior school by finding the 'golden people' as I called them. Everyone needs to search for these people. The teacher or teachers who get you and help you to cope. For me these people were a special SENCO, a language teacher and a pastoral support lady.

It can also be good if you can find one or two friends you can meet outside of school, away from the crowds and stress, and where it can be easier. I was lucky to find those people even if we did still argue sometimes.

Senior school is not a particularly good place for someone with a hidden disability but by searching for these 'golden' people and trying not to give up and quit when things get hard, we can, and will, get the education we deserve.

What was your experience at school?

What can you suggest that could have improved Ella's education journey?

Get in touch and share your experience (you do not have to have your name published!).

Email: getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org - quoting 'My school experience'.

Universal Credit Benefits Checker

The DWP has launched a new benefits checking tool to help people who think they might be eligible for Universal Credit. It takes a few minutes, and doesn't require any detailed information, nor does it process or store personal data. It is an easy first step for anyone who is unsure whether they want to start a claim.

Go to the [Benefits Checker](#)

Work-out with Leonard Cheshire

Getting out and enjoying an impromptu walk or a run isn't an option for many disabled people and lockdown has exacerbated the issue. Before the pandemic, the situation appeared to be changing for the better.

But participation has understandably tailed off during the pandemic, to the tune of 500,000 less people in the last year. Four in five disabled people in England want to be more active but only one in three agree that sport is for "someone like them". At Leonard Cheshire we spend our working days trying to dilute this stigma, supporting disabled people to live, learn and earn.

Check out the [#ShowMeYouCan film](#) and the 15 minute home workout sport toolkit on the website [here](#) to keep active and have fun!



New Guidance for Further Education providers from the Thomas Pocklington Trust

The Thomas Pocklington Trust (TPT) in partnership with the Royal National Institute for Blind people (RNIB), has created new guidance for Further Education providers and urges them to act now.

Blind and partially sighted students have the same ability, aspirations and potential as their fully sighted peers. However, there are often obstacles to their learning, blocking them from securing their best possible future and achieving the success their ability deserves.

These obstacles can be removed through thinking about how courses are delivered, by making information and resources accessible and ensuring students have the right equipment to access their course.

Delivering Accessible Learning: [**A Guide for Further Education providers supporting blind and partially sighted students**](#)

Upcoming Free Webinars - Online Meetings



1. Assistive Technology and Hearing Loss

April 29th, 2021

11:30am- 12:00pm

In this webinar, Luke Nadin will take us through some of the products and devices that are available so that people with hearing loss can enjoy equal access to services and not face barriers to employment or education.

Register for this webinar [here](#).

2. Getting back into good habits for all neurodiverse students

Tuesday May 11th, 2021

12:00pm- 1:00pm

In this webinar, Professor Amanda Kirby will talk about getting back into routines for students who are neurodivergent, maintaining wellbeing and preparing for the next steps.

Register for this webinar [here](#).

Please let us know ASAP if you have any access needs to participate in the webinars.

Have Your Say: DR UK zoom sessions on the 'The National Women's Health Strategy'

The government is consulting on a strategy for women's health, and Disability Rights UK will be hosting three zoom sessions with Disabled People's Organisations and individuals in April to capture Disabled women's thoughts on how women are treated in the healthcare system, and how workplaces deal with health issues.

The sessions will be held at the following times:

Noon-1pm Tuesday 20 April

6-7pm Wednesday 21 April

8.30-9.30pm Wednesday 21 April

This is a vital opportunity to have your say.

Email tellus@disabilityrightsuk.org, stating your preferred session. We will send you the link to the session.

Get your news in Get Ahead! Share your regional news, best practice stories, initiatives, resources and success stories with us and contact: getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

A massive misstep or just something we have to accept?

This is a newly constructed bus stop in North London. This new construction means wheelchair users will have to go on the road to access the pavement further up the bus stop.

The Equality Act 2021 clearly states that *“it is unlawful to discriminate against people in respect of their disabilities in relation to employment, the provision of goods and services, education and transport.”*

Whilst the bus stop is not completely inaccessible, this is still an unnecessary barrier for Disabled people. Is it reasonable to expect in 2021 a higher standard of accessibility?

At Getahead we would love to hear your thoughts, and the change you would like to see.

If you see an accessibility misstep or other barrier, contact us with your experience and pictures so we can shine a light on the reality on accessibility in 2021

Contact us - getahead@disabilityrights.org.uk



Children in Need volunteering opportunity!

BBC Children in Need is reviewing its grant making strategy and are looking at how young people could have more influence over how they distribute money.

They are putting together a group of young people to help them explore questions around their current strategy, the causes they support, opportunities for innovation and the future role of young people in their funding work.

They are looking for one person aged 18 who can commit to four meetings between May and September. This is a really exciting opportunity to help shape the future of Children in Need!

Email me on zoe.pike@youngwomenstrust.org if you'd like to get involved.

PAID VIRTUAL MENTORS NEEDED

- Seeking autistic mentors aged 18-25* to mentor autistic youth.
- Will be provided with professional training and support.
- Will gain valuable work experience and transferable skills.

Priority will be given to young autistic adults who will benefit from training and employment opportunities.

This role requires an enhanced DBS check which we will pay for.



**To apply
email Siena at
siena@qlmentoring.com**

**PEER-TO-PEER AUTISTIC MENTORING PROGRAM FUNDED BY
PAUL HAMLYN FOUNDATION GRANT**

RUN BY GENIUS WITHIN AND SIENA CASTELLON



May 2021

- May 03 - 09- **Deaf Awareness Week**
- May 09 - 15- **National Doughnut Week**
- May 10 - 16- **Mental Health Awareness Week**
- May 15 - 21- **Epilepsy Awareness Week**
- May 15 - June 15- **Tourette's Awareness Month**
- May 20 - **Global Accessibility Awareness Day**

Elections 2021- voting with Learning Differences

Mencap has made an easy read guide for people with a learning disability, which tells you everything you need to know about voting.

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-mencap/elections/guides-voting>

Youth Voice Census 2021

Are you aged 14-24? Have you got time to share your voice on important youth employment issues? 20 minutes can help change things for you and other young people too!

The Youth Voice Census is an annual survey run by Youth Employment UK. It acts as a temperature check of how young people aged 14 – 24 are feeling on a range of issues relating to their transition from education to employment.

Link: <https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/youth-voice-census/>

The Thomas Pocklington Trust launches Aira pilot for patients visiting Moorfields Hospital

New technology from Aira is set to give visual assistance to blind and partially sighted patients and support them to attend hospital eye appointments.

The 6-month trial will support patients attending appointments at Moorfields Eye Hospital. It is funded by Thomas Pocklington Trust and will be free of charge for blind and partially sighted people to use.

It will link visually impaired patients attending appointments at the hospital's City Road site to a network of trained, professional agents who will be able to help them navigate to and around the hospital.

For further information or images please contact: Penny Wilkinson, Thomas Pocklington Trust, penny.wilkinson@pocklington-trust.org.uk 07974 578 637.

Students at Daventry Hill School are continuing to develop their journalistic skills!

News from Daventry Hill school!

By Chayse

Post 16 students at Daventry hill school, opened Café on the Hill for take away service only, on Wednesday 16th September.

The Cafe offers homemade tasty food, which is freshly prepared daily, by Post-16 students and the Job Coach.

Each week the students follow a rota and work in the café for a minimum of one day a week. Their duties whilst at work include:

- Checking emails for pre-ordered food from staff
- Complete the food order online
- Health and safety checks on equipment
- Temperature checks on fridges and freezer
- Clean the café – wipe down surface and sweep and mop the floor
- Serve customers
- Cash up
- Email daily special for the next day



Students are enjoying their time working and learning new skills.

Noel aged 16 said 'I like taste testing the food, to ensure my food is good enough to sell.' 'It is hard working in the café'.

Working together, the students are reviewing and updating the menu monthly, to ensure that there is something tasty for everyone.

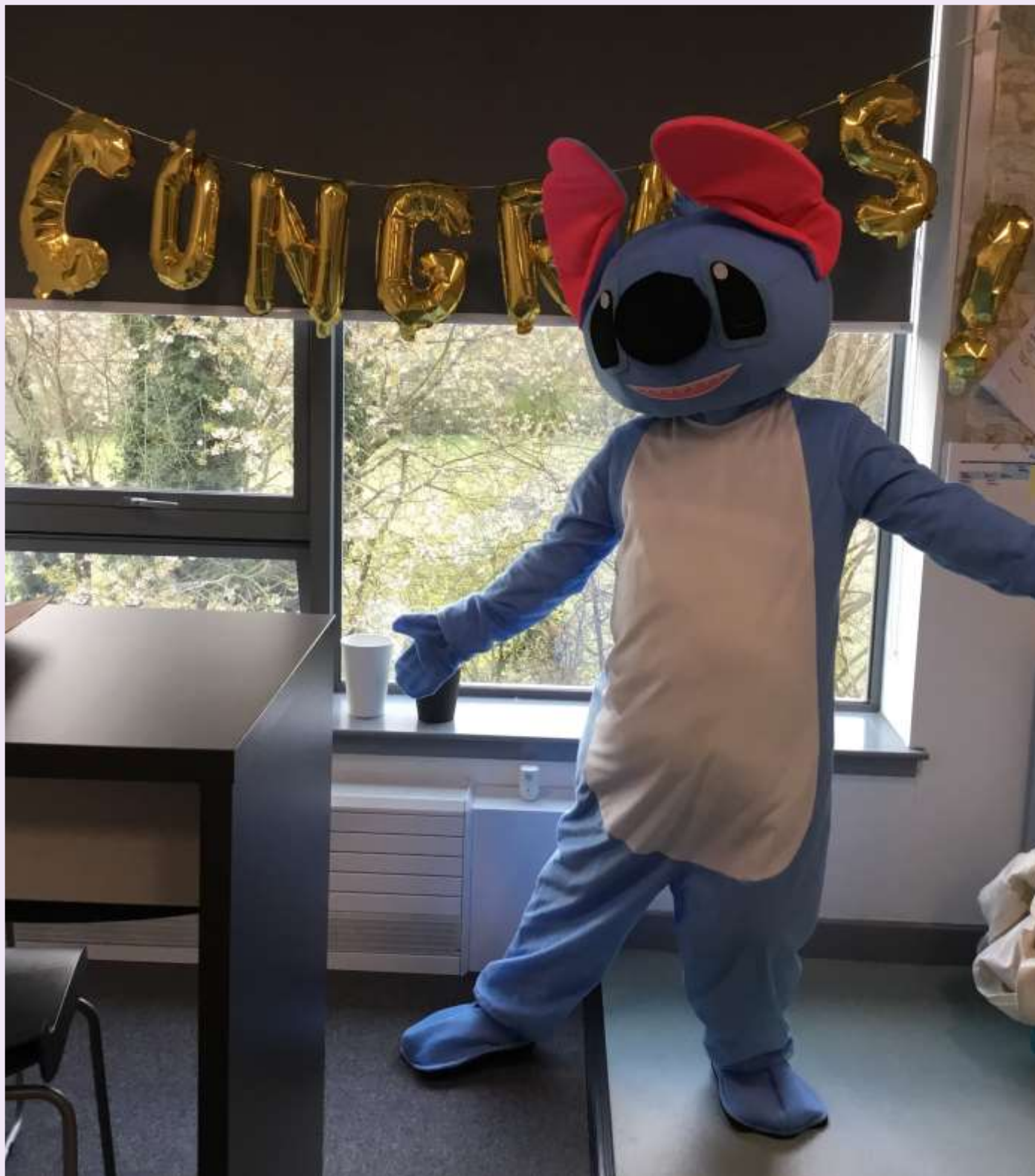
Chayse, who is in Year 12, is learning how to cook for himself and applying functional maths and English into his working day.

All students are required to wear a uniform of black tee-shirt and trousers. It is good to wear a uniform and it makes students feel proud and part of the team!

The café is planning to open to the public when the coronavirus is gone and the economy is recovered. In the meantime, current recipes are being improved and new added.

DR UK Student Helpline

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



Disability Rights UK Online Resources

Online Factsheets:

- [Careers and Work](#) factsheets
- [Education](#) factsheets and guides

Dr Cure and The Evil Breath-Taker

By Cody

During the lockdown a doctor named Brian Cure was a NHS worker by day and by night he was, Dr Cure, the hero who wore his NHS Protection Armour, his rainbow cape and his Special medical mask.

One night during lockdown, the evil covid monster named, The Breath-Taker was doing damage to the people of England by taking their breath. Dr Cure had to track down all the clues to the monsters lair, everywhere he went in the city was filled with sick people and their lost hope, making Dr Cure feel upset. Flying through the sky Dr Cure was listening to the city and then, on the news The Breath-Taker challenged Dr Cure to stop his breath taking madness.

The next day at work Brian had more patients than ever, causing him to believe Breath-taker was behind this. Brian could sense the people of the city were losing their faith in Dr Cure, so he prepared all his new tools including, The Sword of Vaccination, The Belt of Social Distancing and the Hope absorber.

During Dr Cure's nightly search for the Shadowy Covid Monster he came across a cave, filled with dripping goo, creepy sounds and lots of bugs. Dr Cure heard from the distance, 'I've been expecting you for a while Dr Cure.' Dr Cure could not see anyone but only a shadowy figure. He called out 'who are you?' The Breath-Taker turned around and told him, that he should know who he is, The Breath-Taker exclaimed that his defeat will be shown live on TVs all over the City.

All of a sudden Breath-Taker charged at Dr Cure making Brian get out The Sword of Vaccination, Breath-Taker dodged every attack and pushed him into the wall. Dr Cure used the Belt of Social Distancing to create a force field around himself but the evil Covid shadow smashed the bubble with his fierce claws.

It looked like the end of Dr Cure but he told all the people watching on their TVs to not give up hope. They all began to stand up and clap which started boosting The Hope Absorber to full power, making Dr Cure stronger and ready to stop Coronavirus, he grabbed the sword Of Vaccination and struck The Breath-Taker, destroying Covid and giving everyone their health and happiness.

Later on in the week Dr Cure received a medal of heroes at the after Covid city party where everyone could talk and be happy together. He told everyone to not thank him, but to thank The NHS.

Students from different colleges reviewed the work of Stephen Wiltshire

By **Tyler**

Stephen Wiltshire is an autistic artist born in west London in 1974 to West Indian parents.

He learnt how to speak at the age of nine, and at ten years old he began starting to draw detailed sketches of famous London landmarks.

His most recent artwork was an eighteen-foot-wide panoramic landscape of the New York skyline after memorising it on a twenty minute helicopter ride.

I really love his artwork as I think it has a lot of detail of how he does it.

He is a very clever artist who has an amazing ability to remember detail by just looking at buildings. This is sometimes called having a photographic memory.

His artwork has been recognised all over the globe and he was awarded an MBE in 2006 for services to art.

Stephen has his own permanent gallery on the Royal Opera Arcade which opened in 2006.

He has several books out with one being number one in the Sunday Times best sellers list.

By **Chayse**

Stephen Wiltshire is an artist who draws detailed cityscapes.

Stephen was born in London, United Kingdom to West Indian parents on 24th April, 1974. As a child he did not speak and did not relate to other people. Aged three, he was diagnosed as autistic. He had no language and lived entirely in his own world. (Now age 46 years).

My opinion of his arts is:

I like his art and from all the places he been too, they seem to be masterpieces of capturing the real thing.

By **Finley**

Stephen Wiltshire is autistic and can draw detailed pictures from memory. His most recent piece of art is an eighteen-foot-wide panoramic landscape of New York. He drew it after only one view in a twenty-minute helicopter ride. He learned to speak at the age of 9. I think his pictures are detailed.

Other Training Courses

DR UK benefit training courses

Don't know your UC from your PIP? Confused by the range of health and disability benefits?

DR UK is offering four essential online courses, each run in two parts and facilitated by an experienced benefits trainer.

The courses are aimed at staff who work in advice or advocacy who need to know more about - or need a refresher on - changes to welfare benefits and social security. They are ideal for advice workers, social workers, support workers and anyone else supporting clients with social security benefits.

The training courses will run in April, May and June 2021.

Courses sell out fast so early booking is encouraged.

- Introduction to Welfare Benefits
- Universal Credit Overview
- Personal Independence Payment
- Preparing for an Appeal Tribunal

Book your place at: [DR UK benefits training courses](#)

The Career Development Institute

Two new SEND courses for career development practitioners at L6 and L4

The courses, at L4 and L6, are being offered with both accredited and non-accredited pathways from May 2021.

- [Certificate in Careers Support for Students with SEND \(L4\)](#)
- [Certificate in Careers Support for Students with SEND \(L6\)](#)

Disability Rights Handbook now out!

The handbook provides in-depth, comprehensive guidance on the benefits system, explains how social care operates around the UK and includes information about other services and resources for disabled people.

And it's full of tools and tactics to help you make a successful claim.

www.disabilityrightsuk.org/shop/disability-rights-handbook-2021-2022




Contact Us

 Email: getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

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We like to hear from you!

Give us your feedback and contact:

Get-ahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

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

email: getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

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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.

