

*Status – draft rewrite*

**ES personal impact case study – Houghton Kepier Sports College at the Get Hooked Fishing Centre, Tyne and Wear**

*“When I leave school I want to come and work here. I’m going to come down every school holiday to work here and on as many weekends as I can.”*

Michael

*“I’m going to come down in the holidays to work, I’ve really enjoyed it.”*

Bradley

*“The lads have been an absolute credit both to themselves and the school. I am delighted that so many of them want to come back here to help out.”*

Chris Scott, Project Manager, Get Hooked

Michael and Bradley were among six year 9 and year 10 students from Houghton Kepier Sports College who were invited to take part in a series of sessions at the Get Hooked Fishing and Angling Centre in County Durham. The school offers a wide range of extended services to students, parents and the wider local community and the Get Hooked project forms part of the college’s extensive study support and varied menu of activities.

This is the second year of the school’s partnership with Get Hooked. The 40-acre angling centre offers tuition and work experience to young adults who lack social skills, have learning difficulties or may be at risk of offending. The course involves learning about land preservation and conservation, while also helping students to build their confidence and communication skills.

The participants were all identified by the school as having specific needs in terms of their learning or social skills which limit their ability to integrate with others. The school felt the course could make a huge difference to their outlook on school and life in general. The students attended day-long sessions spread over four Saturdays in April and May, carrying out conservation and maintenance work, working in the site shop and learning catering and angling skills. They were involved in the construction of willow walkways and planting trees and shrubs around the site. Discreet

supervision meant they were encouraged to work together as a team and make their own decisions and they took immense pride in their achievements.

“The course was even more of a success this year. Four of those who attended are making arrangements to go back to work at the centre on a voluntary basis,” said Dave Brennan, the school’s community development and cluster manager.

“Indeed Michael spent much of half term working at the centre during the day as a volunteer and then fishing there in the evening and through the night, camping at the site during his stay. Not bad for a 14 year old. And you have to remember the site is not on their doorstep; it’s around twenty miles from Houghton, so that does take some commitment.”

#### Outcomes

- Learning new skills, developing confidence and self-esteem, offering the participating students a greater chance to play an active part in society when they leave school, despite leaving school with few formal qualifications.
- Providing safe opportunities which are leading to volunteering and employment opportunities, for example four of this year’s cohort intends to volunteer at the centre and some are considering studying for NVQs in related subject areas.
- Developing young people’s thinking skills, helping to strengthen their motivation and raise their personal aspirations.
- Positive example of a school working with an external provider to offer students a chance to develop and showcase their talents in an environment completely different to that in school.

#### More information

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