



Principal's Update



26th June 2026

A message from Will M, one of our students

"Yesterday I went to see Toy Story 5 with my parents and siblings and I am genuinely very proud of myself and very happy in a meaningful way for the first time in a long time. In the past, I have struggled with going to the cinema and found it overwhelming due to my autism but I actually managed it yesterday and figured out how to self regulate whilst not distracting other people or anything like that and I stayed in my seat for the entirety of the film. Me and my family weren't sure if I could actually do it but I did and so I have achieved something positive.

Also, after that I went on an evening dog walk with my dad, and sometimes when I feel negative I put off going outside (including dog walks) due to my sometimes quite severe anxiety but I managed it and enjoyed spending about an hour with my dad. But the main reason I actually bring this up is because, on the dog walk, I actually discovered a box near a school on an estate we were walking through. Upon further inspection, this box was a "little library" probably set up by the school and it seems to be for people to donate and borrow books from. It's a nice estate, and it clearly indicates that it's a nice close knit community. I borrowed a book (a rather interesting looking biography of William Shakespeare) and have even already read the first three chapters which is amazing for me because I've struggled so much in recent past with reading books (which saddened me profoundly because I used to absolutely love reading interesting books when I was a child and I lost that hobby due to my ADHD seemingly getting worse) due to my ADHD. In terms of overall impact on me yesterday was genuinely probably one of the best days of my life (so far).

I'm finally overcoming the worst of my ADHD through coping and self regulation and it seems I'm starting to be able to do and enjoy certain things again that I've not been able to do properly in years, like watch full films and read books like I used to (I've already read the first three chapters of the book I borrowed - a year ago I wouldn't have been to do that). In terms of overall impact on me yesterday was genuinely probably one of the best days of my life (so far). I'm finally overcoming the worst of my ADHD through coping and self regulation and it seems I'm starting to be able to do and enjoy certain things again that I've not been able to do properly in years, like watch full films and read books like I used to (I've already read the first three chapters of the book I borrowed - a year ago I wouldn't have been to do that).

My life has felt like an uphill battle for a while, but maybe I'm now past the worst of it all? Could it be that both Sheffield Wednesday (one of the biggest passions of my life) and myself are about to begin a new, golden chapter...? Up the Owls and thank you very much if you've read all of this (I hope have, I really wanted to articulate this to the best of my ability)."

Exploration Day

A couple of weeks ago, five learners - Sam U, Josh O'N, Katie, Hannah J and Dawid - took part in an Exploration Day. The morning's activities involved a walk through Sandall Beat Wood, using a map to guide them through the countryside. During the afternoon, the learners visited Doncaster Museum, where they especially enjoyed exploring the steam train displays and trying on historical costumes.



Buddy the Otter

This week, Sara has given Buddy to Jacqui Birkinshaw, saying, "Jacqui you have been an absolute lifesaver this year. You always help me and are willing to do anything for anyone. Our tutor group would have been completely lost without you. You have such a lovely, nurturing way with the students and your support is so appreciated. Thank you for everything you do!"

Autism Pride Day

Students celebrated Autism Pride Day in Parker's Cafe this week, and took part in an activity to decide how we can make our environment more welcoming for our autistic students, considering what challenges they may face and coming up with ideas to improve.



School Nursing Team/Kooth Visit

School Nursing Team visited this month to complete Sleep Presentation to support students struggling with sleep issues linked to exam stress and other anxieties. Kooth have visited this week to complete Kooth Mental Health support Presentation for support around Social, Emotional and Mental Health Issues.

Industry Insight Event

On Thursday 25 June, the IT Department welcomed AJ, Marketing Manager at TwentyFour IT Services, for an informative industry guest

speaker session. AJ shared valuable insights into the wide range of services delivered by TwentyFour IT, highlighting the company's work with local, national, and international clients.

Our learners gained an inspiring look into AJ's own career journey, exploring how experience in photography, retail, and IT ultimately led to his current role. His story provided a clear example of how career paths can evolve over time and how transferable skills can open new opportunities.

The session included practical cyber security advice, helping learners to develop their understanding of online safety and industry practice. Student engagement during the event was exceptional, with thoughtful questions and contributions from across the group. In particular, Harley W, Will M and LJ demonstrated excellent curiosity and enthusiasm, helping to create meaningful discussion with our guest speaker. The event was a great success and showcased both the high level of engagement within our IT provision and the strong cyber security awareness and technical knowledge that our learners are developing during their time in our vocational IT department.

A huge thank you to AJ and TwentyFour IT Services for supporting our learners, thanks also to our Careers team for their introductions to this service and congratulations to all students involved for representing the department and college so well.