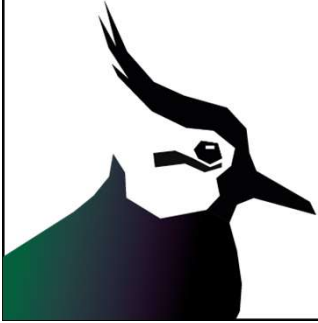


## Autumn newsletter 2020



# Lapwing

Personalised learning for young people

### Our busiest ever start to the academic year!

The start of this year saw an increase in both student and staff numbers at Lapwing, with 60 students enrolled at the start of term (compared with just 50 students in 2019-20), and 7 new tutors joining the Lapwing team! And for the first time, the number of staff based in Norfolk now almost equals the size of the team based in Suffolk, reflecting the increasing demand for Lapwing services in the region. Lapwing regularly has a waiting list of students, and is currently advertising roles to increase our capacity and take on more students.

This term's cohort has a student age range of 10 to 21 years old, spread across Norfolk, Suffolk and north Essex, each accessing a highly personalised programme designed to support their individual needs, reflecting their interests and helping them achieve challenging academic, vocational, employability and/or life skills goals. Since the start of the term, four Lapwing students have already 'graduated' and are on the next steps of their learning journey, and we have welcomed more students in their place.



Lapwing students (top) William coppicing at Ashwellthorpe Woods; (middle left) Brenden learning about bee-keeping; (middle right) Campbell working on the Lapwing allotment; (bottom left) Eleanor working at Dog Squad; (bottom right) Dominic at his equine work placement.

## Coping with COVID-19

Due to the needs of our cohort and the flexible and personalised way that we work, the impact of COVID-19 on Lapwing's operations has been far less than most education providers have experienced. Being very conscious of the need for continuity in routine for most of our students, and understanding that anxiety levels vary considerably between individuals, our staff were quickly able to adapt to new ways of delivering their sessions.

In the Spring we adopted a blended learning model (with some sessions in person and some delivered remotely or online) depending on the individual student's situation, a robust individual risk assessment and the young person's ability to engage through different mediums as well as considering what mode of delivery would best support their programme goals. Although some students found it hard to adapt to technology led sessions, many thrived on this opportunity for independent learning, and this is now being built into programmes, where appropriate, as part of their development.

## Lapwing's Youth Mental Health First Aid Champions

High quality professional development and training for our tutors, skills coaches and key workers is always a priority at Lapwing, and the new term kicked off with Youth Mental Health First Aid Training, providing our staff with the knowledge and confidence to support young people who have challenging mental health issues. We now have 35 Youth Mental Health Champions on the Lapwing team!

Lapwing continues to employ The Thrive Approach as part of our strategy for enhancing young people's emotional development.



Responding to recent statutory guidance, September's training days also saw Lapwing launch a comprehensive Relationships, Sex and Health Education framework to formally support the embedded holistic personal development work we already carry out so effectively.



For regular updates, follow Lapwing on social media!



## Lapwing's recent leavers

Huge congratulations to Lucas, Year 13 (top left) – our Student of the Month for October – for successfully completing his supported transition onto a full-time vocational college course. Lucas has worked part time with Lapwing since he was in Year 8, and full time for the last year and a half. Despite concerns in some quarters that Lucas' needs were potentially too complex to transition back into a group setting, Lapwing has always maintained that, with the right support, he could successfully complete a college course. He is a young man with lots of potential and we wish him all the best.

We also say goodbye to Campbell (Year 8), who is now ready to transition into a group provision. He has worked really hard 1:1 to get himself ready to take this opportunity and we wish him all the best in his new school!

## Minding the Gap

Fully funded by the European Social Fund and National Lottery Community Fund, The Minding the Gap Project supports young people (aged 15-25) who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), or are at risk of this, and aims to re-engage these young people in order to gain employment.

Since January 2017, Lapwing has worked with 232 participants who were NEET securing positive outcomes for 62% of this cohort. As a result of this success, the project was extended to June 2022 with Lapwing commissioned to work with a further 135 participants.

Essentially this is an employability project, but the support is personalised and varied to gain tangible outcomes for young people and has included: 1:1 coaching; arranging and supporting access to online training; supported work experience and volunteering; CV writing and job application support; arranging counselling or other mental health support; as well as organising group events for participants to develop their social communication and learn new skills.

We are taking referrals! Click [here](#) for more information.



## Opportunities at Lapwing

Demand for Lapwing's services continues to be high and we are always on the look out for skilled practitioners with suitable experience teaching and working with children and young people with a range of complex needs. Look on our [website](#) for further details.



*"Dear Lapwing, I would just like to thank you all for the time, patience and support you have given L; your service and communication are outstanding."*

*We have had MANY different services involved with L over the last 15 years from when she was first diagnosed with autism and would just like to say that we have been very impressed with you all and you are one of the most professional services we have been involved with."*

## Term Dates 2020/21

### Autumn Term

Ends Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020

### Spring Term

Staff Training: 4<sup>th</sup> January

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 –

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Half Term: 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> February

### Summer Term

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 –

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021

Half Term: 31<sup>st</sup> May – 4<sup>th</sup> June

## Winter newsletter – what's in the next edition?

A report on Lapwing's media project as a group of seven students join forces to create a podcast. We will also be showcasing a range of Lapwing student work and much more!



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