

Island project

SEND INFORMATION REPORT: October 2021

Introduction - Give information about your provision and the type of courses you offer.

At The Island Project we offer AIMVOC Diplomas and qualifications in Skills for Working in Animal Care Industries at E2, E3, L1 and L2. These courses are a pathway into further education when wanting to working with animals and all course content is split into three main animal-assisted areas. These are *theory*, *enrichment* and *care* and our main focus is to create opportunities for our learners to enhance their social emotional mental health and well-being and build confidence in their own capabilities by learning transferrable skills within employment, further education, independence and own interests.

It is common practise working with some students that behaviour or attendance may result in setbacks which is why our AIMVOC's are designed to be joined in at any point of the year. Student needs can be met in a variety of ways when participating in qualifications because our assessment methods enable flexibility and differentiation for all abilities and needs. Our students can evidence learning by taking part in practical demonstration, discussions, independent research, small group learning and/or one to one tuition. As students' progress at the farm we have higher expectations of them which we make clear in regular mentor meetings.

Induction – how are learners with SEND inducted into your provision?

All learners that are referred to us have accompanying support documentation and information regarding their special educational needs or disabilities which we are able to create a personal education plan for. All students are taught basic expectations within a range of set weekly tasks with support when they first join us, which can be adapted into more individualized targets and responsibilities once knowledge and progress has developed. The learner will be informed about our qualifications during initial induction to the farm and will be given a student handbook to refer back to.

Communication and Interaction – how do you cater for learners with speech and language difficulties? ADHD? ASD?

When we register learners with AIM Awards we outline any special requirements or reasonable adjustments that need to be facilitated. Course content is differentiated so that all students are given equal opportunities to achieve the same outcomes within a small group setting or on a one to one basis. Staff are made aware of any SEN needs and reasonable adjustments that need implementing for example a scribe, laptop, PECs, coloured overlay and/or extra time.

SEN needs can be met in a variety of ways when participating in qualifications and farm based projects because our holistic approach enables all abilities to participate in some form or another by taking part in practical demonstration, discussions, independent research, small group learning and/or one to one tuition.

Cognition and Learning – how do you cater for learners with literacy, numeracy and cognitive difficulties?

Along with all animal care related projects we also include daily cross-curricular linked activities that cater for other areas on the farm such as agriculture and horticulture, arts and crafts, woodwork and site-maintenance, Literacy & Numeracy. All of these can be embedded into the AIMVOC qualifications for vocational attainment and to help improve skills within areas of difficulty.

We promote routine and consistency with daily running at the farm and we have repetitive sessions that allow students to develop skills and improve on performance if they have struggled with it previously.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health – how do you support vulnerable learners and learners with mental health issues?

We have regular weekly mentor chats and also touch on topics proposed from schools in the SEMH annual calendar and discuss our understanding and create awareness of these topics. We also help students develop empathy and build up tolerance for one another. We communicate closely with referring bodies, schools and parents/carers to ensure student welfare needs are being met or that concerns are communicated promptly. By doing this we aim to equip our students with the life skills to succeed as acceptable members of society by developing skills and awareness in building and maintaining relationships, teaching fundamental life skills, cleaning and budgeting skills, achieving qualifications which build pathways to further education and/or employment.

Sensory/Physical Impairment – what facilities are there for learners with physical, visual or hearing impairments?

Please refer back to the section on communication and interaction.

Assessing and Evaluating the Progress of Learners with SEND – how is this managed and communicated to stakeholders?

We evidence learning on an academic tracker, within active work booklets and visual displays. Progress is logged onto daily behaviour registers and certificates are applied for and copies are retained. We also record evidence using an App called Class Dojo which creates an individualised photographic diary of each learner achievements which parents and carers have access to. These are updated daily by staff and can be printed out at the end of the academic year or a student's leaving date for them to refer back to. Also as students' progress at the farm we have higher expectations of them which we make clear in regular mentor meetings. We will give students additional responsibilities such as mentoring younger students and give them specific jobs or individual tasks to do.

Involving learners with SEND and their families – what activities take place throughout the year which involves the learners/families with their education?

At the moment all communication with families and outside agencies is taking place remotely and for those learners who are unable to access the farm we provide home schooling projects and activities for them to try. We also keep our social media site up-to-date so that learners can still see the

animals and keep up to date with farm news and we have introduced a virtual tour of the farm online.

Usually, we would welcome parents, carers to visit the farm and have a look with their children at their work and the animals as an end of year event which we are unable to do at the moment with Covid-19 restrictions so we are utilising our Class Dojo App much more now to show pictures of their children's work and keep links of open communication with them.

Transition – how are learners with SEND involved in transition to post-16 placements/key stages? reintegration etc.?

Our post 16 progression scheme usually begins in April of each academic year where we focus on doing set tasks with Year 10 and 11 students covering a range of mandatory tasks such as CV writing, job research, making phone calls to colleges and applying for bank accounts. We do not cover a specific AIMVOC qualification in careers; however, the employability sections within each qualification do cover ample learning opportunities that will support skills for the future.