



**POSITIVE STEPS**  
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**Oldham**  
Council

# Supporting Participation of young people aged 16+ - good practice examples

Created by Oldham Council, Positive Steps and Oldham Training and Personal Development Network

## Continued engagement activity with prospective / returning students

Maintaining regular contact with prospective students before they officially enrol is supportive and makes it more likely that they will join/return in August / September. This helps young people feel welcomed and connected and is particularly important during this period of sustained inactivity.

## Virtual Tours of Buildings

Entering an unfamiliar building can be daunting, and in the absence of a physical tour, this is the next best thing. Don't forget to include toilets, eating areas (how to queue and buy), how to access the building (swipe cards, etc.), where to go and what to do during free periods, library and mentor support offices in your tour.

33% of Year 11's who responded to the survey highlighted that getting around the building is a worry for them.

## Buddy systems

Existing students supporting new students to settle into the virtual environment and be available for questions when required.

Furthermore, is there scope to introduce new students to each other over the summer, virtually, so they can build friendships before starting college/training? Over 51% of respondents to the Year 11 survey expressed worries over meeting new people and making friends.

## Young Person Quote

*"I'm worried that due to Covid 19 my learning will be affected and with the social distancing rules I am worried that I won't be able to make any new friends. I'm also worried about things going back to normal".*

<b>Key workers</b>	<p>Identify a staff member as a virtual contact so the new young person has a member of staff they are familiar with before they begin the course.</p>
<b>Pre-programme activities</b>	<p>Offer prospective students' activities relevant to their course, to engage them and create a sense of belonging. The activities will reduce the natural regression we see during the summer period and reduce further regression during the extended period of non-activity.</p>
<b>Virtual Chat</b>	<p>Create a virtual chat facility on provider websites with a member of staff so young people can ask questions, privately, remotely and when they want to.</p>
<b>Social Stories</b>	<p>The use of social stories may be particularly helpful to the SEND cohort to support them with the transition to College, either virtual or the introduction of safe physical access.</p>
<b>Increased summer transition activity</b>	<p>To make young people feel a part of the provider community and feel welcomed, the provision of transition activities, both online and face to face where available can reduce transition anxieties for both young people and families.</p>
<b>Young Person Quote</b>	<p><i>"looking forward to going to college but a little worried about meeting new people and making friends my place is now guaranteed and even though I met teachers on [open] day would be good to get to know them more before starting course"</i></p>
<b>Links with Careers Advisers</b>	<p>Careers Advisers linked to the young person's previous school can support providers to engage harder to reach young people.</p>
<b>Online Induction Activity</b>	<p>To ensure anxiety is reduced regarding placements, online inductions can provide reassurance to young people and families that destinations are secure.</p>

## FAQs

Providing a frequently asked questions page on your website can ensure families and young people have easy access to common queries. You may also want to consider how easy it is for people to ask questions: Is there a helpline? Is live chat an option?

## “How to” links

As this year will be different to all other years, a section on your website dedicated to providing videos and instructions on how your learning site will operate at the start of the academic year will support learners to understand and feel more confident to “arrive” in August/September.

## Young Person Quote

*“I’m confused about starting at college”*

## Enhanced Enrolment

Consider what this might look and feel like for young people. Is there anything you can do to offer additional support to a cohort of young people who have not been in education since March? Do they need a tour of the building? Perhaps they would benefit from a chance to see their classrooms, speak to staff and look at the college facilities? 38% of respondents to the Year 11 survey expressed concerns over the enrolment process.

## A day in the life

Create a video showing “a day in the life of a student/apprentice” would help young people to understand what to expect and what is expected when arriving at your setting.

47% of Year 11’s who responded to the survey have concerns about getting back into a routine, videos showing what to expect will help them to understand what is expected of them.

## Class mixer’s

Whether it’s a virtual get together or you can facilitate physical meet ups, opportunities for the class to “get together” before the start of term is a great way to introduce students to each other and enable them to begin to form friendships before the work starts.

## Young Person Quote

*“Chance to talk to new classmates?”*