

## Success Story Luke

Luke is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year student with moderate learning difficulties; he struggles with anxiety and communication. His first placement was with Modelez International which involved packing and weighing mis-shaped chocolate. Luke says, "I didn't mind this placement but I prefer what I do now as there is more variety." His next placement was at Transland which involved packing glass bottles into boxes. Again, he felt the tasks weren't varied enough to keep his interest.



In September 2019 he began a Supported Internship at Silver Birches, a local Care Home, working with the Maintenance Manager (with plenty of variety of work tasks). Initially Luke found the placement challenging due to the requirement of communicating with staff and residents but his Job Coach helped him to build relationships and improve his confidence. Despite the lockdown

interrupting his Supported Internship, the Care Home were so impressed with Luke they offered him a paid job as Maintenance Assistant.

*"I have seen a considerable change in Luke over a period of time. He makes eye contact more frequently." Manager, Silver Birches Dec 2020*

Luke is continuing at college 2 days a week so that we can provide the support he needs to understand the requirements of a paid job such as how to request annual leave, what to do if he is unwell and how to deal with a difficult colleague. Luke has settled into work-life quickly and has said,

"I felt really proud when they put my photo up on the staff notice board."

## Success Story Foyes

In March 2021, Sasha Radwan, Founder and Director of Special Kids Company, contacted The Hive College to offer a Supported Internship to a student who would train as a Warehouse Assistant. Special Kids Company are an internet store selling clothing, shoes, toys and equipment for children with special needs. Sasha has expanded her business significantly over the last few years and has supported The Hive College in many ways during that time. The Placement Coordinator instantly thought of Foyes who is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year student who has displayed significant determination, resilience and motivation despite the challenges that the pandemic has caused.

Foyes actually began a Supported Internship in Sept 2019 but this opportunity collapsed due to the pandemic. Foyes was left devastated and feeling like he had lost hope of ever achieving his dream of full time paid employment. However, he didn't let this stop him continuing to develop his employability skills within college; he updated his CV, he applied for multiple jobs and threw himself into organising a sponsored fun run for John Taylor Hospice.



Foyes was over-the-moon when he was offered a 2<sup>nd</sup> Supported Internship with Special Kids Company and has exceeded all our expectations. He started at the end of April and has quickly become a member of the Special Kids family. He has been supported by his Job Coach Hazera Begum who has helped him to break down each task, developed strategies to enable him to work independently and ensured he remained confident throughout.

The first hurdle to get over was learning how to travel to the warehouse from home independently. Hazera assisted Foyes to work out which buses he needed to get and what time to be at the bus stop to ensure he could arrive at work in good time. She travelled with him initially and gave him clear landmarks to look out for to know when to press the stop button. Foyes quickly gained confidence and within just a few weeks he was managing the journey independently.

Hazera and our 2<sup>nd</sup> Job Coach Alex Fitton, have worked together to design assessment criteria for the different aspects of the job role such as Health and Safety, Picking Procedure and Warehouse Replenishment. To ensure Foyes' progress against this criteria could be monitored, Hazera worked with Nici Cutler (Vice Principle) to design an assessment framework to be used on the Evidence For Learning App (our college-wide assessment tool).

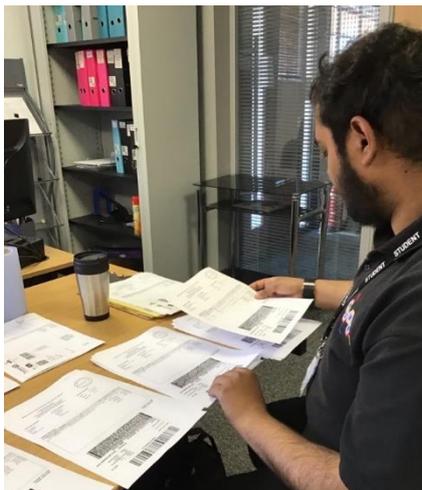
The next hurdle for Foyes was his fear of dogs! Luca is the office dog and visits Special Kids every Wednesday. Foyes worked extremely hard to overcome his fears and they are now firm friends!



Foyes is only in the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of his Internship but he has achieved proficiency in the majority of his job tasks. Hazera has developed various checklists and systems to reduce the risk of mistakes and has allowed Foyes to gradually build up his knowledge of the layout of the warehouse and the different stock items,

*“My Job Coach has really helped me through the training and has been there to encourage me and build up my confidence with the picking and packing.”*

Whilst Foyes has quickly built up his picking, packing and processing skills, he has also worked on building and maintaining his confidence and relationships with his colleagues,



*“I was nervous at the beginning of building relationships with my team but they have been really helpful.”*

As Foyes has begun to work on his own more and Hazera has stepped back, Foyes has occasionally struggled to maintain his confidence and to manage his anxiety. To counteract this, Hazera has introduced an ‘emoji technique’ which involves Foyes texting an emoji to reflect how he is feeling to one of his colleague so that she can pop into the warehouse to have a chat if he is feeling a little low.

Due to the imminent summer holiday break, Foyes will be taking the next step towards independence, working without the support of his Job Coach. Hazera and Ruth will continue to check in with him through the summer but Sasha and our team are convinced he is ready to face this challenge. Sasha is so pleased with Foyes’ progress and work ethic that she is looking into the possibility of offering him a permanent contract in October,



*“You (Foyes) are a personable character and fit right in.”*

