



This project is funded by:



### *Project Case Study*

## **BYPP – Building Young People’s Potential; West Cheshire and Ellesmere Port**

### **Project Overview**

Young people in West Cheshire and Ellesmere Port are being given the opportunity to develop the skills needed for a secure future through a scheme run by ‘Building Young People’s Potential’ (BYPP), part of the Blacon Community Trust, and partly funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) as part of its 2007-10 ESF Co-finance Plan. Whatever challenges face the young people who attend the BYPP project, the attendees soon realise that they are valued members of society, capable of leading a successful life.

### **How it Works**

BYPP was established in 1993, initially to help unemployed people aged between 16 and 25 increase their skills and look for work. However, soon afterwards, BYPP were informed that a group of young people aged between 14 and 18 were engaging in anti-social behaviour at night in the West Cheshire area and BYPP were asked by the police if they could help with this age group. BYPP invited the young people to take part in evening sessions and discovered that many were not in education through exclusion, pregnancy or family problems.

Head Teacher of BYPP, Louise Davey, explains: “We began to build up the number of vocational courses we offered, to ensure the young people who were attending sessions could learn new skills and gain valuable qualifications. As we have independent school status, we also offer traditional curriculum subjects and hope to soon extend these further.

“Sometimes a young person may have been excluded from school in Year 10 or 11 and missed out on gaining GCSEs and we can help them achieve the results they need to follow the career they choose, in a non-traditional environment that they often respond to much more positively.”

Funding from ESF has helped BYPP to continue offering their post-16 programme. Louise says: "Our post-16 programme is crucial because if a young person misses

Year 11 at school, they can quickly become someone with nowhere to go; they have no qualifications, no support and no job prospects. We don't want to see this happen, so we can offer a personalised learning plan, opportunities for volunteering and support from our staff, who include trained counsellors and youth workers.

"We do have strict rules but they are different to ones a school will have. We have very high levels of expectation and one of our main roles is dealing with behaviour and attitude, to ensure all of our young people are fit to learn."

Louise adds: "Our main priority is to give young people the opportunities they need, at the time when they most need them, as tomorrow might be too late. We were very proud to see two of our young mums attend university, something they admit would not have happened had they not been involved with BYPP.

"We can offer the young people who come to BYPP a sense of belonging to something positive which is often something they've never encountered before."

### **Impact and Success**

Adam Poole is just one of many young people to have benefited from involvement with BYPP. He was referred by Connexions for the post-16 vocational training course with the hope that he could gain the skills and confidence necessary to move into further education.

When he first became involved with the project, Adam was very shy and found it difficult to interact with other people. He was recognised as a conscientious young man with the potential to succeed both academically and socially, but he needed support to achieve this, to enhance his self-image and social skills.

With an excellent attendance record and attitude, Adam is now working towards qualifications in communication, literacy and numeracy and ICT. His natural practical ability has led to him being put forward as an ideal candidate for an Apprenticeship within the construction industry.

Louise says: "Adam has really come out of his shell and now has a twinkle in his eye every time he steps through the door. It has been a massive reward to members of staff to see Adam's true personality develop.

“Adam is polite and courteous and has always been a brilliant example to the other students. He’s had support to create a career plan and has moved on to YMCA training and he is planning to start college in September.”