SEND
Weekly Newsletter
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Issue 19

High-flying Ella has an inspiring story

Health drop-in is for you

There's a health drop-in for people with learning disabilities on Wednesday, 30 January at Taunton Library.

It's a chance to meet healthcare specialists within the Learning Disability team.

Find out their roles and how they can help support mainstream services for people with Learning Disabilities to be able to access mainstream care.

The sessions are for anyone who wants to know more about health support services for people with a learning disability.

The sessions run from 10am to 3pm.

Call 01823 368513 for more information.

She's just one small step away from a place at Oxford University and is applying as a volunteer with the RNIB to develop her skills and independence.

All this after Ella lost her remaining sight overnight back in 2015 and surgery could not restore it.

The Support Services for Education Vision Support Team has been with her on her journey, having worked with her since before she started school.

After she lost her sight the team started to work even more intensively with Ella. They had already worked on teaching her low vision skills.

Now they taught her braille, working with her at home so the busy student didn't miss any lessons.

A year after losing her sight she achieved 10 A* and two As at GCSE. She decided to stay at her school Kings of Wessex rather than going for a specialist placement for students with visual impairment.

Having achieved an A*, A and B at A-level she's planning to re-take and swap her B for an A to take up a deferred offer at Oxford. Oxford is offering her maths tuition to achieve this.

The Vision Support team is still offering support in a holistic way and Ella became a fully qualified guide dog owner in the summer.

For more information about the Vision Support Team visit here.

Film shows how we are no different

A thought-provoking film called Same Difference has been made.

It was the idea of Phil Dyer who wanted to show that having a disability shouldn't be a barrier to getting employment.

It was made with support from Somerset Business Partnership and Somerset Film who helped to make Phil's idea a reality!

It shows forward thinking employers who believe in the ethos of "hire the attitude and teach the skills".

Here's a great quote from the film..."When people know that I have a disability they naturally assume I can't do certain things.

In fact, like a lot of disabled people, I can do many things.

We are not different.
We want to be a part of the community.

We've all got something to offer and we want to contribute like everyone else."

You can find the film here.

Let's get using MOMO

Our children and young people looked after have asked for MOMO, so as practitioners we need to get using it!

Mind of My Own (MOMO) is a participation tool for young people who use health, care and education services. More than half our children and young people looked after have Special Educational Needs and or disabilities.

MOMO enables young people to have their voices heard and to participate in decisions about their life.

By using the website , the Apple App or Google App, children and young people can say what they want, when they want.

MOMO means they can safely express their views and wishes so we should embrace it. Click here for a short film about it.

Portal update—please try it

Are you a SENCO carrying out an Annual Review of a student's Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan?

If so please use the new SEND Professional Portal - https://emsonline.somerset.gov.uk/ProfessionalPortal_LIVE/Account/Login - to submit your form to the SEND Casework Team.

By completing the mandatory fields our team can respond to your request promptly.

The Portal is compulsory from January, so why not try it now and feedback on how the process works?
*If you have problems accessing it try pasting the link into Internet Explorer.