



Densholme Farm action



Densholme Care Farm – Hull Road – Great Hatfield – HU11 4UX – 01964 532640

CASE STUDY, Student A

Student A is a female in her 30's and has been attending the farm two days a week for four years, which she is very proud of, feeling an established part of the team and getting on well with other students, volunteers and staff.

She is settled living in the family home with her carers and after a while another gentleman who enjoys the same living arrangements also came along to the farm. Initial worries that this may affect her enjoyment or that she would be overly concerned and take on the caring role for him were unfounded and both seem happy. She has a taxi shared with this gentleman and another student and enjoys good conversation and banter with them and the taxi driver on the short drives to and from the farm, and is organized and ready for when it arrives.

When starting at the farm, her reasons for attending were:-

- To make new friends;
- Learn team skills;
- Wants to make decisions and choices on her own.

She enjoys being at the farm and brought with her skills learnt at agricultural college and has proven that she is a capable student, enjoying practicing and building onto these skills, being able to carry out most horticultural tasks independently and happily doing tasks once she understands what is needed.

She is a confident student and will say to staff or other students (who are predominantly male) if she does not like something and is also outgoing and expresses well the things that she does like. Having volunteered at St Johns for a long time, she is able to say how to look after someone if they are ill. She ably demonstrated (on farmer Denys) how to put someone into the recovery position, the team who watched were impressed with her skills and also in giggles as this was done in a paddock with someone broadcasting manure getting slowly closer.

At times if other students have felt ill she has shown her compassion, spontaneously getting them a cold drink of water and offering empathy and talking soothingly to them, resulting in friendships, trust and being well liked. She has taken on the task of assisting staff to look through the first aid box and stock identifying if supplies are getting low, making a note and advising the admin worker; she thrives on this responsibility.

With a volunteer she plays a major role in creating a board featuring art work undertaken by all students, e.g currently a spring board depicts a tree painted by her plus pompom rabbits, birds and new growth of flowers made from various mediums and by several of the group. She is experimental and creative when doing craft work and loves collecting leaves, cones, flowers, grasses etc from the farm to make pictures and cards, always making special ones for people's birthdays or anniversaries which are well received.

When building the horse shelter as part of the team she joined other students in designing and painting their own breeze block, hers depicting a lovely sunflower that had seeds at its heart. At a workshop that stocked a new pond she joined in all tasks with the team but worked independently after being shown by the tutor how to take willow cuttings and plant them around the pond. She also decorated stones to look like eyes and assisted in building a nose out of rocks, so that with the pond as lips a big face was made.

When setting aims last year she expressed she would like to learn more about how to grow vegetable and plants. For two years after helping build it, she has looked after a raised bed of her own, enjoying planting, weeding and harvesting with particularly good crops of onions, beetroot, beans and lettuce and when tasks take her interest she works methodically and competently.

New Aims she identified for this year are:-

- Do more with the animals;
- Undertake a woodwork project.

She enjoys seeing and caring for the animals, from stroking them to mucking out, collecting eggs, thinking up apt names for them as well as observing their behavior and learning about them. She really enjoyed bird watching, learning about the different species and then drew and wrote about the birds seen for the farm newsletter. When the farm had two rescue ponies she would visit them each day she was at the farm and assist in grooming them, ably holding them on their leads and taking a real interest in watching the horse dentist at work or them having their hair/ hooves attended to. They knew her voice and would trot over to see her and because of this she was one of the few who could easily catch them when they needed to be put on a lead rein.

A workshop that she really loved was making a bench from wooden pallets, getting involved with all aspects of the task and working well with the other students and being delighted with the result. She requested to make a wooden planter for her carers for Valentine's Day, putting the new skills she had learnt to good use.

A great joy to her is being in the farm choir, learning a variety of songs and at times performing them, including beautiful solos which are well received. She has since joined a choir at a local church where she lives, enabling her to have a new hobby and make new friends.

She has a great sense of fun and loves banter, especially with the Farmer Denys and volunteers, all good natured and lovely to see her so animated and happy.