

## DIPLOMA LEARNER – SOCIETY, HEALTH and DEVELOPMENT

**Name:** Natalie Finnie

**School:** Big Wood School

Natalie has just completed the first year of level 2 of the Society, Health & Development Diploma. She chose to do the Diploma alongside her GCSEs because she thought it would open up more career opportunities in the future. The variety of the course appealed to her and the content appeared to match her interest in working in the healthcare sector. She is also studying for a number of GCSE's including Business, ICT, RE, Science, English, Maths and Art.

In total there are 20 students from various schools around the city on the 2 year course, which involved spending one day per week at Bluecoat school.

In Natalie's opinion, the highlight of the course so far have been the trips, in particular the criminal justice trip which involved meeting police staff and crown court staff. This broadened the content of the course; it does not just cover health, but other elements of society as well. Natalie also really enjoyed doing a practical first aid course and learning these skills.

### **Work Experience**

For the Diploma, all students are required to do work experience and Natalie has just completed a week's work experience at Strelley Health Centre. During the first day she sat on reception in order to gain an understanding of health centre environment and its various activities. On the second day she had the opportunity to sit in with the paediatric doctor on assessments, and in the baby clinic. Throughout the rest of the week she gained experience in many areas of the health centre, including phlebotomy, podiatry and school nursing, all of which she enjoyed.

For the work experience Natalie was given a work booklet which contained different units to work through during the week. The units involved communication, confidentiality, legislation, etc which are all elements that link to the Diploma course. There is the opportunity for a second work experience placement to be taken next year as well, also in the NHS but in a different area to enable her to gain wider experience.

## **After the Diploma**

Once Natalie has completed the Diploma, she has the option of continuing onto level 3 or doing A-levels. She originally wanted to be a paediatrician but after the week of work experience she liked the health visiting and nursing side of the sector so may want to work towards that. At the moment she has not made her mind up yet, but she firmly believes that the level 2 qualification will be very useful to her. Whatever she decides to do she knows that it will require a lot of hard work and is quite prepared for that.

## **Advice**

Natalie would recommend the Diploma course to anyone. "It opens up lots of opportunities and relates closely to work and real experiences which I like. There is a lot of work involved but it covers a wide range of areas, so as long as you are willing to put the time and effort in, you can learn a lot. It's good because you can do it alongside your GCSEs too so it also leaves my options open."

"I was very fortunate to be able to do my recent work experience at Strelley Health Centre. I had to fill in an application form and then be interviewed – it was just like applying for a real job! The staff at the Health Centre were really helpful and it was a really good experience overall."