## Project summary

- We introduced the Asdan course in 2004 to meet the needs of a group of disaffected students in Year 10.
- The curriculum provision for the school did not meet the needs of about 10% of the Year 10 group. Asdan was introduced to provide a more flexible approach to learning and one which could be tailored to meet the needs of individual students who had become disaffected. The course was closely linked to work experience and all students attended a work placement for at least one day per week.
- In 2005, the new Year 10 group started the Cope Award with 6 units of accreditation being accessed from the Asdan Bronze scheme and 6 units from the Cope award, providing the 12 units needed for the full award. All students have access to ICT and complete portfolios which include their assignments and work experience reports. Since starting the course we have noticed an increase in attendance levels, greater enthusiasm for learning and increased opportunities for the students in employment. Every student taking the course has achieved a Bronze Award, some students have achieved Silver Award, and we are optimistic that all our present Year 11 students will achieve the Level 1 Cope Award.

## Specific aspect of practice to be accredited?

- Raising standards of achievement and progress at Key Stage 4 through a widening of the curriculum to incorporate ASDAN and COPE.

## Aspect of Every Child Matters addressed:

- ☑️ Be healthy  ☑️ Stay Safe  ☑️ Enjoy and achieve  ☑️ Make a positive contribution  ☑️ Achieve economic well-being

## What were you hoping to achieve?

- Greater motivation and engagement of students (particularly those that may be likely to become disaffected upon reaching 14/15) during Years 10 & 11 and, ultimately, improved GCSE results.
### How did you identify the need for this practice?

We identified the needs by using the following strategies:

- Analysis of KS3 results and monitoring under-performance, disruptive behaviour, and below-average attendance rates.
- Looking at the options for an alternative curriculum to meet the needs of this particular group.
- Looking for ways to personalise learning for these students to improve their motivation and employment prospects.
- Engaging students by increased use of ICT, providing some of their work outside the classroom, and making a large proportion of their studies work-related.

### What did you do?

- We investigated the possible courses that were available and decided that Asdan may meet the students' needs. In March 2004, the Vocational Coordinator went to Leeds to join a group of teachers who were proposing to offer the Asdan course starting in September 2004. In May 2004, the Vocational Coordinator made a presentation to the Leadership Team of the school, with the intention of starting the course as soon as possible.
- Training became an important issue and the Vocational Coordinator worked alongside the Vocational Assistant to make sure that all the materials and resources were ready for the September start. Students were recommended for the course by the Learning Support Faculty, the Form Tutors and the Head of Year. After interviews with the parents and students, a group of 20 was selected to start the course.
- The first significant landmark came in December 2004 when all members of the group managed to achieve the Bronze Asdan Challenge Award. Another landmark was that the entire group were able to stay in their work placements. Some students increased their time at work from one to two days per week. All students received good reports from their work placements. Four members of this group were offered permanent positions with their placements once they left school in July 2006. All members of the group took up places in work with training, or continued in post 16 education; none were unemployed.

### Which members of the establishment and/or wider community have been involved and what was their role?

- Director of Vocational Education- Course leader and teacher;
- Vocational Assistant- Course coordinator;
- Assistant Headteacher- Helps in planning and delivering the course;
- Learning Support teacher- Provides assistance to students, Literacy and Numeracy;
- Local Employers- Providing placements for the students.

### How has the practice been modified or improved during development?

The course has been developed by following these pathways:

- Students study for Asdan Bronze Award with Work Experience;
Students study Bronze and Silver Award with Work Experience;
Students study Bronze Award Leading into the Cope Award Level 1;
From September 2006, Work Experience has been reduced to a maximum of 1 day per week to ensure that all students have sufficient time to complete their Cope Award Level 1, which counts towards the school's overall examination performance.

What has been the impact of the project on pupils’ learning, achievement or enjoyment and how has this been measured?
The impact has been:
- Increased levels of attendance for this group from 85% to 90%;
- Increased enthusiasm for activity in work-related activities;
- Students better motivated; more willing to engage and take part in lessons (better attendance rates);
- Using ICT, students stay on task for longer periods and have more success in producing work of a high standard.
- Successful work experience provides the students with increased self-esteem (6 in the group were offered part-time work with their employers);
- Employment prospects are greatly enhanced (no one has ever been left unemployed following this course).

What are the next stages in the development process?
- October 2006 will see the launch of an Asdan/Cope course running in partnership with a neighbouring school, Baines. Students meet once per week and are about to start work on a charity project. From 2007, both schools will follow a similar timetable allowing the Asdan students, 28 in total, to follow a common course with lessons taking place at both schools four times per week.

What aspects of this practice may be useful for other establishments to consider?
- Personalised learning has improved students’ performance; the Cope Award offers this facility.
- A flexible approach to learning can be an advantage for disaffected students.
- Adopting the Asdan/Cope Award has led to improved examination performances in other subjects, as students are better motivated to learn and have better attendance figures.
- The chance to work in collaboration with another school, college or employer gives the students opportunities to develop their skills in new environments which they may find more stimulating.
- Try to ensure that students on this course have access to ICT facilities as this will enhance their chances of producing better quality work.

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