Delisha’s Story

Delisha is 23 years old and has a learning disability. She has been receiving support from a shared lives carer, Lynne, for the last few months.

Delisha was eager to carry out some form of work experience within a supportive environment. Delisha spoke of previous experience both at college and school within the kitchen environment and spoke enthusiastically of working in a café in the near future.

Lynne made contact with a previous acquaintance at the farm near Markeaton Park who expressed an interest in supporting students with a learning disability in the kitchen tea rooms.

However, Delisha spent a considerable time using public transport to travel to and from Derby city centre to access resources within the wider community and this coupled with her complex medical needs suggested that a placement at the farm would be impractical.

Lynne noticed there was a community café within walking distance of Delisha’s family home and so she approached the café manager to discuss the possibility of a work placement. They referred Lynne on to the community centre manager who agreed to the time and day of the placement. A very excited Delisha was told about the placement.

Delisha and Lynne attended an induction meeting with centre and café managers, covering Health and Safety rules, fire procedures and roles and responsibilities within the work experience.

Delisha began her placement alongside Lynne and her responsibilities have grown with her confidence and independence within this supportive setting. She serves customers by writing down orders and using the till with support. Delisha cleans the café, clears tables, washes up and loads and unloads the dishwasher. When food and drinks are ready, Delisha serves customers and has verbally encouraged customers to fill in customer surveys to ensure community inclusion. Delisha has been involved in meetings about marketing and future café developments. She has also helped to prepare resources for a fund raising coffee morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Research.

Delisha continues to develop good relationships with both customers and staff and is determined to work through any medical issues that she may have during her work experience.
Over time, Delisha and Lynne have extended the amount of time they spend at the café, rewarding themselves with drinks and just lately, light lunches too.

Lynne’s role is to verbally prompt Delisha, praise her for her achievements and reassure her when she feels unwell.

This fantastic work experience opportunity for Delisha would not have been possible without the support of, Lynne, the shared lives carer.

You can find out more about the shared lives scheme on our website.