



Careful budgeting and financial skills make for great cooking ingredients

Portsmouth Foyer exists to enable vulnerable and disadvantaged young people to move from dependence to independence by providing access to accommodation, employment and personal development with appropriate advice and support.

We have 108 residents aged 16–25 from a range of backgrounds and with a range of different needs, including young people who have previously been sleeping rough, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or with alcohol dependence and drug misuse, as well as young people who have previously been cared for by social services, and ex-offenders.

With the full support of the Skills for Life Improvement Programme and funding from Halifax Bank of Scotland, Portsmouth Foyer has created a learning and development programme for 16–25 year old young people not in education, employment or training to combine two priority areas for its residents – financial literacy and healthy eating.

Critically, the Portsmouth Foyer also promoted effective learning amongst the group of 30 residents with help from Stephanie:

- helping them develop numeracy skills
- teaching maths skills – including use of addition, weights, amounts, sizes, measures and percentages – within the vocational context of measuring ingredients and cookery

creating effective schemes of work and tailored lesson plans for the duration of the course.

Courses designed to teach financial literacy

The provider was one of four in the country to successfully apply and receive funding from Halifax Bank of Scotland for courses designed to teach financial literacy.

Financial literacy and healthy eating embedded at Portsmouth Foyer

Mark Cox, Employment and Education Training Manager, Portsmouth Foyer

Portsmouth Foyer is one of a number of institutions and further education providers to benefit from the wide range of Skills for Life reform and development activity funded by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service.

The Foyer was part of the embedding strand of the Skills for Life Improvement Programme last year, with our development adviser,

Stephanie Bond, providing CPD training on awareness raising, core curriculum and embedding. We had support sessions where schemes of work were embedded for the cookery/financial literacy course. Following on our success last year we once again signed up for the Programme, this time focusing on embedding the new Functional Skills especially Numeracy.



Enjoying the fruits of their labour: Portsmouth Foyer students enjoy their supper

Drawing on this funding, the Portsmouth Foyer then developed and ran three six-week courses for ten residents per group. On the course, residents:

- received training on budgeting
- were given a budget of £60 each week to spend on ingredients for creating a group meal
- went shopping to buy the ingredients for the meal
- prepared a meal for ten people which they then shared together with Training staff
- received input and advice from a Health Development Officer on the contents of their meal and on the budgeting skills by the Training staff.

What was the impact?

The course has had a wide range of benefits.

- The Portsmouth Foyer is looking to extend the course and widen it to include greater numbers of learners through a European Social Funding mechanism application.
- Ten more participants are due to begin this second phase of the course shortly.
- Involvement in the course has helped 30 participating residents

‘I can put all the very good money skills and cooking skills into my life when I get my own place.’ Elisha (Learner)

build their portfolios and some have counted their involvement towards a City & Guilds accredited course in Self-Development – Learning Power Award in partnership with Highbury College.

- Eleven of the participants who signed up fully completed the course and another six completed 75%, seven completed 50% and six were early leavers with less than 50% attendance.
- The Portsmouth Foyer has identified a range of positive outcomes for the young people participating, including enabling them to:
 - manage their money effectively on a weekly or monthly basis
 - read and understand utility bills, bank accounts, credit and debit documents: read

bank statements, write a cheque, understand loans and supermarket ‘Best buys’, manage their rents, save money

- understand the importance of healthy eating
- improve their basic numeracy skills.
- It has also:
 - provided an effective and practical way of learning
 - supported learning away from the classroom
 - helped develop the young people’s ‘soft’ skills and broader ‘life skills’: such as learning to cook on a budget, food hygiene and kitchen health and safety.

‘The course has helped me budget my money better and I like learning cooking new food and buy it each week with my friends on the course.’

Sharmaine (Learner)
