



Case Study: Leah

Leah was referred to Circles due to her behaviour within her mainstream school, struggling with a full week, often displaying aggression and violence towards others. Leah started attending Circles one day per week.

Leah struggled at first to settle in, both with her behaviour and sociability. Leah was hostile to other learners, in particular females and new starters and arrived with a negative work ethic and attitude which would also affect other learners in the group. Her language was bad and did not alter her behaviour around younger learners, or those with different SEND needs to her. The larger the group and consequently less attention Leah could receive, the more she resisted to engaging in tasks and became hostile to both learners and staff. Leah moved around different areas of the farm and although proved she was a capable and intelligent learner; she did not find a particular area in which she felt comfortable.

Leah returned to Circles after the lockdown with a more positive and friendly attitude and thus her time at Circles was increased to two days per week. She would spread her sessions between the Construction group and Art group and worked in the kitchen. Leah began forming good friendships with a variety of learners, including females, and showed a more caring and gentler side to her personality. This positive change allowed Leah to begin working on her BTEC Level 1 in Vocational Studies in which she has undertaken units in Painting, Small Animal Care and Woodwork. Leah is also working towards her Home Cooking Skills qualification. Towards the end of the academic year, Leah was moved into a different foster house. Leah felt comfortable enough to discuss this with staff and did not let this change affect her attitude and behaviour; her communication skills improved, allowing for her to express her needs and feelings in an alternative manner to aggression and violence.

Due to ongoing issues, Leah was excluded permanently from her mainstream school before the Summer Holidays. A placement was then set up for her at a PRU. This setting, so far, has suited Leah's needs due to working in smaller groups in lessons and being a less stressful and competitive setting. Although Leah can still be easily led in regards to her behaviour when she follows the actions and attitudes of others, her journey has been exceptional and she has a bright future ahead of her.