

Autistic teenager cut above the rest



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A STUDENT with autism who used to run away from her lessons now has her sights set on a career in hairdressing.

Amy Ellis, 16, wants to become a hairdresser when she leaves LVS Hassocks, a school in Sayers Common for autistic children.

She has teamed up with Hair Essentials, a hairdressers in Market Place shopping centre, Burgess Hill.

Research shows that only 16 per cent of autistic adults are in full-time employment and LVS Hassocks and Amy both want to improve that improving situation.

Amy, who lives in Crawley, was encouraged by her teachers to write to Hair Essentials and ask if she could do work experience there.

After a positive response Amy has been going weekly under the guidance of learning support assistant Rebecca Manley, to gain the full hairdressing experience.

background

LVS Hassocks is a supported learning environment for children aged between eight and 19 who have communication, socialisation and imagination difficulties, specifically with autism or Asperger's.

The school opened in April 2009 and is located in Sayers Common.

Its aim is to help students achieve their full potential.

LVS Hassocks has a sister school in Oxford, LVS Oxford, and is one of three schools owned and run by the Licensed Trade Charity.

Hair Essentials has been trading in Burgess Hill for more than 11 years.

She has learned how to wash, style, curl and a range of other techniques which will be invaluable in helping her gain her independence in future.

Amy said: "When I joined LVS Hassocks four years ago I did not stay in lessons and often ran off."

"Now I stay in all of my lessons

and am really happy at my placement as I want to become a hairdresser so it is helping me."

Abigail Elkins from Hair Essentials, who has been mentoring Amy, said: "When Amy started coming to work experience she was quite shy but has now really thrived here."

"She has gone from doing simple things like learning to straighten hair on a doll's head to performing tasks on people and enhancing the range of what she can do."

"It is building her interaction and communication skills with people which will all help her to become more employable."

Amy is hopeful that her classroom education, qualifications and work experience will help her follow in the footsteps of the school's eight leavers in 2016 who all went on to further education or employment, and former student Liam Pope.

The school arranged for Liam to do catering work experience alongside his qualifications, and helped him arrange an apprenticeship with Sodexo when he left. He went on to become Sodexo's Young Chef of the Year in 2015.

LVS Hassocks student Amy Ellis at Hair Essentials in Burgess Hill



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There are several diseases that can be caught from a tick bite in Britain, these include Lyme Borreliosis, Babesiosis, Anaplasmosis and Rickettsiosis. Most ticks are active between March and October, but

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