

RECONNECT WORK EXPERIENCE KENT *2021-22*



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‘Thanks so much for Monday and Wednesday, it was a huge success! Everytime I visited the rooms, all students were engaged and enthusiastic. As you know, I have been involved with Enterprise related activities for many years and I can't remember seeing such a high number of student engagement and positivity, despite the heat!! I was pleased to hear from both Alec and Janice that they were impressed with our student's attitude and behaviour. It was great to see all of them being actively involved and enjoying their experience.

"It was fantastic that despite not having a work experience placement, students were still able to develop their employability skills and get an insight into the world of work. The local employers Alec and Janice delivered the workshops with had lots of enthusiasm and the planned team-based activities engaged all our students. It was great to see all of them being actively involved and enjoying their experience!"

Teacher following ‘Alternative Placement’ delivery



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‘A huge thanks to you for giving up your time this week. You have run some of the best sessions I have seen from outside providers and the students have been engaged the entire time. We are so grateful that you could come and help us out, but also to offer such worthwhile and engaging sessions!

We will get them on the virtual platform for the Virtual Work Experience’

Teacher following ‘Alternative Placement’ delivery



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‘I just wanted to drop a line to say thanks for the EBP’s help in organising our Year 10 work experience programme this year. After a couple of odd years, it was great to have pupils back out in the community. We had a lot of positive reports about them as well.’

Teacher following mainstream placements



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In 2022, EBP Kent were successful in securing a Reconnect contract through Kent County Council, 'Reconnect – Improving Work Experience.' The programme developed would see 15 schools receive either mainstream Work Placements or an alternative delivery of work experience (bringing students into contact with numerous employers and providing them with a taste of the workplace). It was anticipated that over 1000 students would benefit from this process. All schools involved in this process would receive specialist support before embarking on the experience, with special attention given to 300 of the most vulnerable students, who would have access, in addition, to specialist career support, guidance for the interview process and specialist employability workshops.

In addition to this, 5 SEN schools would also receive guidance, mentoring and finally, placements to support future aspirations and employment. For some of these students, the intention would be to also send them on group visits to better highlight the workplace in a way more comfortable to their needs.

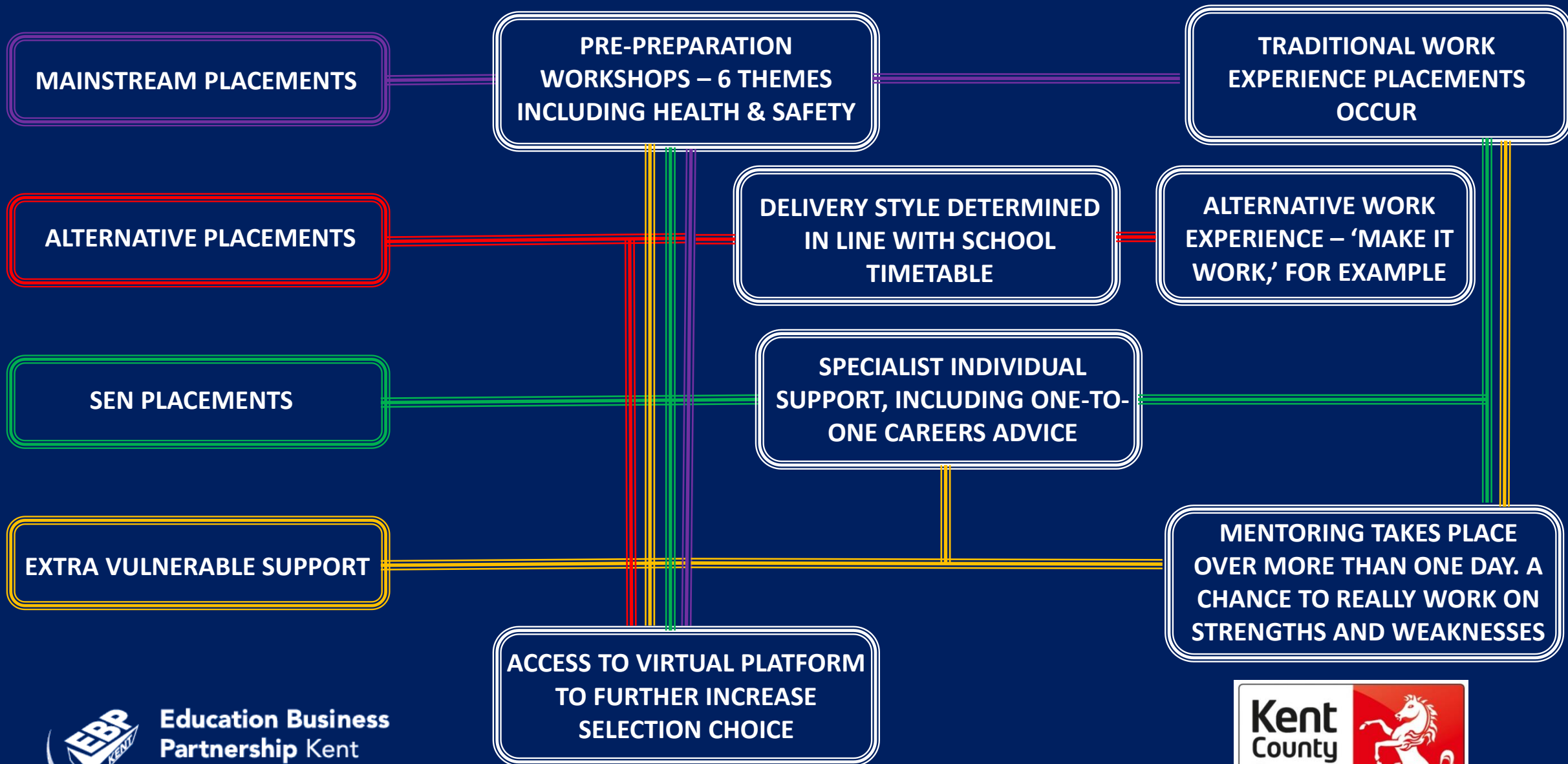
Finally, over 30 schools would receive access to EBP Kent's virtual platform, which would allow students to visit a virtual fair with over 120 organisations, take on virtual Work Experience challenges, developed by 60 Kent organisations and finally, visit a careers section with downloadable resources and guides on Work Experience, so that schools could develop their own programmes where possible.



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EXAMPLES....

SEN PLACEMENTS – AN EXAMPLE

Where: *The Goldwyn School : Year 10/11/12. 24 students.*

Pre-Content: *Students received 2 days of preparation workshops, including phone interviews, essential skills and access to the virtual platform including virtual Work Experience as an extra option*

What: *All students provided with a week long placement.*

Post Content: *Students were asked to evaluate the experience as well as have access to the Virtual Platform for a further 2 weeks, in order to also explore the Virtual Careers Fair.*

VULNERABLE SUPPORT – AN EXAMPLE

Where: *Southwood Enterprise Learning Alliance: Year 10. 10 students.*

Pre-Content: *Students were visited by the EBP team, to receive several sessions over the course of a few weeks, that would better prepare students for their impending placements. The job application process, workplace expectations and essential skills usage, were all workshop themes.*

What: *Students placed on week long placements, based on established career aspirations*

Post Content: *Students evaluated, plus the school had 2 more weeks to access the Virtual Platform, which had further Virtual Work Experience opportunities as well as the Virtual Career Fair which students could navigate in order to establish further career aspirations and also to find out what certain sectors are.*



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EXAMPLES....

MAINSTREAM PLACEMENTS – AN EXAMPLE

Where: *Dane Court Grammar School: Year 12. 132 students.*

Pre-Content: *Students given pre-sessions looking at Health & Safety, Logistics, Employer Expectations and Career Choice selection. All students also supported in selecting placements using online system.*

What: *All students provided with a week long placement. Law students provided with a specialist week.*

Post Content: *Students received a debrief session, including how to use the experience for their CV's. Evaluations took place, looking at pre and post impact.*

ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENTS – AN EXAMPLE

Where: *Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School: Year 10. 152 students.*

Programme Day 1: *Students received preparation workshops during the morning – CVs, Interview Techniques and What Employers Look for? The afternoon, saw the entire year group participate in an Enterprise Challenge, centred on Social Action.*

Programme Day 2: *Students grouped to work with specific organisations over the course of the day on a sector specific piece of work, plus an understanding of the workplace. Also, each student received a one-to-one interview with a member of the business community.*

Post Content: *Students took part in an extensive evaluation, plus all students received written feedback regarding their interview from their interviewer.*



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MAINSTREAM PLACEMENTS

1068 Students

8 Schools

SEN SCHOOLS

72 Students

6 Schools

2230

Students

442

New employers
engaged

ALTERNATIVE / BLENDED

1090 Students

12 Schools

IDENTIFIED VULNERABLE

308 Students

Across **12** Schools



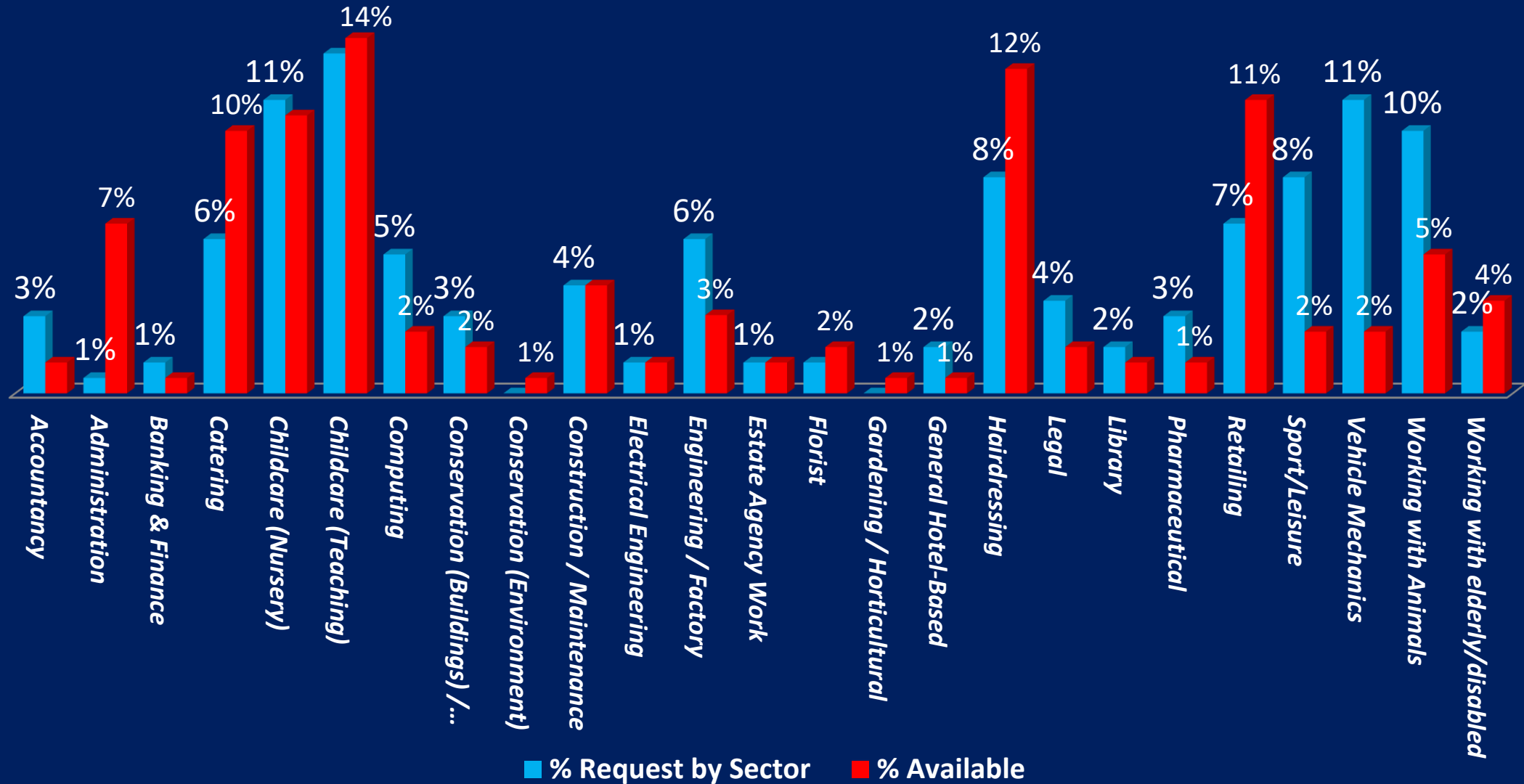
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MAINSTREAM PLACEMENTS – A SUMMARY OF SECTORS

Availability of Placements vs Student 1st Choice Request



On the next page, please click on a marker to find information on:

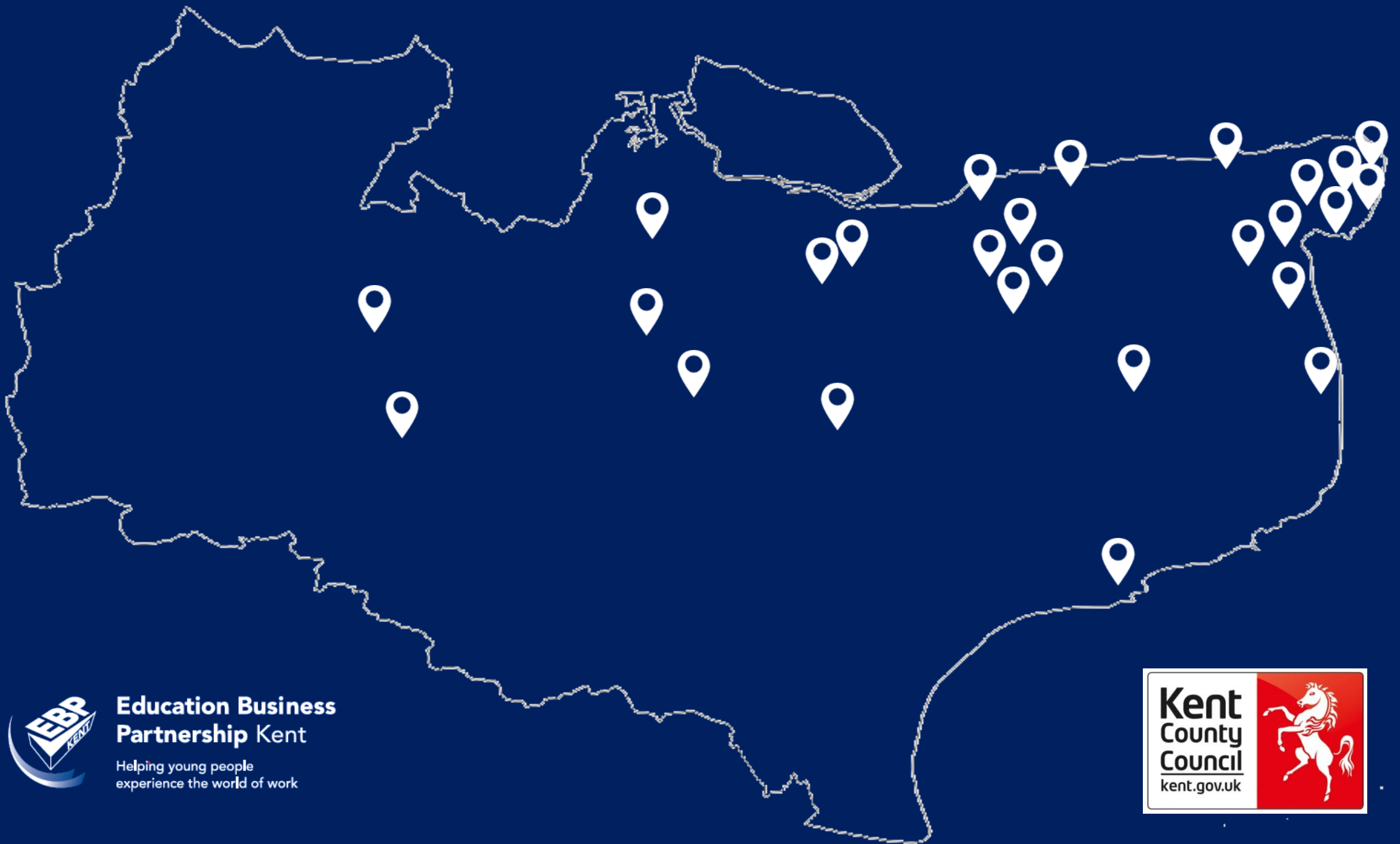
- ☐ Which school it is
- ☐ The type of delivery
- ☐ In some cases, an individual school evaluation



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EMPLOYERS

‘We’ve really enjoyed having (STUDENT) over the last week. He’s been eager to learn, quick to pick things up and genuinely interested in the work he’s been doing. It’s been a pleasure watching him learn about SEO, website design in Adobe XD, and coding his website designs with HTML, CSS and JS. The speed he’s moved through tasks has been really impressive, I’m sure he will have a bright future in computing if that’s what he chooses to pursue’

‘I met the student on the first day and from the start, they were polite, engaging and easy to talk to. It is great to have a student that fitted in so well with the team. Work experience can be a benefit to the company as well as the student. The staff here have definitely benefited from this experience too. Thank you’

EMPLOYER WHO INTERVIEWED STUDENT BEFORE WORK EXPERIENCE:

‘Extremely articulate, precise and concise answers when required but also great depth at other times during the interview. An excellent listener and agile thinker; used some outstanding examples like volunteering experience to demonstrate skills and attributes. Hugely creative thinker which showed in answers covering many areas of the interview. There is no doubt the candidate would be called back for second and third interview’



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CASE STUDIES

'Year 12 student on a placement with a care provider did such an exceptional job during the week, she was efficient learnt everything really quickly, was personable and quickly became a member of the office based team. At the end of the placement she was offered a job around her studies; this has helped her own situation and will enable her to gain significant skills during her level 3 qualifications'

ECHP STUDENT PLACED AT EAST KENT RAILWAY TRUST DURING MARCH:

'He's had a great placement, he's got to know most of the staff and he's really come out of his shell. They have said if he wants to carry on working there he can. He's like a different young person after the challenges of lock down. He goes train spotting at the weekends and he knows all the volunteers here. The driver has taken him up and down the track in the cab/cockpit/drivers room'

'Year 12 student on a placement with a care provider did such an exceptional job during the week, she was efficient learnt everything really quickly, was personable and quickly became a member of the office based team. At the end of the placement she was offered a job around her studies; this has helped her own situation and will enable her to gain significant skills during her level 3 qualifications. The student used 'day in the life of' Instagram posts which delighted the employer'

CASE STUDIES

‘Two students at Lloyds Bank one in Margate, one in Canterbury from CDS Year 10 did ‘an exceptional job’, were very impressive and able to follow instructions extremely well. The employer emailed positive feedback’

‘A traveller young person who was having difficulty engaging with any part of the system became very interested in workshops delivered at the end of April and May. He produced some exceptional work the first completed work the school had seen from him, he worked throughout the morning sessions and was not distracted from task at any point’

‘MAKE IT WORK PROGRAMME, DESIGNED TO BRING WORK EXPERIENCE AND SECTORS INTO THE CLASSROOM. EMPLOYER TASKS, PLACEMENT PREPARATION, ON-THE-JOB INTERVIEWS, FROM STUDENTS: I gained a lot of confidence through the process. I have seen what Work Experience can teach you and will be ready to take this on further once in Sixth Form’

DISCOVERY PARK – ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE, TEACHER: I’m over-the-moon with the positivity from the students. The venue itself has been an eye-opener, but the sessions have helped so many realise that there is opportunity out there. Working with employers has been a huge confidence boost and they are all asking to do more of this’

CASE STUDIES

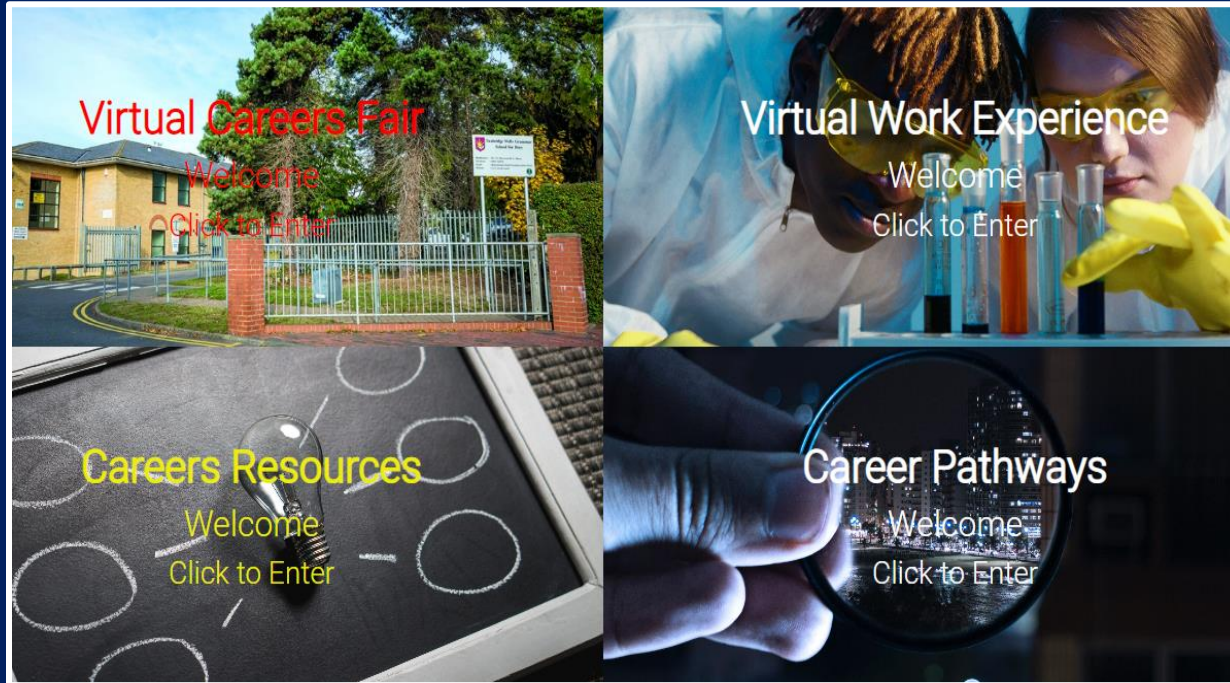
‘Two students with EHCP plans, one with exceptional anxiety completed their retail placement in February. Both students took significant steps in their own personal development. They dealt with the general public, worked hard sorting stock, and approached every request of them with such positive attitudes. The employer went above and beyond to support the students, recognising their needs and making sure everything went well for them’

‘EHP student with a passion for Radio, to learn how it worked, the kind of jobs involved and what it would be like to work in a Radio Station. The student was placed for two days per week initially for six weeks, but following a very positive review, was welcomed by the employer to continue two days a week with successful reviews until the end of the academic year’

HEADTEACHER COMMENT ON EHP STUDENT PLACEMENTS: ‘How amazing..... They were so good with both girls and when E’s anxiety got the better of her S even came out and picked her up from home one morning. Such a fantastically kind, caring and supportive work experience placement, we couldn’t have asked for anywhere better!’

TEACHER COMMENT ON EHP STUDENT PLACEMENT: ‘A life changing experience for this student, whose work and focus have transformed during her placement. She has a new maturity and attitude to her school work that has had an impact on both learning and attainment.’

VIRTUAL PLATFORM



3 AREAS FOR STUDENTS TO ACCESS

1 AREA FOR TEACHING STAFF (CAREERS RESOURCES)



Virtual Work Experience – 10 sectors with at least 5 organisations contained within each. Each organisation provided a virtual challenge



Careers Resources section, 6 areas of topics with downloadable content for staff

CONCLUSION

- The programme has successfully enabled the development of new engagement workshops and activities for the delivery of Work Experience themes and preparation for students to enter the workplace
- Student placements were achieved. Although much harder than in previous years, employers unable to help this time have certainly been encouraged to support next academic year
- Reconnect has allowed a good cross-section of students with varying needs to be supported not just in placement, but beforehand as well so that they could make the most of the experience
- All content was shared with each school careers lead and Reconnect allowed for a resources section to be built on the virtual platform that teachers could access and download free material
- All students who took part in an alternative delivery of Work Experience were able to access the Virtual Work Experience section of the Virtual Platform, having been prepared for the workplace during specially designed workshops and sessions
- The immediacy of post-pandemic did cause issues in terms of placement availability, school timetables and student application, occasionally, but evaluations have shown how certain issues can be resolved



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