



I started the education programme on the farm in 2011, when we had just two groups, each coming for one day a week. All of those pupils completed, and passed, a Level 2 qualification. From there, the secondary education provision has grown to five days a week, and we have now five days a week of provision for primary aged pupils and an additional classroom. I have team of enthusiastic, skilled and dedicated staff, who are as passionate as me about delivering excellent quality outdoor education and getting the most out of the farm as a fantastic teaching resource.

We are constantly amazed by our pupils. Schools send us information about pupils before they start, particularly informing us of any additional needs or behavioural issues, but we rarely notice these issues when they are engaged in learning on the farm. We foster a “have-a-go” attitude and often the students surprise themselves with what they actually can do!

In times when children spend so much time inside, in front of screens, we believe that spending time outdoors, particularly with animals, has extremely positive benefits – and if we can also gain those pupils a meaningful qualification – even better.

This testimony, from the parent of one of our recent pupils, perfectly sums up why we do what we do, and why we are so proud of what we have achieved. **The farm can, and does, change the lives of our young people:**

“Prior to O being offered the provision of the farming course, he was reluctant to attend school and participate in lessons, feeling that he had little worth or value. He was struggling to keep up with the learning and therefore acted out, spending a lot of time in isolation. Since attending the farm he feels confident and has regained his self-esteem. This has been reflected in his behaviour and engagement during lessons, which can be evidence by his attainment points and lack of isolation!”

The farm has been instrumental in broadening O’s understanding of the importance of education and how you apply this in day to day living, such as knowing how to measure the correct length of wood to fix a fence etc. The farm has given him the motivation to think about his future and allow him to try new skills before embarking on further education in an avenue that he had not previously considered. As a result of the farm, O is looking to apply to agricultural college for either a level 2 agriculture qualification or a level 3 apprenticeship as a crop technician. I truly believe that without this intervention O would have been permanently excluded from school with very little hope of being able to secure an appropriate college placement.”

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