

# Choosing pathways: Case study 2

## Supporting pupils in the process of leaving school



### **My Rights, My Say responds to questions created by the Inclusion Ambassadors about transitions:**

The Inclusion Ambassadors are a group of secondary school-aged pupils who have a range of additional support needs and attend a variety of school provision. The group meets regularly to ensure the views of young people with additional support needs are heard in discussions about education policy.

With many young people preparing to leave school over the coming months, the Inclusion Ambassadors have been sharing their thoughts about transitions. They have reflected on what works for them but also what they would like more of.

Using the Inclusion Ambassadors Vision Statement for Additional Support for Learning as a basis, we have responded to the reflective question topics that the group created. We thought sharing some of our case studies\* relating to transitions would be the most useful way to explain how **My Rights, My Say** can help support pupils leaving school.

### **Introducing Ruben**

Ruben is a 15-year-old migrant who had not attended school for 18 months. He was referred to My Rights, My Say as his relationship with school had broken down to the point where Ruben refused to communicate with anyone in the education system.

Ruben is autistic, has anxiety and experiences panic attacks. He reported there was no support in school other than being locked in a room alone with work he did not understand. He was the victim of racism, bullying and isolation. He was also barred from the school bus and had to make his own way to and from school.

### **Feeling valued and included: How My Rights, My Say helped**

A My Rights, My Say advocacy worker reached out to Ruben to arrange a time to chat about his education. After this initial discussion, Ruben felt that My Rights, My Say could help him.

At the time, Ruben was three months into his third year, and it had become quite clear he didn't want to attend school. He felt relationships - particularly with the Head Teacher - had broken down irrevocably. My Rights, My Say helped Ruben by supporting him to have discussions with the school and his education authority whereby he agreed that a college placement would be ideal for him.

He had a passion for the outdoors and loved fishing, motorbiking, mechanics, joinery and engineering. Additionally, Ruben liked the idea that he would not be treated as a child at college and that he would be expected to interact more with college teachers although support would still be available.

### Ensuring the right support: How My Rights, My Say helped

The local college ran an access course to Construction and Engineering which Ruben agreed to explore as an option. The Educational Support Worker from the college built up a good rapport with Ruben from the first meeting, which the advocacy worker also attended. The course was discussed with Ruben and the college invited him for a tour of the campus before he made a final decision.

As Ruben was still only 15, there was an issue of funding. He would not be eligible for an educational maintenance allowance until halfway through the college course and his course fees would have to be paid. He also lived over 20 miles from the college and would need help with transport. Ruben was not able to travel by public transport alone.

### Supporting different pathways: How My Rights, My Say has helped

A transitions meeting, attended by Ruben, his advocacy worker and representatives from his school and the college was arranged. They discussed the following person-centred supports to help Ruben access this new pathway:



**Transport as Ruben cannot attend without support.**



**Financial assistance for breakfast, lunch, clothes and wellbeing.**



**Identified member of staff to approach if Ruben was feeling anxious, including 1:1 support.**



**A laptop for work and assistance to enable it for his needs.**



**Headphones for noise cancellation.**

After prolonged negotiations, the education authority agreed to provide funding for his place in college. The college agreed to his supports and invited Ruben for a tour. The course would be for three days per week with one of those days online, which gave Ruben a chance to slowly get back into education which was important for him. Ruben started college and My Rights, My Say's role came to an end.

\*personal details relating to this case study have been changed for confidentiality purposes.