



Tara (Age: 27)

Went to Braidwood – Sept 2004- July 2009

My Job: Social worker for Adults

Your Company: Wolverhampton City Council, New Cross Hospital

What do you remember about Braidwood School?

What memories do you have? I have lots of wonderful memories of Braidwood school. I arrived with knowing no sign language at all and everyone was supportive. Within a year I felt confident in sign language and had a good friendship and relationship with teachers. I remember working hard in English, playing different sports with boys and girls as I was competitive and playing in a girls football team competing against other schools which I enjoyed. I

remember doing well in many lessons, I remember the fun school trips and bowling at Christmas.

What did you learn? I learnt how to make chairs, bird houses and other big projects in design and technology, learnt algebra in Maths, reading poetry in English, learning about Henry 8th in history and many more! I learnt to mix with hearing pupils and there were lots of fights in their school!

Most of all I learnt to communicate with deaf and hearing people and work with other people. I learn to never give up.

What did you like? What did you not like? I really enjoyed Media in year 10-year 11 as I was working on animation filming taking our time to plan and put together media films which won an award in Cambridge. I really did not like Maths, it was my weakness and I struggled to focus, I remember Mr Barlow's after school clubs for Maths to help improve my GCSE marks once a week but it helped as I achieved a good score in my GCSES which allowed me to be accepted in health & social care course in college.

Did you work hard? In year 10 I realized I had to focus on my lessons and homework/studying to succeed in my exams as I was not interested in homework or after school clubs when I wanted to socialize with my friends but in year 11 I worked

very hard as I wanted to go to college when I left school. I always worked hard in year 7-year 11, but I was always able to have fun!

1) Did you always want to be social worker?

I didn't know what I wanted to do, in year 9. I remember I wanted to help people as I enjoyed doing that. I thought about teaching but a personal friend of mine had a social worker involved and I became interested in what they did. I knew then I wanted to explore social work after I left school. I have never had any other jobs apart from a catalogue Job in the summer before university!

2) What did you do when you left Braidwood School? Did you go to college? What course did you do? What did you do when you left college?

I went to Solihull College and did 2 years in Health and Social Care, I then applied to go to University after achieving 3 Distinction's in college and I was accepted for Liverpool and University of Birmingham, I chose University of Birmingham so I could live at home. I studied BA Social work for 3 years in university and graduated at the age of 21, and had a qualified social work job the same year working with Older Adults. I have worked in four social work jobs in Birmingham, Bristol and Wolverhampton. My favorite job was working in the sensory impairment team in Birmingham where I worked with deaf and blind adults who needed support in the community and I could communicate with them using sign language or Hands on sign language. I am now working in a hospital helping people go home with support to recover at home, it's now been 7 years in social work and I aim to continue this.

3) What is the best thing about being social worker?

The best thing is when you see a person achieving small goals and seeing an improvement in their lives, knowing that I helped them to help themselves. It is rare but it is nice to be thanked for making a small difference.

4) What is the worst thing about being a social worker? It is very stressful, I can feel mentally and emotionally exhausted due to pressures of work sometimes. For me, two of the worst things are when an adult refuses support in a bad situation and I have to respect them and take a step back. The second is when you have built a relationship with an adult and they have sadly passed away.

5) What advice would you give a pupil at Braidwood School about life and work?

My advice would be to never let anyone get in the way of what you want in the future, never let your deafness/disability stop you. Always give it a try, always ask for help or speak to someone about how you feel, and if it doesn't work the way you wanted, there are always other options. Secondly, don't waste time on your education by ignoring work

or learning or thinking you have plenty of time as all of what you do now is so important for when you are older. And remember to have fun along the way!