



Doncaster Racecourse

Diversity and Inclusion

Your Future, Your Choice

Lead, Believe, Achieve, Exceed – working with Harrison College to support Students with Autism

Proudly partnered by



Doncaster Racecourse creates new Partnership With Harrison College, Doncaster: a specialist business, enterprise and employability post-16 education provision for students with autism and special educational needs.

More than one in 100 people are on the autism spectrum and there are around 700,000 autistic adults and children in the UK.

People with autism have particularly low employment rates – with fewer than three in 10 in work



Breaking down barriers to recruitment

Recent years have proved difficult for the racecourse in terms of recruitment. 43,039 people aged 16 to 64 in Doncaster were classed as 'economically inactive'. We knew that potential new employees were out there; we needed to look for new ways to engage with them and support our Diversity and Inclusion mission.

To build links with our local community that will continue for years to come

By creating a sustainable work placement programme that would develop and grow over time.

To develop the skills of our current leadership team

To develop the skills of the existing Doncaster Racecourse management team with regards to leadership, mentoring, emotional intelligence and Diversity and Inclusion.

To support local partners and make racing accessible for all

To create an inclusive placement programme where students can thrive, placing no limits on what can be achieved no matter their background or starting point, leading to a secure and prosperous future that supports our wider business and community goals.

To work with local partners to support young people that have had low aspirations and low social mobility to be enthused by the diverse careers that racing can offer.

Our partnership with Harrison College focused on the following 2 main areas:

Placement Students:

- 2 students undertook a 5 Month (1 day per week) placement in the following departments:
 - Maintenance and Grounds
 - Catering
- Both students went through a full induction programme which outlined exactly what they wanted to gain from the placement.
- A tailored programme of activity and learning was created in partnership with Harrison College for each student.
- 9 Doncaster Racecourse managers engaged in the program and supported the students on their journey.
- Weekly meetings were held with each student to track their progress and alter the programme where needed.
- Full training was given, and each student had a dedicated mentor

Hospitality Box

Harrison College took ownership of a hospitality box at Doncaster Racecourse, this:

- Gave an opportunity for young people from the college to experience working in the hospitality sector but in a smaller, less intimidating space within this hospitality box.
- It also allowed Harrison College to host other business partners and potential partners to explain how partnerships work and the impact that they have when they are successful, using Doncaster Racecourse as an example to other businesses.
- The annual box is also used to support Autism in Racing, where exclusive use was given to the charity for multiple race meetings each year to widen the participation in the sport.

“Success isn’t about how much money you make; it’s about the difference you make to people’s lives”

Results

Placement Students:

- 9 Managers were involved in the programme, developing their skills as leaders
- Both placements finished successfully with both students being offered employment; fulfilling a recruitment need for the venue.
- 2 members of the Doncaster Community who otherwise would have been classed as NEET (not in education, employment or training) have now kickstarted their career. We will triple the number of placements in our next cohort.
- Our Harrison college placement template will be used as a blueprint for further partnerships within the local community.
- We have raised further awareness within our community about just how fantastic it is to work at our venue.

Hospitality Box

- Significant commercial impact to the racecourse via Hospitality box use
- Over **300 new business customers** welcomed through the Harrison College Hospitality Box to raise awareness of Doncaster Racecourse and the work of Harrison College
- Many **students gained work experience** by hosting hospitality within the Box
- **Autism in Racing** given access to this box as a Raceday sensory room at allocated racedays throughout the year widening participation in the sport.

Continued Partnership

- Our future cohort 2023/2024 is already planned and will expand to other departments within the company such as Administration, Sales and back of house kitchen areas.

Harrison College recognised in numerous local and regional awards.

A Win for Harrison College

On Friday 23rd June Harrison College was awarded the National SEND Awards Support into Employment award, hosted by Michael Morpurgo.

Harrison College Receives Certificate of Excellence for Impact Through Partnerships from National Teaching Awards

Doncaster college doing the business in education after winning two major awards

Harrison College becomes the latest organisation to become a patron of [Doncaster Chamber](#), a privileged position normally reserved for key companies.

Doncaster college joins business community at highest level



Supporting Information

I'm CW's mum and I just wanted to say a massive thank you to you and all of the team at Doncaster Racecourse and the Hilton.

*Having a child with special needs brings a lot of worry - how will they do at school, will they have friends, etc my most recent how will she get on in the world of working. Any anxiety I had has been proved wrong not only by CW but also your team and yourself, thank you for taking the opportunity to offer her this experience and for the **patience** and **kindness** everybody has shown her. Her **confidence** and **independence** has grown in recent months and **I'm a very proud mum.***

She's looking forward to continuing as working with you in the coming months where I'm sure she can keep on learning.

Many thanks to everyone.

CW's (Placement student's) Mum

*On the day that the two students arrived it was clear to me that they were really nervous, and the challenges that they had already faced were obvious. But **in no time at all they were part of our team** and making a huge difference in our workplace. I really do believe that the placement gave them **confidence beyond just their place of work** and gave them a boost to undertake new experiences. Organising the placements was challenging for us at first, we didn't know what to expect. But it's such a great feeling to know that I was part of the team that has supported the students into the workplace and now our racecourse is really seeing the benefit of those 2 great students. **I can't wait for the next cohort.***

Jess Beverley, Doncaster Racecourse, HR Officer

Two students were given internship opportunities. Both of these young people have autism and at mainstream school were given very little encouragement about the world of work and career paths that they could pursue. The employability skills that both young people developed during the placement have been invaluable and the support provided by the staff team has been excellent. Both students were offered roles at the Racecourse at the end of their placements. The partnership is continuing into the academic year 2023 – 2024 with a new cohort of interns joining the racecourse.

Gemma Peebles, Harrison College Principal and Chief Executive Officer



Taking a massive leap of faith in yourself and others is never easy. Yesterday was a big day for one of our students and with help from the @doncaster racecourse **Arena Racing Company** team, our student exceeded expectations. Whilst studying at the college, they have shown all the skills needed to work in hospitality and has now embarked on an internship with **Doncaster Racecourse and Exhibition Centre**. Working in the **Harrison College** hospitality box, the student will be hosting guests whilst in a safe and controlled environment. Special thanks go to **Jessica Beverley** who has again gone above and beyond to make this happen. If you wish to learn more about our autism friendly race course experience and **#AutismInRacing** please contact **Michael Peebles** on mpeebles@harrisoncollege.co.uk

