

Sean's story

Things about school I liked . . .

Learning some life skills for when you leave school. Yeah, like maths. Learning about different jobs and careers. It was a nice small school – it weren't too big. And it was not full of people. And it made you feel welcome. I was getting bullied at the last school I was at. They taught you how to cope with bullying and how to get through school.

Things about school that I didn't like . . .

That was good at the start but once you got older it got boring. The school was a bit easy. You was doing simple stuff, you weren't going on to higher education.

The building was nice, but it looked a bit old. Some chairs were getting uncomfortable. Some of the chairs were a bit low. The tables were a bit low some of the time.

I felt I couldn't really say anything to the teachers because I just thought that was just everyday at school.

Relationships at school . . .

You got on well with lots of people. Teachers were nice except the two I didn't like.

Problems at school . . .

I didn't really like having different teachers all the time because they taught in a different way and once you got learning something they'd change it slightly or say it in a different way. Because when our science teacher left, we had loads of different teachers in one year until we got two what stayed on for longer.

Making school/college better . . .

I'd have made more harder work, so it's not just more of the same stuff all the time. Like stuff you would do in primary school or the first year of secondary school.

I would have liked more things to do during break times. Because all we had was a climbing frame.

The move to college . . .

When we were at school, we had learnt about college beforehand, so we knew what we were going into. And everything was OK because you got grown up and college was just like a big place to learn in.

I felt good about that. Because you weren't always said to like a child, you were always treated like adults and the people who were teaching you the things to learn, we called them lecturers and by their first name instead of their maiden name.

Well, I was on a Context course. And I felt that was useful – learning life skills and learning how to cook and doing housework and you got cleaning and hoovering, your washing up. And I liked it because you did, like, woodwork and multiskills, sort of how you can look after a house if something went wrong, or how to do your own DIY and know how to do engineering and that.

Yeah, 'cos you could go away from the buildings, sit outside, and you've got the library, you've got a place to have your lunch. It was good. You could be with your friends. Yeah, you just relax outside there. There were loads of places to go. It was nice.

Adult life . . .

I didn't really decide what I wanted to do next 'cos I left halfway through my course because I felt that I'd learnt everything I needed doing.

Well I got to doing that through my social worker, my transitions social worker . . . and the college. And all with them they found a farm to work at. And I had always since I left college and through all the school holidays, and college holidays. So I did a big block of work experience.

I really liked it at the end of it and they said: 'You can carry on.' So I carried on until September, the start of college year, and then Connexions and the learning board got together and they paid me to be there to learn how to be a farmer. And then, through that, I got learning NVQ in horticulture as well.

Advice for others . . .

If you've got a problem, talk to the staff more.