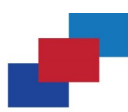




Adopt a School
Constructing Excellence
South West working with



**Southern
Construction
Framework**

CASE STUDY

ACORN BLUE



PROFILE

Company: Acorn Blue

School: Redruth School

Project: 'Opening eyes'; providing long term interactive support and access to construction organisations

Working closely with the school it was decided to take advantage of their curriculum enrichment week and introduce students from years 7, 8 and 9 to the wider opportunities within the construction industry.

Working with Beth Haslam, Assistant Head and Head of Maths, it was agreed the school would encourage both boys AND girls to voluntarily attend a one hour session held with each of the year groups.

The format was agreed in advance, namely; a brief presentation, followed by as much one to one dialogue as possible with small groups of students.

The presentation explained who Acorn Blue were, why we wished to adopt the school and what we hoped to offer the school in the future. It sought to dispel the perception, accepted by the students, that construction was all about muddy sites, bricklayers and relatively low status work. Instead it concentrated on 'opening eyes', included images of female architects, electricians, and plumbers, together with before and after photos of completed local projects and highlighting of iconic buildings from around the world.



David Stein from Acorn Blue on site with students from Redruth School

July 2018

- Launch & Site Visit
- 115 students
- Total Intervention hours 747.5
- 6.5 hours in School



Acorn Blue Site in Cornwall

At the end of the presentation a prepared hand-out identifying over 50 potential careers in the industry was handed to each student.

It immediately became clear that many of the potential career roles were entirely unrecognised, ranging from Glaziers and Surveyors to perhaps less surprisingly, Fire Engineering! In many instances the list provided a useful starting point for Acorn Blue employees, going around the classroom, to speak directly with small groups of students about their aspirations and how even if unexpectedly, these may be fulfilled through construction.

Typical examples included; pointing a student interested in Spanish, Photography and IT to consider looking at a well known local company that produces CGI's for the industry. Several students interested in materials and art expressed interest in Landscape Architecture once this was explained to them. Another, who was keen on photography and art, wanted to understand what Interior Design entailed, whilst a number of our staff highlighted opportunities for those interested in IT, to consider careers that involved the use of AutoCAD and BIM. More conventionally, some students already interested in specific industry roles, were encouraged to take up our offer to get them direct access to meet individuals already working in their sphere of interest.

To help reinforce the opportunities and make the industry more real, on the Friday, we had a follow up site visit for any students who attended the 3 sessions, who wished to attend. This proved very popular and Including 6 members of Year 11 who had been attending work experience with Contractors, 39 students attended. Students were split into 3 groups for the visit and those waiting were given a short fun quiz based around aspects of the site. The winner will be awarded a small prize.



Points to note:

Approximately one hour was spent with each year group over the 3 separate days with between 5 and 6 Acorn Blue staff attending each day. This proved very valuable since it enabled students to talk to people with differing skill sets and perspectives and enabled meaningful time to be spent with every student. We also ensured at least 2 female members from our team attended each session.

Future engagement: Subject to feedback it is hoped we will have a similar 'opening eyes' session with key members of the teaching staff. For students we are looking into how, with the school, we can use the 'live' site visit project to create exercises that students can relate aspects of the curriculum to. e.g. create a spreadsheet to show how a development appraisal is carried out.

Longer term, working with other 'Adopt a School' teams in Cornwall, we would like to explore the possibility of producing a data base of companies and individual traders, who are willing to give a few hours of their time to going into schools to provide career specific help

