

- **School/College/Business:** City Academy Norwich
- **Topic:** Breaking down stereotypes
- **Gatsby Benchmark(s):** 2, 3, 4 and 5

There have been numerous studies into the effects of stereotyping with young people and findings have found that the effects can have implications on not only career decisions but also future achievements. This is therefore something we are continually trying to break down.

During the Autumn Term, City Academy Norwich held a breaking stereotypes workshop with their year 7 students. Volunteers were invited to an extended assembly during which the students were asked to guess what their jobs were based purely on what they looked like; the volunteers were dressed in normal working attire with none in a uniform.

Following the initial assumptions, the volunteers gave a brief overview of some of the tasks associated with their role without disclosing their exact job. Students could then change their guesses based on this before the jobs were revealed. Students were surprised at some of the jobs, one volunteer for example was a young disabled female and many of the students thought that she worked in beauty therapy but were really surprised to find out that she was a Senior Lawyer. Adding another aspect to the workshop; all volunteers were from a local authority highlighting that one organisation can have many different jobs within it.

Volunteers then revealed their job, adjusting their job title if it didn't simply describe what they do. All the volunteers were from a local authority which added another aspect to the workshop, that one organisation can have lots of different jobs within it.

From the feedback on the day, it was clear that some of the students had made some stereotypical judgements purely based on looks. However, during the session they started to broaden their thinking and realised that what you look like, your gender, age or ethnicity does not have any implications on your future prospects.

Following the event one volunteer commented "I'm so grateful for opportunities like this to see young people so ready to be flexible and curious to challenge their biases. As our future workforce, I'm proud to see this is the direction in which we are headed!"

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