



Our story

"Empowering change and promoting inclusivity"



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1. Mission, vision and values

Mission

- To provide our service users with the same opportunities as their peers.
- To promote the valuable contributions people with learning disabilities can make if given the opportunity.
- To support our service users to live fulfilled lives and achieve their goals.
- To operate an initiative that is inclusive, for all communities and makes a genuine difference to people's lives.

Vision

To have an inclusive and integrated setting to allow people with learning disabilities to thrive. Enabling our service users to feel valued, comfortable and part of the wider community.

Values

- Inclusivity
- Positivity
- Equality
- Ability
- Kindness
- Compassion

2. Evidence base and the key principles of the Pinnies initiative

National research and how Pinnies is trying to improve the lives of Mencap service users and increase the opportunities available to them

National research by Mencap

1. People with learning disabilities have fewer chances to take part in leisure activities or socialise with their peers, and so many have fewer friends

Pinnies provides a safe space for our service users to socialise with their peers and feel part of their community. Something that most of us take for granted but for people with learning disabilities is not easy to find. Pinnies is the only business offering this kind of integrated facility for people with learning disabilities in the area.

The Pinnies initiative is overseen and run by Rica Scott who has more than 25 years experience and knowledge of supporting adults with learning disabilities. This makes the project unique in comparison to the alternative work based placements available to adults with learning disabilities. These placements are sadly difficult to find, even more so in a post pandemic working environment.

As well as Rica's extensive knowledge there are a number of permanent staff who are well established employees who through their work at Pinnies have a indepth understanding of the valuable contributions people with learning disabilities can make and how to support our service users to achieve their goals.

2. Being physically present in a community does not necessarily mean people with a learning disability feel integrated within their community or accepted by their peers. Social inclusion involves making meaningful connections and participation in fulfilling activities

Everyone is treated as equal in Pinnies. Our service users who visit are served by their peers alongside the Pinnies employees. Not only does this provide a familiar face but can act as inspiration for their own life goals. Externally it sends out a strong message of inclusion and accessibility for everyone. We know people with learning disabilities are massively underrepresented in the workplace and Pinnies is here to show that shouldn't be the case and is unacceptable. People visit Pinnies for great service, delicious food but also to contribute to the charity's fantastic work.

3. Evidence suggests that having more and better quality friendships is associated with better physical health and lower risk of early mortality

At Pinnies we are a family, every one of the team makes a valuable contribution to the business. We can see noticeable

positive change in our service users in terms of confidence, social skills, communication and physical skills. Equally those service users who visit the shop are comfortable and relaxed in the setting enjoying time with peers and the wider community. Friendships are formed within an integrated setting and our customers have a much better understanding of the incredible capabilities of people with a learning disability. As well as the valuable contributions they make in society, if given the opportunity.

(References : <https://www.mencap.org.uk/learning-disability-explained/research-and-statistics/friendships-research-and-statistics>)

3. Service user testimonials



Sam Bates

"I like coming here and do have fun when here.

"Yes it's changed me, I am more confident.

"I look forward to coming here."



Charlie

"I work at Pinnies because I like work. We are the best team the A team."

Carol

"I am made to feel comfortable and welcome here.

"I feel more confident. My support worker says she seen a difference in me. That I am more comfortable and chatty.

"I definitely look forward to coming."

Kirsty, Pinnies employee

"I started in Pinnies in 2013 with little experience of adults with learning disabilities. But for the last nine years they have taught me so much about life. All of our guys are truly amazing and I am touched by the way they all have so much to give in so many ways.

"My passion for what we do is something I feel so very strong about.

"Pinnies really is a treasure for all of our customers."

4. Customer reviews

3 March 2022

Dear Rica

PINNIES: GODMANCHESTER'S LOCAL TREASURE

Having visited you once again today, I thought it might be timely for me to record my appreciation to you and other members of Pinnies for all your efforts.

Before Pinnies burst onto the scene, there was a total dearth of local places where one could take a meal, or snack - or even grab a coffee 'on the go'. Pinnies has plugged that gap in no uncertain terms, and I know that I am not alone in appreciating what you all do.

Quite apart from the excellent quality of the food on offer (including some rather splendid cakes!) the level of service is always first class: the epitome of friendly efficiency. From my own personal point of view, Pinnies consistently exemplifies the sort of values that are sadly all too rare these days.

In addition to providing a welcoming meeting place for both individuals and groups, Pinnies also provides an opportunity for Mencap personnel to learn about the world of work, and to develop their own social skills. While I am reluctant to single out individuals, I must give a 'shout out' to Kirsty here, for her thoroughness and patience when mentoring Sam, Charlie and others who have passed through the doors.

Keep up the good work!



Reviewed 6 August 2018

A Fantastic Local Cafe supporting Mencap

This is just a great place to go. Always friendly, always great food and always great service. Kirsty and the team are fabulous with kids and the atmosphere in the cafe is lively and buzzing with local people. On top of all this, when you visit Pinnies you are supporting Mencap and all the fantastic work they do...win win!

●●●●○ Reviewed 12 February 2019

Plain, wholesome food freshly made

Staff are always friendly and welcoming. Food is wholesome and freshly made. A treat to eat here. Cakes are homemade and all meals are made from local produce. Pinnies is a charity run restaurant for people with both mental health problems and learning difficulties with all profits going back into the business. A great place to rest after a walk along the causeway, even their coffee is good.

●●●●● Reviewed 15 August 2019

Small cafe serving good food and drinks.

Pinnies is, I believe, operated in cooperation with Mencap and is a small storefront cafe close by the waterfront. Serving excellent snack type meals and excellent cakes, it is a good spot for brunch as well. Very friendly staff and good service.

●●●●● Reviewed 7 October 2019  via mobile

Great Little Find

Needed a break whilst travelling the A14, had my elderly Mum with us, so wanted something nice but easy. Pinnies was a great find, lots of choice for good quality fresh cooked food/drinks. Really well priced. Lovely staff. Street parking nearby. Then to top it all off its run for charity : Mencap. Win win. We would definitely come again next time in the area. PS also has WiFi

Show less

Dear Sir,

I live in Godmanchester, it is a lovely small town which has been made even better by having "Pines" where the friendliness, food & cleanliness enhance my days

It is lovely to see how the young people from MenCap gradually blossom, overtime they become more outgoing and confident.

all the ladies working there are kind and even though they are busy seem to find time to make one feel special.

Sincerely

Ruby Ward

5. Project lead statement - Rica Scott

I have worked for Huntingdon Mencap for 25 years. My own son has a learning disability, he struggled through school and then experienced many knock backs because employers only saw the learning disability label.

It took just one person to make a difference, who took the time to get to know what my son could offer and they gave him a chance. He has made a success of his life.

When we opened Pinnies we wanted to give people who are disadvantaged an opportunity to develop skills and be proud of their abilities. We never look at the label just the person in front of us. We take their base line skills and build from there.

It's been a privilege to see young people come for work experience with limited skills, little confidence and avoid social interaction, gradually build their skills become confident enough to speak to customers and eventually decide that they want to go to college or find work in the catering industry.

Over the last 10 years we have helped over 30 young people achieve academic qualifications in the catering industry.

Many have gone onto further education then catering college. Many are now in gainful employment. I feel this is something to be very proud of.