



Principal  
**Graham  
Razey**



Top character  
qualities developed

- Volunteering
- Critical thinking, reason and judgement
- Service
- Problem-solving
- Reflection

## East Kent College

REGION South East  
 TYPE FE College  
 STUDENTS 1900 pupils aged 14+

We began a student engagement strategy two years ago by setting aside two days for all staff and students to volunteer for local community organisations. It was such a success, and we received such brilliant feedback from the students and community, that **we forged ahead and made youth social action an integral part of all the full time students' study programmes.** Six weeks of the academic year are 'Progress Weeks' when students must work on social action projects. They get experience of project management and week by week they work on planning, fundraising, volunteering and how to celebrate the results.

**The College employs a Community Project Co-ordinator to assist the curriculum managers,** link with local organisations and support staff in organising activities and capturing feedback. They also liaise with local press to ensure the good work is publicised, which helps present a positive image of our young people.

Our projects have been many and varied. One group supported a Parkinson's exercise group by raising money to buy them new equipment. Other students worked through their half term

to re-vamp and re-decorate two large classrooms used by the local community. Hair-styling services were offered to residents of a local nursing home, while our learning difficulties and disabilities students spent a day making food so the local church could host a lunch for the homeless. In partnership with Broadstairs Town Team ('Brush Up Broadstairs'), Thanet District Council and Broadstairs Rotary Club, students cleaned up and repainted an area of the promenade, making an immediate impact on the local environment. Memorably, the students also hosted a wonderful 'murder mystery' evening at the school – they provided a two course meal, drinks and games while plucky staff acted out the play. All the money raised went towards the materials needed for a new outdoor stage at a junior school and our students built it themselves on volunteering days.

**Without question youth social action benefits not only the community but develops employability skills and supports work experience.**

Students are directed to treat their community partner like a client, who gives them a brief to work to and feeds back on their behaviour and professionalism.



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Fantastic project. Learnt a lot and brushed up on some skills and now feel more confident working in teams.

**Toby Allen, Catering Student**