



PARENT/CARER NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2025



Gyrfa Cymru
Careers Wales

For parents and carers of young people in mainstream education

Welcome

Welcome to our autumn newsletter for parents and carers. The first term of the academic year is always a busy and varied one for our education-based careers advisers. Young people in schools and colleges face a new start as they progress from one year group to the next and our advisers are there to support them to prepare for their next steps.

Our focus during the autumn term is to ensure that all those who have moved on from year 11 are settled in their chosen option of education or training and those who are still unsure have the help they need to find something to suit them. We may contact your child to check where they've progressed to as part of the destination survey work we carry out on behalf of Welsh Government. We will also be working with schools this term to ensure that a plan is in place to offer a guidance interview to all young people before they leave year 11.

In this edition of our parent/carer newsletter, you'll find some useful tips on how you too can support your child to plan their career and decide on their next steps. We share Isabelle's story on feeling confident about her career choices and how Rhys works with schools to bring the world of work to life for learners.

Year 9 subject options

If your child is in year 9, they will soon need to pick their subjects for year 10 and 11.

Choosing GCSE subjects can be an exciting opportunity to have a meaningful conversation with your child about their future aspirations, interests, and the subjects they'd enjoy studying.

While it may seem early to be making decisions that could influence their career path, these choices shape the options available to them later such as courses, qualifications, apprenticeships, A-Levels and university.

But don't worry, this process doesn't have to be overwhelming. Read our guide for choosing options:

[Year 8 and 9 subject options | Careers Wales \(gov. wales\)](#)

Find out more about the choices and decisions your child will make and how we support them:

[Your child in Years 7, 8 and 9 | Careers Wales](#)



Stop! Don't Drop

Get in touch so we can discuss your options

Has your child recently started college or sixth form and is now wondering if they've made the right decision?

They shouldn't rush into a decision they might later regret and it may help to pause and reflect on these three questions:

1. Why am I having doubts about the course?
2. What are my options?
3. Who can support me?

If your child is having doubts about their course, ask them to visit:

- [Thinking of leaving a course?](#)
- [Three key questions](#)



Top tips to support your child

1 Listen and be supportive

Find out more about why your child wants to leave college or sixth form. It might be due to a variety of reasons, and some could be easily resolved. Whatever the reason, you can get support from the college, school or from us at Careers Wales.

2 Share your own experiences

You can share your own experiences of education and employment. Share some insights into the reality of studying or working and that there are many positives from each situation.

3 Have a plan

Look at the other options available such as applying for an apprenticeship, applying for Jobs Growth Wales+, finding employment or work experience. It is best for your child to stay in school or college until their next step is in place

We can help

Our experienced advisers can:

- explore the options available with your child
- listen to their concerns and plan next steps
- offer you support, advice and guidance as parents and carers

Speak to a careers adviser

→ [Click here to book an appointment for your child to speak to an adviser on the phone, in-person or video call](#)

Year 11 Timeline

As parents of year 11 learners, you can expect the year ahead to bring both challenges and achievements as your child prepares for external exams and for leaving year 11. To help you stay informed, here's a timeline of key events to look out for during the year:



September

Back to school! Your child should now start thinking seriously about their career ideas and next steps. If they are thinking of apprenticeships, jobs or training, encourage them to speak to their school based careers adviser early in the academic year. Our careers advisers will start to invite year 11 learners to careers interviews from September. Encourage your child to attend their interview and ask them about what they discussed, what they found out and their next steps. If you have any questions, you can [contact us](#).

November

Year 11 mock exams start. Your child will need to start thinking about any applications they would like to submit for college courses, jobs, apprenticeships, or training. You can help them navigate the application process and help them prepare to complete any formal applications.

January / February / March

Major apprenticeships are advertised. Keep in touch with your careers adviser if your child is interested in applying for work, training or apprenticeships. Your child needs to confirm their options, but also consider back-up plans in case things don't work out.

October

Your child might get invited to **sixth form and college open evenings** from October. You can sign up to our vacancy bulletin which will give you some idea of the types of job vacancies advertised locally and nationally and search for jobs in Wales on our website.



[Vacancy Bulletin](#)

December

Look at the parents section of the **Careers Wales website** for more information on how to support your child.



[Parents](#)

April

The Working Wales team may be in contact with your child to offer support with **applications for jobs, training or apprenticeships**. Working Wales is part of Careers Wales.



[Working Wales](#)



May

GCSE Exams begin.



July

By this time, year 11s have left school and most will have applied for their chosen next step option. However, some will still be unsure and may need support. If your child hasn't made a decision about their next step, encourage them to contact their careers adviser. They may be offered an interview with their adviser or with Working Wales by telephone, video call or face-to-face in one of our centres. As a parent, you are also welcome to contact us to discuss your child's options or if you have any queries.



[Contact Us](#)



June

The last Friday in June is the official school leaving date, regardless of when your child turns 16. Young people cannot officially start an apprenticeship or training programme before this date. Our careers advisers may contact your child during the summer months to see if they need any support with planning or applying for their next step. This could be by text, e-mail or WhatsApp.

August

GCSE results.

Hopefully, your child's plans will have worked out and they will progress to their chosen next step. Some young people, however, may receive unexpected results or may have changed their minds. Careers advisers will be on-hand on results day either at school, at your local careers centre, or by phone. If you need to speak to an adviser on or around the results day, contact **0800 0284884** or book an appointment with an adviser here.



[Book an appointment](#)



New Decision Making Quiz

A new tool is now available on the Careers Wales website to help people, of all ages, make decisions about their future.

The Decision Making Quiz is quick and easy to use. It helps people learn about their decision-making style.

The quiz helps people become more aware of how they make choices. It also gives practical tips and shows different decision-making methods.

The quiz is particularly useful for:

- year 9 students choosing subjects.
- young people deciding on post-16 and post-18 options.
- those considering their next steps after exam results.
- career changers exploring new opportunities.
- individuals at risk of dropping out of further education

Making informed decisions about the future can be challenging, regardless of age or where you are in your career journey. The Decision Making Quiz is a simple yet effective tool that helps individuals reflect on how they approach choices and gain valuable techniques to make decisions with confidence.

Answer 6 questions to discover your decision-making style.  [Decision Making Quiz](#)

You and your child might also like:



Buzz Quiz

Personality Quiz. Find out your personality type and what jobs might suit you.



Future Jobs Wales

Explore Wales' regions and industries. Learn what jobs you could do, now and in the future.



Job Information

Find out what a job involves, what the pay is like, how to get in, future demand and more.



Career Match Quiz

Find out what jobs might be right for you and get career ideas.



How we can help your child

Real life stories

In Year 10, Isabelle from Cardiff wasn't sure what to do next. She felt anxious about sixth form and her post-16 options.

Isabelle said: "I wasn't really sure what A levels I should do, what sixth form would be best for me, or what I needed for uni."

That's when she met Nick, her school's careers adviser.

She said: "Nick came into our year group and explained the whole thing. If you didn't know what you wanted to do, you could go speak to him. It was really helpful."

One-to-one advice

In year 11, Isabelle began one-to-one sessions with Nick.

Isabelle said: "I had no idea what I should do after school. I felt so alone. But Nick made me realise I wasn't alone and that there were so many more options. He made me less anxious about leaving school."

Step by step, Nick helped Isabelle build her confidence.

She said: "He slowly started introducing the idea of sixth form to me. He made it all seem very easy and gentle. It was a lot less daunting."

"He went through all the different schools in our area and helped me decide which one would be the best fit. He showed me when open days were and stuff like that."

With Nick's help, Isabelle decided to study psychology, biology, history, and RE.

Feeling secure about the future

Isabelle feels much more positive about her future now. She hopes to do a psychology degree. She would like to work in a role that helps people and supports communities.

She said: "Nick helped me decide what's the best place for me, what grades I needed, and what I should do with my future."

"I feel a lot better about it now because I have support and I know where I can go. I feel a lot more secure in my future."



← Isabelle's Story

Careers support helped Isabelle feel less anxious and more confident about her future.

Advice for others

When asked what she would say to other young people who feel anxious about their future, Isabelle said:

"I'd just tell them to talk to Careers Wales and know they're not alone. There are so many things they can offer them support wise."

CWRE Curriculum Co-ordinator

A day in the life

I work with schools and colleges in Swansea, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion as a member of our curriculum team.

My role is to support teachers to deliver high-quality Careers and Work-Related Experiences (CWRE) as part of the Curriculum for Wales. We help them to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver an effective careers programme for learners.

I usually start my day around 8am by checking my schedule and preparing resources for the schools I'll be working with. Today, I'm visiting a secondary school who are participating in our Careers Wales Quality Award. I have arranged to meet with the careers leader, heads of areas and subject teachers to discuss how CWRE can be properly embedded across all areas of learning and experience.

I work with teachers to make sure that all learners get to understand the relevance of what they're studying to their future career. Teachers are also supported to broaden horizons, help learners to find out more about their interests, challenge traditional stereotypes, improve decision-making, develop skills and promote the value of Welsh language skills in the workplace.

Today's meeting with the careers leader focusses on understanding CWRE as a cross-cutting theme in the curriculum. We discuss the school's vision for CWRE, identify initial areas for improvement and complete a development plan. The careers leader is enthusiastic and wishes to involve staff, learners and parents/carers, whether that be in designing the careers programme or actively contributing to it.

During the rest of the morning, I support the heads of areas and individual subject teachers in planning authentic learning experiences that bring the curriculum to life and help learners understand how their skills and interests connect to real-world jobs. We discuss the use of careers in renewable energy as a context for learning in science, linking the topic of trigonometry to the world of work and how CWRE can be used as a context for learning in the new WJEC English Language and Literature GCSE.

After lunch, I run a training session for teachers. We talk about how delivering CWRE is now the responsibility of all staff, discuss career and labour market information



Rhys Davies

→ Job Title:

CWRE Curriculum Co-ordinator

→ Careers Centre:

Neath

→ Linked school or college:

All schools and colleges in Swansea, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion.

and explore the wide range of resources and support on offer from Careers Wales. Teachers leave with practical ideas and confidence to bring career-related learning into their classrooms.

I finish my day by updating our internal systems with notes from meetings and planning next steps with schools. I also respond to emails from schools and colleges who want support with CWRE development in my area.

Best part of my job:

The best part of my job is when a teacher tells me how a lesson sparked new interest and allowed learners to see the wider importance and relevance of a subject through appropriate links to the world of work.

I enjoy contributing to an approach that prioritises the 'why' of learning and supports education professionals to develop richer learning experiences.

→ [Learn more about our work in supporting the curriculum.](#)

Upcoming Events

Skills Cymru, the largest careers and skills event in Wales, will be returning to Cardiff in November 2025.

The event promises to bring together over 60 national and local employers, universities, colleges and training providers.

Organised by NAS Media and supported by Careers Wales, Skills Cymru is a free, two-day event for young people.

Parents and carers are invited to attend with their child between 3:30pm and 6pm on Tuesday 26 November.



All upcoming events, from across Wales, where our careers advisers will be on hand to share advice and guidance, can be found on our websites:



[Careers Wales events](#)



[Working Wales events](#)



Cymru'n Gweithio Working Wales

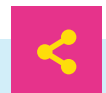
Our Working Wales service supports anyone aged 16+ to find a job or access opportunities to upskill through courses and training.

The service is tailored to each individual's personal circumstances - whether they are a school leaver, facing redundancy, have recently been made redundant, or are looking to change careers. We also support anyone wanting to upskill, build confidence, create a CV, develop interview skills or overcome barriers to work.

You can access free support from Working Wales at a Careers Wales centre, our outreach venues, over the phone or digitally. [Find out more](#) or [book an appointment](#).



www.workingwales.gov.wales



We hope that you have enjoyed reading this newsletter. If you would like to share your feedback on our work with parents, please complete our



[parents questionnaire](#)

Contact us:



You can contact a careers adviser at school or by phoning **0800 028 4844**



We have a Wales-wide live chat facility available via www.careerswales.gov.wales



Drop into one of our [careers centres](#)



Email post@careerswales.gov.wales

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