



PARENT/CARER NEWSLETTER

Spring 2025



Gyrfa Cymru
Careers Wales

For parents and carers of young people with additional learning needs

Welcome

Welcome to the spring newsletter for parents and carers of young people with additional needs. In this edition we share some top tips for any learners leaving education this summer. You'll also hear from Alison and Macie as they share their story, showing how our advisers support learners in schools. Additionally, we're pleased to share news about our latest events, the Valued Partner Awards for employers, What Next? careers events for year 10 and 11 pupils and the Celebrating Neurodivergence careers fair in Cardiff for those aged 16 and above.



Parent Voice

Careers Wales are eager to hear feedback about our services from parents and carers across Wales. Your opinions and preferences can help us improve and plan our services.

Would you be willing to share your feedback with us? If so, please e-mail parents@careerswales.gov.wales by 25 April 2025.



Top Tips

Is your child finishing school this year and moving on to college, work, or training? Our careers advisers have put together some top tips to help with the transition.

Transport

- Plan how your child will travel, be it to college, work or training.
- Check travel times before the first day.
- If your child is travelling independently, why not have a practice run.

Reviews

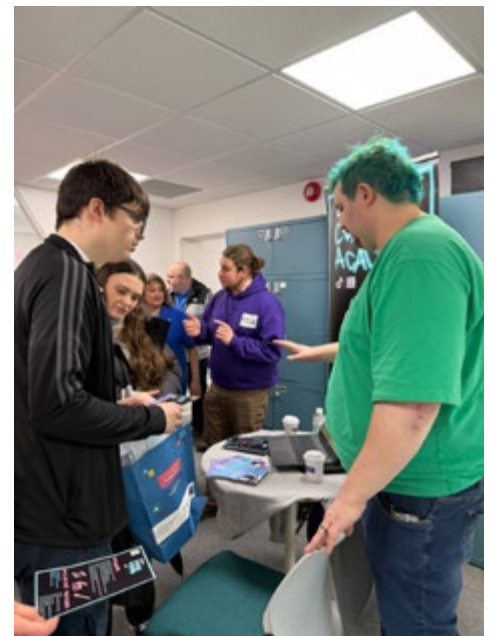
- Attend the Individual Development Plan review in the final year to ask any questions.
- Share what you think is working well and what isn't working so well.

Options

- Attend any open events to find out as much as possible. If there is more than one option, research them all to compare what's on offer.
- Don't forget to apply in good time as college courses can get full early and colleges may offer transition days while your child is still in school.
- Give yourself plenty of time to look at what's available.
- If your child is going to college, make sure the college has a copy of their Individual Development Plan or Learning and Skills Plan.

Support

- Make sure everyone who works with your child is aware of their intended next steps.
- Visit our [website](#) for advice for all ages.
- Talk to social services about adult services.
- Don't forget that the careers adviser, social worker, college transition worker are all there to help and answer questions.



Supporting you and your child

Careers Wales are here to support you and your child to make the right decision about their future.

Our careers advisers can:

- ➔ give impartial careers information, guidance and coaching.
- ➔ help your child understand their strengths and reach their potential.
- ➔ share information about various options, including work and further learning.
- ➔ help your child set short-term and long-term goals related to their future options.
- ➔ support your child if they face setbacks and challenges.



The new Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act (ALNET) means that young people with Additional Learning Needs, who need additional learning provision, will have an Individual Development Plan (IDP) rather than a Statement of Special Education Needs or an Individual Education Plan. By September 2025, the Act will cover all age groups in school.

If your child has an Individual Development Plan (IDP) their careers adviser may be invited to their annual review to discuss the transition from school. The careers adviser can provide information and advice about post school options. Additionally, they can signpost you to other agencies that can provide support to you and your child as they move on from school.

To support your child, we can:

- ➔ meet with them to talk about their ideas for the future.
- ➔ meet with you to discuss options.
- ➔ attend reviews when invited, especially during their final year at school.
- ➔ negotiate or advocate on your child's behalf if needed.



Alison and Macie's story

Real life stories

Careers advisers work with all schools in Wales to support learners with careers information, advice and guidance.

Alison Peel is a careers adviser based in north Wales who has supported young people with additional learning needs in schools and colleges for the past 13 years. The support she provides is tailored to each learner.

Alison shares how she has supported Macie Marsh, a year 14 pupil at Ysgol y Gogarth, who has additional learning needs and is leaving school this summer.



→ A package of support

"I first met Macie in 2019, when she was in year 9. Macie attended her first careers interview with me where we started to chat about what she might want to do in the future. Macie showed an interest in working in the school café and hairdressing.

"I met Macie again several times when in year 10 and 11 during group workshops. My workshops looked at skills, interests, interview techniques and decision-making skills.

"I sat down with Macie again to have a careers interview in year 12. I listened to her and asked questions, supporting her with her ideas. By year 12, Macie started to show an interest in being a classroom assistant. My role was to ensure that she was making the right decisions and create a next steps plan.

"I have attended many of Macie's annual reviews at Ysgol y Gogarth between years 9 and 14. The annual review is important to ensure that Macie is getting the support she needs and making progress to help plan for the future.

"Learners need to get a flavour of the world of work to make choices about their careers. We've organised for employers to visit the school and visits to different workplaces. We have run mock interview sessions with employers in school which Macie has enjoyed. She also attended our 'What Next?' careers events.

"I'm so happy to see that Macie is already gaining work experience as a classroom assistant, supporting young learners at Ysgol y Gogarth. Macie will leave school this summer and has successfully gained a place at Coleg Llandrillo on the Skills for Life and Work course and she also plans on doing some volunteering. I have enjoyed supporting Macie and wish her the very best in reaching her goals."

→ Looking forward

Macie adds "I have enjoyed speaking to Alison, she has helped me to understand my options and make a plan. She has always been there to help me, my mum and my teachers. At first I thought I wanted to be a hairdresser, but I like children and I'm really enjoying my work experience as a classroom assistant.

"Alison has always been there to listen to me and help me make choices about my future. She has made me feel much happier."

Working with employers

Valued Partner Awards

The Valued Partner Awards is a way for Careers Wales to recognise and thank the businesses that work with us.

Every year, we celebrate the work employers have done to help schools and young people to engage with the world of work,

Partnership between businesses and schools provide young people with inspiration and motivation. Valuable work-related knowledge and experiences help young people link what they learn in school and the world of work.

The 2025 awards took place in January at the Senedd. 36 nominated businesses attended. Nine winners were announced on the day by our host, journalist Sian Lloyd.

Jack Sargeant, Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership attended and said:

"This recognition highlights the dedication and impact Welsh businesses have in shaping the futures of young people.

"Congratulations to all winners and nominees for their commitment to empowering the next generation with skills, confidence and invaluable career experiences. Your efforts are inspiring!"

You can read more about the awards and the winners on the Valued Partner Awards page on our website.



[Valued Partner Awards](#)

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Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership



What Next?

Choose Your Future event

Careers Wales recently hosted a 'What Next? Choose Your Future' event in Carmarthen, giving young people with additional learning needs the opportunity to explore future career options.

The event welcomed year 10 and 11 pupils from special schools across Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, and Powys. Over 150 learners were in attendance to explore their future careers.

10 organisations from a range of sectors supported the event. They offered information on jobs, careers, apprenticeships, training, and educational routes.

Learners took part in interactive workshops, enjoyed hands-on activities to learn about different jobs and were able to connect with potential employers. Careers advisers were also available to provide impartial advice and guidance on courses, qualifications, and career pathways.

Leanne McFarland, regional care career connector at WeCare Wales, said: "It's great to have these events organised by Careers Wales as they give a chance for all students to see what career opportunities are available to them, and what different options they have got after school."

James Harper, social impact manager at Principality, said: "It's great to be in Carmarthen today. It's fantastic meeting so many young people and we are working hard to raise awareness about careers in financial services across Wales."

Hannah Stephens, a Careers Wales business engagement adviser, said: "This event is all about creating an inclusive environment where young people with additional learning needs can connect directly with employers and training providers."

"As well as helping with their confidence and motivation, the information and encouragement they receive will help them to identify opportunities and make informed choices about their future careers."

What Next? events will also be held in Port Talbot and Merthyr Tydfil. Event details can be found on our website.



careerswales.gov.wales/events



Celebrating neurodivergence

Over 300 people recently attended our first jobs fair for neurodivergent jobseekers at our careers centre in Cardiff.

The event was organised in response to many neurodivergent customers sharing concerns about finding accommodating employers.

Working Wales, who organised the event, is delivered by Careers Wales and funded by the Welsh Government to provide careers guidance and employability support to those aged 16 and above.

Specifically designed for neurodivergent individuals, including those yet to be diagnosed, the fair enabled attendees to explore employment opportunities in an accessible and supportive environment.

Ten inclusive employers, including HMRC, BBC Wales, Barnardo's, Transport for Wales, the NHS, and Cyber Innovation Hub, attended the event to offer a range of career opportunities.

Attendees praised the event for being welcoming, inclusive, and tailored to their needs.

One participant said: "Looking for work when neurodivergent is daunting, so the fact there is an inclusive jobs fair is amazing."

Another attendee said: "I hope that there are more events like this."

Careers advisers were on hand throughout the event to offer personalised employability support.

Mike Keohane, Team Manager at Careers Wales, said: "We recognised a real need for an event like this. We wanted to do something for neurodivergent jobseekers where they could explore career opportunities with employers who understand and value their skills. Seeing so many attendees engage positively with employers and support organisations was fantastic, and we're thrilled with the feedback."

"Given the event's overwhelming success, we are looking forward to hosting more inclusive jobs fairs in the future."

All Working Wales events can be found here.



workingwales.gov.wales/events



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Participant of event

Book an appointment

Did you know we support adults too? Our Working Wales service provides a wide range of support including accessing training, upskilling, funding, and help with CV writing and interview techniques.

**Cymru'n Gweithio
Working Wales**



[You can book an appointment with a careers adviser here](#)

Working Wales offers free and impartial careers advice and guidance if you are aged 16 or above.

Visit our website to discover the range of ways that we can support you in your next steps:



[Work advice](#)



[Apprenticeships](#)



[Job Bulletin](#)



[School leavers](#)



[Redundancy support](#)



[Young Person's Guarantee](#)



www.workingwales.gov.wales



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](#)



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