



PARENT/CARER NEWSLETTER

Spring 2026



Gyrfa Cymru
Careers Wales

For parents and carers of young people in mainstream education

Welcome

We're delighted to bring you the spring 2026 edition of our Parent/Carer Newsletter, created especially for parents and carers of young people in mainstream education. In this issue, you'll find helpful updates, useful resources, and ideas designed to support you and your child's journey through the secondary years and beyond.

Whether your child is preparing for key decisions in years 9 to 12, considering options after leaving education, or looking at apprenticeships, we hope this newsletter provides inspiration and practical advice for you both.



Parent Voice

Thank you to all the parents and carers who took the time to complete our parent questionnaire. Your feedback is invaluable and will help shape how we develop and enhance our services in the future. Here's a snapshot of what you told us:



→ **Most respondents are parents and carers of learners in years 7-11.**

→ **The services you're most interested in include:**

- the termly parent/carer newsletter.
- help to support your child to make career decisions.
- help to understand how different subjects relate to different jobs.
- understanding more about future jobs.

→ **All parents and carers expressed an interest in taking part in further consultation activities.**

→ **Feedback on the services received from Careers Wales was overwhelmingly positive.**

We are committed to using your feedback to ensure our services truly meet the needs of both young people and their parents and carers. Your views matter to us, and we always welcome further contributions. The survey remains open, so if you haven't yet taken part - or have more to share - you can find it [here](#).

Parents - there's part of our website just for you

Parents and carers play a key role in supporting children to make learning and career decisions. Our website can help you - whatever stage your child is at. You will find ideas, information, and tools to support children at all stages - from primary school right through to when they're looking for a job.



Primary

Get ideas and resources to explore the world of work with younger children.



Years 7 to 9

Find out more about making options choices.



Years 10 and 11

Get information about possibilities after year 11 and find out how we support your child too.



College & 6th Form

Discover ways to support your child as they decide what to do next.

Other stages and contexts

We also have information for parents of children:

- [Who have left school or college](#)
- [With additional learning needs](#)
- [Who are educated at home](#)

Exploring career ideas

Whatever their age or situation, chatting with your child about subjects they're studying, or jobs that are out there plays an important part in helping them to think about their future.

It helps them to explore and consider ideas and be better prepared to make decisions.

Talking together also helps you both understand their current thinking and possible next steps.

We have different conversation starters to help you depending on whether your child has:



You'll also find tips for positive conversations and an overview of our tools and quizzes and how you could use them with your child.

Other things you'll find in our 'Parents' section

Information about:

- [What a careers adviser does, the support we offer and details we hold](#)
- [Work experience](#)
- [The curriculum and qualifications](#)
- [Careers routes and pathways](#)
- [Funding options for courses in Wales](#)

And tips to:

- [Help you support your child to make good career decisions](#)
- [Use information about the job market to support career decisions at different stages](#)
- [Prepare for results day](#)

Share your thoughts

We'd love to hear what you think about the content for parents on our website.

This very short [survey](#) will help us understand your needs and make improvements.

Career Planning

Year 9

Year 9 is a pivotal stage for learners as they begin to consider their GCSE subject options. Encourage your child to think about their interests, strengths, and any career ideas they might already have. Having open conversations at home can help them feel more confident when making choices that will shape their future studies and opportunities. Have a look at our [video](#) to support parents with their child's options:



Year 10

Year 10 is a good time to look to the future and begin preparing for what comes next. Support your child with finding their work experience placement or take up a part-time job, as this gives valuable insight into the realities of working life and may inspire them towards a particular career or industry. Your child's effort and commitment to their GCSE studies will help pave the way for further education, apprenticeships, or employment opportunities. Balancing schoolwork with hands-on experience can really strengthen their confidence and broaden their horizons.

Ready for the World of Work?

Your child might be preparing to leave education this summer. Wondering what comes next? We're here to support you both on the journey to employment. Our expert advisers can:

- help your child weigh up their options - whether that's an apprenticeship, further training, starting a business, or stepping straight into the world of work.
- provide guidance on writing a CV that details their strengths and potential and give tips for interviews and applications.
- share live job vacancies via our [Job Bulletin](#) so your child can start the next chapter with their best foot forward.

Year 11

As your child enters year 11, they will begin making informed decisions about their next steps. By now, they should have sat down with a careers adviser for a one-to-one careers interview. This isn't just another school meeting - it's a chance for your child to share their aspirations, explore opportunities, and hear from a qualified expert about future job markets and emerging industries. Why not have a chat with your child about what was discussed and help them act on any recommendations from the meeting.

Year 12

Year 12 marks the beginning of exciting possibilities. Now is the ideal time for your child to start thinking seriously about their future. The summer term brings a flurry of university open days - perfect for prospective students to soak up the campus atmosphere and gather crucial information. This is also a good time to dive into research on student finance, so you're ready for what lies ahead.



Higher Education Guide

Supporting your child with university applications

Deciding whether to go to university is an exciting milestone, but it can also feel overwhelming - for both young people and their families. As a careers adviser, I often hear parents say they want to help but aren't sure where to start. My short guide brings together trusted sources of information alongside practical tips to help you feel confident supporting your child through the process.

1 Exploring Options: Where to Begin?

A great first step is simply exploring what's out there. There are thousands of courses across the UK, from highly academic pathways to creative, technical and vocational degrees. Encourage your child to keep an open mind and compare a few different options.

Useful websites for research:

- [UCAS Course Search](#) - the main place to explore all university courses.
- [UCAS Parents and Guardians Hub](#) - clear guidance, timelines, and videos designed specifically for families.
- [Discover Uni](#) - official government data on student satisfaction, teaching quality and graduate outcomes.
- [Uni Guide & WhatUni](#) - student reviews, course breakdowns and university comparisons: <https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/> and <https://www.whatuni.com/>
- [Prospects](#) - helpful if your young person is unsure where a particular subject might lead.

When comparing courses, look beyond the title. Two degrees with the same name can have very different modules, teaching methods or placement opportunities.

2 Open Days: What to Expect

Open days give students a real sense of whether a course or university "feels right."



Rebecca Williams-French

→ Job Title:

Careers Adviser

→ Linked school or college:

Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy, Llanrwst

When to go?

Summer and early autumn for first visits; autumn and spring for full open-day programmes and offer holder-days.

What happens?

Talks, tours, accommodation visits, and opportunities to meet staff and students. Virtual tours are also widely available.

Parent tip:

Encourage your child to prepare questions - about teaching hours, placements, support and costs.

3 The UCAS Application Process

Most students apply for up to five courses through UCAS.

Key deadlines:

- **October** - Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary
- **January** - Main deadline for most other courses

Schools and colleges often set earlier internal deadlines, so keep an eye out for these.

4 Writing a Strong Personal Statement

The personal statement is your child's chance to show their enthusiasm for the subject. It doesn't need to be perfect first time - drafting and reflection are important. Encourage your child to:

- Explain why they want to study the subject.
- Demonstrate interest through wider reading, projects, volunteering or relevant experiences.
- Reflect on skills gained inside and outside of school or college.
- End with what they hope to achieve or explore further.

Parents can support by talking through ideas, asking questions and helping them stay organised, but it's important the writing remains their own.

Money Matters

For Welsh students, information on tuition fees, maintenance loans and grants comes from [Student Finance Wales](#). Repayments are income based and only begin once the graduate earns over the repayment threshold.

Universities also offer bursaries and scholarships, so it's worth exploring these early.

My final thought

Your support - listening, encouraging and helping them stay organised, plays an important role. Whether they choose university, a degree apprenticeship or another route entirely, there are many ways to move forward after school or college.

I wish you and your child every success in whatever path they choose. May the next steps bring new opportunities, challenges and achievements. Good luck!



Apprenticeships

Is your child thinking of an apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships are a great way to gain qualifications whilst working and earning a wage.

There are four different types of apprenticeships, each offering different levels:

1. Foundation apprenticeship
2. Apprenticeship
3. Higher level apprenticeship
4. Degree apprenticeship

For more information on the apprenticeship levels visit:



[Apprenticeship levels explained | Careers Wales](#)



How to find an apprenticeship?

There are many ways to find apprenticeship vacancies, including:

- Visit our [Apprenticeship Search tool](#)
- Research [employers who offer apprenticeships](#)
- Visit employer websites directly
- Use [Online job websites](#) to help with your search
- Attend employer events and open days. Some employers will hold their own recruitment open days.

For more information on the apprenticeship levels visit:

To apply for an apprenticeship, your child will need:

- a [well-written CV](#) and [application](#).
- the instructions and information about the apprenticeship application process.
- a [covering email or covering letter](#).
- to prepare for interviews and assessments.

Our careers advisers can support your child when applying for apprenticeships.

How we can help your child

Real life stories

First conversations

Daniel first came across Careers Wales in Year 9. "I wasn't quite sure what to do, as there were multiple options where I wanted to go," he explained.

Daniel had subject choices to make, and so he attended one of the careers events at school. It was here that he first spoke to a careers adviser.

"It was just a nice chat about where I wanted to go and nothing was pushed. They helped me realise I had more options than I'd realised," he said.

Building confidence

As Daniel moved into his GCSE years, he started to meet regularly with Rhys Roberts, the new careers adviser based at his school. Their sessions focused on early career ideas.

"We would mainly chat about the importance of revision and look at possible careers out there. We talked about falling on a backup plan when needed. It made my confidence a lot better because I knew there were different careers out there and different ways of going around things."

Daniel already had a rough plan in mind to do something in IT. But the guidance he received helped him think more realistically about his next steps.

Rethinking the future

By the time he was studying for his A levels, Daniel began to reconsider his original plan of going to university. Through more conversations with Rhys, he explored whether university, an apprenticeship, or college would suit him best.

"Originally I thought I was going to go to university, but I realised that probably wasn't in my best interest," he said. "I prefer the more hands on sort of feel of work. I'd rather just get in there and do it."

Together, they looked at a range of apprenticeships, discussing the pros and cons of each one.

During Year 12, Daniel also arranged his own work



← Daniel's story

With tailored careers guidance, Daniel explored his options, built his confidence, and secured the hands on apprenticeship he'd been aiming for.

experience with the council's IT department. This gave him a real insight into the workplace.

An opportunity then came up with Carmarthenshire County Council for an apprenticeship in IT. Knowing that Daniel had enjoyed his work experience there, Rhys forwarded an email about the opportunity straight to him. He also supported him through the application process.

Achieving his goal

When Daniel was offered the apprenticeship, he said it felt like everything had come together. "It felt amazing. It felt like the hard work had paid off." He is now completing an IT apprenticeship with Carmarthenshire County Council where he can earn while he learns and is enjoying every moment. "I find it really good and it's a nice environment," he shared. Looking back, Daniel says the support he received made a huge difference to his confidence and communication skills. It also encouraged him to keep going, even when things felt uncertain. His advice to other young people thinking about speaking to a careers adviser is simple: "I'd tell them to go and to never give up."

Employers Supporting Schools

As part of our commitment to preparing pupils for the world of work, we are delighted to share some recent activities made possible through our education business partnership. These experiences enable learners to connect with local employers and gain valuable insights into a range of industries. Here's a snapshot of recent activities across Wales:



Employer: The Potting Shed

Year 9 Food and Nutrition pupils from Fitzalan High School in Cardiff enjoyed an inspiring site visit to The Potting Shed Cafe. During their time there, they discovered what it takes to work in catering, learned about growing food, watched live cooking demonstrations, and even took part in hands-on coffee and hot chocolate workshops.



Employer: DVLA

Year 9 pupils from Morryston Comprehensive in Swansea had the opportunity to explore a range of exciting careers at the DVLA. The visit included sessions on ethical hacking, cyber security, Artificial Intelligence, and software development, showcasing the breadth of modern job roles in technology.



Employers: Wall Lag, Airbus, ClwydAlyn Housing, Mentera, and Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board

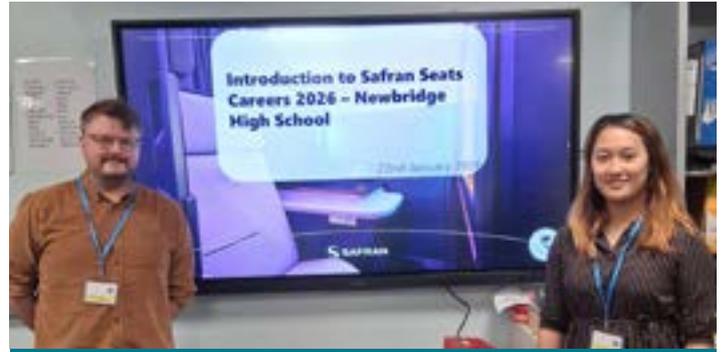
Year 8 learners at St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School in Flint took part in a skills day. This event was packed with interactive sessions designed to show the six areas of learning, which are Expressive Arts, Health and Wellbeing, Humanities, Language, Literacy and Communication, Mathematics and Numeracy and Science and Technology link directly to future career paths and the world of work.



Employer: Severn Screen and Into Film

At a recent careers fair, parents and learners from Monmouth Comprehensive School learned about a variety of job roles and the importance of sustainability within the creative arts industry. These engaging, real-world experiences have a genuine impact on learners. They help to bring classroom learning to life and inspire learners to work towards their goals with renewed motivation and confidence. You can learn more about employers supporting schools here:

[Working with schools | Careers Wales](#)



Employer: Safran Seats

Safran Seats recently visited Newbridge School, where they delivered an informative presentation to Year 11 BTEC engineering students. The session provided valuable insights into careers in engineering, highlighting the qualifications and skills needed to succeed in the sector.



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.

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

 [All our Working Wales events can be found here.](#)

**Cymru'n Gweithio
Working Wales**

Contact us



Gyrfa Cymru
Careers Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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

 Email post@careerswales.gov.wales

 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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