



PARENT/CARER NEWSLETTER

Summer 2025



Gyrfa Cymru
Careers Wales

For parents and carers of young people with additional learning needs

Welcome

Welcome to the summer newsletter for parents and carers of young people with additional needs. In this edition we share some useful information to help you support your child if leaving education this summer. You'll hear from Alison Alford who shares her average day as a careers adviser at Canolfan Addysg y Bont in Llangefni. You'll also hear about the excellent opportunities given to pupils at Woodlands School in Cardiff to develop their understanding of the world of work through our work with employers. We hope you find our summer newsletter helpful when supporting your child with their next steps.

Our achievements

We are proud of our achievements in delivering services to young people with additional learning needs in schools. Between April 2024 and March 2025:



1,310

pupils attended careers
interviews



3,018

parents contacted us for
support



383

pupils took part in careers
group sessions



1,337

pupils attended activities
with employers

Parent Voice

In our spring newsletter we asked parents who were happy to share their feedback and opinions on our services to get in touch by e-mailing parents@careerswales.gov.wales. Thank you to all those parents who got in touch. A consultation survey has now been shared with you.

We would like as many parents as possible to complete the survey (which should take about 5 minutes to complete). Click on the link below to complete the survey:



[Parents Consultation Survey](#)

Thank you!



Careers Adviser

A day in the life

Walking into Canolfan Addysg y Bont is always a highlight of my week. I'm greeted with smiles, warmth and familiar faces. Pupils call my name when they see me arrive and ask who I'm there to see.

Over the years, I've come to know many of the young people well through my role as an ALN careers adviser, and each visit reminds me just how meaningful and rewarding my work truly is.

8:45am - Arrive at school

I arrive at reception and sign myself into school and meet with the class teacher to discuss the pupils' availability and schedule careers interviews for the day. Once the pupils return from assembly, we greet each other, and I spend around 10 minutes observing the morning routine. Each learner shares how they're feeling and what they had for tea the night before - a lovely ritual that I often join in with (though their meals usually make me a bit envious!). It's a relaxed, informal way to ease into the day and helps set a positive tone for learning.

9:15 am - Careers interviews

I start a series of 30 to 45-minute careers interviews. Due to the diverse additional learning needs of the pupils, some may find it challenging to focus or communicate for extended periods. To support them I often adapt my approach. For example, we might play a game like Jenga, where the pupil answers a question each time a block is removed, or use playing cards to prompt discussion. Another useful tool is the Talking Mat where pupils place pictures on a mat to show what they enjoy (next to the smiley face) and what they dislike (next to the sad face). These interactive methods help create a relaxed environment, encouraging honest communication. They allow me to explore their interests, preferences, and passions; all important clues in identifying potential career pathways.

12:00 pm - Lunch and parent calls

I go outside for a bit of fresh air, then return to enjoy a cup of tea with any teachers who aren't on duty



Alison Alford



Job: Careers Adviser

I work within Careers Wales' services to young people department, specifically supporting learners with additional learning needs.



Careers Centre:

Bangor or Holyhead



Linked school or college:

I work with young people at Canolfan Addysg y Bont and the Independent Living Skills Department at Grwp Llandrillo Menai in Llangefni.

at the time. I take the opportunity to catch up on emails and make calls to parents who are concerned about their child's future plans. These parents seek guidance on their child's options and I make sure to provide them with the support they need.

1:30 pm - Review meeting

The afternoon begins with a "Best Interests Review" for a school leaver with profound learning needs. This meeting, although held at the school, is led by social services to determine the best course of action for a pupil who is considered unable to make decisions about his future plans. It takes place in the school's meeting room and includes social services representatives, the assistant head of the school and the pupil's parent.

We know that a local FE college isn't a viable option due to the student's needs, so we explore alternatives such as specialist college provision and day care services. After evaluating the pros and cons, the decision is made that attending a specialist college would best support the pupil's independence and learning. We agree on the next steps, including sharing the meeting minutes by the end of the week with the Welsh Government to explore potential funding for the specialist college option.

3:00 pm – Paperwork and follow-ups

When the pupils finish for the day I document the day's activities, including details from the careers interviews, lunchtime parent calls and the review meeting. I also make a note of any pupils who may need further guidance and schedule follow-up appointments in my diary. I will get in touch with

parents to update them on next steps, such as attending college open evenings or reminding them about upcoming careers events.

Best part of my job:

The best part of being an ALN careers adviser is helping young people discover what they enjoy, what they're good at, and what they might want to do in the future—no matter their challenges. It's about building trust, boosting confidence, and making sure they feel supported and understood as they take their next steps.

Seeing their pride and what they can achieve is incredibly rewarding.



'What next?' postcard

Careers advisers will support learners in group sessions and careers interviews and may agree on a list of next steps with your child. Next steps could be to look at the My Future section on our website, complete the quizzes and look at what skills they have.

Your child will hopefully bring the 'What next?' postcard home to show you, along with the contact detail of the adviser for any further support.

Employer support for schools

My name is Adrian Cole and I'm a business engagement adviser in Cardiff. My role is to bring schools and businesses together to enhance the careers and work-related experiences (CWRE) programme in schools.

One of the schools I support is Woodlands School in Cardiff. I work closely with staff at the school to identify opportunities to increase learners' understanding of the world of work and develop their skills. Employer engagement activities can vary from site visits to workshops and mock interviews.

Here's a snippet of the employer engagement activities I've organised for 15-19 years old pupils at Woodlands School so far, this academic year:



← **Adrian Cole**

Autumn Term

Welcome Break

Staff at Welcome Break welcomed a group of learners for a careers tour of Burger King, KFC, WHSmith, Waitrose and Starbucks. Pupils learned about different jobs within each business at the site.

Network Rail

Pupils spent time at the Network Rail office to develop their interview skills. Staff gave 1-2-1 interviews and provided positive verbal and written feedback for each pupil. A wonderful, positive experience for all.



Welcome Break



Network Rail

Spring Term

Galliford Try

Thank you to the team at Galliford Try for giving the pupils a very informative tour of their site in Cardiff. Pupils wore hard hats and high vis vests and were guided to the top of the building, hearing about the various jobs with the construction industry and company.

Asda

Pupils visited the Asda store in Cardiff Bay in March. Asda staff were on hand to talk about their job roles and the pupils had an opportunity to pick customer orders, price goods, serve customers and use the tills. They had a brilliant day!



Galliford Try

Storey Arms

A group of pupils visited the Storey Arms to learn about the job roles on the site. Pupils picked clothing, footwear and equipment for a primary school group, had a career tour of the facilities and cooked food for visitors in the kitchens.

Summer Term

Pizza Hut

I've organised for a group to visit Pizza Hut in Cardiff during the summer term. Pupils will learn about jobs within the company and the hospitality industry and have a pizza box building competition. For lunch, they'll make their own 12" pizza!

Bute Park

Bute Park and Arboretum are another supportive employer who will welcome a group of learners in June to learn about horticulture and the types of jobs available at the park.

Potting Shed Café at Insole Court

A group of learners currently being taught at school about job roles in a café will visit the Potting Shed Café at Insole Court. They will be trained to use the coffee making equipment and complete work tasks in the kitchen and café areas.



Asda



Storey Arms

"The Careers Wales workshops have had a transformative impact on our pupils aged 14-19, providing them with invaluable insights into various career paths and industries.

"Through hands-on experiences at renowned establishments such as Asda, Pizza Hut, Galliford Try, Bute Park Nurseries, Storey Arms Outdoor Education Centre, and Welcome Break Services, our students have gained practical knowledge and skills that extend beyond the classroom.

"These workshops have not only broadened their understanding of potential career opportunities but also ignited a passion for learning and personal growth.

"At each location, pupils were able to engage directly with professionals, observe day-to-day operations, and participate in activities that mirror real-world job scenarios. For instance, at Galliford Try Construction, students learned about the intricacies

of building projects, while at Bute Park Nurseries, they explored the importance of horticulture and environmental stewardship.

"These immersive experiences have equipped our students with a clearer vision of their future aspirations and the confidence to pursue them. The positive feedback from both pupils and facilitators underscores the success of these workshops in fostering a proactive and informed approach to career planning."

Eve Williams, Assistant Headteacher at Woodlands School

Read about other employers who support schools



[Real life stories | Careers Wales](#)

Ready for work?

Is your child leaving education and getting ready for work? Here's some information on the support available:

Supported employment

Supported employment agencies work with people to help them find work, learn the skills needed to do a job, settle into a job and learn how to travel to work.

The organisations who will provide support are:

- ➔ Agoriad Cyf (North Wales)
- ➔ ELITE Supported Employment (South, Mid and West Wales)



Apprenticeship schemes

Apprenticeships combine practical training in a job with study.

As an apprentice your child will gain work experience, learn new skills and gain a nationally recognised qualification while earning a wage. Apprenticeships can provide your child with tailored support while they learn and work.

Find out more here:

- ➔ [Supported Shared Apprenticeships - ELITE Supported Employment](#)

Disability Confident employer scheme

The Disability Confident scheme supports employers to make the most of the talents disabled people can bring to their workforce. You can find the list of Disability Confident employers here:

- ➔ [Employers that have signed up to the Disability Confident scheme - GOV.UK](#)

Jobs

There are different ways to look for a jobs. Your child could look at job websites, join a recruitment agency or use social media. You can find more tips here.

- ➔ [How do I find a job? | Careers Wales](#)

Current live vacancies, across Wales, can be found at

- ➔ [Job Bulletin | Careers Wales](#)

Access to Work

There are legislation and agencies that support young people with ALN and their families. Find out more here.

- ➔ [Legislation and support agencies | Careers Wales](#)

If you child is leaving school this summer, they may be feeling nervous about what's next. Have a look at some of these videos of young people talking about their next steps after school.

- ➔ [Your options after leaving school - YouTube](#)

Summer Events

Careers Wales and Working Wales have a busy summer ahead as we plan to attend the Royal Welsh Show and National Eisteddfod again this summer.

We will have a programme of fun activities and workshops available at each event.

Come to see us at:

- The Royal Welsh Show, Builth Wells, 21 to 24 July.
- National Eisteddfod, Wrexham, 2 to 9 August.

Careers Wales events can be found here:



careerswales.gov.wales/events

Working Wales events can be found here:



workingwales.gov.wales/events



ALNET (Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal)

From September 2025 the ALNET Act will cover all young people. Careers Wales will no longer write Learning and Skills Plans for young people leaving school and will no longer be involved in applying for funding for specialist college placements.

We are still here to help!

Careers Wales will still be working with young people with ALN to help them plan their futures.

We will meet with young people in groups and/or on an individual basis.

Our advisers can also attend Individual Development Plan (IDP) reviews to provide you with information on options that will help your child achieve their potential and work towards their goals.

If you are a parent of a young person who is leaving school in the next year or two and would like to find out more about options, you can get in touch with the adviser through the school or by contacting us directly.

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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