



PARENT/CARER NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2024



Gyrfa Cymru
Careers Wales

For parents and carers of young people in mainstream education

Welcome

Welcome to our autumn newsletter for parents and carers. In this edition we share some helpful advice for supporting your child through transitional years. We share Sam's story on how he asked for support when he wasn't enjoying one of his A Levels. Also read about the fantastic partnership created between Kier and Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryntawe and the positive impact it made. We hope you find all the information and stories useful when supporting your child.

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 tips for choosing subject here.](#)

Year 11 Timeline

As parents of year 11 learners, the year ahead is likely to have some ups and downs as your child faces the challenge of GCSE exams. 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 a careers adviser early in the academic year. School careers advisers will start to invite year 11 learners to careers interviews from September. Encourage your child to attend their interview when booked. Ask your child about their careers interview in school. If you have any questions, please contact the school's careers adviser.

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. Sign up to our **job bulletin** which will give you some idea of the types of job vacancies advertised locally and nationally

 [Job Bulletin](#)

December

Look at the **parent 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 **Careers Wales** 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.

The school careers adviser 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 phone, 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](#)

Your child in college or sixth form:

5 Top Tips to support your child with their next steps.

1 Talk about their career goals

Listen, be supportive and share your own experiences.

2 Research all options

Find out about all the options available for your child.

[Visit our options at 18 guide](#)

3 Use social media

Social media is a great way to find key information to support your child. You can follow us or organisations such as UCAS for parent specific information.

4 Search for vacancies

Find out about work and training vacancies through our [Job Bulletin](#) and [Apprenticeship Finder](#).

5 Don't panic!

We can help. Contact us by phone, webchat or [book an appointment here](#).



How we can help your child

Real life stories

During the summer before starting Year 12, Sam had completed work experience at a veterinary surgery. This confirmed his ambition to become a vet.

Sam, from Bridgend, was studying for A Levels in biology, physics, and chemistry when he started Year 12.

After starting his classes Sam quickly realised that chemistry, a subject often needed for veterinary courses, was not right for him.

Sam said: "It wasn't what I was used to. I figured out that I could not go the full two years doing something I did not enjoy. So I got in contact with Claire, my careers adviser at school, and she spoke through it with me."

Claire advised Sam that it was a good time to make a change at this early stage of his A Levels, if that was what he wanted.

He said: "We spoke through it, and she helped me realise that over the first couple of weeks of school I was enjoying my biology work a lot more."

Claire supported Sam to explore all of his options, and what university courses he could do.

Sam explained: "I still wanted to work with animals because that was a massive push factor for me, and we came to the decision that it would be good to look into doing something like biological sciences or zoology at university."

Sam found out from Claire about the integrated master's degree, which combines a bachelor's degree with postgraduate studies. Sam said: "The grades were there so I wanted to work towards the top group universities."

"Over the summer, I worked with Claire on my personal statement. Then, I started my UCAS application, and eventually with Claire's help, I applied to do zoology at Bristol, Manchester, Glasgow, and Exeter and I got offers from all four of them."

Sam's first choice is the University of Bristol, where he hopes to study an integrated master's degree in zoology. His long-term goal is to obtain a PhD and engage in research focused on animals and animal behaviour. He shared: "I want to do zoology more than anything."

Sam advises other young people: "Don't panic and find someone to talk to. Talk to them about whatever you're feeling, tell them what your worries are and go from there."

"I'm sure that whatever you do, whatever you decide to do in your A levels or your GCSE's, you will find support and you'll be able to go forward and use whatever qualifications you've got to go and do the things you really love."



← Sam's story

Everyone has a different career journey. Here's how we were able to help Sam with his next steps when he had some doubts about his A Level choices.

Working with employers

We arrange events throughout Wales to link employers and young people together. One example of the work we do is to bring employers into schools to deliver activities to give learners an insight into specific industries and what employers want from their employees. Here is an example of how an employer supported a school in Swansea:

Pupils build outdoor classroom

Kier and Careers Wales joined forces to give Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryntawe pupils the opportunity to build an outdoor learning space. The big build took place at the school in Swansea earlier this year. 43 pupils across years 9, 10 and 11 worked closely with the Kier team to build the classroom.

During the build pupils learned about careers in the construction industry and developed skills such as communication and problem solving. They learned about construction processes and working together as a team. This was done with help from local contractors Ian Williams Carpentry and HD carpentry.

The pupils were given lessons in health and safety, before setting to work on building the outdoor space.

The pupils followed plans and drawings. They made basic civil engineering checks along with groundworks, carpentry and paving jobs.



Harley Beavan, a Year 10 pupil at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe, commented on his experiences during the build, saying: "It's good because it's something different to other schools. I appreciate the chance to get these opportunities."

Year 10 pupil, Harvey Green, added: "This is something that can go on our CVs and shows that we've been doing some work."

Simon Davies, headteacher at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe, said: "I believe developing partnerships through Careers Wales with companies like Kier are key to us as a school.

"We have plenty of pupils here who want and need these real-life work experiences and we are very grateful that Kier have been able to support this project.

"It means a great deal to our pupils – both boys and girls – who have benefitted from being a part of this and seeing what it's like to have a real-life work experience from the construction industry."

Jason Taylor, regional director at Kier Construction Western & Wales, said: "Working alongside Careers Wales with Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe on this project has been a pleasure.

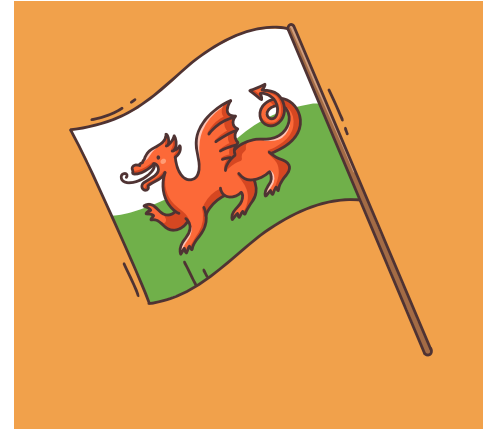
"The students who joined us in building this outdoor learning space showed plenty of enthusiasm and a real willingness to learn more about our work.

"We look forward to watching these brilliant individuals develop and establish themselves in the construction industry."

Welsh in the Workplace

The Welsh Government has set a target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

As a result, some jobs in Wales will ask for Welsh as an 'essential' or 'desirable' skill.



Why learn Welsh?

- ➔ Being able to speak Welsh is a skill that will make your CV stand out from the crowd.
- ➔ Being bilingual can give you more opportunities in life and can broaden your horizons.
- ➔ Learning and speaking Welsh can help you explore and engage with your local community.

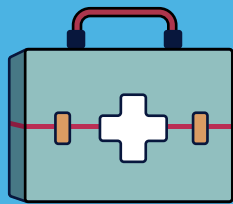
86% of the population in Wales feel that the Welsh language is something to be proud of
(source: [Y Cynnig Cymraeg](#))

94% of Welsh speakers feel that providing Welsh language service helps a company make a good impression
(source: [Y Cynnig Cymraeg](#))

Sectors with the most Welsh speakers

In Health and Social Work

16.5%
are Welsh speakers



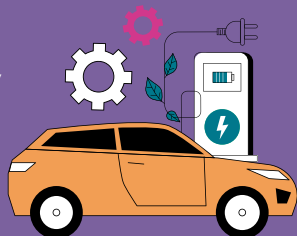
In Education

15.5%
of the workers
are Welsh speakers



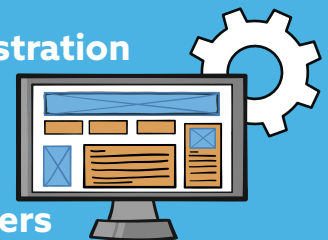
In wholesale, retail and motor Industry

11.6%
are Welsh speakers



In public administration and defence

11%
are Welsh speakers



(source: [Welsh language by population characteristics \(Census 2021\) | GOV.WALES](#))

Find out more about the Welsh language and different ways to learn:

➔ [Learn Welsh | Careers Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)

Career Management Skills

Is there such a thing as a 'job for life'?

Our professionally qualified careers advisers will help your child become more effective at successfully managing and planning their career.

Career management isn't about a one-off occupational choice, but rather a series of lifelong career transitions.

Improving the career management skills of young people enables them to make transitions more smoothly, enjoy a higher level of career satisfaction and play a more active part in the economy and in their communities.

Your child's careers adviser can support them to understand the skills needed to plan their career. Career Management skills include:

- Motivation
- Decision making
- Self-awareness
- Opportunity awareness
- Application
- Resilience



Working Wales

The Working Wales service helps anyone aged 16+ to get a job or find the most suitable opportunities to allow to up-skill through courses and training.

The service is specific to each individual and own personal circumstances and can help anyone aged 16+. This includes school leavers, those facing redundancy or recently redundant, or career changer.

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 face-to-face at a Careers Wales centre or outreach venues, over the phone or digitally.

Working Wales

#changeyourstory



[Find out more](#)



[Book an appointment](#)

Social Media

Do you and your child use social media?

We share regular up to date information on all our channels.



[Facebook](#)



[Instagram](#)



[X](#)



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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Contact us



You can contact a careers adviser at school or by phoning [0800 028 4844](tel: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](#)

Follow Careers Wales on social media

