

Work Experience Matters

Priory Wood's School have a unique and innovative way of providing their students with work experience.

The school run a café for the public in their school sixth form building on Fulbeck Road in Middlesbrough.

The café is staffed by Priory Woods students, all of whom have a range of different disabilities. The café gives the students chance to experience working in a catering and food service environment with the support of school staff when needed.

Ryan, who has the role of supervisor during his work experience placement loves serving customers and working as part of a team.



Preparing for Adulthood



Project Choice
Making a Difference

NHS
Health Education England

A word from our guest editor Tracy Hobson, Area Manager at Project Choice

In October 2018 I became the Area Manager for Project Choice. I immediately began liaising with Middlesbrough Council and local schools/colleges to see how we could all work together to support our young people with SEND and ensure positive outcomes and destinations.

Employment is what most young people hope for when they leave education. However, I have worked in education in the Middlesbrough Area for many years and know the challenges young people with SEND face when they are making the transition from school/college into employment.

For many young people and parents this can be stressful and worrying time, therefore Project Choice is working alongside Middlesbrough Council to support young people aged 16-25 with Education, Health and Care Plans on their journey into employment. The programme is an NHS initiative and is a 38-week programme run across the NHS, Public and Private Sector organisations to secure extended and supported work placements for young people.

Since starting in my role, I have seen many young people make a successful transition into employment, grow in confidence and develop their independence. I have also seen many parents who have been overwhelmed with pride at the progress their son/daughter has made. This was apparent at the Graduation Event we held in July at Middlesbrough Football Club.

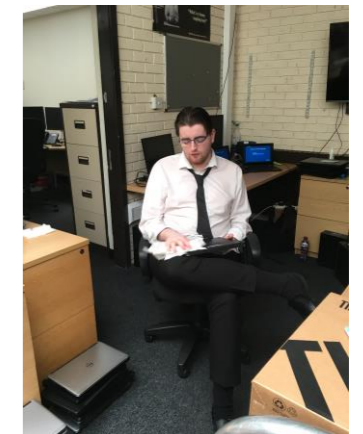
I hope you enjoy this special celebration issue of the 'Preparation for Adulthood' newsletter, marking the achievements of all of the supported interns over the last year.

Employment is what most young people hope for when they leave education...

Alex's Story

Alex was on a Supported Internship Programme with Project Choice. He excelled in his placement in the IT Department at Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust. Alex has worked very hard and his confidence has improved greatly. He has integrated himself within the IT team and learnt many valuable work and independence skills which have allowed him to progress onto an IT Apprenticeship within the NHS Trust.

Alex's mentor within the IT department has been extremely supportive and encouraged Alex to develop his IT skills within the role including taking him on visits to other NHS sites to learn about various IT systems.



If you have a story that you would like to be included in the next edition of the newsletter please contact Emma Cowley. emma_cowley@middlesbrough.gov.uk

www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/localoffer



Young Person's Conference – May 2019



87 people attended including young people, professionals and parents

Young people's views recorded in 5 different ways

14 workshops took place



Lunch time socialising



Filming by our student film crew

Collaborative art projects created

Supported Internship guest speakers



Information available through market place activities



There was so much fantastic feedback at the conference that it's hard to fit it all into one newsletter!

The main points that you asked us to look at were:

- You want jobs.
- You want your own home
- You want friendships and a family of your own
- You want to make your own decisions
- You want to be included in all decisions about you
- You want to choose how to spend your time
- We should make meetings more interesting, and have different ways for you to be involved
- You should be supported to be involved
- You want to learn how to become an adult – with help on things like budgeting and cooking.
- You want us to get to know you and listen to your voice
- You think the Local Offer website is:



We are going to be working hard over the next year to change all of the things that you have asked for. We are going to keep updating you regularly about the progress we are making.

We are going to focus on:

- Involving you in everything
- Supporting you to make your own decisions
- Making sure the opportunities you want are available to you
- Making it easier for you to be involved and have your voice heard.

You can read a full report about the conference, and see more pictures from the day, by visiting the Local Offer (www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/localoffer) and searching for 'conference feedback report'.

YOUNG PERSON'S CELEBRATION EVENT – JUNE 2019



Middlesbrough Council hosted an event at the Town Hall to mark the achievements of people from across the town in its annual SEND Awards.

Award winners were celebrated for their successes in work experience placements, in employment and in apprenticeships.

The achievements of those whose independence is an inspiration to others were also acknowledged, along with those who continually champion for the rights of others in their communities.

Andrea Williams, Middlesbrough Council's Director of Education, said: "It was a privilege to share such amazing achievements with these confident young people and their very proud families."



Project Choice Graduation – July 2019

Project Choice
Making a Difference



Congratulations to the Project Choice supported interns who celebrated their graduation in style at Middlesbrough's Riverside Stadium.

The interns were celebrating the completion of work experience placements that have given them the skills and confidence to progress into further paid and voluntary roles.

Many of the young people there were not just celebrating a fantastic year of work experience, but were also celebrating the offer of a job or apprenticeships as a direct result of the supported internship programme.

Employers who offer their time and work placement opportunities were also acknowledged, with some of the success of the programme being attributed to good quality work placements, fantastic partnership working and ongoing support from organisations across the town.



Callum Smith is a HR Project Manager, working at Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust. This year he has offered supported internship placements to interns from Project Choice.

Callum says "working with Project Choice as a mentor to young people on their supported internships has not only been a positive experience for us as an employer, but also for myself and the team.

The guidance and support given to both myself and the organisation to support the young people, and the support given to the young people from Project Choice staff has been exceptional. Their commitment, dedication and passion for the interns to succeed is infectious.

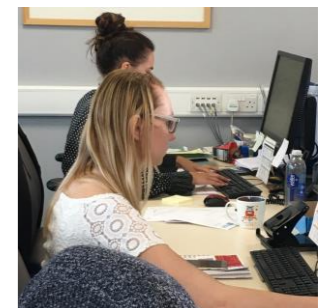
I would strongly encourage more employers to give supported internships a chance, as I truly believe that through being a part of Project Choice, organisations have the ability to make a difference to, and transform the lives of, young people and their families."

Donna Dakin has recently graduated from her supported internship with Project Choice. This is what she has to say about her experience in **her own words ...**

"My name is Donna Dakin and I started Project Choice in September last year and I have had a brilliant time. I have learnt new things like skills and things I didn't know I could do. The team in project choice have been really supportive and got me a work placement in Middlesbrough Council with the SEND team.

I have also met new friends and friendships I will never forget.

I have worked with Middlesbrough Council since the beginning of this year and I have really loved working with the SEND team. I have been involved in planning a lot of events like the young person's awards event and meetings, and I also helped with sending out letters to parents for the Ofsted inspection."





Service in the Spotlight

Work Readiness Team Middlesbrough Council

The Work Readiness team work with young people aged 16 – 18 years who are not in learning, and up to 25 years if they have special educational needs or are a care leaver.

Our team is committed to:

- Helping vulnerable year 11 student's transition into post 16 learning.
- Offering impartial careers information advice and guidance.
- Supporting young people into education, employment or training.
- Keeping up to date with all the learning opportunities available for young people in Middlesbrough and surrounding areas.
- Supporting vulnerable young people and their families through Early Help interventions.

We arrange to meet young people in a place which suits them.

You can contact the Work Readiness team via email at workreadinessteam@middlesbrough.gov.uk or call 01642 513162.

Your questions answered:



What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a paid job which combines practical training in the workplace with study.

As an apprentice you will:

- work alongside experienced staff;
- gain job-specific skills;
- earn a wage and get holiday pay; and
- study towards a related qualification (usually one day a week).

Apprenticeships are available at a variety of different levels and usually take one year to complete, although some higher level apprenticeships can take longer. They are available within a wide variety of sectors depending on your interests and aspirations.

During your apprenticeship, your training provider will make sure that you have off-the-job training to help progress towards completing your apprenticeship and achieving your qualifications.

Apprenticeships for young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan

Young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan can keep their plan whilst they are on an apprenticeship and can be supported to complete their apprenticeship. The level of support that is provided to each apprentice will vary depending on individual needs and the apprenticeship that they are undertaking.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all of the employers who have worked with us over the last year.

