

How can I help my child decide what to do when they leave school?

During school time the pupils are introduced to “My World of Work” website www.myworldofwork.co.uk which is a wealth of information and contains a quiz which helps them identify their strengths and interests and then suggests jobs/careers which might suit them. There is information on jobs, Modern Apprenticeships and volunteering and there’s also a section for parents too www.myworldofwork.co.uk/parents.



A representative of the Careers Service is based in the school two days per week. Your child can pop in to see them at lunchtime if they have a wee query or wish to make an appointment to discuss things in more depth. They can also request a careers appointment by just asking their Support Teacher. The appointment times are listed in the Daily Pupil Bulletin which is read out to classes, displayed on the school foyer screens and available to view on the Pupil section of our school website www.dehs.info.

There is a variety of options after leaving school e.g. full time employment, apprenticeships, The Forces, college, university and a wealth of information is available online on all of them! Here’s a few suggestions: the parent pages of the websites www.npfs.org.uk and <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>, additional Modern Apprenticeship (MA) information www.apprenticeships.scot, information & assistance specific to the Hospitality industry from Springboard www.careerscope.uk.net/opportunities.

Our education system is like a set of building blocks, which can be added to at any time (via school, college, work or a combination) and allows for changes of direction. This is often described as a “Learning Pathway”. See this SQA document www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/National_Parent_forum_nutshells_pathways.pdf as it describes the qualifications and various pathways, particularly look at the Pathway examples on page 3. For example, a HNC college course is equivalent to a first year of University in some subjects; so a youngster can choose to study at college for a year or two after school and may then be accepted into a University degree course, perhaps gaining direct entry to 2nd year of the course (HND may give direct entry to 3rd year at University). There is generally more than one route to the same destination - research the careers and courses and ask questions!

Encourage your child to:

- speak to lots of people about their work
- take up any opportunities of work experience or volunteering
- attend career events (good idea to go along with them as they might need prompting to speak to people and ask questions)
- look into a wide variety of jobs/careers or if they’re dead set on something, make sure they find out all about it (the good and bad!)
- arrange relevant work experience or even just visit the environment to make sure it’s what they’d imagined! Many companies are willing to arrange a visit/work experience for a keen/interested youngster – there’s no harm in asking, the worst that can happen is they say “no”! The school also has contacts with many industries/businesses and can assist with arranging work experience during term time; they should discuss it with their Support Teacher.



From a local point of view, things to bear in mind are; there is a daily “College” bus from Newton Stewart to Dumfries College but be prepared for a long day, especially if you live a distance from Newton Stewart. Apprenticeships are a great way to get started in a career, look into what's on offer locally and also have a look at apprenticeships within national companies e.g. network rail, BAE systems, Scottish Power, Scottish Gas etc - many provide career/apprenticeship information on their websites. The wage for an apprentice varies widely and may dictate whether the youngster can relocate to take up the opportunity, so it's worth looking into all the options available.

Try not to stress about your child’s future, they’ll find their own way eventually. Some young adults don’t want to do any more education so seeking job opportunities could be the right route for them. For others a

college course is preferred to a University one. They are all individuals. The key thing is to keep supporting them and encourage them to keep progressing. There are lots of opportunities out there, encourage them to keep exploring them until they find what they're looking for. Try to get them to apply for a range of opportunities rather than set their heart on one. Support and prepare them for long waits and rejections, the process can be long and have its ups & downs!