

Tips for how to embed career-related learning in your setting

Career-related learning in Primary School is not simply talking about jobs. It is not asking a 7-year-old to decide what their future career pathways looks like. Instead, it is about ensuring they have the opportunity for regular conversations that challenge stereotypes, broaden their horizons and raise their aspirations.

We want them to be curious and inspired about what their futures could hold. We want them to start to see the connection between the learning they do in school and the world of work, to recognise the importance of their learning, to understand the skills they are developing and how these skills will help them in their future roles.

How can your school support pupils to be able to maximise opportunities when they join their secondary school's careers programme on transition? Ultimately, how can we enable pupils to be career ready?

Whether your school is just starting out on this journey, has made a start or already has an extensive programme in place, there are some tips and resources for you to consider, to help fully embed career-related learning in your setting.

A great starting point is the [self-assessment quiz](#). Even if you are not aware of any current career-related learning going on within your school, it will spark ideas and reflection on current practice and help you to recognise how much is already going on or what could easily be adapted to form part of a career-related learning plan. The quiz will help you to consider your long-term goals for your pupils' learning and how career-related learning could fit within this.

The quiz was designed in partnership with [Skills Builder](#) and is based on two mutually reinforcing sets of principles which outline good provision at primary. The first set of principles are derived from a 'What Works' report that The Careers & Enterprise Company, in partnership with [Education & Employers](#), published in 2018.

The second set of principles are the Skills Builder Principles. The [Skills Builder Principles](#) outline best practice in teaching the [eight essential skills](#) and these help to help shape the design and delivery of careers related learning.

Used together, these models can inform an excellent overall, whole school approach to challenging stereotypes and broadening aspirations.

What Works: principles to help to guide the strategic thinking and planning

1

Principle 1: Embed into a whole school approach driven by senior leaders

Evidence shows that positive impacts from career-related learning are greater when a consistent and whole school strategy is in place.

How?

▶ **Consider career-related learning in the context of your vision for pupils when they leave your setting.** Your school ethos, values or vision statement may speak about the development of essential skills that help prepare a young person for their future.

● **Link career-related learning to your school priorities.** Career-related learning can positively contribute to meeting school priorities. For example, career-related learning can be about diversity and inclusion and it can also raise aspirations.

◆ **Consider a Career Link Governor.** At secondary school and college, a Governor is given responsibility for careers. If this feels like too much of a big step for you, look at [these resources](#) from The Centre for Education and Youth, to help you engage your governing board in a different way.

2

Principle 2: Start Early

Evidence shows that positive impacts from career-related learning are greater when a consistent and whole school strategy is in place.

How?

▶ **Use existing areas of the curriculum** such as 'people who help us' to teach younger children about the diversity of people who work in different roles. For example, help children to explore the term 'midwife', explaining that even though it has the word 'wife' in it, it doesn't mean you have to be female to do this role.

▶ **Choose reading books where characters have jobs.** Use this [book list](#) from the National Literacy Trust, to help build up a bank of books which can open up discussions around aspirations and exploring worth in all job roles.

● **Extend your role play to include visitors from the world of work.** To either launch or round up the launch of a new 'home corner' or role play box of clothing, invite in a visiting speaker in that job role to explain what they do, in order to inform role play or inspire mark making.

◆ **Develop or adopt a scheme of career-related learning work from EYFS.** Take a look at this [example scheme of work](#) from The Black Country Consortium.

Key

- ▶ - Developing
- - Embedding
- ◆ - Enhancing

3

Principle 3: Embed into the curriculum

Schools and senior leaders should make the relationship between career-related learning and the aims and ethos of the school explicit, thereby ensuring all stakeholders see its relevance and value. Embedding career-related learning also makes it sustainable and more impactful.

How?

- ◀ **Explore the adaptation of your PSHE curriculum to make career-related learning more explicit.** For example, when exploring positive relationships, relate this to the world of work – professionalism and maintaining positive relationships in the workplace. Take a look at these [PSHE lesson plans](#) created by The PSHE Association and LOUD.
- **Ask each subject specialist** to explore how one topic per year group could link to the world of work.
- ◈ **Link all learning to the world of work** by facilitating the practice of skills and knowledge in relation to a business or job. For example, set a business of the term or a career pathway of the term and deliver all learning through this lens – calculate fractions as a chef in a local restaurant or debate right and wrong as a lawyer.

Key

- ◀ - Developing
- - Embedding
- ◈ - Enhancing

4

Principle 4: Ensure activities are personalised and relevant

There is evidence to suggest that, like all learning, primary career-related activities are most effective when they are planned, delivered and adapted depending on the age group.

How?

- ◀ **Begin career-related learning with a goal setting session.** What do your pupils want to achieve? What is important to them? This will help to personalise how career-related learning is delivered. [Look at these resources](#) from The Eden Project to help.
- **Adapt an existing scheme of work to suit your local priorities.** Use a scheme of career-related work, such as [this one](#) designed by The Black Country Consortium, and adapt it to suit the priorities and interests of your pupils.
- ◈ **Make learning relevant to your local context** using local Labour Market Information. Use [this guide](#) to make your own LMI resource, from The Centre for Education and Youth. It provides a template that you can use to build a 'book of jobs', tailored to your local context and relevant to all your pupils.

5

Principle 5: Open to all

Career-related learning in this phase should not be targeted at a particular group or groups (for example; girls, disengaged learners or high achievers) – instead it should be offered universally to all pupils in primary schools.

How?

-  **Consider how you can challenge stereotypes at every opportunity.** When inviting in guest speakers, explore the possibility of broadening the range of speakers or challenging the typical expectation. Take a look at [Inspiring the Future's 'Redraw the Balance' video](#) or use the [challenging stereotypes presentation](#) from The Black Country Consortium.
-  **Consider how you reach 'each and every' pupil** by embedding some form of career-related learning in every classroom, delivered by every teacher. Could this be a link to employability skills? The question, 'Why do you think we learn about this in school?'. Encourage and support all staff to consider how they could incorporate this wider careers messaging regularly to ensure it reaches every child.
-  **Create an 'in-house' work experience for all children by giving children jobs** within the school that they must apply and interview for. This is an innovative way of teaching children about workplace behaviours in a safe environment and enhances a system that probably already exists for you, for example you may already have water monitors. 'Pay' children using your school's rewards system and review their performance like in any real-world job.

Key

-  - Developing
-  - Embedding
-  - Enhancing

6

Principle 6: Involve employers and parents

It is important that the person imparting knowledge about jobs and careers brings real-life, authentic experience of the workplace. When employers engage with children, they are perceived as having real authority and authenticity.

How?

-  **Utilise the staff in your school.** Multiple roles exist within your own school and each member of staff will have taken a slightly different route into their career. Encourage staff to talk openly to children about this and involve different staff members in delivering assemblies about their job and career pathway. If you're part of a cluster or academy, you could even 'swap' staff between schools so that the children see new faces.
-  **Encourage local employers to get involved.** Look at East Sussex County Council's Primary Careers Hub [Guide](#), designed to help schools and employers work together to develop career-related learning, and tools to measure the impact of career-related learning activities. Also, make use of these [Top tips for employers](#) to help when working with primary schools for the first time.
-  **Engage parents in the delivery of career-related learning across the whole school.** Create a version of Inspiring Worcestershire's [Parental Pledge Campaign](#) to secure the support of your parental community in the delivery of career-related learning. Assemblies with guest speakers, including parents and even governors are a great way to start bringing career learning into primary schools and engage the wider school community.
-  **Help keep parents up-to-date and informed.** Use the resource developed by 15 Billion EBP to [deliver a workshop](#) for your parental community. It aims to inform parents of the ways in which the labour market is predicted to change and the importance of having an entrepreneurial mind-set and the 8 Essential Skills to thrive in the economy of the future.

Skills Builder Principles for best practise in essential skill development

Consider these principles when designing your strategy.

The Skills Builder Partnership work closely with a cohort of committed schools and colleges on the Accelerator programme, who work towards the Skills Builder Award. There is a robust matrix for each Skills Builder Principle, which outlines what bronze, silver and gold looks like. The information below is just a starting point for thinking about these Principles. For more information, visit skillsbuilder.org/educators.

2

Skills Builder Principle 2: Start early, and keep going

Mastering these essential skills isn't simple and takes time and sustained effort. The skills are not just about employability, but about thriving in all aspects of life.

Things to consider:

- Thinking about these skills for all the pupils you work with
- Introducing these skills in younger cohorts
- Providing opportunities for pupils to build the skills further as they grow up

1

Skills Builder Principle 1: Keep it simple

A consistent focus on the same skills helps ensure everyone's shared understanding and makes building these skills as tangible as possible. Using the same language all the time makes a big difference.

Things to consider:

- Defining which essential skills you focus on in your school or college
- Ensuring staff and pupils use a consistent language when referring to the skills
- Providing training and support on teaching these skills

3

Skills Builder Principle 3: Measure it

Take time to reflect on the skills of individuals – by observing or by self assessment. This gives a balanced understanding of strengths and weaknesses, highlights progress and shows next steps.

Things to consider:

- Using a consistent skills framework and assessment tool like Skills Builder
- Ensuring the framework reflects quantifiable progress over time
- Checking in on progress regularly

4

Skills Builder Principle 4: Focus tightly

Building essential skills should build upon a pupil's previous learning and skill attainment. It should allow dedicated time just to explicitly build skills.

Things to consider:

- Setting different goals for what different pupils should be aiming to do when building their skills
- Protecting time just to focus on explicitly developing skills

5

Skills Builder Principle 5: Keep practising

To accelerate progress in the essential skills, they should be used and reinforced as often as possible – including opportunities for reflection.

Things to consider:

- Providing regular opportunities for pupils to use their essential skills
- Highlighting these opportunities clearly to pupils and teachers
- Providing regular opportunities to actively reflect on the skills and how they have been developed

6

Skills Builder Principle 6: Bring it to life

Ensure pupils see the relevance of these skills by linking them with the real world and by bringing real-life problems and challenges to work on.

Things to consider:

- Framing skills in terms of their usefulness for education, employment and wider life
- Providing opportunities for pupils to use their skills in different settings
- Using links to employers to support building these skills

How can you get involved?

Visit the [platform](#), take the [quiz](#), use the [resources](#) and encourage those in your network to do the same.



Let us know what you think of the platform and keep up-to-date with our work at [primary here](#)

For more information, please contact the Education Team at: primaryeducation@careersandenterprise.co.uk