

# Inspection Findings: Developing the Young Workforce



## Developing the Young Workforce

In Scotland, scrutiny activity is a crucial tool which supports improvement, as well as providing assurance and public accountability. The scope of our inspection activities at a local level gives us a unique evidence base drawn from observing practice at first hand across the country. This series of inspection findings briefings is based on evidence gathered across early learning and childcare settings, primary, secondary and special schools over 2018-19 and is designed to promote improvement at a local and national level.

### Summary findings

Across all sectors, in a number of interesting examples of schools/settings, staff are supporting children and young people well to develop skills for learning, life and work. The strategic leadership within secondary schools for the development and implementation of the priorities of Developing the Young Workforce: Scotland's youth employment strategy (2014) (DYW) has improved overall. However, the pace of progress across sectors continues to be too slow and implementation is not yet consistent across schools/settings.



The photographs used in this report were taken before Covid-19 restrictions were in place.



## Early learning and childcare settings

Across almost all early learning and childcare (ELC) settings, children benefit from opportunities to engage in imaginative play which helps to develop their understanding about the world of work. Role-play contexts offer most of these opportunities. In most settings practitioners, in consultation with



children, develop play-based contexts which enable children to explore different jobs, for example, as doctors, nurses and firefighters.

Increasingly, practitioners are encouraging children to learn about a wider range of careers, for example, in architecture and science. In almost all settings, children engage very well with these play-based contexts. Overall, practitioners need to develop further children's understanding of how the skills they are learning link to the world of work. Practitioners need to develop further partnership working with employers to support the curriculum.

The majority of ELC settings have fostered positive relationships with local businesses and community resources which helps to promote children's understanding of the world of work. Settings should develop further partnership working with employers and increase the number and range of partners to support the curriculum and to help develop children's skills.

Where settings use the [Career Education Standard 3-18 \(CES\)](#) well, teams thoughtfully integrate learning about a diverse range of careers naturally into children's play. In these settings, practitioners work effectively with parents, the local community and businesses to provide meaningful and relevant experiences that extend children's awareness of a range of occupations. For example, children apply

their early literacy and numeracy skills as they grow and sell their own vegetables or use technology to record a stock take. Children learn about tools and technology, teamwork and risk assessment from planners and builders. Through such work, practitioners skilfully support children to make connections between their own learning, achievements and developing skills and the world of work.

### Case Study 1

Across a primary school and early learning and childcare setting, planning makes clear connections between aspects of science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics and entrepreneurship through world of work activities at each stage. A clear progression pathway is in place for art and children produce artwork of a very high standard. There is a whole school approach to DYW and the school's 'Skills to Success' progression framework is embedded in daily learning and teaching. Almost all children are developing a strong awareness of employability, skills for learning, life and work and how their learning, both in and out of school, relates to this. This highly effective practice is an area of strength of the school.

## Primary schools

The majority of primary schools are making positive progress in supporting children to understand and develop skills for learning, life and work. Schools have an increasing focus on engaging parents and partners in talking about their work. Teachers provide useful learning experiences through a variety of planned experiences, including real-life contexts within local communities. Children benefit from opportunities to learn about skills required in a range of careers and professions and in the best practice, they talk confidently about life and work skills.

In a minority of primary schools, staff use the CES well and children talk confidently about a range of careers that they feel are achievable. DYW and skills for learning, life and work are areas that should be developed further and embedded within the curriculum. There is considerable scope for schools to develop a progressive skills framework incorporating existing opportunities across the curriculum. This would allow skills for learning, life and work to be tracked effectively.

### Case Study 2

In a primary school the senior leadership team and staff work very well with a wide range of partners. Partnership working is used very well to support children's learning and to provide children with enjoyable and challenging learning experiences in a range of different contexts.

Children benefit from opportunities to learn about a range of careers and professions through the annual career fair and ongoing learning related to DYW. Children can talk about a wide range of careers that they are interested in. Staff should now help children gain a better understanding of skills for learning, life and work.

### Case Study 3

In a primary school staff are helping children understand the skills they are developing through a well-planned skills progression framework. As children move through the school, learning opportunities include a focus in specific skills for life, learning and work. Children in P6 and P7 attend masterclasses at the local college to help apply their skills in relevant and meaningful contexts.





## Special schools

The majority of special schools are making good progress in developing flexible senior phase pathways. A few schools are providing opportunities for young people to gain accreditation for vocational qualifications. For example, in rural skills and horticulture. A few also continue to maintain links with the young person's mainstream school to enhance their senior phase offer.

In small schools, offering a breadth of pathways in the senior phase can be challenging. However, there are good examples of schools developing productive links with businesses and local colleges. These partnerships are providing more bespoke pathways for learners in the senior phase.

There are examples of schools working with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to help staff and learners to gain a good knowledge of local job market intelligence and to tailor their pathways accordingly. Where young people are placed in a school away from their home locality, this is more of a challenge.

The development of business and industry partnerships is a feature in almost all special schools. This is supporting children and young people to learn in meaningful real-life contexts, including learning about the world of work.

### Case Study 4

A special school has its own Enterprise Academy. This emerging work is supporting young people with moderate learning difficulties to develop skills for work. As a result, they are gaining accreditation from a range of vocational courses, including qualifications in professional cookery, horticulture and administration.

For children and young people with the most complex additional support needs, the focus of learning is to improve communication, self-regulation and independent living skills to support them to become full members of society. Taking learning into the community is an important aspect of this work.

Developing skills for learning, life and work is an important focus for almost all special schools. Activities, such as outdoor learning, develop resilience and confidence and this supports young people to sustain post school destinations. A few schools need to make the link with the development of skills for work more explicit in planning learning. A few schools are reported as making good use of the CES and [Work Placement Standards \(WPS\)](#).

Experience of the world of work features in most



secondary and all through special schools. This ranges from work placements, taster sessions, visiting businesses in the local community and engaging young people in voluntary work.

### Case Study 5

A special school has an outstanding initiative to track post school destinations. Learners benefit from support from partners and school staff to access education, training, or employment after they leave school. Commendably, staff maintain contact with each young person for a number of years and provide support to help them sustain their destination.

## Secondary schools

### Leadership

The strategic leadership within secondary schools for the development and implementation of the priorities of DYW has improved overall. However, the pace of progress in secondary schools continues to be too slow and implementation is not yet consistent across faculties.

Around a quarter of secondary schools demonstrate clear leadership by the senior team for the implementation of DYW priorities across the curriculum and the whole school. In these schools, staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and are working well with young people and external partners to implement the requirements of the DYW.

### Case Study 6

A secondary school has a clear and useful five-year plan for the implementation of DYW. Close links with the local authority and SDS support this. Senior and middle leaders direct the implementation of DYW exceptionally well. They ensure appropriate partnership contributions from employers, SDS, alumni, and associated primary schools.



A few secondary schools have a DYW working group and related strategy in place, both of which work well in supporting the planning and monitoring of the delivery DYW implementation targets. In around a third of secondary schools, plans for the implementation of DYW priorities have been created, but are at an early stage of implementation. In these schools, the pace of progress is too slow and not consistent across the school.

In almost all secondary schools, leaders are aware, to varying degrees, of the need to refer to Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) and the Regional Skills Assessment (RSA) when planning the curriculum and related careers information advice and guidance strategies but have not taken action to do so. As a result, learning activities are insufficiently linked to the needs of the local and national economies. Partnership working to achieve DYW aims and enhance the curriculum is well led in around a third of secondary schools.



### School improvement planning

In only a quarter of secondary schools the School Improvement Plan (SIP) identifies clear actions to progress the implementation of DYW priorities. Senior staff in these schools monitor progress of these priorities regularly and effectively to evaluate the extent to which young people are benefitting from DYW priorities. Overall, the alignment between SIPs and DYW plans is still underdeveloped, resulting in too slow progress in implementation.

#### Case Study 7

A secondary school has the SIP takes good account of DYW priorities. The plan is informed well by a detailed faculty DYW review audit which has helped senior leaders establish a baseline position. The review also identifies clear development actions which assist faculties in planning for improvement.

### Career-long professional learning

Staff awareness of DYW priorities has improved as a result of focused career-long professional learning (CLPL). This has included a focus on developing staff's understanding of the CES, Career Management Skills (CMS), My World of Work (MyWoW) and, to a lesser extent, the WPS. However, the extent to which this has

influenced learning and teaching practice is still too variable.

#### Case Study 8

In one secondary school, senior staff have conducted two reviews to help them establish the school's position on DYW. They first looked at the CES and asked staff to self-assess how well they were meeting the expectations set out in the standards. This gave a useful overview, as well as further raising awareness of the standards, and underpinned planned actions. The second was a review of employer links, which again helpfully highlighted areas with good links as well as those that needed further support.

### Curriculum: learning pathways

Most secondary schools provide appropriate breadth and range of senior phase pathways for young people. Overall, schools work well with external partners to provide a range of vocational pathways from Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 4-7. This enables young people to engage in learning pathways which match their aspirations and needs. In most schools, Foundation Apprenticeship programmes have been introduced, however, overall uptake remains low.

All schools provide experience of the world of work in the senior phase. A few secondary schools are also providing placement opportunities to S3 learners. Overall, young people value these experiences and schools manage them well. However, whilst the majority of schools are aware of the WPS, staff are not yet using the standard to relate young people's work placements to their wider learning in school. In around a third of secondary schools teaching staff have incorporated CES and CMS into their classroom delivery, however this is often limited to a few curriculum areas. In most schools, further work is required to support staff to embed CES within lessons.



## Case Study 9

In a secondary school there is a clear understanding of DYW across the school, its purpose and what this means for young people. The plans in place to enhance the young people's readiness for work or further study are well considered, clear and are the basis for developing the senior phase curriculum offer. The school is effective in recognising and planning for the 'I can...' statements from the CES to be incorporated into PSE classes from S1 to S6. This is helping to ensure a strong and consistent focus on developing employability skills and awareness in the young people.

## Partnership working

Most secondary schools have effective and agile partnership-working with local colleges, community learning and development (CLD) and third-sector providers to widen choice, including access to vocational programmes. Young people benefit from taking part in these programmes and generally value this learning experience. All schools have introduced partnership-working with local employers, most of which bring benefit to young people. Around half of secondary schools have particularly effective partnerships with employers. Overall, partners are not yet sufficiently involved in

curriculum design or evaluation. There is scope for most schools to use data with partners effectively to plan for improvement.

## Opportunities to achieve more widely

Almost all secondary schools offer young people opportunities to achieve more widely, develop their skills for learning, life and work, and support creativity and employability. Often, awards are linked to the SCQF and CES. However, progress is too slow in linking young people's personal achievement and skills development to their wider learning in school. Too many schools do not monitor young people's development of skills through personal achievement activities.

## Careers guidance

All secondary schools have in place arrangements to provide a range of careers advice and guidance services to young people. The majority of secondary schools have in place effective measures to help young people and families make informed choices about future post-school learning options. In a few schools, materials for career information are limited to outdated booklets, which are hard to understand and unappealing to young people. All schools have in place measures to provide effective support to learners with additional needs. Most schools do not provide sufficient information to ensure a successful transition to further learning experiences for these learners.



## Use of personal and social education (PSE) for careers and DYW)

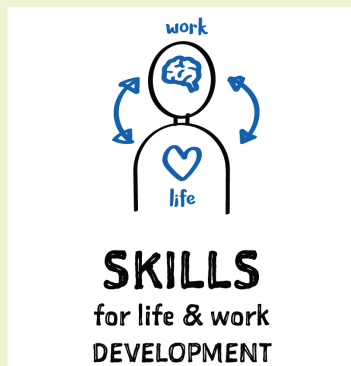
Almost all secondary schools use or plan to use PSE sessions to support the development of young people's CMS and the use of MyWoW. Most schools do not deliver PSE sessions which are effective and valued by young people in relation to DYW priorities and the development of skills for employability.

## Use of My World of Work

Although the numbers of young people with a MyWoW registration are improving overall, in most schools young people do not yet make good use of the resource. Too many staff are unfamiliar with MyWoW and do not promote its use to young people. In schools where the MyWoW ambassador role has been introduced, young people enjoy the role and are making an active contribution to supporting the use of the resource across the school.



During inspections, HM Inspectors routinely identify highly effective practice to be shared more widely to promote improvement. Many examples are developed as sketchnotes and accompanied by a blog from the establishment describing their practice. Sketchnotes with reference to DYW include:



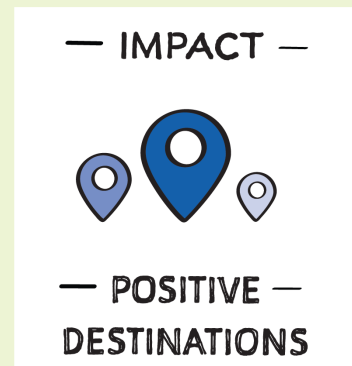
### ST MATTHEW'S ACADEMY

[See full Sketchnote](#)



### ST CATHERINE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

[See full Sketchnote](#)



### CASTLEMILK HIGH

[See full Sketchnote](#)



This briefing is accompanied by an interactive presentation designed for educators at all levels in their own establishments, which can be used for discussion, reflection and to support improvement.

[Click here to visit the presentation.](#)

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