

The 'Primary' World of Work

Suggestions for schools

There have been several attempts recently to formalise the approach to 'aspirations and careers' at the Primary level. To a large extent, primaries have **always** had a focus on developing the individual child, nurturing their talents and including creativity, problem solving and self confidence with as many opportunities as possible. Adding knowledge of the world of work related to the curriculum, some understanding of routes to work and a local focus helps to contextualise these opportunities in a meaningful way. The suggestions below are drawn from the extant research and several years of working in this field.



Aspiration Days/Weeks/Talks

Many schools have a focal week or day each year where they invite people from local businesses, parents, relatives to come into school and speak to classes or even assemblies about their job. The evidence suggests that these have a **high impact** on the children and an effect that can even be measured into adulthood in terms of increased earnings. The drawback is the organisation involved. Businesses are often hard pressed to find time or volunteers to attend even if you can get hold of the right person. Appeals to parents are often the easiest way to arrange these events but areas of high unemployment will find this more difficult. Currently there is an expectation for secondary schools to achieve multiple talks for pupils as part of their Gatsby Benchmark Career objectives. Many have been doing this for several years and find it hard to get enough speakers.

Adding 200 or so primary schools to that equation won't help!

Sector Days

There are lots of resources available from various sectors that have activities to raise their profile. These can be used to create an 'engineering day' for example with problem solving activities and resources about the jobs involved. These are often fun and informative with a great opportunity for developing skills such as creativity. Greater impact can be achieved by 'bringing someone in' to lead at least part of the day.

Embedding in the Curriculum

There is strong evidence that relating curriculum learning to the world of work has a clear impact. **Feedback from children** suggests that they work that bit harder when they realise that a particular concept is useful in the long term. This approach is more difficult to achieve when teachers have limited knowledge of the world of work themselves. Spark has been working with a number of primary schools in the last few months to look at every subject in their medium term planning. Using our local connections and understanding, this approach has proved really successful with an increased focus on local knowledge and how local businesses are a key part of that in all year groups across most subjects.

Site Visits

These are great opportunities when they can be arranged. Several companies are happy to do them but **spaces are often limited**. Ideally the visit will be prefaced by some specific work around the company with follow up work of course to reflect on and deepen the learning.