



Apprenticeship Update for Schools

We are now in the full implementation stage of the new Walsall Council Apprenticeship Programme – Endless Possibilities.

Our Apprenticeship Levy includes maintained schools so we have ensured that all schools have been contacted regarding their levy allocation. Only a few schools are left on the list to contact. Thank you to everyone for their positivity and enthusiasm in helping implement the programme.

Since July 2018 we have had over 250 enquiries from internal teams and schools regarding the levy and we have started to convert these enquiries into Apprenticeship starts. We have over 70 Apprentices on programme however this is rising on a daily basis. It is estimated by March 2018 we will have 100 Apprentices.

Our Public Service Target is 174 Apprentices so we are well on our way to achieving this. We will report back to government on behalf of schools in relation to the target - this will commence in April 2018.

We have a schools representative on our Apprenticeship Working Group – which meets bi monthly – we use this forum to consult and steer the direction of travel. We have presented to various Headteacher school forums to ensure everyone is aware of the new programme and the procedure for accessing the levy pot.

The brand has been created and we now have our own Twitter account - @Walsall_Apps with over 200 followers already, this will help us spread the word and promote our Apprenticeship vacancies. Please follow us and Retweet!

We will be promoting Apprenticeships in National Apprenticeship Week 5th to 9th March 2018 and have offered every High School an Apprenticeship talk or assembly for their students.

Walsall is ahead of the game! We are determined to spend our levy and be in a good position to receive any further funding if available. We have already been highlighted for our pro activity in engaging departments and schools in the Apprenticeship programme we are working towards reaching the designated target figure. Good practice has already been recognised especially around the Diversity of the programme we offer.

The Apprenticeship programme has been very well received by schools and we now have 33 Apprentices within schools across the borough this consists of:

- Existing Staff = 7
- New Recruits = 26

Funds will start to expire in April 2019 - we will begin a consultation in May/June regarding schools that do not want to spend their levy, in this eventuality, schools could opt for their portion to be re-distributed to other council departments, including schools, who would wish to expand their number of Apprentices. Our consultation would include how is this money re-distributed for example it may be through a simple bidding process similar to the current Expression of Interest form.

We have carried out an extensive procurement procedure and now have a framework of 6 Training Providers who will deliver Apprenticeships across the organisation and schools. The Training providers will be monitored on a quarterly basis.

The NEW Teaching Degree Apprenticeship is approved and will hopefully be delivered from September 2018. Schools are now expressing an interest so that we can talk to Universities about their offer and negotiate discounted prices for groups of Apprentices.

As a reminder to Schools if you are wishing to Recruit an Apprentice you must:

- Follow the required recruitment procedures
- Pay the Apprentice at least [the apprenticeship minimum wage](#) - £3.50 per hour (£3.70ph from April 2018)
- Create opportunities for your Apprentice to work alongside experienced staff
- enable them to learn job-specific skills through an Apprenticeship Standard or Framework
- Include study during their working week (for example, at a college or training organisation)
- contract work for a minimum of 30 hours per week – this is flexible within schools

There is never a guarantee of a job at the end of an Apprenticeship, however, 9 out of 10 Apprentices do stay with their employer and progress further. If schools do not have the opportunities available our role is to ensure that we do not lose that individual and they have access to information, advice and guidance from our Learning and Development Team to ensure they can progress to another role within the organisation.

We will be developing a range of case studies from the schools that have engaged with the Apprenticeship programme to promote to a wider audience.

Apprenticeships are available in 1000's of job roles from Facilities Services (Caretaking), Business Administration, Finance, Management, Digital and Technology, Hospitality and Catering, Supporting Teaching and Learning to name but a few.

It is worth noting that schools receiving increased funding for the PE and Sports Grant in 2017-2018 can be used to pay the salary of an Apprentice employed to enhance school PE and Sport provision. The schools levy allocation can then pay for the Apprenticeship Training.

One of our priority groups is Walsall Care Leavers. As a Council we are ring-fencing Apprenticeship vacancies for Care Leavers and we have already supported 4 Care Leavers into Apprenticeships through a Pre Apprenticeship Programme.

Please remember Apprenticeships are open to all ages now from 16 years to 64, for new recruits and for existing staff and at levels 2 to 7 which is equivalent to a Masters Degree. The Apprenticeship Levy really does represent an excellent opportunity to enhance the skills and competencies of the workforce at a time of rapid change and transformation.

If you would like to discuss Apprenticeships especially Recruiting an Apprentice to your team then please get in contact with Helena Baxter Helena.baxter@walsall.gov.uk or 07767 615214 for any Apprenticeship information, advice and guidance.