



Supporting Every Step: Career Guidance for Those Working with Vulnerable Young People

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Introduction

Supporting young people on their journey towards successful careers and employment is a critical task, especially for those from vulnerable groups. In recent years, significant strides have been taken to improve opportunities for these groups, ensuring they are not overlooked, and that effective transitions and provisions are implemented. For example, initiatives have been developed for disadvantaged young people and those with Special Educational Needs (SEND). However, there is still much work to be done.

At The Careers & Enterprise Company, we are committed to ensuring that all young people are supported to make their best next step. To achieve this, we must equip the trusted adults working with young people with the appropriate knowledge and understanding to support them effectively. We recognise that some groups, such as those from Gypsy Roma Traveller communities, Care Experienced young people, and young carers, may still be at risk of not receiving an effective careers programme tailored to meet their specific needs. These young people often face unique challenges that can hinder their educational and career aspirations. By addressing these challenges, we can help them overcome barriers and support them to achieve their full potential.

This guide is designed to support educators, Careers Leaders, career advisors and all trusted adults working with young people with practical strategies and insights to better support these vulnerable groups. Employers may also find the guidance valuable when engaging with young people who face additional barriers. By understanding their specific needs and barriers, we can create more inclusive and effective careers education programs. Our goal is to ensure that every young person, regardless of their background, can achieve their full potential and succeed in their chosen career paths.

Through this guide, we will explore tailored approaches to careers education, highlight best practices, and direct you to organisations that can offer additional support. We will also provide resources to help bridge the gap between these young people and their future employment opportunities.

Together, we can make a positive impact on the lives of all young people, fostering an equitable and supportive environment for everyone.



Context

Young people from Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) communities, those who are care-experienced, and young carers face unique challenges that make them particularly vulnerable. These groups often encounter significant barriers to education, such as frequent relocation, disrupted schooling, and additional responsibilities at home.

Unfortunately, teachers may not always have the knowledge or resources to fully understand and support these young people effectively. This lack of understanding can lead to unmet needs, hindering their educational progress and overall well-being.

It is crucial for educators to receive appropriate training and resources to better support these vulnerable students to take their best next step and help them overcome their specific challenges. Here are some key points for each group:

- **Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) Community:** GRT students face cultural misunderstandings and discrimination, frequent travel disruptions, and limited access to educational resources, all of which hinder their trust in institutions, consistent attendance, and academic progress.
- **Care Experienced:** Care Experienced young people often face disrupted education and social relationships due to frequent foster care changes, trauma impacting their mental health and learning, and a need for tailored support systems.
- **Young Carers:** Young carers often face overwhelming time constraints, emotional stress, and a lack of recognition, which can lead to absenteeism, reduced academic performance, and unmet needs.

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses cultural sensitivity, targeted support programs, and collaboration among schools, families, and community services. By recognising and understanding these specific challenges, educators can provide better support to these vulnerable learners, helping them to achieve their future goals.

In the following pages of this guide, we will delve deeper into the challenges and barriers faced by these groups of young people. We will also provide practical guidance and actions for educators to implement in their settings, ensuring that these young people are supported in finding their best next steps.

Additionally, you may find the 2024 National System Review report, titled '[Driving Equity and Tackling Disadvantage Through Your Provision](#),' particularly useful when planning and implementing career provisions for disadvantaged young people.



Careers Education

Vulnerable learners, including those from the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) community, Care Experienced young people and young carers can face significant challenges around their careers education. One major issue is their lack of understanding of career pathways, often exacerbated by irregular attendance meaning they miss valuable careers activity to support them in making informed decisions about their next steps. This inconsistency in schooling can leave them unaware of the various educational and career opportunities available and can mean they lack the skills and information to support them in making effective transitions.

Additionally, travel requirements present a considerable challenge. Accessing post-16 education or employment opportunities often necessitates reliable transportation, which can be difficult for these young people due to frequent relocations or limited access to transport. This issue can be a huge barrier to workplace experiences. Challenges such as long-distance travel, unfamiliar environments, and the need to interact with new people can be daunting and discouraging.

Limited aspirations due to home life commitments and past experiences can hinder their career ambitions. Many of these young people have significant responsibilities at home or have faced challenging circumstances that limit their ability to envision and pursue long-term career goals. These factors collectively create a complex web of obstacles that require targeted support and interventions to help these vulnerable young people succeed in their educational and career pursuits.

It is therefore essential that appropriate and realistic careers education provision is planned, personalised, and considerate of the unique circumstances these groups of young people face. Developing positive and trusting relationships with the adults they work with is a key ingredient for successful and meaningful careers education for these young people.

In the following pages, we will delve into the experiences of young people from each of these groups. By understanding their journeys, we will gain valuable insights into the factors that helped or hindered their education and career development. This will highlight specific strategies and actions educators can take to better support future young people from these vulnerable groups around their career's education.





Challenges and Prejudices

Navigating careers education can be particularly challenging for young people who are Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT), care experienced, or young carers. These groups often face unique barriers and prejudices that can hinder their educational and career prospects.

These disadvantaged groups of young people encounter significant obstacles that impede their progress. Instability and frequent changes in their home lives can lead to educational gaps and inconsistent mentorship, while lower expectations from educators and employers further exacerbate these issues. Balancing these challenges and their home lives with educational and career aspirations can be particularly difficult.

Addressing these challenges requires a nuanced and empathetic approach within careers education. It involves recognising the specific needs and strengths of these young people, providing tailored support, and actively working to dismantle the prejudices they face. By doing so, we can create a more inclusive and supportive environment that empowers all young people to achieve their full potential.

As we progress through the guide, we will delve deeper into the challenges and prejudices faced by these identified groups.



Gypsy Roma and Traveller (GRT) Community: Challenges and Prejudices

The Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) community faces a variety of obstacles and biases. These can affect young people directly or indirectly and can also experience discrimination, and stereotyping. This can significantly impact their outlook, goals, perspectives, and future ambitions. As professionals, we recognise that experiences during formative and school years can have lasting positive or negative effects. Even a single adverse experience from the list below can profoundly influence a young person's journey and decision-making regarding their future and career. Some of the challenges and prejudices faced by GRT young people include, but are not limited to:

- **Stereotyping:** GRT communities are often unfairly labelled as untrustworthy, criminal, or anti-social, perpetuated by media and societal biases.
- **Racial Profiling:** GRT members frequently face racial profiling by authorities, leading to unfair treatment and exclusion from public spaces.
- **Social Exclusion:** GRT individuals often experience denial of access to services, housing, and employment, reinforcing a sense of being unwanted in society.
- **Educational Barriers:** GRT children often face obstacles in education, including bullying, low expectations from teachers, and lack of cultural understanding in schools.
- **Health Inequalities:** GRT communities suffer from significant health disparities, such as lower life expectancy, higher rates of chronic illness, and limited access to healthcare.
- **Housing Discrimination:** GRT families sometimes struggle to find suitable housing due to discrimination from landlords and local authorities.

Mitigating Challenges for GRT Young People

Outlined below are suggestions to ensure that young people from Gypsy Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities are not disadvantaged and receive high-quality careers education that acknowledges their culture and traditions, providing opportunities for progressive, ambitious, and realistic career pathways.

Clear Procedures: When planning any careers activity ensure GRT young people are supported to access the activity through institution wide policies to address racism, bullying, and inequalities affecting GRT young people.

Engagement Strategies: Develop strategies for meaningful engagement with GRT parents, considering cultural norms and barriers to support them in understanding the purpose behind the career's activity and the intended outcomes for their young person in line with cultural values and beliefs.

Early Career Guidance: Primary schools should partner with secondary schools or youth provision organisations to provide introductory careers guidance and education for GRT pupils at primary level to try to support continuation in education and its value in supporting young people to achieve positive career outcomes.

Reducing NEET: Ensure careers activities are planned with acknowledgement of the GRT communities' challenges and barriers and ensure they are supported to access all aspects of the careers programme to build aspiration and support a reduction in.

Special Educational Needs: When planning careers activity and tailoring your programme to meet individual needs recognise and address the special educational needs of GRT young people, which may be masked by other challenges and equip them with the support they need to access the programme.

These approaches cultivate a welcoming and inclusive setting, empowering GRT young people to enjoy a positive educational experience, aim for higher achievements, and flourish.



Care Experienced Young People: Challenges and Prejudices

Care experienced young people previously referred to as Looked after Children (LAC) are often faced with many hurdles and barriers in their educational paths, which can greatly influence their aspirations and career opportunities. One of the primary challenges is lower school attainment. This can be attributed to frequent changes in living arrangements, which often lead to disruptions in schooling and a lack of continuity in their education. Additionally, care experienced young people may lack positive role models and face low expectations from carers and advisers, further hindering their academic progress.

Some of the challenges faced by care experienced young people include, but are not limited to:

- **Stability and Continuity:** Frequent changes in foster care placements can disrupt their education and social relationships.
- **Trauma and Mental Health:** Many care experienced young people have experienced trauma, which can impact their ability to concentrate, form relationships, and engage in learning.
- **Support Systems:** They often require tailored support and interventions to address their specific emotional and educational needs.

Mitigating Challenges for Care Experienced Young People

Mitigating the challenges faced by care experienced young people around careers education, requires a multi-faceted approach. Here are some strategies that can help:

Access to Information and Resources: Offer clear and accessible information about all career pathways, financial aid, and support services. Schools and colleges can provide tailored guidance sessions and workshops to help navigate the application process.

Positive Role Models and Mentorship: Connecting young people with positive role models and mentors can inspire and motivate them. Mentorship programs provide guidance, encouragement, and practical advice for setting and achieving educational and career goals. This is particularly impactful when mentors are alumni, care experienced and can demonstrate positive progression.

Career Guidance and Work Experience: Offer targeted career guidance and work experience opportunities to help young people develop essential skills and build confidence. Collaborate with local businesses to create personalised, tailored approaches that meet individual needs. This can include internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing programs, ensuring a comprehensive and supportive pathway to career success.

Addressing Stigma and Discrimination: Raise awareness and promote understanding of the challenges faced by care experienced young people to reduce stigma and discrimination. Training for educators, employers, and support staff can foster a more inclusive environment.

Support Systems: Provide comprehensive support addressing both academic and emotional needs, including counselling services, peer support groups, and extracurricular activities. Regularly assess and adjust support programs based on feedback from the young people to ensure their effectiveness and relevance.

These strategies foster a more supportive and inclusive environment, helping care-experienced young people overcome barriers and fully access the full breadth of a careers programme.



Young Carers: Challenges and Prejudices

Young carers face significant challenges and prejudices that shape their educational experiences and career aspirations. Balancing substantial caregiving responsibilities with academic commitments often leads to frequent absences and reduced focus on studies, making it difficult to meet educational milestones. This persistent absenteeism can result in lower grades and attainment, further exacerbating their educational disadvantages. Additional challenges faced by young carers include, but are not limited to:

- **Academic Challenges:** Young carers frequently encounter prejudices and misunderstandings from peers and educators. Their caregiving responsibilities are often overlooked, resulting in insufficient support within the school environment. Additionally, their commitment to caregiving can restrict their aspirations, leading them to primarily consider careers within the care industry.
- **Lack of Support:** Many young carers are not identified by local authorities or schools, resulting in inconsistent support. This “postcode lottery” means some young carers receive little to no assistance, leaving them to manage their responsibilities alone.
- **Social Isolation:** The stigma associated with being a young carer can also lead to social isolation and bullying, further impacting their mental health and well-being.
- **Careers Education:** Young carers face substantial career development challenges. Their caregiving responsibilities often restrict their participation in extracurricular activities, work experience, and career workshops, reducing opportunities to explore various career paths and develop essential skills. Consequently, they may miss many aspects of the school's careers program, limiting their potential outcomes. Additionally, they are less likely to pursue higher education, which can further restrict their career options and perpetuate disadvantage.

Addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts from schools, local authorities, and policymakers to ensure young carers receive the support they need to succeed academically and in their careers. Recognising their unique circumstances and providing targeted interventions can help young carers overcome barriers and achieve their goals.

Mitigating Challenges for Young Carers

To help young carers overcome their challenges and access career programs, a variety of support systems can be implemented to address their specific needs and obstacles. Some of these include:

Educational Support: Schools can offer flexible schedules, assignment extensions, and access to tutoring and homework clubs. Implementing adaptable career programs ensures young carers do not miss opportunities. Training staff to recognise young carers and providing confidential discussions can also be beneficial.

Peer Support Groups: Establishing a supportive community with alumni can significantly boost career aspirations for young carers. These groups provide a safe space where young carers can connect, share experiences, and offer advice. The encouragement and support from peers in similar situations are immensely beneficial.

Emotional and Mental Health Support: Access to counselling and mental health services is essential for young carers, as it can help them fully engage with career programs.

Practical and Financial Assistance: Local councils and trusts have a duty to assess the needs of young carers and provide appropriate support, such as care workers to assist with daily tasks and personal care, alleviating some of their responsibilities so that greater focus can be given to study. Financial assistance programs can also help cover caregiving costs.

Career and Future Planning: Career guidance and mentoring programs can help young carers explore their career options and plan. Schools and organisations can facilitate work experience opportunities and provide resources for higher education applications and scholarships.

Legal and Advocacy Support: Young carers have certain legal rights under acts like the Children Act 1989 and the Children and Families Act 2014. Advocacy organisations can help young carers understand their rights and access the support to which they are entitled.

By implementing these systems, young carers can better balance their caregiving responsibilities with their educational and personal development, helping them to thrive.



Educational Settings

Disadvantaged young people, including those identified as Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT), care experienced, and young carers, are present in all types of educational settings, offering unique opportunities and challenges.

These settings encompass primary and secondary schools, as well as further education institutions like colleges and sixth forms. Additionally, some of these young people may be home educated.

Many young people from these identified groups, begin their educational journey in mainstream schools, where they may face difficulties due to frequent changes or challenges in their home life and the need for additional support. These disruptions can impact their academic progress and social integration, making it essential for schools to provide tailored support and stability. In some cases, it may be appropriate for these young people to access their education at special schools, colleges, or alternative provisions.

By understanding the diverse educational settings attended by disadvantaged young people, we can better appreciate the unique challenges they face and work towards creating more inclusive and supportive learning environments.

In the following pages, we will explore how educational settings collaborate with these groups of young people, the successful strategies they employ, and the resources available to provide support.



Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT): Educational Settings

Traditionally, many GRT families have valued practical, hands-on learning over formal education, influencing their children's educational choices. However, there is a growing recognition of the importance of formal education in providing broader career opportunities and essential life skills.

Many GRT children attend mainstream schools, benefiting from the national curriculum and structured environment. However, these schools may not address their unique cultural needs, leading to feelings of exclusion. To address this, some schools offer cultural awareness training for staff and inclusive policies. For example, [Inclusive Services Training by Friends, Families and Travellers](#), aims to make services more accessible for Gypsy and Traveller communities by increasing knowledge of their cultures, traditions, and histories, using personal experiences and real-life stories to highlight their challenges.

Some GRT young people attend alternative education settings like pupil referral units (PRUs) or special schools, which offer smaller classes, individualised plans, and flexible education.

Home education is also popular, allowing parents to tailor the curriculum to their children's needs and interests, though it requires significant parental commitment and may limit social interaction.

We know that education plays a critical role in shaping employment pathways. Traditional schooling may not align with GRT cultural values, leading to lower attainment and higher dropout rates. Early career guidance, flexible schooling, and culturally sensitive support can help GRT students stay engaged and achieve better outcomes, creating equitable employment pathways.

Programmes and Initiatives

Below are several programs and initiatives designed to support those working with GRT young people on their careers education journey. These programs will help you understand the challenges faced by young people from GRT communities and recognise the unique barriers they encounter when accessing effective careers education programs. By tailoring and personalising the offer, you can ensure accessibility and engagement.

[Gypsy Roma and Traveller Achievement and Inclusion](#): This initiative provides training to develop whole staff awareness of GRT culture, history, and traditions. It also introduces strategies to overcome barriers to education for GRT pupils and their families and offers advice on parental and community engagement.

[Diverse Educators' Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller Inclusion Toolkit](#): This toolkit offers resources to help educators better understand and support GRT communities. It includes guidance on identifying and understanding GRT communities, strategies to challenge misrepresentation and misunderstanding and practical advice on adapting educational practices to be more inclusive.

[The Traveller Movement, Education CPD Training for School](#): Training for schools and local authorities that supports the understanding issues facing Gypsy, Roma & Traveller children, young people, and their families in accessing good quality education.

[Inclusive Services Training by Friends, Families and Travellers](#): This training focuses on making services more accessible for GRT communities and includes real-life stories to highlight challenges faced by GRT people.

[Gypsy and Traveller Cultural Awareness](#) (Online Pre-recorded): This training is suitable for anyone working with and supporting GRT communities, particularly school and educational setting staff. It covers the different Traveller communities, their unique cultural aspects and the challenges and barriers they face.



Care Experienced Young People: Educational Settings

Care experienced young people attend a variety of educational settings. Many begin their educational journey in mainstream schools but often face disruptions due to frequent changes in living arrangements. These disruptions can impact their academic progress and social integration, making it crucial for schools to provide tailored support and stability.

In some cases, it may be appropriate for care experienced young people to access their education at special schools, colleges, or alternative provisions. Regardless of the setting, the key factor is that they receive the right support and access to resources. A vital component of this support is the Personal Education Plan (PEP), which ensures their educational needs are met and helps them achieve their full potential.

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

The PEP supports the educational progress of care experienced young people and is part of their Care Plan. It is a document developed collaboratively by the young person, their social worker, caregiver, designated teacher, and virtual school representative.

As outlined in the Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children statutory guidance:

“The PEP should cover the full range of education and development needs including:

- **careers advice and guidance and financial information about further and higher education, training and employment.** Discussions about longer term goals should start early and, ideally, well before Year 9 (age 13-14) at school. High aspirations are crucial to successful planning for the future. They should focus on the child or young person’s strengths and capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve.”

Key elements of a PEP include:

- **Achievements and Strengths:** Highlighting the young person’s accomplishments and areas where they excel.
- **Student Perspectives:** Incorporating the young person’s views and aspirations.
- **SMART Academic Goals:** Setting Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound targets to guide their educational journey.

The creation and implementation of the PEP require close collaboration between the school and local authority. The designated teacher ensures the PEP accurately reflects the young person’s educational needs, progress, and career aspirations. Regular meetings and reviews monitor development and adjust the plan, as necessary. Additional funding provided as part of the PEP process, and its allocation and usage must be clearly identified.

Starting careers conversations early is crucial for care-experienced young people. These discussions build aspiration and self-confidence, essential for navigating education and career planning. By initiating these conversations well before Year 9, educators and caregivers give young people ample time to explore interests, strengths, career paths, set realistic goals and it allows for personalised career guidance.

Focusing on their strengths and capabilities inspires care experienced young people to aim high and pursue ambitions, boosting self-esteem and providing a clear roadmap for the future. It encourages participation in work experience and extracurricular activities to enhance skills and employability.

Early career planning can help to mitigate disadvantages care experienced young people often face. Addressing aspirations and career goals from an early age allows for targeted support and interventions to overcome barriers. This support includes mentoring, resources, and tailored educational programs aligned with career interests. Early careers conversations ensure care experienced young people have the tools and confidence to achieve their goals.

Programmes and Initiatives

Below are several programs and initiatives designed to support professionals and parents/carers working with care-experienced young people, especially in the realms of education and career development. These initiatives aim to address the unique challenges faced by care-experienced young people, providing them with the necessary support to succeed academically and in their future careers.

Become Charity: They offer practical and affordable training for professionals and carers working with care-experienced young people. Their programs aim to increase awareness and knowledge, helping educators feel confident in supporting these young people effectively.

Parental Engagement in Careers Education: This suite of resources including the [FREE Parental Engagement CPD](#), support parents and carers to have constructed careers and education conversations with their child.

Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust: They provide courses that include lectures, seminars, and case presentations to help educators understand the lives and adverse experiences of care-experienced children and young people.

Whole Council Approach by Local Government Association: This initiative encourages councils to adopt a comprehensive approach to supporting care leavers. It involves treating care experience as a protected characteristic, ensuring that care experienced individuals receive the necessary support for stable home lives, preparation for adulthood, and independent living.

Wider Education Workforce: Careers Conversations: This short course is designed to highlight how the wider education workforce plays a key role in supporting young people to make informed choices about their best next step and potential career pathway. When referring to the 'wider education workforce' we include those in roles such as pastoral within education and those who support young people through other relationships such as social workers, case workers, youth workers and specialist support.





Young Carers: Educational Settings

Young carers attend all educational settings, but it is important to recognise that some may not be immediately visible. Therefore, staff training is essential to effectively identify and support these young people.

Attendance

Research indicates that young carers are more likely to experience educational difficulties, with many missing school days and struggling to keep up with their studies. This was a key finding in this report, [Caring and classes: the education gap for young carers, 2024](#). Key findings from the report include:

- Young carers are missing on average 23 days of school every year – that is more than a month in total.
- Almost half of young carers at secondary school are ‘persistently absent.’
- Only 46% of teachers think their school provides the support young carers need, while 23% of young carers say they get no support at all.

Elevated levels of absenteeism can lead to lower academic attainment and an increased risk of not being in education, employment, or training (NEET).

Given these challenges, early and ongoing careers conversations are crucial for helping young carers navigate their educational and career paths. By discussing their aspirations and goals, educators and caregivers can provide the necessary guidance and support to overcome barriers. Tailored interventions, such as flexible schooling options, mentoring, and access to career resources, can help young carers balance their responsibilities with their academic commitments.

Addressing the support gap for young carers requires a concerted effort from educators, policymakers, and support organisations. By working together, we can ensure young carers have the resources and encouragement they need to succeed both academically and in their future careers.

Programmes and Initiatives

Below are several programs and initiatives designed to support professionals working with young carers and their work can support in enabling access to a careers programme. These initiatives aim to help professionals identify young carers within their settings and provide appropriate support.

[Carers Trust](#) offers comprehensive training modules designed to help professionals identify and support young carers. These modules cover topics such as the impact of caring on young carers, how to approach conversations with young carers and their families, and safeguarding issues.

[The Children's Society](#): This organisation offers comprehensive training and consultancy services. Their programs are responsive to local needs and provide current information and solutions to support young carers.

[Action for Children](#): This organisation provides information and guidance on who young carers are and what their responsibilities might include. They offer practical and emotional support to ensure young people can enjoy their childhood.

By providing targeted support and understanding the unique challenges faced by young carers, educational institutions can help these young people succeed despite the demands of their caregiving roles.



Pathways

It is important to recognise that many individuals within the vulnerable groups discussed in this guide also have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), which can further complicate their pathways to employment. For young people from Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) communities, care-experienced backgrounds, and those who are young carers, the intersectionality of their experiences often means they face multiple barriers. These barriers can include disrupted education, limited access to resources, and additional responsibilities at home. When combined with SEND, these challenges can be even more pronounced. Therefore, it is crucial that career provisions are tailored to address these overlapping needs, providing comprehensive support and inclusive opportunities. By doing so, we can ensure that all young people, regardless of their background or educational needs, have the chance to achieve their employment goals and contribute meaningfully to society.

There are now a range of pathways to employment for young people, designed to cater to a variety of interests, skills, educational backgrounds, needs, and disabilities. These pathways provide options and choices for all, aiming to equip young people with the necessary skills, experience, and support to transition smoothly into the workforce.

Further Education and Vocational Training

One of the primary pathways is through [further education](#) and vocational training. Young people can enrol in colleges or vocational schools to pursue qualifications such as [A-levels, BTECs, or T-Levels](#). These programs often include practical components like work placements or internships, which provide valuable hands-on experience. Additionally, many institutions offer specialised courses tailored to specific industries, helping students gain the skills needed for their chosen careers.

For young people with SEND, many colleges and training providers offer specialised courses and programs designed to meet their unique needs. These programs often include practical skills training, work experience placements, and support from job coaches. [Supported internships](#), for example, are a popular option where young people spend a sizeable portion of their time in a workplace, gaining hands-on experience while receiving support from both their educational institution and the employer. This approach ensures that all young people, regardless of their educational needs, can develop the skills and experience necessary for successful employment.

Apprenticeships

[Apprenticeships](#) are another significant pathway to employment, combining on-the-job training with classroom instruction and allowing young people to earn while they learn. Available in a wide range of sectors from traditional trades like construction and engineering to modern industries such as digital technology and healthcare, apprenticeships provide a structured route to gaining industry-recognised qualifications and practical experience, making apprenticeships highly attractive to employers.

[Inclusive apprenticeships](#) are particularly valuable for young people with SEND. These apprenticeships are designed to be flexible and personalised, accommodating individual needs while providing on-the-job training in various industries. This approach not only helps young people develop specific job skills but also boosts their confidence and independence, ensuring they are well-prepared for successful careers.

Higher Education

For those interested in higher education, university degrees remain a popular pathway. Many universities offer comprehensive career services, including internships, placement years, and industry partnerships, to help young people gain relevant work experience during their studies. Additionally, some universities offer degree apprenticeships, which combine university study with paid work in a related field.

Universities also provide dedicated support services for students with SEND. These services often include personalised learning plans, assistive technology, and adjustments to teaching methods and assessment procedures to accommodate individual needs. Specialised support staff, such as disability advisors and mentors, are available to help students navigate their academic and social environments. For specific information about the support available, it is best to contact the individual universities directly. They can provide detailed information on the resources and assistance they offer, general information can be found [here](#).

Entrepreneurship Programs and Self-Employment

Entrepreneurship programs and self-employment offer promising pathways for young people enthusiastic about starting their own businesses. Various organisations and initiatives provide training, mentorship, and funding opportunities to help young entrepreneurs turn their ideas into successful ventures. Nationwide organisations such as [Entrepreneurs Unlocked](#), [SAMEE](#), and [The King's Trust](#) specialise in working with young people with SEND. They offer workshops and resources that build confidence, develop entrepreneurial skills, and support the creation of new business ventures. These initiatives not only foster independence and creativity but also create inclusive environments where young people with SEND can thrive and contribute to the economy.

Parent/Carer Engagement

An essential aspect of educating young people about their career options is upskilling parents and carers. By enhancing their understanding of various career pathways, parents and carers can better support their children in making informed decisions about their futures. The [Parental Engagement in Careers Education](#) resources from [The Careers & Enterprise Company](#) are designed to assist in this process, providing valuable information and guidance to help parents and carers effectively support their children's career planning.



Resources

Here are some valuable resources that can help you explore pathways to employment:

[Engaging Parents and Carers in ATE Pathways: Resources for parents/carers](#): Use the Careers Leader Guide to help you plan out a progressive journey for parents to engage with these resources as they support their child through informed conversation, to decide upon their best next step.

[Engaging Parents and Carers in ATE Pathways: Resources for Staff](#): These resources could be included as part of a welcome pack for new teachers, form part of staff CPD, a handout or guidance shared with teachers or form tutors at key careers-focused points or ahead of parent and carer engagement opportunities e.g. parents evenings or other progress and review events.

[NTLT - Vocational Pathways](#): These resources have been developed by North Tyneside Learning Trust as part of a transition project. Based on four growth areas a vocational box has been created for download.

[Pathways Posters - My Skills My Future](#): These posters show potential pathways for young people at the age of 16. Developed with the support of the Birmingham SEND Careers Hub the posters are relevant for those typically not likely to take GCSE (Career Group 1) and those typically likely (Career Group 2).

[Technical Education Pathways Resource](#): Created in partnership with the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP), these resources are designed to explain the pathways available to young people as well as promoting the wider work of the Training Provider (ITP) sector.

[Worcestershire Inclusive Employment - Your Pathways Magazine](#): This magazine aims to act as your guide as both you and your young person navigate the working world: providing answers to your questions, giving you helpful tips and activities, and linking you to various resources for more information.

In the following pages, we will explore key considerations for specific pathways tailored to Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) communities, care experienced individuals, and young carers. This section will provide valuable guidance and useful resources to support these groups in navigating their unique career journeys.



Pathways to Employment for Gypsy Roma Traveller Young People

Traditional pathways to employment for Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) young people can differ significantly from those of the general population, due to cultural norms, educational experiences, and societal biases. Understanding these pathways is crucial for developing effective support strategies and for enabling effective transitions. It is important to still support GRT YP to understand all the options available to them and enable them with the skills and knowledge they need to make informed choices.

Family and Community Networks

One common pathway for GRT young people is through family and community networks. Many GRT families have a strong tradition of self-employment and entrepreneurship, often in trades such as construction, landscaping, and market trading. Young people frequently learn skills and gain work experience by collaborating with family members in these businesses. This direct, practical approach to learning can be highly effective, though it may limit exposure to broader career options.

To broaden their career horizons, consider leveraging these experiences to enable multiple opportunities in different trades or within a company. Encourage GRT young people to explore internships, apprenticeships, and work placements in various fields. By doing so, you can help them build a versatile skill set and open doors to new opportunities.

Additionally, upskilling parents about career options through the [Parental Engagement in Careers Education](#) resources from [The Careers & Enterprise Company](#) can help them support their children in making informed decisions about their futures.

Further Education

GRT young people face unique challenges in accessing further education, but there are numerous opportunities and support systems designed to help them succeed. Colleges often have dedicated support services to assist GRT students, such as mentoring programs, financial aid, and career guidance, ensuring they have the resources to thrive in their studies.

[The Education People](#) provide a range of training and resources to schools and colleges to help them create inclusive environments for GRT students. This includes strategies to overcome barriers to education, such as addressing attendance issues and promoting parental and community engagement. As part of the transition piece reach out to your local FE and Post 16 providers to find out what services and support, they can offer.

Vocational Training and Apprenticeships

Vocational training and apprenticeships offer GRT young people the chance to gain formal qualifications and practical skills that are highly valued in the job market. However, accessing these opportunities can be challenging due to discrimination, lack of awareness, and limited support. Tailored vocational training programs that consider the cultural context and needs of GRT communities can help bridge this gap and open new career possibilities.

Creating apprenticeship opportunities for GRT students requires collaboration between schools, colleges, local employers, and community organisations. Building relationships with local businesses through networking events, business associations, and direct outreach is key. Providing employers with awareness training about GRT culture fosters understanding and support.

Engaging with employers to understand their workforce needs helps tailor apprenticeship programs to meet both students' and employers' requirements. Promoting the benefits of hiring GRT apprentices, such as diverse perspectives and strong work ethics, encourages participation. Offering cultural awareness and mentorship programs ensures a supportive environment for GRT apprentices.

Flexible apprenticeship models, such as part-time or seasonal options, can accommodate GRT students' unique needs. Collaborating with community organisations provides additional support and resources. Continuous monitoring and publicising successful stories can inspire more employers to participate and encourage other GRT students to pursue these opportunities.

By taking these steps, schools and colleges can create a supportive environment that promotes successful apprenticeship opportunities for GRT students, helping them gain valuable skills and improve their career prospects.



Higher Education

Recent data from the report [“Gypsies, Roma and Travellers: The Ethnic Minorities Most Excluded from UK Education”](#) indicates that only around 660 Gypsy or Traveller students are registered in higher education. This highlights significant underrepresentation and the urgent need to address barriers faced by GRT communities.

Improving GRT representation in universities requires a multifaceted approach. Early engagement and outreach programs, such as campus visits, summer schools, and mentoring schemes, can raise awareness and inspire aspirations for higher education from primary and secondary school levels.

Training university staff on GRT culture and challenges fosters an inclusive environment, reducing prejudice and making GRT students feel welcome. Providing targeted financial support, such as scholarships and bursaries, can alleviate material barriers and cover tuition fees, living expenses, and other costs.

Offering flexible learning options, such as part-time courses, online learning, and modular programs, accommodates the unique lifestyles and needs of GRT students, making higher education more accessible.

Take the initiative to connect with your local universities and explore the support they offer for Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) students. Establishing mentorship programs and highlighting successful GRT individuals can provide invaluable guidance, inspiration, and help challenge stereotypes. Collaborate with GRT community organisations to co-create culturally relevant programs and initiatives, ensuring their needs and perspectives are considered.

By implementing these strategies, universities can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for GRT students, improving their representation and success in higher education. Reach out today and start building these essential partnerships to make a lasting impact on the educational journeys of GRT young people.

Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) young people need to be aware of the wide range of educational opportunities available to them and believe that further

and higher education is a realistic option. Building their confidence to navigate their educational journeys, including approaching further education colleges and universities, is crucial. Overcoming the challenge of being the first in their families to attend university and the perception of higher education as a white, middle-class domain is essential.

Hearing success stories from GRT alumni who have navigated these pathways can be incredibly inspiring and motivating. Alumni can serve as role models, demonstrating that higher education is attainable and valuable, and can help break down stereotypes and barriers.

While boosting confidence and self-belief is crucial, it must be paired with tangible improvements in educational outcomes. Enhancing academic performance, particularly at GCSE level, is essential to making further and higher education attainable for GRT young people. To break the cycle of low educational progression, support for GRT students must be targeted, specific, personalised, and sustained. This approach ensures that GRT young people receive the necessary guidance and resources to succeed in their educational and career aspirations. For more detailed guidance on this approach, refer to the [“Driving Equity and Tackling Disadvantage Through Your Careers Provision: Educator Guide.”](#) developed following a recent National System Review focused on addressing disadvantage through careers education.

In conclusion, addressing the unique employment pathways for GRT young people requires a comprehensive and culturally sensitive approach. By leveraging family and community networks, vocational training, apprenticeships, and higher education, we can create a more inclusive and supportive environment that acknowledges and respects the distinct cultural context of GRT communities. To achieve this, it is essential to foster collaboration between educational institutions, local employers, and community organisations. Tailored programs that provide practical skills, formal qualifications, and flexible learning options can help bridge the gap and open new career possibilities for GRT young people. By promoting cultural awareness, offering targeted financial support, and highlighting successful role models, we can inspire and empower GRT students to pursue their aspirations and contribute meaningfully to the workforce.



Pathways – Care Experienced Young People

Care-experienced young people often face unique challenges that can impact their career pathways, but with the right support and resources, they can achieve positive outcomes. One of the key strategies is to provide tailored career guidance that considers their individual experiences and aspirations. This involves creating personalised career plans that outline clear steps and milestones, helping them navigate the complexities of career choices and educational opportunities. Young people aged 16 to 19 who are attending a publicly funded school, college, or training course may be eligible for a bursary to assist with education-related expenses. For more information, please visit [this link](#).

Further Education

Colleges offer a wide range of courses, from both academic to vocational training in a variety of subjects and sectors. To support care-experienced young people to succeed in their educational journeys they often provide tailored support services including help with; financial assistance (including bursaries, grants, and scholarships) to help cover living expenses, and other educational costs, reducing the financial burden on these students. Additionally, colleges often provide priority access to year-round accommodation, ensuring a stable and secure living environment, including support during holidays.

Dedicated support staff, such as care leaver advisors or mentors, offer personalised guidance and assistance with academic planning, personal issues, and accessing additional resources. Mental health and wellbeing services, including counselling, peer support groups, and wellbeing programs, help students manage stress, build resilience, and maintain their mental health.

Career development support is also available, with colleges offering career guidance, work experience opportunities, internships, apprenticeships, job fairs, and career counselling. To foster a sense of community and belonging, colleges organise social events, clubs, and activities, helping care-experienced students build friendships and support networks.

By offering comprehensive support services, colleges foster an inclusive and nurturing environment that empowers care experienced young people to reach their full potential. To learn more about the available support, contact the colleges in your area.

Vocational Training and Apprenticeships

Vocational training and apprenticeships are valuable pathways for care-experienced young people. These programs offer hands-on experience and practical skills that can lead directly to employment. Find out about apprenticeships and what help is available for care leavers in the [Amazing Apprenticeships care leavers guide](#). Organisations like the [Career Matters Thrive Platform](#) provide online and face-to-face learning programs that develop skills and competencies through activities and self-directed learning. These programs are designed to support decision-making and increase knowledge of various career pathways, making them an excellent option for those who prefer a more practical approach to learning.

Higher Education

A significant barrier for care experienced young people applying to higher education is the lack of information and advice. Many are unaware of the support and resources available to them, which can lower aspirations and raise concerns about affordability, discouraging further studies. However, universities and colleges often have dedicated support services for care-experienced students, including financial aid, accommodation guarantees, tailored programs, mentoring, and counselling.

An excellent example of support for care experienced students is the package offered by Cumbria University, which includes:

- A dedicated contact within the Student Engagement Team to assist with preparation prior to starting, and throughout the course.
- Funded transport to the campus for an Offer Holder Day.
- Advice and guidance on applying and personal statements, which can be done via telephone.
- Initial Student Money meeting.
- Accommodation available 365 days a year at several locations.
- Opportunity to apply for paid Student Ambassador work.
- Request a celebratory 'Whoop/Shout Out' at the Graduation Ceremony.
- Exit package upon graduation to include future careers guidance including job hunting, CV updating and interview preparation.

Further information about this initiative can be found [here](#).

Initiatives like this offer flexible learning experiences, support for basic needs, and empowering relationships, all essential for helping care experienced young people succeed in higher education and beyond. This is just one example of a support program for care experienced young people, many other universities provide similar services, so it's recommended to contact them directly and include this information in your offer under [Gatsby Benchmark 7](#).

Resources

Below is a list of resources to assist those working with care-experienced young people in higher education or supporting the application process.

[This slide deck](#) produced by the Rees Centre's Dr Neil Harrison, summarises the seven steps that are needed to increase the number of care leavers and other care-experienced young people entering higher education in England.

[The Carer Leavers Association](#) provide information and guidance to those who are considering, or currently enrolled on, a further, or higher education course.

[Become](#) provide valuable training with helpful information about the process of applying to university for care-experienced young people and how to ensure they are supported onto and during their Higher Education journey.

[This brief](#) produced by Office for Students (OCS), looks at the obstacles young carers face and how they can be addressed, including examples of good practice and the recommendations of a recently commissioned report.

[This handbook](#) developed by [Children's Commissioner](#), helps higher education professionals recognise the challenges faced by care-experienced students and encourages the implementation of supportive policies. Covering support from pre-admissions to graduation, the handbook addresses financial assistance, social integration, career development, and overall well-being.

Download the [Higher Education Transition Pack for Care- Experienced Learners](#) developed by [Go Higher West Yorkshire](#). This resource is designed to support care-experienced learners in Year 11, 12 or 13, who are thinking about applying to higher education.

Employment

One of the primary obstacles care experienced young people are faced with when entering employment, a lack of stable support networks. Unlike their peers, care experienced individuals may not have family members or mentors to guide them through the job search process, provide career advice, or offer emotional support. This absence can make it difficult for them to navigate the complexities of the employment market and secure meaningful job opportunities.

Potential gaps in education and skills due to disruptions in their education and frequent moves or instability in living situations can also be a barrier. These disruptions can lead to lower academic attainment and fewer opportunities to develop essential skills needed for the workforce. As a result, they may find themselves at a disadvantage when competing for jobs that require specific qualifications or experience.

Employers may have misconceptions about their capabilities or reliability and care experienced young people may face stigma and discrimination in the workplace which can hinder their chances of being employed or advancing in their careers. This discrimination can be both overt and subtle, affecting their confidence and motivation to pursue their career goals.

To address these challenges, it is crucial to provide targeted support and interventions. This can include mentoring programs, career counselling, and skills development workshops tailored to the needs of care experienced young people. By offering these resources, we can help them build the confidence and competencies needed to succeed in the workforce. Furthermore, raising awareness among employers about the unique strengths and potential of care experienced individuals can help reduce stigma and create more inclusive workplaces.

There are many organisations running programmes and projects to support care experienced young people in gaining employment. Here are a few notable examples:

[Groundwork](#) run programs such as [“Care to Work.”](#) which provide intensive, trauma-informed support to care-experienced young people aged 16-25. Starting with a comprehensive 1-2-1 assessment to build a holistic understanding of their person’s needs and aspirations. Once individual goals are clear, employment coaches provide coaching, guidance and encourage joint problem solving to help young people develop stability in their lives so they can commit to work knowing they have the tools to manage their finances, home life and lifestyle.

[Grandmentors by Volunteering Matters](#): This award-winning programme connects care experienced young people with older, experienced mentors who provide emotional and practical support. The mentors help guide young people through their transition from care to independent adulthood, offering advice on education, employment, and life skills.

[Propel into Education](#) and [Propel into Work](#) are initiatives offered by the charity Become. They provide information, advice and guidance for care-experienced young people, to help them make confident choices about their education and career path, as well as providing 1:1 support with things like exploring different careers, job searching, creating or tailoring CV and cover letters, applying for jobs and apprenticeships and preparing for interviews.

[Barnardo’s](#) run the [Employment and Training for Young People in Care](#) programme which includes several courses and projects to help young people gain the skills they need to enter the world of work.

Practical interventions such as mentoring programs, career counselling, and skills development workshops are crucial. Additionally, raising awareness among employers about the unique strengths and potential of care experienced young people can help reduce stigma and create more inclusive workplaces.

By providing these comprehensive support services and fostering a collaborative effort among educators, policymakers, and support organisations, we can ensure that care experienced young people are supported in their decision-making, increase their knowledge of various career pathways, and have the tools and confidence they need to succeed in their educational and career journeys. For more detailed information and guidance, please refer to the [“Driving Equity and Tackling Disadvantage Through Your Careers Provision: Educator Guide.”](#)



Pathways – Young Carers

Young carers often encounter unique challenges that can influence their career paths. However, with the right support and resources, they can achieve successful outcomes. Tailored career guidance is crucial, as it considers their individual experiences and aspirations. Personalised career plans, outlining clear steps and milestones, can help young carers navigate the complexities of career choices and educational opportunities, ensuring they have the tools to pursue fulfilling careers.

Further Education

Young carers often face significant challenges balancing education with caregiving responsibilities. However, there are numerous further education opportunities and support systems to help them succeed. Colleges offer various courses, including vocational training and academic qualifications, providing young carers with essential skills and knowledge. These institutions often have dedicated support services to assist young carers, such as mentoring programs, financial aid, and career guidance, ensuring they have the resources to thrive in their studies. Explore the support services available in your area including local college or other educational institutions.

One key organisation that can support is [Carers Trust](#). They provide resources and [guidance to further education colleges](#) on how to support students with caring responsibilities. This includes practical tips, case studies, and recommendations for embedding support throughout the student lifecycle. Colleges are encouraged to develop tailored approaches to meet the specific needs of young carers, helping them sustain their participation in learning and achieve positive outcomes.

Many colleges offer flexible learning options, such as part-time courses and online learning, to accommodate young carers' demanding schedules. Financial support through bursaries and grants, like the [16-19 Bursary Fund](#), helps cover costs such as travel, equipment, and meals, alleviating financial pressures associated with further education.

Vocational Training and Apprenticeships

Vocational training and apprenticeships are valuable pathways for young carers. These programs offer firsthand experience and practical skills that can lead directly to employment. Programs like the [Young Carers Futures](#) delivered by Carers Trust, provide opportunities for young carers to engage in internships and employability activities with leading employers. These programs help young carers build confidence, develop essential skills, and gain valuable work experience, making them an excellent option for those who prefer a more practical approach to learning.

[Amazing Apprenticeships](#) offer a range of inspirational and informative resources to help young people explore apprenticeship opportunities. Their resources include step-by-step guides to applying for apprenticeships, information on different apprenticeship standards, and support for parents and carers. By using these resources, young carers can find apprenticeships that match their interests and career goals, further enhancing their prospects for success.

Take the next step: If you are a young carer or know someone who is, explore the support services available at your local college or educational institution. Reach out to mentors, apply for financial aid, and take advantage of career guidance programs to help you succeed. Your future is bright, and with the right support, you can achieve your educational and career goals.

Higher Education

Young carers in the UK have access to a wide range of higher education opportunities, supported by various initiatives designed to help them succeed despite their caregiving responsibilities. Universities and colleges offer diverse courses, from undergraduate degrees to vocational qualifications, equipping young carers with the skills and knowledge needed for their chosen careers.

Flexible learning options are crucial for young carers. Many universities provide part-time courses, online learning, and distance education programs to accommodate their demanding schedules. These flexible options enable young carers to balance their studies with their caregiving duties more effectively.

Additionally, many universities offer specific bursaries for young carers, helping cover expenses such as tuition fees, accommodation, and study materials.

[UCAS](#) provides comprehensive support and guidance for young carers including financial aid, academic help, mental health & wellbeing available and information about the [Carer Passport Scheme](#).

Employment

Supporting young carers in seeking employment can be challenging due to their caregiving responsibilities. However, careers programs can play a crucial role in helping employers understand and appreciate the unique skills that young carers bring to the workforce. Many employers recognise the valuable attributes young carers develop, such as multitasking, time management, and a powerful sense of responsibility. These qualities make young carers highly desirable candidates in various fields.

Through their [Young Carers Futures Programme](#), Carers Trust aims to support young carers aged 16-25 in overcoming employment barriers. This program offers job search assistance, employability workshops, and connections to potential employers. Participating in these programs helps young carers build the confidence and skills necessary to secure meaningful employment.

[THE MIX](#): Offer young people training opportunities and access to employment, along with top tips for young carers starting work. Additionally, they have created a guide to help young carers navigate transition into the workforce.

Additionally, financial support is available through the [Carer's Allowance](#), which provides a payment to help young carers manage their financial responsibilities while balancing work and caregiving. This allowance can be crucial in enabling young carers to pursue part-time or flexible work opportunities that fit their schedules.

Employers can also play a significant role by offering flexible working arrangements and understanding the unique needs of young carers. By creating supportive work environments, employers can help young carers thrive professionally while continuing to fulfil their caregiving duties.

By participating in these programs, young carers can gain the confidence and competencies needed to succeed in the workforce. Educating employers about the unique skills and capabilities of young carers can help diminish stigma and foster more inclusive work environments.



Modern Work Experience

Gatsby Benchmark 6 states that: Every learner should have first-hand experiences of workplaces to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks.

Modern work experience for all young people is fundamental for developing skills, confidence, and career prospects. For disadvantaged young people and those in identified groups such as Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT), Care Experienced, and young carers opportunities are even more crucial and have the potential to be extremely impactful.

The key is to start early and offer multiple, meaningful experiences with varied work experience opportunities for young people at various stages to ensure a well-rounded, careers learning journey. Collaboration between schools/ colleges, employers, and community organisations is essential.

Additional preparation and support systems for vulnerable students, including mentoring, travel assistance, and detailed planning for bespoke experiences, should be offered.

Definition of 'Meaningful' for Benchmark 6:

A meaningful experience gives the young person the opportunity to explore what it is like to work in that environment, what skills are valued in the workplace, their recruitment processes and what it takes to be successful. This could be achieved through visits to workplaces, work shadowing and/or work experience. Throughout the careers programme these experiences could be in person or a combination of in person and virtual, where appropriate.

Both the young person and employers should be supported to prepare for the experience. Additional or different support may be needed for vulnerable and disadvantaged young people and for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Expanding the concept of work experience to include diverse activities beyond traditional placements, such as industry masterclasses, virtual work experiences, and employer-led projects, is essential.

There are numerous virtual work experience programs available to support workplace experiences. These include provider-led initiatives from organisations like UCAS, Springpod, Speakers for Schools, as well as programs delivered by employers. These opportunities offer access to diverse industries and help break down geographical barriers. Participants can engage in real workplace activities and interact with professionals, gaining valuable insights and skills.

Youth Employment UK (YEUK) also offer a range of virtual work experience opportunities. Further information on these programmes can be found [here](#).

The Careers & Enterprise Company has developed a framework of progressive learning outcomes to raise the quality of work experience for learners. They have introduced equalex, a solution to modern work experience. equalex follows a tiered approach, offering a comprehensive structure that provides both breadth and depth of workplace experiences. This multi-year, multi-experience model is integrated within the curriculum and accessible to ALL learners. The model offers structure, not prescription about when and how work experience should be delivered. The flexibility, requested by employers and schools, will help foster innovative and impactful approaches. Further information can be found [here](#).

Modern work experience is transformative for disadvantaged young people, especially those identified as Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT), care-experienced, and young carers. By equipping them with essential skills, boosting their confidence, and providing robust support, these programs can level the playing field and open new doors to successful and fulfilling careers.

In the following pages, we will explore key considerations for work experience tailored to Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) communities, care experienced individuals, and young carers. We will also provide top tips for achieving success.

Modern Work Experience for Gypsy Roma, Traveller (GRT) Young People

Many Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) young people acquire valuable experience through family businesses such as construction and market trading, which instil practical skills and a strong work ethic. However, it is crucial to expose them to a wider range of careers to ensure they are fully informed about all pathways and opportunities available to them.

To ensure inclusivity, programs must respect GRT cultural contexts by offering flexible schedules and cultural awareness training for employers. Examples of such initiatives can be found across the country. For instance, the [Bright Futures program by London Gypsies and Travellers](#) provides long-term support, helping GRT young people find sustainable training and work opportunities. This initiative offers mentorship and tailored apprenticeship programs, effectively bridging the gap between education and employment. It is crucial to ensure these programs are meaningful by adhering to the [Gatsby Benchmark](#) definition for [Gatsby Benchmark 6](#), ensuring they add value and are delivered with intent and impact.

Building strong relationships with local employers, community organisations, and partners to create meaningful and diverse experiences is encouraged. Ensuring that GRT young people have access to culturally sensitive and adaptable work experience programs is essential for breaking down barriers and advancing a more equitable society.

[The equalex](#) framework developed by The Careers & Enterprise Company, provides both breadth and depth of workplace experiences. This multi-year, multi-experience model is seamlessly embedded within the curriculum, ensuring it is inclusive and accessible to all learners.

Below are some top tips to consider when planning modern work experience for GRT young people. By leveraging these strategies and promoting ongoing collaboration, we can empower GRT young people to pursue their career aspirations, make meaningful contributions to the workforce, and achieve their goals.

Top Tips

1. **Leverage Technology:** Use digital tools, apps and online platforms for remote internships and virtual work experience.
2. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Ensure work environments are inclusive and respectful of GRT cultures and provide training for staff on cultural awareness and sensitivity.
3. **Supportive Environment:** Create a supportive and encouraging work environment and address any discrimination or bias promptly and effectively.
4. **Mentorship Programs:** Connect GRT young people with mentors who understand their unique challenges and encourage regular check-ins and guidance to build confidence and skills.
5. **Flexible Scheduling:** Offer flexible work hours to accommodate different lifestyles and commitments and consider part-time or project-based work experience opportunities.
6. **Community Engagement:** Partner with local GRT communities to create tailored work experience programs and involve community leaders in planning and implementation to ensure relevance and support.

Modern Work Experience for Care Experienced Young People

Modern work experience is crucial for care experienced young people, providing them with essential skills, confidence, and opportunities often less accessible to them.

Instability in living situations and lack of support networks, can hinder the educational and career prospects of care experienced young people. Tailored work experience programs can bridge these gaps and offer pathways to meaningful employment. Here are some examples of current programmes:

Care Leaver Covenant: This program, supported by various businesses and organisations, offers work experience, pre-employment, and mentoring programs for care leavers. It aims to break down barriers to opportunity and help young people transition successfully into the workforce.

John Lewis Building Happier Futures: This programme aims to drive change for and unlock the potential of people who've experienced care. This includes an employability offer such as work experience, interview support and apprenticeships.

Programmes such as these develop practical skills and competencies valued in the job market. Through hands-on experience in various industries, young people can build robust skill sets, enhance their employability and allow them to explore different career paths. Additionally, these programs boost self-esteem and confidence, fostering a sense of achievement and self-worth, especially for those who have faced negative experiences or low expectations.

Positive interactions with employers and colleagues help build professional networks, providing valuable connections and references for future job opportunities. Mentorship and support components are also crucial, offering guidance, encouragement, and practical advice. These relationships significantly aid their transition to adulthood and independence, fostering resilience and a positive outlook on their future.

The equalex framework developed by The Careers & Enterprise Company, provides both breadth and depth of workplace experiences. This multi-year, multi-experience model is seamlessly embedded within the curriculum, ensuring it is inclusive and accessible to all learners.

Here are some top tips for developing modern work experience programs for care experienced young people. By following these tips, you can create impactful and meaningful experiences that foster their growth and development.

Top Tips

1. **Create a Supportive Environment:** Ensure the work environment is welcoming and provide a mentor for guidance.
2. **Tailor the Experience:** Customise the experience to match the young person's interests and strengths.
3. **Provide Clear Instructions:** Offer clear, concise instructions to reduce anxiety and clarify expectations.
4. **Encourage Feedback:** Establish a feedback loop to value their input and make necessary adjustments.
5. **Ensure Accessibility:** Make the experience accessible in terms of location, hours, and accommodations.
6. **Celebrate Achievements:** Recognise and celebrate their milestones to boost confidence and motivation.

It's crucial to dedicate time after the work experience to help them plan their next steps, such as job applications, further training, or connecting with industry professionals.

Modern Work Experience: Young Carers

Modern work experience is vital for young carers, offering skills and opportunities that enhance their career prospects. Their caregiving duties often limit exposure to traditional work experiences. Participating in modern programs helps them gain practical skills, build confidence, and develop independence.

Young carers bring valuable skills to employers. They excel at multitasking, balancing schoolwork with duties like shopping, cooking, and managing medication. Their reliability and punctuality are exceptional, understanding the importance of being dependable. Responsibility and leadership are integral to their daily lives.

Successful programs for young carers must be flexible and supportive. Employers should offer flexible hours, remote work options, and understanding supervisors. Mentorship programs can guide young carers, helping them build networks and receive tailored advice. By providing such work experiences, we empower young carers to overcome barriers and succeed, benefiting both them and the workforce with diverse and resilient individuals.

The virtual work experience opportunities and guides developed by [Youth Employment UK \(YEUK\)](#) offer young carers a fantastic chance to explore career options. These programs are flexible and can be tailored to fit their schedules. Further information on these programmes can be found [here](#).

Collaboration between schools, employers, and support organisations is essential. Educational settings can identify young carers and connect them with suitable programs, while support organisations provide resources like counselling and financial aid. Regular check-ins ensure the experience meets their needs and career goals.

Programs like the [Young Carers Futures](#) initiative by Carers Trust exemplify how bringing together young carers with leading brands and employers can create meaningful opportunities. By empowering young carers through these collaborative efforts, we can help them overcome barriers and succeed, enriching the workforce with their diverse and resilient contributions.

[The equalex](#) framework developed by The Careers & Enterprise Company, provides both breadth and depth of workplace experiences. This multi-year, multi-experience model is seamlessly embedded within the curriculum, ensuring it is inclusive and accessible to all learners.

Here are some top tips for planning modern work experience for young carers. By implementing these strategies and fostering collaboration, we can help young carers contribute meaningfully to the workforce and achieve their goals.

Top Tips

- 1. Understand their Responsibilities:** Recognise the unique challenges young carers face. Be flexible with schedules to accommodate their caregiving duties.
- 2. Provide a Supportive Mentor:** Assign a mentor who understands their situation and can offer guidance and emotional support throughout the placement.
- 3. Tailor the Experience:** Customise tasks to align with the young carer's interests and strengths, making the experience more engaging and relevant.
- 4. Ensure Clear Communication:** Offer clear instructions and regular check-ins to ensure they understand their tasks and feel supported.
- 5. Promote Wellbeing:** Encourage a healthy work-life balance and provide resources for mental health support if needed.
- 6. Celebrate Achievements:** Acknowledge and celebrate their accomplishments to boost their confidence and motivation.



Personal Guidance

Gatsby Benchmark 8 states that: Every pupil should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a careers adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all pupils but should be timed to meet their individual needs.

Tailored personal guidance is crucial for disadvantaged young people, particularly those who are Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT), care experienced, and young carers. This ensures they can make informed decisions about their education, career paths, and future goals.

A recent National System Review highlighted best practices in personal guidance for disadvantaged young people, revealing common successful approaches.

Schools and colleges in the Review also ensured that Careers Advisers had access to relevant information and insights to make guidance sessions effective for disadvantaged and vulnerable students, often through data sharing and collaboration with other staff members. Most schools, special schools and colleges tried to ensure that Careers Advisers providing personal guidance had access to information and insight to make meetings with disadvantaged and/or vulnerable students as impactful and effective as possible. This could involve data sharing, working closely with colleagues in different roles (e.g. pastoral or teaching staff or SENCO and careers advisors), or both.

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Personal guidance within careers education is most effective when integrated into a broader support offer. It is essential that personal guidance is not provided in isolation but as part of a comprehensive support offer. Involving key multi-agency partners throughout the process ensures a cohesive approach, addressing the diverse needs of disadvantaged young people.

Collaboration between educational institutions, social services, mental health professionals, and employment agencies fosters joined-up thinking. This holistic approach ensures that the young person receives consistent and coordinated support, enhancing their career prospects and overall well-being. By working together, these professionals can provide tailored guidance, resources, and opportunities, empowering young people to achieve their full potential.

By working together, educators, social workers, mental health professionals, parents/carers and career advisors can provide a coordinated and comprehensive support system. This integrated approach not only addresses the immediate needs of disadvantaged young people but also helps them build resilience and develop the skills required for long-term success.

For more details, refer to the “Spotlight on Personal Guidance” section of [Driving equity and tackling disadvantage through your careers provision: Educator Guide](#).

Over the next few pages, we will explore key considerations and top tips to ensure that all young people receive the personal guidance they need to make informed decisions about their education and future career paths.

Personal Guidance for Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) Young People

For Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) young people, tailored personal guidance is vital part of their careers learner journey. Here are some key considerations:

Careers advisers should be trained to understand GRT cultural backgrounds and specific needs, including barriers like discrimination.

Guidance sessions should accommodate GRT lifestyles, such as seasonal travel and cultural events.

Schools, colleges, and community organisations should work together to create an inclusive environment for GRT young people.

Ensure GRT young people have access to career resources, including vocational training, apprenticeships, and remote work experience programs.

Here are some top tips to help you effectively plan personal guidance for Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) young people as part of your careers programme:

Top Tips

1. Train career advisors to understand the **unique challenges** GRT young people face, including cultural sensitivities and barriers to education and career opportunities.
2. Offer career guidance sessions at **flexible times** to accommodate the lifestyles and commitments of GRT young people.
3. Create a **safe, confidential environment** for GRT young people to discuss their circumstances and career goals.
4. Integrate career guidance with other **support services** like mental health counselling and academic support.
5. **Engage parents or guardians** to ensure they are aware of available support and can help with career planning.
6. Provide **easy access** to resources on career options, pathways, and work experience opportunities.

Personal Guidance – Care Experienced Young People

For young carers, personal guidance in careers education is crucial due to their unique circumstances. Their responsibilities at home, such as caring for a family member, can impact school attendance, academic performance, and well-being. Tailored career guidance helps them navigate these challenges and achieve their goals.

Career advisers should provide holistic support that considers both academic and personal needs. This includes understanding their caregiving responsibilities, listening to their concerns, and offering practical solutions like flexible scheduling for work experience, assistance with college applications, and securing financial aid. Access to mentoring programs and extracurricular activities can also build their confidence and skills.

Collaboration with professionals such as social workers, educators, and mental health professionals ensures a coordinated approach that addresses all aspects of the young carer's well-being. Regular check-ins help monitor progress and adjust guidance as needed. By adopting a compassionate, comprehensive, and collaborative approach, personal guidance can empower young carers to overcome barriers and make informed decisions about their future.

Here are some top tips to enhance support for young carers, helping them balance their caregiving responsibilities. This integrated approach ensures they receive the necessary guidance and resources to succeed in their chosen career paths.

Top Tips

1. Train career advisors to understand the **unique challenges** young carers face, including the impact of caregiving on their education and career goals.
2. Offer career guidance sessions at **flexible times** to fit young carers' busy schedules, such as before or after school.
3. Create a **safe, confidential environment** for young carers to discuss their circumstances and career goals.
4. **Integrate career guidance** with other support services like mental health counselling and academic support.
5. **Engage** parents or guardians (where possible) to ensure they are aware of available support and can help with career planning.
6. Provide **easy access** to resources on career options, further education, and financial aid tailored for young carers.
7. Encourage **peer support groups** where young carers can share experiences and career advice.

Personal Guidance – Young Carers

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Conclusion

Careers education is vital for the development of all young people, but it holds particular importance for Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) youth, care-experienced individuals, and young carers. These groups often face unique challenges that can impact their aspirations and future goals. Therefore, careers education for disadvantaged young people must be responsive, targeted, and personalised. As highlighted in the [Driving equity and tackling disadvantage through your careers provision: Educator Guide.](#)

Understanding their history, culture, and current context is essential. All activities should have clear intent, be implemented effectively, and have their impact measured. Careers conversations should start early and be frequent. Additional opportunities for modern work experience and encounters with employers should be provided. Personal guidance should involve a collaborative approach, with professionals sharing information to offer the most effective support.

Targeted education around pathways to employment helps these young people understand the various career options available, the steps needed to achieve them, and the support available. Exposure to diverse sectors, industries, employers, and workplace environments is crucial. It allows them to gain real-world skills and experiences, make informed decisions, and understand how to be competitive in the job market. Modern work experience provides opportunities to demonstrate their capabilities to potential employers, build confidence, develop independence, and acquire valuable skills directly applicable to the workforce.

Quality personal guidance with individualised support from career advisors who understand their history and context can help these young people identify their strengths, set realistic goals, and create personalised career plans. This guidance ensures they receive the encouragement and resources needed to succeed.

Careers programs must be flexible to accommodate the unique circumstances of these young people, allowing them to navigate their external responsibilities while fully exploring and experiencing all opportunities. By doing so, educators can give these young people the best chance at achieving their goals and leading fulfilling lives. This approach not only benefits the individuals but also enhances the diversity and inclusivity of our communities and workplaces, ultimately building a brighter future for everyone.

Resources & Organisations

To further support your efforts in guiding Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT), care experienced and young carers towards successful careers and employment, we have compiled a list of valuable resources and organisations. These tools and services are designed to address the unique challenges faced by these young people, ensuring they receive the support they need to thrive.

Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT)

Resources

- [Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people](#)
- [Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller Inclusion Toolkit](#)
- [Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller pupils: supporting access to education](#)
- [How Can We Work with and Learn from Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller Communities?](#)
- [Sussex Learning Network](#)
- [Teaching Resources - Friends, Families and Travellers](#)

Organisations

- [Friends, Families and Travellers](#)
- [The Education People](#)
- [The Equality Diversity Inclusion Team \(EDIT\)](#)
- [The Traveller Movement](#)

Care Experienced

Resources

- [BBC Bitesize - Supporting care-experienced children](#)
- [Employer guide to support care leavers into apprenticeships](#)
- [Future Me](#)
- [Inclusive Employer Toolkit](#)
- [Looked After Children \(Children in Care\): Careers in Personal Education Plan](#)

Organisations

- [Become](#)
- [Care Leaver Covenant](#)
- [Leicestershire Cares](#)
- [Moving on Up Network](#)
- [National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum](#)
- [Rees Foundation](#)

Young Carers

Resources

- [BBC Bitesize - My identity - life as a young carer](#)
- [Introduction to supporting young carers in school: A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers, and Non-teaching Staff](#)
- [Young Carers in Education A Resource on Identifying and Supporting Young Carers in Education](#)
- [Young Carers in Focus](#)

Organisations

- [Carers UK](#)
- [Carers Trust](#)
- [NSPCC](#)
- [sense](#)
- [The Children's Society](#)
- [THE MIX](#)
- [Young Carers in Schools](#)

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has supported the creation of this guide. Your expertise, dedication, and support have been invaluable in ensuring that we provide comprehensive and practical information to help young people navigate their career pathways. Special thanks go to the organisations and resource creators who generously shared their knowledge and resources, enabling us to offer a wide range of insights and guidance. Your contributions have been instrumental in shaping this guide.

Additionally, we appreciate the input from young people, educators, Careers Hubs, and mentors who provided their perspectives and expertise. Your collaboration has helped create a resource that is both informative and empowering for young people and their families.



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