

REPORT

To: EDUCATION COMMITTEE	Subject: DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE – ACHIEVING POSITIVE DESTINATIONS FOR WINTER SCHOOL LEAVERS
From: HEAD OF EDUCATION (SKILLS, LIFELONG LEARNING & YOUTH EMPLOYMENT)	
Date: 9 JANUARY 2017	Ref: LMCM/PON/MS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide information for committee regarding a four day conference which took place in November/December 2016. The conference was designed to assist targeted winter leavers from all of North Lanarkshire’s secondary and additional support needs schools to enter positive post-school destinations of either further education, training, employment, Activity Agreement or volunteering.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Achieving Positive Destinations for Winter Leavers

The way in which positive post-school pathways can be followed can be unclear and confusing for many young people.

Data indicates that young people who are winter leavers are three times less likely than their summer leaver peers to leave school and enter a positive destination. Recommendation 13 in the report, ‘Education Working for All! Commission for Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce’ states, “Support for young people at risk of disengaging... should focus on early intervention and wide ranging, sustained support and should relate to labour market intelligence.”

In addition, North Lanarkshire Council’s Modern Apprenticeship Programme begins winter recruitment in December and this in itself offered opportunities for winter leavers.

3.0 CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Winter Leavers Get Ready For Work Week Conference

A conference was held at 101 Park Street, Coatbridge from 29 November – 2 December 2016 to introduce targeted winter leavers to a wide variety of post-school destinations from across a wide range of services and sectors. All 23 mainstream secondary schools and ASN secondary schools were each allocated five places for their young people who were leaving at Christmas and had yet to secure a positive destination. The event was open to 112 young people and the majority of schools took up their allocation. Attendance of pupils throughout the week remained at 100%. The aim was that every attendee would be exposed to a variety of destinations and opportunities and apply for at least one position by the end of the week.

Led by the Education Skills and Youth Employment (ESYE) team, the event was supported by Routes to Work, Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL), New College Lanarkshire and a range of employers.

The conference used various approaches and formats to engage young people including; group work, seminars, pecha-kucha sessions and practical activities. An employer opened the event every day with a keynote from the NLC Chief Executive on the final day. The young people attended sessions with training providers, the Army, the RAF, Activity Agreements, volunteering services and automotive. They also explored the opportunities at New College Lanarkshire through taster sessions in hospitality, beauty, construction, dental nursing and music technology.

In their groups, the young people also received career management skills and guidance from SDS, help with interview skills and CVs. A team of Modern Apprentices also provided question and answer opportunities.

Throughout the event, North Lanarkshire Council's 35 Modern Apprenticeship vacancies, along with another 45 local job vacancies, were displayed and promoted. On the final two days young people were paired with a member of staff and assisted in the application process. Any applications which were not completed within the week were pursued by school staff and careers advisers.

3.2 Outcomes & Results

Follow up data reveals that, as a direct result of the Winter Leavers' Conference, at least 25% of attendees have secured a positive destination into full time employment, college or a training course with 26% returning to school and a further 15% have been granted interviews.

As well as providing winter school leavers with knowledge and choice about the world of work and the opportunity to secure a positive destination, North Lanarkshire Council's modern Apprenticeship Programme benefitted by the high level of applications received, ensuring success in their recruitment process.

The event will be repeated in May 2017 with targeted summer leavers.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Education Committee is invited to endorse this approach being taken to allow school leavers within North Lanarkshire Council to learn about labour market intelligence and post-school pathways and receive tuition on interview skills and job applications.



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