

ROUTING for them

A parent's/carer's simple guide to education, training and employment pathways for those with SEND.

Look inside for:

- Simple explanations of different pathways
- Advice on how to support young people
- Careers and future plans activities to complete together
- Hints and tips



Welcome to Routing for Them!

Supporting parents/carers to support their children when making big decisions about their next steps.

Legally, young people must do one of the following until the end of Year 13 (for some people, those with an EHCP, they may be supported up to the age of 25):

- Stay in full-time education
- Start an apprenticeship or traineeship
- Spend 20 hours a week working or volunteering alongside part-time education or training

Solihull Council's Post-16 Tracking Team has a statutory duty to collect information about young people, so that those who are not participating (NEET; Not in Education, Employment or Training) can be identified and given support.

We know that choosing which path to take in education and beyond can be a daunting prospect for students and those supporting them. That's why we've created this guide to help parents and carers get informed about the various options available and offer the best possible guidance.

Read through the information provided, check out our hints and tips, and complete the activities provided to navigate the wonderful world of education, training and employment pathways.

Use the key to navigate through the various topics and sections.



Further Reading



Top Tip



Note



Interactive Activity



Conversation Starter



Bonus Activity



Contents

Moving On: Years 12 & 13

4	Where to Start?
5	Careers Advice: What Should You Expect?
6	Let's Talk About Your Goals
7	Our Top Tips
8	Where are the Opportunities Right Now?

Leaving School: Years 10 & 11

10	Choosing a Pathway
13	Let's Talk About Pathways
14	What Happens When?
15	Choosing a Destination
16	Let's Talk About Destinations

20	Choosing a Pathway
22	Let's Talk About Pathways
23	What Happens When?
24	Let's Talk About Destinations

Beyond Education: Years 10–13

27	Developing Skills
31	Work Experience & Volunteering
32	Let's Talk About Work Experience
33	Writing a CV
34	Let's Talk About CVs

35	Writing a Cover Letter
37	Completing an Application
38	Smashing an Interview
39	Let's Talk About Interviews

The Emotional Rollercoaster

42	Plan B
43	Let's Talk About Plan B
45	Wellbeing
46	Case Study



Where to Start?

All of the information provided here is designed to help you get an insight into different career pathways to best advise and support your child on their way to getting to where they want to go. So, before we get into the good stuff, let's think about your child – their strengths, their likes, their dislikes, their hopes and dreams.

Try completing the activity below with your child.

Let's Talk About You

Answer the questions in the boxes provided.



I like doing:

I am good at:

My favourite lessons are:

I learn best by:

I do not like:

Some of my top skills are:

My dream career is:

In 5 years, I would like to be:

I think I could achieve my goals by:

Bonus Activity

Try noting down what you think your child's responses will be before they fill in the form above. Are their answers what you thought they would be? Discuss any differences together.



Careers Advice: What Should You Expect?

When it comes to careers advice, there are a few things that everyone should know and information that everyone should have. Each school should follow something called the Gatsby Benchmarks. These 8 expectations define what world-class careers provision in education looks like and provide a clear framework for organising the careers provision at school or college.

By following these benchmarks, your school/college should ensure that you know what's what when it comes to your future opportunities.

All schools should have information about their careers programme on their website.

The 8 Gatsby Benchmarks are:

1. A stable careers programme.
2. Learning from careers and labour market information.
3. Addressing the needs of each student.
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers.
5. Encounters with employers and employees.
6. Experiences of workplaces.
7. Encounters with further and higher education.
8. Personal guidance.

Let's Talk About Your Goals

One good way to think about your career and future pathway is to identify your goals and work backwards. You might see yourself with a job, working as a volunteer or in a supported internship. Try working together to fill in the boxes. Have a look at the job profiles on Prospects.ac.uk to help.

There is no one pathway to get to any job – you can take a winding route to get to where you want to go! Plus, you might change your mind on the way. Focus on what you enjoy now to help you make decisions about your future.



Bonus Activity

Try completing this Buzz Quiz together. It's a short, fun quiz that analyses your personality to see which job roles and industries might suit you!



If your child has had an appointment with a Careers Adviser through school, they should have a Careers Action Plan which you can request a copy of. Young people with SEND should have specialist careers advice available. Contact the school for more information.



When I am older, I want to be a:



To get there, I will need:

*Think Degree/Apprenticeship/Training/
Supported Internships*

To get there, I will need:

*Think A Levels/T Levels/BTEC/Apprenticeship/
Supported Internships*

To get there, I will need:

Think GCSEs/BTEC



Top Tips

Here are some 'quick wins' when considering your future options and making the right steps forward.

1. Talk to your careers adviser, family and friends about your ideas.
2. Speak to your school's careers lead and check the school's website for more careers information.
3. Research all options thoroughly, ask questions and attend open days to gain a real understanding of what is out there so that you can make an informed decision.
4. Send out applications as soon as you can.
5. Make a plan of what you need to do and when so you don't miss any deadlines.
6. Submit multiple applications so you can keep your options open for a bit longer before making a final decision.
7. It's fine to change your mind, and remember to ask for help if you feel you need it.

Let's hear from some parents!

"The most important thing is clear communication; colleges speak to the young person not the parent unless the young person asks them to. It is important to set out how communication is going to work early on."

"I would always say to talk to the SEN team at the college as well as the course tutors. It's really important that all the right people know the needs of the young person and what support they should be offering."

"Make sure your young person knows who to go to for help, and if they won't speak to tutors at college, make sure that there is a process in place they can use instead – whether this is emailing, using cards, or going to a specific named person."

Where Are the Opportunities Right Now?

Understanding local Labour Market Information (LMI) is important when choosing routes into possible careers and future opportunities. Here is some of the most up-to-date information about Solihull, Birmingham, Coventry and Warwickshire, which may help you and your child to think about their future.

For more information about our region, visit:



solihullforsuccess.com



investinukcentral.com

- Solihull has one of the strongest economies outside of London, contributing £5.1 billion to UK GDP.
- We also have one of the fastest growing labour markets in the UK, with 38% more jobs per person than the average in Great Britain.
- Solihull is ranked in the top 10 UK destinations for business.
- We have strengths in sectors such as high-value manufacturing, low-carbon transport, professional services and ICT.
- £16.8 million is being invested in the Wildlife Ways project to make Solihull greener.
- The Times recently ranked Solihull in the top 20 most popular areas to live in the UK.

Leaving School: Years 10 & 11

Choosing a Pathway

"What do you know about your options after school? Have you thought about which pathway you would like to take?"

If your child is planning on attending university in the future, they should check the entry requirements for the subject they want to study before choosing a post-16 pathway.

If your child is considering a Supported Internship, look into opportunities in your local area or speak directly to the careers advisor.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships allow students to 'earn while they learn', receiving a wage whilst studying for a qualification. They are a great way to gain hands-on, practical experience, employment skills and become qualified in a specific role. Apprenticeships are available in a wide range of sectors, including finance, HR, engineering and the emergency services.



Everything You Need to Know About Apprenticeships (Amazing Apprenticeships)

Traineeships

Traineeships provide 16–24-year-olds with a work placement, which can last between six weeks and a year. They help young people to develop the skills they need in preparation for an apprenticeship or job. Traineeships are flexible, and programmes can be tailored to individual needs.



Traineeship Information for Trainees (HM Government)



Supported Internships

Supported Internships are personalised, work-based study programmes for young people with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND). They last between six months and a year, around 70% of which is spent in the workplace. Supported Interns are enrolled through a learning provider, which offers additional support.

You must have an EHCP in place to carry out a Supported Internship.



Supported Internships (HM Government)

BTECs

BTECs are vocational courses that allow you to learn in hands-on lessons. They are taught over two years, which includes two weeks of work experience. BTECs are ideal for students who are practical learners. One BTEC Extended Diploma is usually equivalent to three A Levels (but there are lots of different BTECs to choose from!).



Facts About BTEC Diplomas (UCAS)

The main differences between a BTEC and T Level are the work placement length and subjects available. BTEC work placements last two weeks and T Level work placements last at least 45 days.



T Levels

T Levels are very recent qualifications that were introduced in 2020. They provide hands-on, classroom-based learning over two years as well as a work placement of at least 45 days. T Levels are ideal for students who prefer learning by doing and want to gain work experience at the same time. One T Level is equivalent to three A Levels.

Solihull College & University Centre currently offers T Levels in:

- Digital Production, Design & Development
- Education & Childcare
- Engineering, Manufacturing, Processing and Control

South & City College Birmingham currently offers T Levels in:

- Business Administration
- Digital Production, Design & Development
- Digital Support Services
- Engineering & Manufacturing
- Health & Laboratory Science
- Design, Surveying & Planning for Construction
- Building Services Engineering for Construction
- Building Services for Construction, Electrical & Electronic Equipment Engineering



T Levels (HM Government)



T Levels (Solihull College & University Centre)

A Levels

A Levels are subject-based qualifications, similar to GCSEs but at a higher level. Students usually choose 3–4 subjects to study over two years. Depending on the subject, A Levels can be assessed by exams, coursework or both.



Facts About A Levels (UCAS)

Find out more about choosing a college/sixth form on page 15.



Let's Talk About Pathways

Work through these statements together and record the answers.

Research some of the pathways listed on the previous pages together to help inform the answers.



The career I would like is:



To get there, I am interested in studying:

The pathway I would like to take is:

☐

Supported Internship

☐

BTEC

☐

Apprenticeship

☐

T Level

☐

Traineeship

☐

A Levels

I think this pathway is right for me because:

I will do some more research on:

What Happens When?

One of the things that can worry students and parents the most about planning for their next steps is being unsure of timelines and deadlines. Each school or college will have its own specific deadlines, but we have provided an overview to help you understand what needs doing and when.

"Do you know how and when to plan for your next steps? Let's look at a timeline together."

Browse apprenticeship vacancies at:
www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship.

Students can (and should!) apply to more than one destination. They can accept several offers and don't have to make a final decision until after they receive their GCSE results.

Last Term
of Year 10

Research
your options

Talk to your
school's careers
lead if your child
has an EHCP

First Term
of Year 11

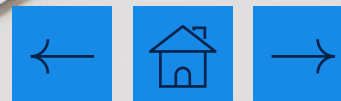
Most apprenticeships
advertised from January/February
Sixth forms/college applications open
(check their websites for deadlines)

Apply!

Second Term
of Year 11


Attend open evenings
Larger firms start advertising
apprenticeships

If your child has an EHCP,
Year 11 reviews should happen



Choosing a Destination

Choosing a pathway is one thing; deciding where to study next is quite another. Year 11 Leavers can attend a sixth form attached to a school (their own or a new school), a further education college, an independent training provider, complete an apprenticeship with an employer or carry out a supported internship. Each option will differ in the subjects, courses or placements on offer.



“Have you thought about where you would like to study or work when you leave school? Shall we look at the options together?”



Find out more about the post-16 options in Solihull [here](#).



Let's Talk About Destinations

The best way to get a feel for the different destination options is to attend as many Open Evenings as you can. At each Open Evening you attend together, fill in the template below to collect as much information as possible.

Remember to ask questions!

Provider 1



Name of provider:

What subjects/qualifications interest you?

What support is offered?

Do students typically achieve well here?

What extracurricular activities are available?

How would you travel to get here?

Ask at least one student their favourite thing about studying here and note it down:

What did you like about this provider?

Was there anything you didn't like?

Deadline for applications:

Remind your child to keep an open mind! Choosing the same place as their friends won't always be the best option for them.



Remind your child to keep an open mind! Choosing the same place as their friends won't always be the best option for them.



Provider 2



Name of provider:

What subjects/qualifications interest you?

What support is offered?

Do students typically achieve well here?

What extracurricular activities are available?

How would you travel to get here?

Ask at least one student their favourite thing about studying here and note it down:

What did you like about this provider?

Was there anything you didn't like?

Deadline for applications:

Remind your child to keep an open mind! Choosing the same place as their friends won't always be the best option for them.



Provider 3



Name of provider:

What subjects/qualifications interest you?

What support is offered?

Do students typically achieve well here?

What extracurricular activities are available?

How would you travel to get here?

Ask at least one student their favourite thing about studying here and note it down:

What did you like about this provider?

Was there anything you didn't like?

Deadline for applications:

Moving On: Years 12 & 13



Choosing a Pathway

"What do you know about your options after Year 13? Have you thought about which pathway you would like to take?"

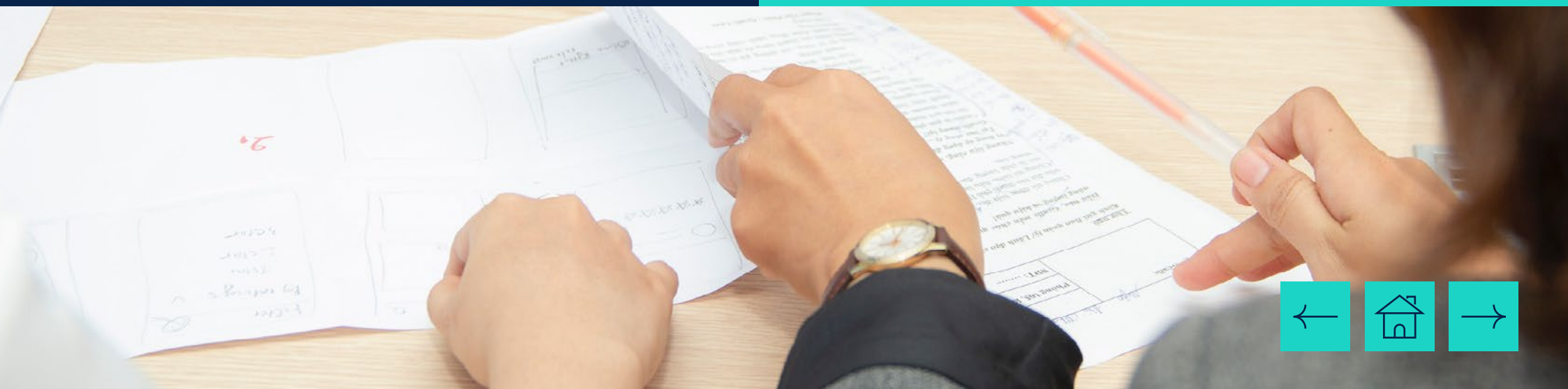
Many people assume that the only option after Year 13 is to go to university to study for a Bachelor's degree – but this isn't the case! It's a good idea to explore all the options available before diving straight into university applications.



Employment

After students turn 18, they are no longer legally required to stay in education. This means that they are free to fully join the working world in a job of their choosing! After leaving education, they will likely be applying to entry-level jobs. It is a good idea to look on sites such as Indeed to browse job postings and check that they have the in-demand skills needed for their chosen field.

There is more information on writing applications on page 37.



Apprenticeships

Anyone over the age of 16 can start an apprenticeship. Apprenticeships allow students to 'earn while they learn', receiving a wage whilst studying for a qualification. They are available in a wide range of sectors and at different levels, which are equivalent to other qualifications.

Level:

2 (Intermediate)
3 (Advanced)
4 (Higher)
5 (Higher)
6 (Degree)
7 (Degree)

Equivalent to:

GCSEs
A Levels
Foundation degree
Foundation degree/First year of Bachelor's degree
Bachelor's degree
Master's degree



Everything You Need to Know About Apprenticeships (Amazing Apprenticeships)

Further Education

Further Education refers to any study after secondary school that's not an undergraduate/postgraduate degree. Further Education colleges often provide vocational courses to help students develop practical skills in a sector that interests them, as well as Foundation Degrees that allow students to study a single subject further before deciding whether to continue to a full Bachelor's degree.



Foundation Degrees (UCAS)



Vocational Qualifications (Careerpilot)

Bachelor's Degree

Undertaking a Bachelor's degree allows students to study a subject in much greater depth, usually over 3–4 years. While many students study for their Bachelor's degree at a university, some further education colleges are also university centres, allowing degree-level study at college.

Different universities have different specialities and entry requirements, which students should check carefully before applying.



Undergraduate (UCAS)



Make sure your child knows their predicted grades and the entry requirements for the course and university they're interested in.

Gap Year

Some students choose to take a year out or 'gap year' after Year 13. This could be for many reasons, such as travel, volunteer work or taking time to develop key skills before applying for jobs or university places. Whatever the reason, it is a good idea for students to plan what they want to achieve in their gap year to get the most out of their time.



Gap Years – Ideas and Things to Think About (UCAS)



Whatever your child's plans are for their next steps, it's always good to have a Plan B in case things don't work out. This could be having a good 'insurance' university option or applying to jobs as well as apprenticeships.



Let's Talk About Pathways

Work through these statements with your child and record their answers.

Research some of the pathways listed on the previous pages together to help inform the answers.



The career I would like is:

The pathway I would like to take is:

☐

Supported Internship

☐

Further Education

☐

Gap Year

☐

Higher Apprenticeship

☐

Bachelor's Degree

☐

Degree Apprenticeship

☐

Employment

Bonus Activity

Has your child ever thought about starting their own business? Check out Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council's business resources for more information!



Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council's business resources

I think this pathway is right for me because:

I will do some more research on:

If my first choice doesn't work out, my Plan B is:



What Happens When?

One of the things that can worry students and parents the most about planning for their next steps is being unsure of timelines and deadlines. Each school or college will have its own specific deadlines, but we have provided an overview to help you understand what needs doing and when.

Apprenticeship

Each employer has their own deadline. Apply to them directly rather than through UCAS.

University



Let's Talk About Destinations

"What things are important to you when choosing a training provider/employer? Why?"

Choosing a pathway is one thing; deciding where to study/work next is quite another. Common options include university, further/higher education colleges and independent training providers, which can offer degree apprenticeships, Bachelor's degrees, foundation degrees and apprenticeships.

The best way to get a feel for the different destination options is to attend as many Open Days as you can. At each Open Day you attend together, fill in the template below to collect as much information as possible.

Attending an Open Day doesn't always mean travelling a long way. Some universities now hold Virtual Open Events. Check their websites for more details and remember to book your place when necessary!



Name of provider:

Type of provider:

What qualifications/courses are you interested in?

What support is offered?

How does the provider rank in league tables for this course?

How far away is it from home?

Is it on a campus or are buildings dotted around the city?

What is the location like?
(e.g., small town, big city, lively, quiet)

What clubs or teams would you be able to get involved with?

Ask at least one student their favourite thing about their provider and note it down here:

What did you like about this provider?

Was there anything you didn't like?



Name of provider:

Type of provider:

What qualifications/courses are you interested in?

What support is offered?

How does the provider rank in league tables for this course?

How far away is it from home?

Is it on a campus or are buildings dotted around the city?

What is the location like?
(e.g., small town, big city, lively, quiet)

What clubs or teams would you be able to get involved with?

Ask at least one student their favourite thing about their provider and note it down here:

What did you like about this provider?

Was there anything you didn't like?



Name of provider:

Type of provider:

What qualifications/courses are you interested in?

What support is offered?

How does the provider rank in league tables for this course?

How far away is it from home?

Is it on a campus or are buildings dotted around the city?

What is the location like?
(e.g., small town, big city, lively, quiet)

What clubs or teams would you be able to get involved with?

Ask at least one student their favourite thing about their provider and note it down here:

What did you like about this provider?

Was there anything you didn't like?



Beyond Education: Years 10–13

Developing Skills

Now that you and your child have discussed which pathway(s) they would like to take and which destinations they are considering, let's look at ways to help them get there by developing their skills.

Although certain skills are specific to a type of job or course, there are many which are essential in almost every scenario, including everyday life. These are known as 'soft skills', 'employability skills' or 'life skills'.

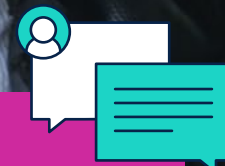
They include:

- Listening
- Communicating
- Problem Solving
- Creativity
- Staying Positive
- Aiming High
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Time management
- Cooperation
- Self-awareness
- Resilience

Admissions teams and employers look for these skills when recruiting, so it's important to strengthen them and have examples of demonstrating each.



The Skills Builder Partnership



Your child will have taken part in a range of careers experiences in school. You can request a record of these activities to help you both to think about and evidence their skills.




Let's Talk About Skills

It is likely that, through school, extracurricular experiences and careers activities, your child already has a lot of these skills. However, they may feel that they are stronger in some areas than others.

Together, work through the following steps for each skill.

- 1. Ask your child to rate their confidence in each skill out of ten.**
- 2. Jot down examples of times they have used them (for example, they could have shown teamwork through playing football or completing a group project).**
- 3. Note down any ways they could strengthen each skill (for example, they could improve their listening skills by joining the school council).**



"Do you know how and when to plan for your next steps? Let's look at a timeline together."

Listening

Confidence:

Examples:

How could I improve?




Communicating

Confidence:

Examples:

**How could
I improve?**

Problem Solving

Confidence:

Examples:

**How could
I improve?**

Creativity

Confidence:

Examples:

**How could
I improve?**

Staying Positive

Confidence:

Examples:

**How could
I improve?**



Aiming High

Confidence:

Examples:

How could I improve?

Teamwork

Confidence:

Examples:

How could I improve?



Leadership

Confidence:

Examples:

How could I improve?



Work Experience & Volunteering

A great way for young people to develop employability skills outside of school or college is to volunteer or take part in work experience. Opportunities can vary hugely in the activities and time commitment involved, so there should be something out there to suit everyone!

For some young people in specialist schools, work experience options may not be provided; however, there are other ways to gain both work and life experience.

Partly as a result of the pandemic, there are now lots of ways to gain work experience 'virtually' by completing activities online. Have a look at these free websites:



Barclays Life Skills



Forage



Sprinpod

There are four main ways to arrange work experience/volunteering:

1. Speak to the Careers Lead in school/college.

2. Apply directly to an employer's work experience/volunteer programme.

3. Contact an employer without an established work experience programme (if you don't ask, you don't get!).

4. Ask your social and personal networks if they know of any opportunities.



Did you know that, in a recent study, over half of graduate recruiters said that applicants with no previous work experience would have little or no chance of receiving a job offer?

Here are ten reasons to take part in work experience or volunteering:

1. To increase success rates in job hunting.
2. To sample a variety of career options.
3. To get a feel for your chosen industry.
4. To show passion, interest and motivation to future employers.
5. To try different roles without having to commit long-term.
6. To get a gentle introduction into the world of work.
7. To help you identify and develop your skills.
8. To be in with the chance of receiving a real job or apprenticeship offer.
9. To build up your network of contacts.
10. To put on your CV!



"Do you know about all the benefits of work experience or volunteering?"





Let's Talk About Work Experience

Use the template below with your child to help them keep track of the work experience and volunteer roles they apply for.

Employer/Provider	Date Applied	Contact	Response

Bonus Activity

With your child, look up the biggest employers in Solihull.
What sectors are they in? How many people do they employ?
Do they offer work experience programmes or internships?



Writing a CV

You almost always need to submit a CV, no matter what role you apply for in life. Even if your child doesn't need a CV for any of their applications right now, it is a good idea to start putting one together as soon as possible to avoid forgetting things or rushing to put one together in the future.

Here are some top tips to help your child to write a stand-out CV:

1. Keep it short

A good CV should be between 1–2 sides of A4. Keep it relevant and straight to the point so that the person reading it doesn't lose interest!

2. Keep it logical

Putting the information in a clear order helps the person reading the CV find what they need quickly. Start with a short overview, then key skills, work experience, education and qualifications.

3. Keep it relevant

Ensure that the information included is relevant to the specifications of the role they are applying for. If any specific skills or experience are mentioned in the job description, make sure they are stated clearly in the CV.



"Do you know what makes a good CV? Let's look at a template together."

4. Keep it up to date

Make sure that they keep adding to their CV whenever they gain new experience or qualifications – that way, the details are fresh in their mind.

5. Keep it accurate

Make sure that they double-check the information they have provided on their CV. Are the dates correct? Have they put down the right grades for the right subject?

6. Check it!

The last thing they should do before sending their CV anywhere is to check it over for spelling and grammar. In fact, it is wise to ask someone else to check it over too, just in case.

Let's Talk About CVs

Now it's time for you and your child to put together their template CV. Find a job description on **Target Jobs** that is relevant to their interests to tailor to.

Use the text boxes below to fill in the correct information, or start from scratch in a Word document.



Section 1 – Contact Details:

Name, telephone number, email address and town/city.

Section 2 – Personal Profile:

A little bit about your interests, skills and experience.

Section 3 – Key Skills:

Refer back to page 27 for inspiration!

Section 4 – Employment/Work Experience History

Start with the most recent first. Include dates, job title and key responsibilities.

Section 5 – Education:

Start with the most recent first. Include subjects and grades.

Section 6 – Achievements:

Anything relevant that you are particularly proud of.

Section 7 – References:

Two or three people who could testify about your character and confirm the information on your CV (avoid family members!). You can write 'References available upon request' and let referees know they may be contacted.

Writing a Cover Letter

Many companies also ask applicants to submit a cover letter. This is a short letter (usually no more than a page) your child should write to introduce themselves and tell the employer why they should consider their application.

Even if it's not required as part of the application, it's a good idea to send one to help them stand out! Here are some top tips to help your child write a smashing cover letter:

1. Keep it personal

Write a new cover letter for every job applied for, making sure it's tailored to the specific role and company. Make sure your child does their research on the company first and shows this in what they write.

2. Keep it professional

Make sure the tone of the letter makes a suitable first impression to a potential employer.

3. Keep it specific

Use the language the employer used in their job advert. Remember to include any essential skills mentioned (as well as evidence to back them up!).



[How to Write a Cover Letter \(HM Government\)](#)



[Sample Cover Letter \(Prospects\)](#)

4. Keep it brief

No employer has time to read a long cover letter! Stick to 3–5 paragraphs and no longer than one side of A4.

5. Keep it accurate

Double check spelling, grammar and the company's details. You don't want to lose out because of silly mistakes.



"Do you know how to write a cover letter? Let's try an example together."



Let's Talk About Cover Letters

Go back to the job you and your child based your CV activity on. Now try writing a cover letter for the same position. Complete the boxes provided to learn how to structure the letter.



Section 1 – Addressing your letter

As with any formal letter, start with Dear [Name].

If you don't know their name, it's best to stick with 'Sir or Madam'.

Section 2 – Opening paragraph

Introduce yourself and the position you're interested in.

Section 3 – Why you?

Explain the skills and experience you have that make you right for the job.

Section 4 – Extra information

Include any extra experience you have that may be relevant.

Section 5 – Round it off

Write a nice polite thank you and tell the employer you look forward to hearing from them.

Section 6 – Sign it off

End with 'Yours sincerely' or 'Yours faithfully'.

Completing an Application Form

Some companies will ask for applicants to complete an application form as well as (or instead of!) submitting a CV. These days, most application forms can be completed and submitted online.

Here are our top tips to help your child write a great application:

1. Read before you write

Make sure they read all instructions carefully before they begin the form to avoid making mistakes. Not following instructions may leave their application at the bottom of the pile.

2. Make a good impression

Application forms are formal documents and your child's first chance to make a good impression. Avoid text speech and double-check spelling and grammar.

3. Practice makes perfect

It is a good idea to draft responses in a Word document instead of typing straight into the



application. This way, your child can take advantage of spell check and draft their answers a few times before submitting.

4. Sell yourself

As with all parts of applying for a job, your child is trying to stand out against other applicants. Make sure they talk about any relevant skills and experience that the employer asks for.

5. Double-check

Your child should check their application over before submitting, making sure they haven't missed any questions or made any mistakes.

6. Keep a copy

Make a copy of everything in the application. This will help your child remember what they said if they get to an interview, and it might help them in other applications!



Smashing an Interview

So your child has submitted their application and been offered an interview – that's exciting! Now to make sure they are well-prepared and ready to blow their interviewer away.

Make sure they prepare beforehand by:

- **Researching the organisation beforehand.**
- **Making a list of questions they would like to ask.**
- **Reading through their application again.**
- **Practising their interview technique.**
- **Planning how they will get there.**
- **Downloading the right software if it's a virtual interview.**
- **Aiming to get to the venue or log on early.**
- **Dressing smartly.**



Let's Talk About Interviews

Discuss these common interview questions with your child. You could even role-play an interview scenario, so they get used to answering various questions.

Be an interview STAR! When asked, 'Give me an example of when you...' questions, use the STAR technique to structure your response.

Situation: What was the situation you faced?

Task: What tasks were involved?

Action: What actions did you take?



1. Tell me about yourself

Do not recount your life story. Give a summary of your skills, experience and interests. Your personal profile on your CV is a good place to start.

2. Why should we hire you?

Talk about your strengths and how your skills and experience apply to the job description.

3. What are your weaknesses?

Do NOT say that you are a perfectionist! Pick a genuine area where you are short on skills and describe what you are doing to improve.

4. Why do you want this job?

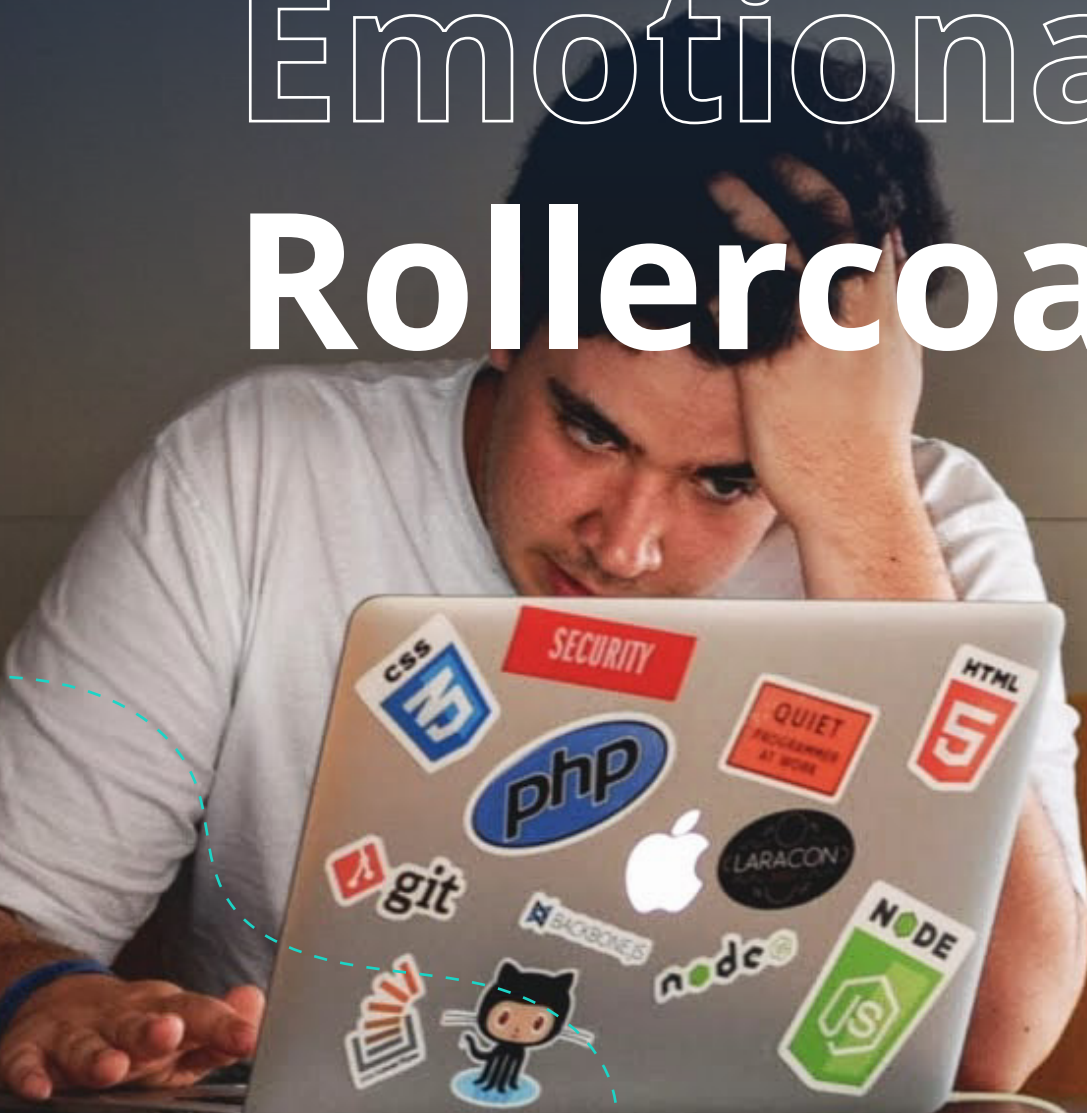
Here's where you can bring out your research on the organisation. Talk about what you like about the organisation's vision/values and how they fit with your personal goals.

5. Give me an example of when you ...

applied your problem-solving skills, worked as a team, managed your time. Use your CV to prepare responses for various situations beforehand.



The Emotional Rollercoaster



The Emotional Rollercoaster

No matter how old we get or how much experience we have, it is normal to worry about the future or feel stressed about the decisions we are facing at the present. Mix in all the additional pressures of being a teenager – hormones, relationships, hobbies, social media – and that's a lot to take on.

Although you can't take their exams for them or fix all their fallouts with their friends, you can be there to offer advice, reassurance and a friendly ear. Try the discussion points as a starting point.



- **"Remember that no matter what results you receive, there will be a pathway or opportunity out there that's right for you."**
- **"It is normal to feel stressed and nervous about your next steps. What practical steps can we take together to relieve some of the pressure?"**
- **"It's important to take breaks from revision to help your mind take in all of that information. Shall we go for a walk/bake a cake/watch some TV?"**
- **"How are you feeling about your exams/interview?"**
- **"What can I do to help you prepare?"**
- **"Job hunting can sometimes feel like a lot of rejection, but the right opportunity will come your way. Would you like me to look over any of your applications?"**



Plan B

As much as everyone wants their Plan A to go ahead without any hiccups, it's always best to prepare for the 'what ifs'. Preparing for the various possible outcomes can make those 'what ifs' less scary, and ensures that, whatever happens, practical steps are in place to move forward.

Remember, even if your child doesn't quite achieve the grades they need for their first-choice destination, or they don't get the apprenticeship placement they had their heart set on, there is support and training available to help.

Local Support:

The Skills for Success Project is an employment and skills pathways project to help young people in Years 11, 12 and 13 with understanding careers, learning pathways and skills. The support is free through schools and colleges and includes one-to-one support, workshops, skills training and more.

The Solihull Youth Employment Promise scheme supports 15–29-year-olds to look for work, education or training. Young people can access one-to-one support, help looking for courses or jobs, CV and interview support, confidence building and more.



Skills for Success project



Solihull Youth Employment Promise

National Support:

National Careers Service Helpline: 0800 100 900



National Careers Service Website



Post-16 Options (BBC Bitesize)



University Clearing (Whatuni)



Wellbeing (iCould)

Let's Talk About Plan B

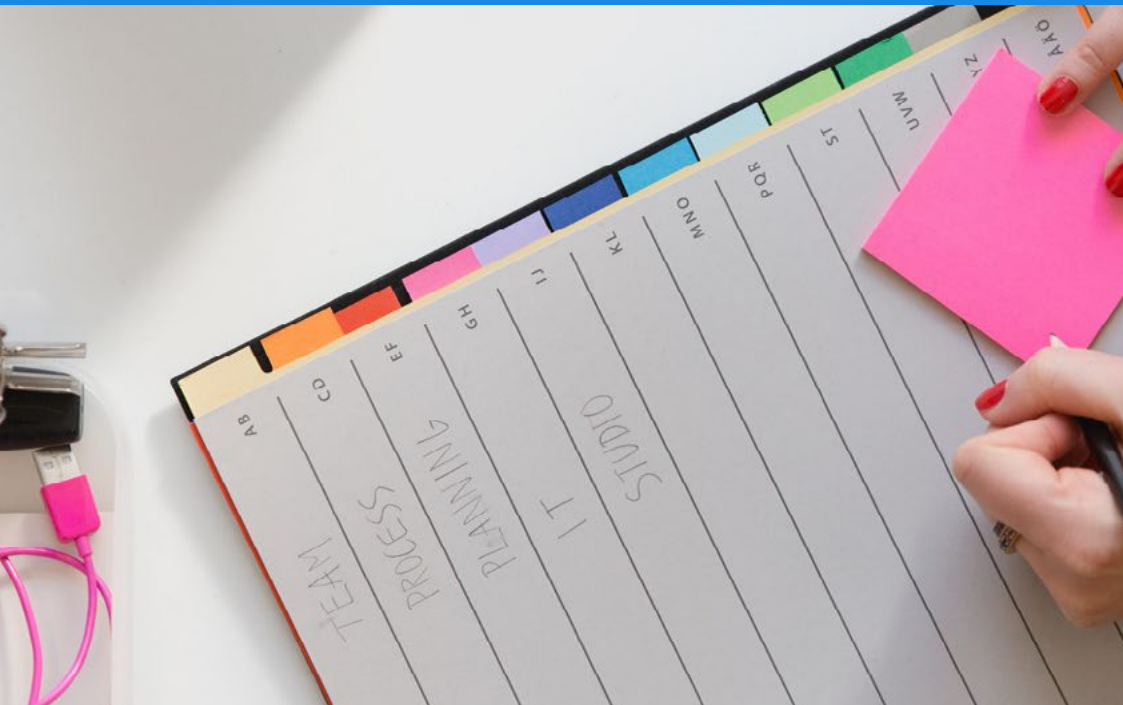
Getting a Plan B (and Plans C, D and E) ready can help you to prepare and ease anxiety around results day or application decisions.

Complete the activity below to help you think through the possible scenarios and what you would do in each one. Write down your 'best-case scenario' first, and then think through any other scenarios and how you would deal with them.

Best-case Scenario:

This would mean that:

I might feel:



Scenario 2:

This would mean that:
At first, I might feel:
What I could do instead:
Support I can access:

Scenario 3:

This would mean that:
At first, I might feel:
What I could do instead:
Support I can access:

Scenario 4:

This would mean that:
At first, I might feel:
What I could do instead:
Support I can access:

Talking about these scenarios might make you/your child feel a little anxious at first – that's normal! Remember, putting plans in place now can help to ease the anxiety in the long run.



Wellbeing

Further support
around mental health
and wellbeing can be
found at:



**From everyone at Solihull Careers Hub,
we wish you and your child the best of
luck!**

For further practical support and guidance,
visit the National Careers Service website.



nationalcareers.service.gov.uk



Anxiety UK



Kooth



Mind



Moodscope



Solar



Student Minds



The Mix



YoungMinds

Case Study

Remember, not everyone's experiences are the same. Here is an example of one local experience.

Transition to college went relatively smoothly. Year 11 EHCP annual review was brought to get the paperwork into place. The SENCO at the time suggested not to name the college on the EHCP but to enrol directly with the college, as paperwork was taking a long time.

We were invited into the college in June 2021, for J to look around the college and to go through the EHCP and SEN requirements. The EHCP was just a paper copy sent through from school with the agreed amendments on it, which the college photocopied but assured me that they would request the proper version from the LA.

The SEN team at college then decided to put together a document listing J's needs but couldn't get a copy of the final EHCP to use as a basis for the document. The college and I pulled this document together ourselves and J went to a new placement, with shorter hours and regular attendance from the college to observe him in the placement.

Remember to maintain positive communication with the college provider and careers lead.



The college course then went ahead smoothly and J passed the course in June. Unfortunately, he was put off continuing in this field but was accepted into a new course starting in September. They accepted him onto a level three course, despite him not having a pass in English at that time, which has boosted his confidence.

Once the college and I were working and communicating together, the college course proceeded smoothly but this only came about when J was really struggling. He won't ask for help or tell anyone he can't cope until things get really bad, so I need to be involved to process information for him and feed it back in a way that he understands. The college treat the pupils as adults, which is only fair but in the case of SEN children this isn't always in their best interest. Communication between college, pupils and parents is key.

"Make sure your young person knows who to go to for help, and if they won't speak to tutors at college make sure that there is a process in place they can use instead- whether this is emailing, using cards, or going to a specific named person."

"The most important thing is clear communication; colleges speak to the young person not the parent unless the young person asks them to. It is important to set out how communication is going to work early on."

"I would always say to talk to the SEN team at the college as well as the course tutors. It's really important that all the right people know the needs of the young person and what support they should be offering."

ROUTING for them

Solihull
CAREERS HUB

THE **CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE**
COMPANY



European Union
European
Social Fund

