

## Approaching employers

Bringing employers or local business people into your primary school is a great way to contextualise children's learning. Positive role models bring authentic experience of the workplace and help children develop their sense of self, challenge their assumptions about job roles and understand who they can become.

## Top tips for employer engagement



### Reach out

- Start with staff, parent and governor networks
- Utilise connections with former students who might revisit and inspire
- Register with the [Primary Futures](#) and [STEM Ambassador](#) platforms to connect with employers who are committed to primary engagement
- Approach any charities you have supported or fundraised for
- Consider opportunities for exploring job roles during school trips



### Timings

- Give plenty of notice - at least six weeks if possible
- Don't expect SMEs (small and medium enterprises) to visit for more than 90 mins at a time - they'll be losing money from their business
- Give a clear time slot within your requested day



### Planning

- Give the visitor clear instructions for the engagement and what you are trying to achieve including: - year group/key stage/additional needs/any parents invited - aims and objectives for the engagement - pupils' prior knowledge
- Be prepared to facilitate and develop ideas/activities with your visitor
- Make sure to drop them a line prior to the booked visit confirming timings, location, parking and main contact number information



### On the day

- Make them feel welcome before, during and after the event
- Aim to make them feel part of your school community - they are more likely to return that way
- Offer refreshments - the nice coffee!
- Be aware that some people may have had negative experiences of school and could be anxious about the visit
- Make sure a member of staff is nominated to be present throughout the engagement



### Follow up

- Promote your visitor(s) in communications to parents
- Thank them for their time - a letter from the children is a nice touch!
- Stay in touch moving forwards - particularly if you have updates about what the children have learned or achieved with their help

# Ideas for meaningful encounters with employers

## Curriculum based project

- Plan a project in collaboration with employer(s)
- Area of curriculum taught through a workplace lens
- Employers may also support classroom delivery

## Themed days

- Use a national themed day/week or charity fundraiser to focus on job roles and/or skills
- Invite volunteers or mentors to bring their world of work to classroom learning on a memorable occasion

## School or class challenge

- Set a school/or class challenge from the many resources (see below) available (or set your own) and invite local employers in to support the challenge.

## In-class presentation

- Try an 'I Love My Job' format; a visitor speaks to the class, virtually or in person.
- Employers with a little more time could introduce a hands-on-task promoting skills for the workplace

## Gatecrash the lesson

- Collaborate with employer to deliver a lesson objective through a workplace scenario/task
- This could take the form of using subject skills (e.g., collecting and presenting data) to solve a problem/answer a brief.

## Assembly talk

- Visitor talks during a School Assembly/PSHE lesson
- They might build in a demonstration where appropriate and allow time for pupils' questions

## Workplace visit

- Do you have a planned trip to an attraction/exhibition/event?
- Set children a challenge; What jobs are visible and what duties are being performed? What jobs might exist behind the scenes to make things work? Talk to an employee?

## Panel Q & A

- Try an 'What's My Line' assembly; pupils prepare questions to uncover jobs of 4-6 visitors.
- For more impact? Visitors spend extra time individually with a particular class/year group.

## Short film

- Use engaging digital content to give children an insight into jobs/sectors
- Allows them to see workplaces they might be unable to visit and for multiple members of a company to speak to them to showcase role and diversity.

## Careers carousel

- Inviting 4-6 visitors to deliver talks to a class/key stage in groups
- Groups spend 10-15-minute designated slots learning about each visitor's role

## Careers fair

- Reach out to multiple employers across range of sectors
- Introduce children (and families) briefly to local opportunities and future job skills
- Avoid the 'merchandise trap'; ask employers to engage pupils in a short, relevant skills activity rather than have their focus misdirected on pens, badges and stickers etc