

South Lanarkshire on Foundation Apprenticeships

Foundation Apprenticeships are increasing opportunities for young people and fundamentally changing the way schools, learning providers and employers are developing the young workforce.

Why Foundation Apprenticeships?

The council already had strong links with Skills Development Scotland and has a strong partnership model across South Lanarkshire Council within schools and with local team leaders for young people who have left school and seeking a positive destination.

When we were approached by SDS about the offer of Foundation Apprenticeships it was an attractive solution to realising the plans of Developing the Young Workforce.

Encouraging schools to provide Foundation Apprenticeships

The council got fully behind the introduction with a range of activity to promote the offer to both pupils and teaching staff.

We organised a year of roadshows, held in cluster schools across South Lanarkshire. For example, Trinity High School covered outlying schools i.e. Stonelaw High and Cathkin High. School staff who had a role to play in the programme were invited to attend such as Deputy Head Teachers, timetablers, work experience co-ordinators, guidance staff and DYW leads.

During the roadshows SDS provided the strategic context of FAs, the local authority outlined the role of the HUB approach and other learning providers were invited along to provide more detail on their local offer. The DYW LED group also attended, to outline their role across Lanarkshire and where they will support the growth in employer engagement for FAs.

We also embarked on a huge publicity/ marketing campaign covering all Head teachers, school time table staff and all pupil support staff.

Gaining support from teachers and senior school leadership

The key focus for our promotion and marketing campaign targeting teaching staff was to win hearts and minds using a host of key messages.

The emotive message was to take on board the work-based learning route and the benefits it can provide to young people.

The practical message was about changing the mindset of schools, to embed work-based learning into the curriculum and identify the benefits of the FA alongside other subject areas and how this can provide enhancement to pupils in their career pathway.

Building capacity in schools to support Foundation Apprenticeships

The council has a central employability hub and links Developing the Young Workforce. Both communicates on Foundation Apprenticeships and supports schools with any issues and pathways.

The HUB has supported all schools across the local authority with identifying suitable young people for the FA programme, communication and co-ordination between schools and different learning providers.

Pupil transport to and from the learning provider on set days is also organised by the HUB to support the schools.

Promoting the offer and benefits of Foundation Apprenticeships to pupils and parents or carers

Promotion of Foundation Apprenticeships was integrated into existing activity delivered to support pupils and parents.

We held information talks at parents events delivered by staff, which were well attended.

In addition, information developed by SDS was used by school careers advisers when speaking to pupils about pathways.

Foundation Apprenticeships supporting Curriculum for Excellence, Developing the Young Workforce and the council's ambitions for participation and attainment

Foundation Apprenticeships provide our young people with another learning pathway, so they broaden the opportunities on offer to pupils.

Pupils can access other qualifications that are currently not on offer in schools such as the NPA element of the FA.

The introduction of FAs is fully supported by the Executive Director of Education and the Senior Management Team. The roll out is fully supported through the Opportunities for All Strategic Partnership Board, which is a sub group of the Community Planning Partnership and has the overview of all Youth Employability across the council. This group also oversees the delivery of DYW action plan for all partners across South Lanarkshire.

Benefits to schools and pupils of greater employer engagement through Foundation Apprenticeships

By tapping into the local business community pupils will be able to access more opportunities to learn and gain invaluable experience of the world of work.

In terms of schools, Foundation Apprenticeships are enabling them to provide more opportunities for their pupils and have a wider focus on the support it can provide.

Tackling challenges in introducing and embedding Foundation Apprenticeships in the curriculum

There were a number of areas we addressed to be able to embed Foundation Apprenticeships into the curriculum.

It was key to manage the timetable and within that, factor in the pressure of exams.

The inclusion of another offer meant there was a need to ensure efficiency of school being a one stop shop and delivery centre for all Highers versus the management of FA aspects such as factoring in time to travel, different lunch times.

Some of the challenges have been addressed. For example, we have offered a 1 year model for S6. In addition, we have ensured that all Foundation Apprentices are out of school on Tuesdays and Thursdays, as a manage transport workload and support the SVQ assessor and coordination teams.

Plan to support the future growth in the number of Foundation Apprenticeship opportunities

Apprenticeships last year to 5000 start next year. How do you plan to support future growth in the number of Foundation Apprenticeship opportunities in We will continue to support Foundation Apprenticeships through a number of ways to raise awareness of the offer.

We want to see uptake through word of mouth from pupil to pupil, and aim to share success stories. In addition we have plans to run a marketing campaign: 'FAs my brighter future', with branded materials such as bags, pads and pens.

There will be a joint effort across the local authority to build awareness, support and uptake of FAs. We will be gaining the support from the Opportunities for All strategic group, employer engagement team and council departments, especially the Executive Director of Education.

HUB School Delivery Model

During 2017 delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships, the local authority captured feedback and lessons learned from schools and pupils around the challenges presented when travelling to and from Glasgow and East Kilbride Colleges campus locations. Not only was this costly in terms of the transport method (taxis) but also had an impact on the pupil's subjects. Although the schools had timetabled FA as a subject, pupils were missing lunch/ classes as they had to leave school to ensure they arrived at College for a specific start time.

This was particularly relevant to the Clydesdale area schools in the region where transport has increased challenges. Whilst planning for submitting their own bid, South Lanarkshire Council took this on board alongside the impact of retention on the programme.

A key ambition for the local authority was to scale up the number of FA places and frameworks available across all schools. One solution to the challenges in the rural area was to develop a HUB school delivery model.

Lesmahagow High School was identified in collaboration with the local authority as being the HUB school in the Clydesdale region. A key part of this discussion was looking at where demand was coming from in the area and where schools had capacity to deliver in-house. The local authority provided relevant resources and equipment to develop a dedicated room for the FA programme in Children and Young People. Therefore, pupils and lecturers had continuity.

The benefits to this approach are identified as economies of scale in transport costs, resource costs etc. The environment is attractive to pupils as they are treated differently and equipped with council branded t-shirts, FA bags, notebooks, pens etc. To date there has been a significant increase in number of learners on the programme.

