Careers Bulletin November

Supporting Your Child's Future

This month's careers bulletin focuses on helping families navigate some of the most important educational transition points in a young person's journey. From choosing the right post-16 pathway to understanding the opportunities available after the age of 18, making informed decisions can feel overwhelming for both students and parents.

Whatever stage of education your child is at, thinking about their future and exploring the opportunities available to them is important. This edition is designed to equip families with the information, tools and resources needed to have informed conversations about aspirations, career pathways and future destinations.

Within this edition, you'll find information on Sixth Form, colleges, apprenticeships, T Levels, university, degree apprenticeships and employment pathways, alongside practical guidance and resources to support career discussions at home.



Whatever your child's future, we will support them to get there

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Post-16 Options

For students leaving school, there has never been a wider range of exciting opportunities available. Whether your child is considering A Levels, apprenticeships, T Levels, vocational qualifications, or employment with training, family support and guidance are invaluable in helping them make informed decisions about their future.

It is important to remember that all young people in England must remain in education or training until the age of 18. This does not necessarily mean staying in school, but it does mean that students must continue in one of the following pathways:

- Sixth Form or College
- An apprenticeship
- Employment or volunteering combined with part-time education or training

This means that young people cannot leave school at 16 and enter full-time employment unless the role includes an approved programme of education or training leading to further qualifications.

At St Wilfrid's, we are committed to supporting every student and family in exploring the full range of post-16 opportunities, ensuring that each young person progresses onto a pathway that suits their interests, strengths and aspirations.

Understanding Post-16 Options

A Levels

Ideal for students who enjoy academic study and may wish to progress to university, higher technical education, higher apprenticeships or degree apprenticeships. Allows greater flexibility in subject combinations

Vocational Qualifications

(BTEC, AAQ Qualifications. Soon to be replaced and simplified with V Levels)

Practical, career-focused qualifications that prepare students for employment, higher technical eduvation apprenticeships or university

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Understanding Post-16 Options

Apprenticeships

Students earn while they learn, gaining nationally recognised qualifications whilst working with employers.

Apprenticeships are available at various levels and across a wide range of industries including:

- Engineering
- Healthcare
- Construction
- Digital Technology
- Finance
- Professional Services
- Education

Different levels of apprenticeships exist and can be accessed after level 2 (GCSE) or level 3 (Sixth Form / College) study

T Levels

Two-year technical qualifications that combine classroom learning with an industry placement, helping students gain valuable workplace experience.

Equivalent of three A level sized qualifications.

For students who are certain on their career path

Can lead into University or higher technical education or higher apprenticeships upon completion



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Sixth Form Open Evening

Thursday 19th November. 4.00pm-6.00pm

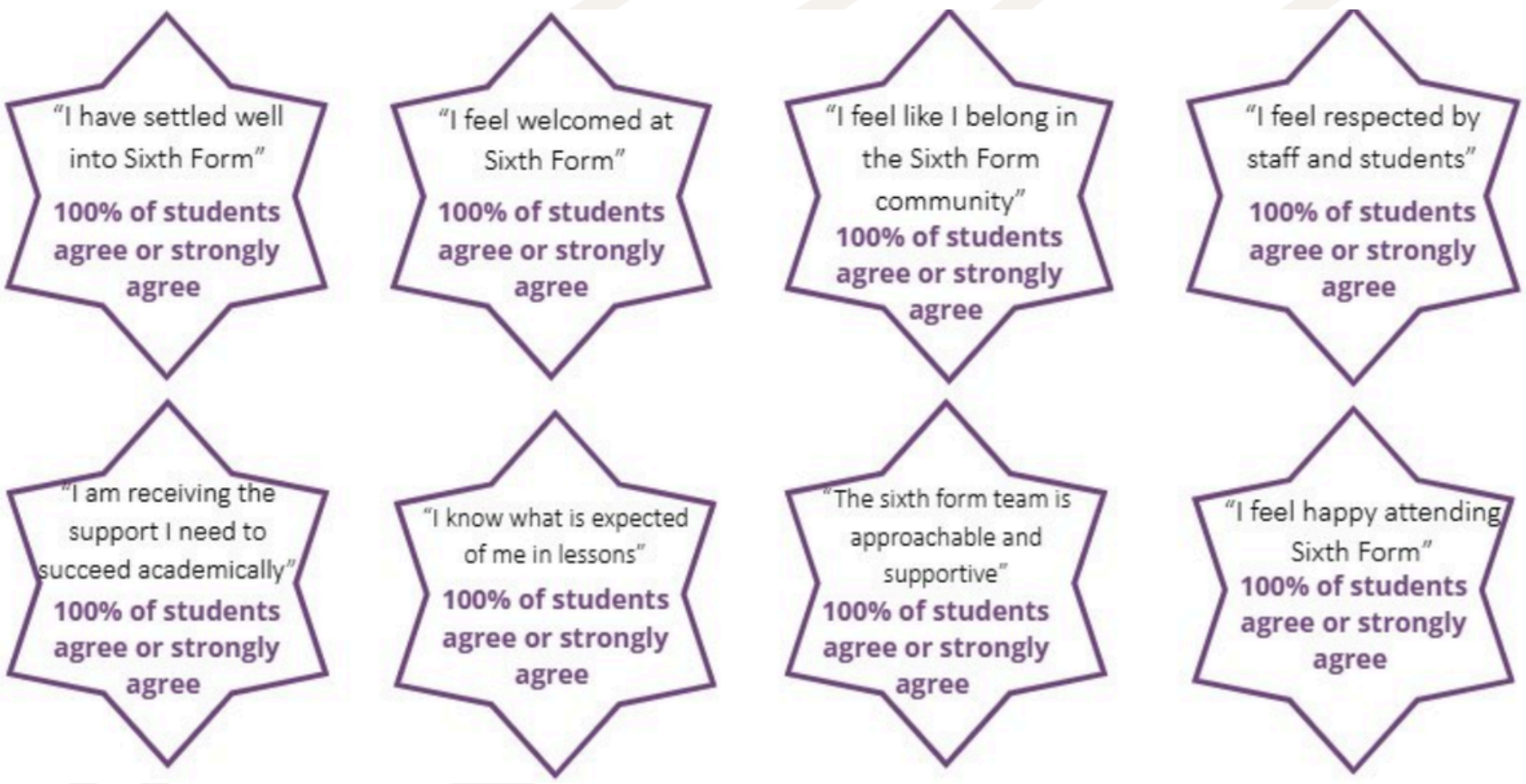
All Year 10 and 11 students are encouraged to attend

This is a fantastic opportunity for students and families to:

- Explore our Sixth Form facilities
- Meet subject teachers and current students
- Learn about our curriculum offer
- Discover enrichment opportunities
- Find out about university, apprenticeship and career pathways
- Ask questions about applications and admissions

We look forward to welcoming prospective students and families and helping them discover what makes St Wilfrid's Sixth Form such a special place to learn and grow

What do our current students say about our Sixth Form?



To support you having powerful conversation with your child about their future, I have included our Sixth Form pathways that are intended to guide subject decisions rather than restrict in recommended subjects to study at Sixth Form and some examples of possible careers they may lead into

Exploring the careers and local labour market information using unifrog would be a suggested next step to explore together.

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Sixth Form Pathways

CREATIVE ARTS

Music / Photography / Film / Art / Engineering / Geography / Business / IT

Career Progression
Film Production, Set Design, Location Management, Digital Media, Design, Music Production.

SPORT & LEISURE

Sport / Biology / Sociology / Psychology / Forensics Science / Travel / Business / IT / Health and Social Care

Career Progression:
Community Health, Physiotherapy, Sports Management, Tourism, Coaching, Education.

MARKETING & DIGITAL MEDIA

Photography / Film / Music / Sociology / Computer Science / English Language / Business / IT / Law

Career Progression
Advertising, Marketing, Content Creation, Media Management, Digital Design.

STEM CAREERS

Chemistry / Maths/ Biology / Computer Science/ Physics / IT / Forensic Science

Career Progression
Engineering, Design, Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Data Analytics

MEDICINE

Chemistry
Biology
Physics / Maths / Psychology / Geography / Law

Career Progression
Doctor, Dentist, Veterinary Science, Pharmacy, Medical Research, Psychiatry, Neuroscience, Biomedical Careers, Public Health Policy, Medical Ethics Roles.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

English / Psychology / IT
Health and Social Care / Psychology
Forensic science, biology, sport

Career Progression
Nursing, Midwifery, Paramedic Science, Mental Health Support, Social Worker, Medical Photographer

MEDIA & COMMUNICATION

Film / English Literature / Psychology, English Language / Spanish / Sociology, Business / IT

Career Progression
Media Production, Marketing, Advertising, Journalism, Global Media, Publishing, Public Relations, Human Resources

LAW

English Literature / Law / Philosophy & Ethics
Sociology / Spanish / English Language / History

Career Progression
Law, Business, Government and Leadership Roles, pension, financial advising, accutarial science. Policing, Security.

Find out more about each of our Sixth Form qualifications at:

https://www.st-wilfrids.org/sixth-form/6thformcourses

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Upcoming Opportunities

Opportunities are shared regularly via your child's Year group Teams channel. Please ensure your child has enabled notifications and checks this regularly

Thinking of applying for apprenticeships?

Discover apprenticeships at the BBC
BBC apprenticeship vacancies open on the 3rd November. Join this live webinar to hear directly from the BBC about what it's like to be an apprentice, gain valuable insights into the structure and benefits of the apprenticeship schemes, including hands-on training and career development opportunities. The session will also guide you through the recruitment process, highlight what the BBC looks for in applicants, and share practical tips to help your application stand out.
Wednesday 4th November 2026, 16:00 – 17:00

NavigATE: What to expect from the apprenticeship recruitment process
Securing an apprenticeship starts with understanding the recruitment process. Ideal for prospective apprentices and those supporting them, this webinar provides a step-by-step look at what happens from application to appointment, along with practical tips on how to prepare. Attendees will also hear from the Emerging Talent Lead at the Met Office.
Thursday 12th November 2026, 15:30 – 16:15
https://www.amazingapprenticeships.com/events/navigate-what-to-expect-from-the-apprenticeship-recruitment-process/

We encourage students, parents and carers to register even if they are unable to attend live, as all registrants will receive access to the webinar recording and presentation slides afterwards.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch. If you do not already receive our free schools and colleges newsletter, you can subscribe at amapps.uk/parent-carer-newsletter to receive updates on future webinars, new resources and other careers education updates.

Engineering apprenticeships
Interested in engineering apprenticeships?

SETA Ltd is hosting an engineering career event on 3rd December. This will be very popular, so book your place ASAP.

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/seta-engineering-training-association-seta-careers-event-tickets-2002993067183

Online subject taster sessions provide a taste of what it is like to study specific subjects at the University of Sheffield. From confucianism to using Machine Learning to track bumblebees, there are a wide range of sessions available, all are listed below.
Please share this opportunity with anyone you think would benefit from these sessions. Students can sign up individually using the links below but we also welcome class bookings - you just need to select 'Teacher/Careers Advisor when you are signing up for the session.

Subject taster sessions can be booked here.

South Tyneside College - 3rd November 5.00-7.00pm
St Wilfrid's Sixth Form - 19th November 4.00-6.00pm
Newcastle University - Saturday 21 November
Northumbria University - Saturday 21 November
Gateshead College - 23 November 2026 4:30pm-7:00pm
Newcastle College - 2nd December 5.00-7.00pm
SETA Apprenticeships engineering jobs fair: 9th Feburary 5.00-7.00pm

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Post-18 Options

Opportunities are shared regularly via your child's Year group Teams channel. Please ensure your child has enabled notifications and checks this regularly

When students begin exploring their post-16 pathways, it is helpful to understand the opportunities that may be available to them after the age of 18. For our Sixth Form students, it is important they they begin exploring their options for when they leave us at the end of Year 13. There is no single "right" route, and young people can achieve success through a variety of pathways depending on their interests, strengths and career aspirations.

Apprenticeships

Students earn while they learn, gaining nationally recognised qualifications whilst working with employers.

Apprenticeships are available at various levels and across a wide range of industries including:

- Engineering
- Healthcare
- Construction
- Digital Technology
- Finance
- Professional Services
- Education

Different levels of apprenticeships exist. Students leaving sixth form should be applying for apprenticeships at level 3 or above

University

University remains a popular choice for students wishing to deepen their knowledge of a subject and gain a recognised qualification. Degrees are typically studied over three or four years and can lead to a wide range of career opportunities.

Many careers, such as medicine, teaching, law, engineering and psychology, may require a degree or further higher education study.

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Post-18 Options

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Higher Technical Education

Higher Technical Qualifications are employer-led Level 4 and 5 qualifications designed to develop the advanced technical skills needed by industry. They provide an alternative to a traditional degree and can lead directly into skilled employment or further study.

Gap Year with volunteering

A gap year can provide valuable life experience through travel, volunteering, work placements or skill development.

Employment

Some young people progress directly into employment where employers provide structured training and opportunities to gain professional qualifications while working.

Remember: Career Journeys Are Rarely Linear

It is important for students and families to remember that very few people follow a perfectly planned career path. Many adults change careers, retrain or discover new opportunities throughout their working lives. The skills developed through education, employment, volunteering and enrichment activities often prove just as valuable as qualifications themselves.

The most important thing is not having every step mapped out at 16 or even 18, but choosing a pathway that keeps opportunities open and allows young people to continue developing their knowledge, skills and confidence.

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Family Support Resources

Parents and carers play a vital role in helping young people make informed decisions about their future. The resources below provide excellent advice, guidance and labour market information to support family discussions around post-16 and post-18 pathways.
When exploring post-16 options, it is helpful to remember that these decisions are often linked to future post-18 opportunities. Whether your child is considering university, an apprenticeship, a degree apprenticeship or entering employment, thinking ahead can help them understand which qualifications and experiences may support their long-term goals.
It is equally important to remember that very few young people have their entire future mapped out at 16. They do not need to have all the answers right now. The most important thing is that they choose a pathway that keeps doors open, develops their skills and places them in a strong position to take advantage of future opportunities.
Encourage your child to be curious, explore different careers and research pathways that interest them. Sometimes discovering what they don't enjoy can be just as valuable as finding what they do. Career plans will often change and evolve over time, and that's perfectly normal. By remaining open-minded and willing to explore new possibilities, young people can ensure they are well placed for opportunities and inspiration to find them along the way.

Amazing Apprenticeships Parent Zone

Amazing Apprenticeships offers a wealth of free resources designed specifically for families, including:

- Parent guides
- Apprenticeship information videos
- Labour market updates
- Parent webinars and podcasts
- Podcast: The Parent Perspective Podcast
- Visit: https://amazingapprenticeships.com

UCAS Parent Support

UCAS now provides significant support for parents and carers helping young people navigate post-18 choices.
Topics include:

- University applications
- Personal statements
- Student finance
- Apprenticeships
- Degree apprenticeships

Podcast: UCAS Parent and Carer Guides
Visit: https://www.ucas.com

Unifrog for Families

Unifrog provides excellent guidance for students exploring all progression routes, including university, apprenticeships and employment.
Families can access:

- Careers information
- Subject advice
- Application guidance
- Future pathways resources

All St Wilfrid's have access to Unifrog. Please sign in using the "Sign in with Microsoft" option and enter your childs school log in details.
Podcast: The Student Futures Podcast
Visit: https://www.unifrog.org

Higherin

Higherin supports young people and families across the North East with progression into higher education and future careers.
Resources include:

- University guidance
- Student finance information
- Parent events
- Outreach activities

Visit: https://higherin.com

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Alumni Spotlight

From St Wilfrid's to Transport Planner



Paul Skipper

Transport Planner at Stantec

My Journey

After studying Geography, Biology and Chemistry, I went on to Manchester Metropolitan University. I had an amazing university experience, met brilliant people and spent a year studying abroad in the USA.

Where Am I Now?

I now work as a Transport Planner at Stantec, a global engineering and consultancy firm, working on projects ranging from new housing developments to major city buildings. I particularly enjoy promoting sustainable travel and helping to reduce carbon emissions.

What did you love the most about Sixth Form?

Being able to focus on subjects I enjoyed, with supportive teachers who helped me both academically and with planning my future. The strong sense of community also made it a brilliant environment to learn and grow

Your Future Starts Here

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Alumni Spotlight

From St Wilfrid's to Medicine



Dr Karis Harbertson

NHS Doctor

My Journey

After studying Biology, Chemistry and Philosophy & Ethics at St Wilfrid's, I went on to study Biomedical Science BSc at Manchester University before completing a degree in Graduate Entry Medicine (MBChB) at the University of Nottingham

Where am I Now?

I am a resident Doctor in the NHS, I am an acute medicine doctor, which means I see patients that are coming in from the emergency department who are going to be coming in to the hospital wards. I perform examinations, prescribe medications and I also look after the same day emergency care unit.

My Advice

Don't worry if your route to success looks a little bit different to what you first imagine! My journey to medicine was slightly different, having to do a degree in Biomedical science first, but I didn't give up on my dreams and graduated within the top 1% of my medicine degree and was awarded a place at the denery to train in a hospital opposite Big Ben in London as a result!

Your Future Starts Here

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Alumni Spotlight

From St Wilfrid's to Degree Apprentice



Dylan Bell

Engineering Degree Apprentice with Accenture

My Journey

After studying Computer Science, IT and Spanish at St Wilfrid's Sixth Form, I applied for both university courses and degree apprenticeships in Computer Science. I chose the degree apprenticeship route because it offered the opportunity to gain valuable industry experience while studying for my degree.

Where am I Now?

I am currently in the final year of a Software Engineering Degree Apprenticeship with Accenture. Since joining in September 2024, I have worked on a Live Support team, investigating incidents, analysing data and implementing code fixes that help keep critical services running smoothly.

Throughout my apprenticeship, I have worked alongside talented colleagues who have supported my development and helped me build both my technical knowledge and professional skills.

My Advice

Take the time to explore degree apprenticeships as well as university courses. Most importantly, choose a pathway that aligns with your interests and do what you enjoy. Success comes much more easily when you are passionate about what you do.

Your Future starts Here

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We are always looking to expand and enhance the careers programme at St Wilfrid's.

If you are able to support our students through careers talks, workplace visits, joing our alumni programme, mentoring, work experience opportunities, industry insight sessions, or any other careers-related activity, we would love to hear from you.

Equally, if you have friends, family members, colleagues or professional contacts who may be willing to support our careers programme, please encourage them to complete the short form below.

By sharing your expertise and experiences, you can help inspire the next generation and give our students valuable insight into the wide range of opportunities available to them.

St Wilfrid's Careers and Industry Networking – Fill out form

Thank you!

If you have any questions about careers or need any further help in supporting your child, please contact kforster@st-wilfrids.org



Whatever your child's future, we will support them to get there