

Primary Futures



A guide for Primary school leaders on working with employers and volunteers



For further information please contact our Schools Team on 0203 206 0510 or check out our website: www.primaryfutures.org @Edu_employers

Primary Futures is part of
inspiring the **future.org**



Introduction

Russell Hobby, General Secretary, National Association of Head Teachers

A future career seems a long way off for most primary age children. Making a connection between what they learn in primary school and the jobs they might one day pursue is not easy, particularly for those from challenging backgrounds, where local unemployment is high and horizons may be set low. Primary Futures, which is part of the successful Inspiring the Future programme which as of October 2014 has already registered 16,000 volunteers from across the country, is intended to change that. Developed by the NAHT and the Education and Employers Taskforce charity, Primary Futures is a new free resource for state schools that brings literacy and numeracy to life, broadens horizons for primary school children and links their learning to their futures.

Inviting volunteers into schools is nothing new. There are well established number and reading partner schemes across the country such as Number Partners and Time to Read, and the Evening Standard newspaper has worked with Beanstalk via the Get London Reading campaign to train up volunteers and send them into primary schools to help struggling readers. However the free Primary Futures programme is on a much greater scale than most initiatives by nature of its reach and the diversity and range of its offer. Through Primary Futures, schools can connect with volunteers willing to do short 'career insight' talks about their job, sector and profession, creating a link between learning in school and the world of work. Many volunteers can also talk about using maths or languages at work or setting up their own businesses and some express an interest in becoming a school governor.

One of the many challenges the teaching profession faces is the criticism from business leaders that young people are leaving school without the necessary skills to succeed in the workplace – which is where Primary Futures can play an important role.

It links what children do in school to the world they will inherit one day. In the Primary phase, children learn to develop their literacy and numeracy skills, but don't always fully appreciate quite why they're doing it. A central part of this initiative is to develop the link between literacy and numeracy skills and the world of work so helping children to see that

learning has a real purpose and practical value. On the more personal level it's also wonderful to see a spark of interest ignited in a child who may have previously felt disconnected from school.

The Education and Employers Taskforce charity has already built an online mechanism to connect schools and volunteers. It is 'matching' software that works in a similar way to online dating. When teachers register they can see the list of volunteers in their local authority area by job and simply invite them to visit their school.

Primary Futures introduces children to the world of work through the eyes of volunteers who can show them how literacy and numeracy have opened doors to interesting and rewarding careers. It gives our children and young people a vision of the opportunities available to them, so that they understand the value of learning.

Teachers can help primary children meet and learn from adults beyond their own locality and social networks which is especially invaluable for children who live in an environment of high unemployment.

Of course, another reason for inviting volunteers into schools is to get as many people as possible who don't normally visit schools in to see what actually happens in the classroom and the high quality work which is going on in so many of our schools.

About this guide

This guide discusses some of the most common activities that primary school leaders and teachers across the country organise to support learning and development and help primary school children make a connection between what they learn at school and the wider world. It is not intended to act as a comprehensive list of all the activities and events that schools organise but rather to give a flavour of the diverse projects and initiatives that are underway.

Through inviting people who have built successful careers to take part in career related activities, enterprise activities and number and reading partner schemes, teachers and school leaders enable primary school children meet, interact with and learn from adults beyond their own family and social networks. In facilitating and encouraging interaction with volunteers from a wide range of professional backgrounds, primary schools can help children increase their confidence, broaden their horizons and improve their key skills. Schools can also draw on volunteers for advice and to fill vacancies on governing boards.

Drawing on relevant analysis and evaluations that have been undertaken, this guide sets out what is known about the benefits of some of the programmes and activities that schools organise that involve employers and employees. It shares the insights that are available from what is a limited research base and captures the first-hand perceptions of primary school teachers involved in running such events and activities.

The guide is structured as follows:

- What are career focused activities?
- Enterprise activity schemes and programmes
- Number partner scheme
- Reading partner schemes
- Primary Futures
- Case studies – using employee volunteers in school
- Find out more



Primary Futures How it works

Only 1 hour per year



Volunteers

Step 1



Step 2



I've received an invite from a school to a Primary Futures event



Step 3



I really enjoyed meeting the children and talking to them about my career and the importance of my primary school learning



Step 4

Primary Schools



Sign up to find volunteers willing to visit your school



Decide which volunteers to invite, e.g.



- Graphic Designer
- Apprentice Engineer
- Nurse
- Architect
- Chef



Send them a message



To:
 Would you like to attend a Primary Futures event?
 From:

After the discussion with the children

That's made me think of the different options open to me...



Career focused activities

What?

Primary schools across the country run activities and events to introduce children to the very wide range of careers and professions that are available. These activities take many forms, for instance careers insight talks, Career Days: subject talks and activities; work simulations; workplace visits; and Professions Weeks.

Activities vary greatly in focus, scope and duration but the overall idea is to introduce children to new people and possibilities, to give them the opportunity to develop ideas and aspirations for the future and to help them to understand the purpose of learning.

Inspiring the Future is a free online service that does just that by giving teachers access to over 16,000 volunteers who have pledged at least one hour of their time to talk about their job, career and the educational route that they took, and through Primary Futures this is now available to primary teachers. Volunteers and schools are connected securely online, with volunteers receiving invites from teachers from local schools to see if they can attend activities during the academic year.¹

Examples of these activities, and of how and why teachers have organised them through Inspiring the Future, are set out below. All the quotes form part of genuine invitations from primary teachers to volunteers.

Career insight talks in year group or school assemblies where volunteers talk to children about the job they do, and answering questions from children sometimes using 'Guess My Job' quizzes to stimulate discussion.

"Many of our children come from families where there are few or no working adults and they have limited experience of the world of work and sometimes, as a consequence, very low aspirations. As part of this I am organising speakers to come in to school and talk about their chosen career and excite the children about the world of work. I was wondering if you were able to come in some time this academic year to talk to one or both classes about your career and make it really exciting!!"

Teacher at Primary and Nursery School in Brighton & Hove

"We feel that we should expand our horizons and invite in speakers from outside our community. Ideally we would like speakers who can tell their story and answer searching questions from an imaginative audience... But what we really want to understand is what makes you a high achiever?? Have you found a role that makes you feel happy, successful and passionate about achieving excellence? How did you find it? We wish to make this a long term investment in bringing into the lives of the children - insight, passion and a can-do attitude!!"

Teacher at Primary School in Derbyshire

Careers Days or Jobs Fairs featuring people in a wide range of occupations talking about their jobs, practical activities such as using a stethoscope or designing an advertising flyer and even opportunities for children to try on some of the uniforms people wear at work.

"I am arranging a careers day for our current Year 5 and 6s. I have planned a unit of work that focuses on raising aspirations and focusing on potential future careers. Essentially my aim is to reinforce the importance of education in all facets of life. The culmination of the unit will be a careers day where professionals will be available to answer questions from our children. We are aiming for a date in late Feb/early March and I would love it if you could attend."

Teacher at Primary School in Chester

"To raise aspirations of the pupils at the school, a Building Futures Day has been organised where professionals from many different fields of work have been invited to talk to the children about their job, career path and how important their education was in achieving it. 8 volunteers will talk in pairs about their job. We would like you to talk for 5-10 minutes allowing time for children to ask questions."

Teacher at Primary School in Wolverhampton

“Our school serves a community of high unemployment and we are determined to play our part in improving by preparing our children for the challenges of life ahead. We are planning a series of afternoon events week beginning February 3rd where we are inviting colleagues from the world outside school to spend an hour or so of their time in school talking and sharing their experiences with 10 and 11 year old children.”

Teacher at Primary School in Barnsley

Subject talks and activities where volunteers talk about how they use specific skills or subject knowledge in their jobs to enthuse children and help them to situate their learning in the real world.

“We are embarking on a project to raise the aspirations of our pupils, who are from quite a deprived area, in order to motivate and interest them more in their work. We are looking to hold some short talks from people who have used maths in their careers to show the children why they are learning maths and how useful it will be to them in later life. This is part of a drive to use and apply the skills they learn across the curriculum.”

Teacher at Primary School in Gateshead

“On Thursday 6th March we are celebrating World Book Day by dressing up as book characters, making books and holding a second hand book sale. We are also launching Readathon in our special assembly at 9.15a.m. If you are available to come in during the assembly and share a passage from your favourite childhood book or you could visit us at any point in the day to read or help with book making you would be made very welcome.”

Teacher at Community School in Cornwall

Work simulations based around role play and hands-on activities;

“Our vision is to promote real life learning experiences for our pupils. With this in mind, we are looking for some volunteers to come and talk

to our year 5 and 6 pupils about their current job roles. If you feel that you would be able to run a workshop of some kind to give the children a feel of what your job entails then that would be even better”

Teacher at Academy in Essex

Professions Weeks which combine some or all of these activities:

“I am currently organising a Raising Aspirations Week.... The aim is to introduce our children to a range of career/study opportunities in order to inspire them for the future, and the encourage them to take full advantage of their education. Many come from low aspirational backgrounds and the area is one of high social and economic deprivation. We are hoping to have as many different visitors as possible during the week, as well as provide visitors who are willing to speak to and answer questions from children across the age range.”

Teacher at Primary School in Salford

Careers focused activities, which can also include workplace visits and visits to universities and further education colleges, are most commonly organised for children in Key Stage 2, particularly those in Year 6. However, a 2011 government review shows that employee volunteers are used by primary schools to support children’s learning, development and attitudes across all year groups.¹

Why?

Research has shown that primary school children often have fixed and narrow ideas about careers: children start to rule career options ‘in’ and ‘out’ at an early age and girls hold stereotypical views about ‘male’ and ‘female’ careers by age 7.² For example girls are less likely to aspire to careers in science than boys, even though more girls rate science as their favourite subject than boys.³

By introducing children to successful professionals working in different roles and industries, teachers and school leaders can help children to broaden their horizons and increase both their awareness of the opportunities open to them and their confidence and self-awareness. This can be particularly important in less advantaged areas with high unemployment or places where most parents work in similar roles.

To try and overcome some of the additional challenges children from disadvantaged areas can face, the Department for Schools, Children and Families (now the Department for Education) funded what were called Pathfinder pilots in primary schools in 7 local authorities between 2009 and 2010. Pathfinder schools shared similar characteristics, such as higher than average rates of entitlement to Free School Meals and proportions of pupils with Special Educational Needs.

Pathfinder pilot local authorities and schools were encouraged to develop tailored approaches to career related learning that met the need of their Key Stage 2 pupils. Schools followed a common approach to identifying specific needs and designing and delivering programmes of career-related learning but the precise number and type of activities therefore differed between schools.

A comprehensive evaluation of the Pathfinder pilot programme by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) found that it succeeded in a number of ways. These included:

- Increasing awareness of career opportunities amongst participating children;
- Increasing understanding of the link between education, qualifications and work;
- Reducing gender-specific job stereotyping;
- Engaging parents and carers in the education and career choices of their children.

Pupils at schools involved in the Pathfinder pilots also showed evidence of increased self-confidence, improved team-working skills and improved attendance and attainment, compared to peers at non-Pathfinder schools.⁴



Enterprise activities

What?

Enterprise related activities are the most common form of work-related learning activities at primary schools. A 2011 government research project found that enterprise activities were offered at least once a year at 81% of the 95 schools surveyed.⁵

How?

Enterprise activities take many forms but they commonly involve children planning and running money making projects and managing budgets, usually in teams. Some primary schools devise and organise their own events and activities and ask volunteers who work in a similar field or role to help shape activities and judge projects and Dragon's Den-style competitions. Other schools participate in national schemes, programmes or challenges such as the Fiver Challenge, the Young Enterprise Primary Programme and the Enterprise Troopers competition in Wales.

Why?

Enterprise education programmes typically aim to develop communication, team work and problem solving skills and to introduce children to important concepts such as entrepreneurship and money management.

International evidence suggests that; such enterprise activities can help children to develop non-cognitive skills such as persistence, creativity and pro-activity.⁶ A large randomised control trial evaluation of BizWorld, an entrepreneurship education programme that is taught in the final year of primary school in countries around the world including the Netherlands, found that the programme had a significant positive effect on non-cognitive entrepreneurial skills of participating Dutch children.

On average, the skills of children who participated in the 5 day experiential learning programme increased by more than their peers who did not across a number of areas:

- Self-efficacy;
- Drive for achievement;
- Risk taking, persistence;
- Analysis;
- Pro-activity;
- Creativity.

The programme did not however have a positive impact on the entrepreneurial knowledge or intentions of participants.



Reading partner schemes

What?

Volunteer literacy schemes, whereby volunteers visit schools regularly to help children practice their reading and build their confidence with, and interest in, books, are widespread in primary schools. More than a third (36%) of the 1,000 primary school teachers surveyed by NFER in 2012 reported that pupils at their school had been involved in one-to-one literacy schemes with non-expert volunteers who regularly heard children read.

How?

Volunteer reading schemes operate differently in different places. In some schools parent volunteer to listen to children read on an ad-hoc basis, some schools run their own reading partner programmes using non-parent volunteers and others draw on or take part in reading partner programmes such as those run by Beanstalk (formerly Volunteer Reading Help), Business in the Community and Tower Hamlets EBP whereby volunteers from a diverse array of personal and professional backgrounds volunteer to go into schools on a regular basis to support children who are struggling with reading. Hundreds of employee volunteers registered on Inspiring the Future are interested in becoming reading partners:

“Hi I saw your profile and I’d be interested in sourcing a male role model for reading. Is this something which you may be interested in?”

Teacher at Primary School in Lancashire

These schemes recruit volunteers through different methods but after some initial, often quite modest, training volunteers visit their allocated primary school regularly (usually once or twice a week) and spend time reading, talking and playing educational games with children who have been identified as in need of extra support by their teachers. Volunteers typically work with the same child or children for at least a term, and often for a full academic year.

Why?

Teacher evaluations of reading partner schemes are generally very positive. The overwhelming majority of the 323 primary school teachers surveyed by NFER who had personal experience of volunteer literacy schemes said that volunteer either slightly increased pupils’ chance of reaching a target (68%) or very much increased pupils’ chances

of reaching a target (23%). Less than 2% of teachers said they thought such schemes reduced the chances of participating pupils reaching their target, which is important given the time involved.

Academic studies also point to positive outcomes. A thorough evaluation of the Time To Read reading partners programme run by Business in the Community in Northern Ireland found clear evidence of improved reading outcomes for children, particularly the foundational reading skills of decoding, reading rate and reading fluency.⁷

This evaluation used a randomised control trial methodology whereby 512 children from 50 schools in Northern Ireland were randomly allocated to take part in Time to Read or to a control group. All 512 children were tested on a range of measures in October 2009 at the start of the school year and again in June 2010 when the Time to Read intervention finished.

The study found that children who took part in Time To Read experienced a 6 percentile point improvement in their decoding skills, a 9 percentile point improvement in their reading rate and a 6 percentile point improvement in their reading fluency, compared to children in the control group. The evaluation did not find evidence of any significant improvements in comprehension, reading enjoyment or reading confidence amongst participating children. However, it did find that the Time to Read programme worked effectively irrespective of gender, socio-economic background or initial reading ability and also had a positive impact on children’s aspirations for the future.

Number partner schemes

What?

Many schools engage with volunteers and employees to support numeracy and enthusiasm for maths amongst pupils. Employer-based numeracy schemes like Number Partners and university-led schemes such as STIMULUS and Volunteers in Primary Schools involve volunteers going into primary schools on a regular basis and playing number games with children to help them develop their confidence, interest and skills in maths. Hundreds of volunteers registered on Inspiring the Future are interested in supporting the work of primary schools in this way.

How?

Volunteer numeracy schemes differ in their nature and organisation but typically volunteers work with a particular school after some initial, at times modest, training. Volunteers then visit the school approximately once a week to play number games with pupils, with the aim of making maths fun, increasing the confidence of participating students and improving their attainment in maths.

Whereas reading partner schemes tend to be targeted at children who are behind on literacy, schools can use number partner activities to engage and stretch high achievers as well as support those who are struggling with maths or lack confidence in their own abilities.

“I am looking for volunteers who would like to visit the school on a regular basis either to support/ work with a child with reading or mathematics - we can provide some training if required.”

Teacher at Primary School in Wigan

For example Number Partners volunteers in Tower Hamlets, Leicestershire and Hull work with children who are behind on maths but also with children with high levels of numeracy. The national scheme is aimed at 7 to 14 year olds but can be adapted for younger or older audiences according to the preference of teachers or co-ordinators who select students to participate in the programme.

A 2014 survey of 28 teachers, head teachers and Maths coordinators by the Education and Employers Taskforce shows that volunteers support children from Year 2 to Year 6, but with a particular concentration at Years 3, 4 and 5. The average number of participating students at Number Partner schools was 11 (ranging from 2 to 24) and Number Partner sessions generally take place once a week for between 15 and 30 minutes.⁸

Under the STIMULUS programme run by the University of Cambridge, students who are studying maths or science related subjects volunteer to work as volunteer Teaching

Assistants at nearby schools for a term, alongside the class teacher. Schools can choose how best to draw on the skills of volunteers, for example assisting with practical work, working one-to-one with able pupils and/or helping with after school science and homework clubs. Under the Volunteers in Primary Schools (VIPS) initiative at the University of East Anglia, students can choose to be Number Partners, Reading Partners or Classroom Assistants and commit to offer a minimum of 10 hours of their time in total.

Why?

There are very few evaluations of numeracy partner schemes but the Taskforce survey of teachers and school leaders at 28 different schools with experience of the Number Partners programme shows that teachers with first-hand experience believe it has positive effects on the numeracy of participating children and a number of additional benefits.

When asked, the majority of teachers surveyed said that participation in Number Partners had improved pupils' chance of reaching their individual numeracy targets, 66% reporting that it had slightly improved chances and 26% saying that it very much increased their chances. By far the majority of teachers also reported positive effects on the concentration, listening skills, verbal expression, confidence, motivation and aspirations of participating children as well as improvements in their understanding of the world of work and participation in class. Teachers reported that these benefits – summarised below - tended to manifest themselves after 6-9 sessions with a Number Partner.⁹

Where the Number Partner programme is felt to have its biggest impacts for children (28 schools)

	It makes a lot of difference	It makes a little difference	It makes no difference
Confidence	64%	32%	6%
Motivation	54%	42%	4%
Ability to express thoughts and ideas verbally	48%	44%	7%
Concentration	44%	44%	11%
Numeracy	43%	57%	0%
Listening skills	43%	46%	11%
Aspirations	35%	50%	15%
Understanding of the world of work	30%	52%	19%
Participation in the classroom	26%	64%	7%
Literacy	8%	50%	42%
Participation in playground activities	8%	46%	46%
Ability to express thoughts and ideas in writing	4%	46%	50%

SURVEY QUESTION: THINKING ABOUT THE YEAR GROUP YOU ARE MOST FAMILIAR WITH IN RELATION TO NUMBER PARTNERS, PLEASE REVIEW THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: 'AS A RESULT OF THE NUMBER PARTNER SESSIONS, I FEEL THAT PUPILS IMPROVED THEIR...' (N = 28)

Primary Futures

Primary Futures aims to widen the horizons and aspirations of primary school children by helping them make the connections between their lessons and their futures.

Primary Futures has been developed by school leaders' union NAHT in partnership with the Education and Employers Taskforce charity. It is completely free to all state primary schools across England and is part of the successful Inspiring the Future programme which as of October 2014 has already registered 16,000 volunteers from across the country. These volunteers have pledged at least one hour of their time to talk about their job, career and the educational route that they took.

Through the Inspiring the Future platform, primary schools can access a vast network of volunteers from different backgrounds and professions, from apprentices to chief executives, archaeologists to zoologists. Volunteers and schools are connected securely online, with volunteers receiving invites from teachers from local schools to see if they can attend activities during the academic year based on the chosen specialisms and activities that the volunteers have selected when creating their profile.

Adapting Inspiring the Future for the primary audience through Primary Futures opens this significant, free resource to tens of thousands of teachers and children at primary schools throughout the country.

Using Inspiring the Future volunteers

Primary Futures makes it easy for teachers to invite volunteers to take part in a diverse range of activities. Many primary school teachers have already begun using Inspiring the Future to find volunteers and invite them to come into the school. Examples of the activities volunteers can help with are set out below.

Career insight talks for example during school assemblies or lessons, where volunteers explain their jobs and enthuse children about the range of opportunities open to them and how important reading and numeracy were during their school days.

Career fairs or Professions Days featuring people in a wide range of occupations talking about their jobs and practical activities that bring work to life.

Enterprise activities such as acting as judges in projects and competitions such as enterprise or environment schemes.

Reading with or listening to individuals or small groups, perhaps reading a passage from a favourite book to enthuse pupils.

Numeracy which might involve taking part in a numeracy activity or demonstrating how they use maths in their daily work.

Subject talks and activities, for example running Inspiring Languages events in which volunteers discuss the different backgrounds and cultures they come from, helping to broaden children's horizons and showing how they use languages in their jobs.

Becoming a school governor, volunteers can express their interest in becoming a governor and start the conversation with a local school.

The **Inspiring the Future** team works with hundreds of employers and professional bodies across the country, ensuring that volunteer numbers keep pace with the demand from schools. In order for employers to happily release their staff to go into schools for a minimum of an hour a year it is important that schools adhere to the terms and conditions set out when registering. Inspiring the Future works on a degree of trust, it is indicated that DBS checks are not necessary as a teacher is always present and it is imperative that this adhered to in order to satisfy the best practice frameworks that very many employers undertake when involved with employer engagement schemes.



Case Studies

Professionals Week at ARK Atwood Primary Academy (Key Stage 1)

ARK Atwood Primary Academy hosted a 'Professionals Week' in June 2013 because the school believes that even in the early years of primary school it is good to talk to children about their aspirations and what they would like to do later in life. Atwood Primary is unique because as a newly established academy it only currently has Key Stage 1 pupils. However, it wants to show children the link between early learning and their future. Atwood put out a call for parent volunteers to talk about their job in assembly through its school newsletter disseminated in bookbags, by email to parents and on the website.

'Professionals Week' was open up to any parents keen to talk about their job, no matter what it was. Parents were encouraged to bring photos of people doing their job and give a practical demonstration of what they do. They were also asked to outline the skills needed to do the role. There was a huge response, so over two weeks of morning assemblies parents talked about their jobs including; a heart surgeon, tug driver at Heathrow Airport, barrister, shoe designer, electronic sound engineer, chef and a bookbinder. The children had a chance to ask questions which they really enjoyed.

Next, the school plans to take the children to a university to start sowing the seeds of 'possibility' in their young minds.

Daniel Upfield, Headteacher at ARK Atwood Primary Academy, says: "Professionals Week' was an excellent introduction to the world of work. Our parent speakers were engaging and enthusiastic and enabled our pupils to begin to make links between their current education and the skills required to perform a range of different jobs. We believe that with high aspirations all of our pupils can go to university and pursue a career of their choice."

Number Partners at Holywell Primary School (Key Stage 2)

In Spring Term 2014 Holywell Primary School in Leicestershire had six children in years 3 and 4 participating in Number Partners. Children are selected to take part in the scheme because they are low on mathematical confidence and meet Number Partners in pairs for 30 minutes once a week, over the course of a term.

Holywell Primary School believes that links with the wider community and interactions with adults beyond parents, teachers and support assistants are key to being a successful school. Participating children are paired with a different Number Partner each week and receive extra support with their maths in a friendly, non-stressful environment with supportive Number Partners.

Each child who participates in the Number Partners scheme is tracked during the course of the programme and during the last academic year participating pupils increased their end of year target by one sub level, as well as benefitting from increased confidence. Liam Battison, Maths Co-ordinator at Holywell Primary School, says: 'It is a worthwhile and fulfilling programme for both pupils and the Number Partners involved. The children really benefit and absolutely love it! As a coordinator, it is fantastic knowing that we have a support programme for pupils who really need one to one, just to improve their mathematical confidence.'

Dream Catcher Assemblies at St. Luke's School (Key Stages 1 and 2)

St. Luke's is a small primary school in a deprived area of London. For many of pupils there is a mismatch between their aspirations for careers and the reality of the kinds of jobs that will be available to them in the future. They may have high aspirations but they don't always know how to get there.

'Dream Catcher' assemblies were set up by the Headteacher as part of the Learning for Life strategy and they have been running for over two years in St. Luke's and its partner school, Moreland. They tend to be focused on the 7-11 age range, although some have taken place for Key Stage 1 pupils. They are usually conducted with groups of 100 or so pupils for 15-20 minutes and there is always a senior manager present so that volunteers don't have to do behaviour management or run the session themselves.

St Luke's School has found Inspiring the Future to be a valuable resource in sourcing volunteers who are willing to come into the school and engage with the pupils on the theme of careers. Volunteers are encouraged to bring in props or uniforms to show to the pupils and the sessions are based on a question and answer format, with two pupils (usually Year 5 or 6) volunteering to be 'questioners' for that session. They join the speaker at the front of the hall and take turns asking questions to draw out the story of what the volunteer does and how they got into doing it. Then the floor is open to other pupils to ask questions.

When the school was tying in the curriculum with the Olympics, pupils also asked questions around sport and the role sport plays in the life of a volunteer. The point of the assembly is not only to find out how about work or careers but also to see how people shape a life outside of their job.

The school has really seen the impact of these assemblies, particularly in the kinds of questions the pupils are asking. The yearly pupil questionnaire has also shown them talking more specifically about dreams for the future; previously many would talk about being a footballer or a dancer, being rich and famous, and now more of them talk about careers such as biologists or veterinary surgeons. The assemblies help the pupils to understand the range of roles and sectors that they can go into, as well as to see the journey they need to make to get there.

Sometimes volunteers want to get involved in other ways as well; the school had one Inspiring the Future volunteer who was a software engineer come in and run a workshop with a Year 5 teacher. This allowed the pupils to see how skills such as maths are applicable to exciting jobs and can then make the connection between their time at school and the world of work.

Professions Day at Oak Meadow Primary School (Key Stage 2)

Oak Meadow Primary School is a large two form entry primary school with 399 children located in North West Wolverhampton. To widen the horizons and aspirations of primary age children and foster a love of reading and numeracy, eight professionals from different professional fields agreed to talk in pairs to a year group of children. Each talk lasted for 30 minutes with volunteers talking for between five and ten minutes and the children responding with questions. The year groups were Years 3 to 6, with a total of 60 engaged and the teaching staff were present at all times helping to facilitate the questions and answer sessions.

Before half term, the children had been given homework projects to investigate different careers and think about what their dream job would be. The day started with an assembly in which the Head and Regional Lead talked to the children about dream jobs, looked at images of many different careers and discussed how career paths are changing. The volunteers were all present for the assembly and introduced to the children. From there, the children returned to classes and the career 'chats' began

In the afternoon, children worked with school staff on outcomes of the day including a

variety of topics such as writing a CV, designing an advert for a dream job, looking at job advertisements in local papers and online, writing 'A day in the life of an XXX' and thank you letters to the volunteers.

Volunteers, who were given guidance ahead of the day, said that they liked working in pairs. Working in pairs gave volunteers confidence and they learnt from each other whilst also giving the children the opportunity to compare and contrast different careers.

Primary Futures Pilots 2014

The NAHT worked with the Education and Employers Taskforce to run 16 regional pilots in early 2014. These classroom events aimed to link learning in school - especially literacy and numeracy - to the world of work, raise aspirations and break down job stereotypes. Case studies available on the Primary Futures section of the Inspiring the Future website highlight the aims, experiences and outcomes of these primary schools around the country.

One of the pilots took place at Athersley South Primary in Barnsley. Head teacher and immediate NAHT Past President Steve Iredale reflects:

“One of our first volunteers was a female paramedic from Wakefield. She was able to relate the children’s learning in literacy and numeracy to her job. The children could see a real link as she highlighted the importance of writing patient notes neatly to avoid the threat to someone’s safety caused by illegible case-notes. The pilots have been a great success hence we are now rolling out the scheme nationally.”

After the event Lewis, a pupil from Athersley South Primary, said he really enjoyed the visit:

“I learned lots about the role of a paramedic and how my learning in school is so important! It was an exciting afternoon and I can’t wait for the next time,” he said.

Find out more

Education and Employers Taskforce

- Primary Futures (part of Inspiring the Future)– www.inspiringthefuture.org
- Research on employer engagement impacts – <http://www.educationandemployers.org/research-main/>

Enterprise programmes

- BizWorld - www.bizworld.org/
- Enterprise Troopers (Wales) – www.enterprisetroopers.com/
- Fiver Challenge - www.fiverchallenge.org.uk/
- Young Enterprise Primary Programme - <http://www.young-enterprise.org.uk/what-we-do/primary-programmes/>

Reading partner schemes

- Beanstalk: www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk/
- BiTC Time to Read (Northern Ireland): www.bitcni.org.uk/what-we-do/place/young-people-and-schools/time-to/
- Tower Hamlets Primary Reading Partners: www.thebp.org/programmes/primary-reading-partners/

Number partner schemes

- Number Partners - www.numberpartners.org/
- STIMULUS, University of Cambridge - www.stimulus.maths.org/content/
- Volunteers in Primary Schools, University of East Anglia - www.uea.ac.uk/careers/students/opportunities/volunteering/projects

Notes

¹ QCDA (2010) QCDA review of work-related learning for young people aged 5-19

² Flouri, E. & Panourgia C. (2012). Do primary school children's career aspirations matter? The relationship between family poverty, career aspirations and emotional and behavioural problems. Centre for Longitudinal Studies Working Paper 2012/5. IOE, London

³ Archer, L., Osborne, J., DeWitt, J., Dillon, J, & Wong, B. (2013) ASPIRES: Young people's science and career aspirations, age 10-14. London: King's College

⁴ NFER (2011) Key stage 2 career-related learning pathfinder evaluation. London: Department for Education

⁵ QCDA (2010) QCDA review of work-related learning for young people aged 5-19

⁶ Huber, L; Sloof, R & Van Praag, M (2012) The Effect of Early Entrepreneurship Education: Evidence from a randomised field experiment

⁷ Miller, S; Connolly, C; and Maguire, L (2011) A Follow-Up Randomised Controlled Trial Evaluation of the Effects of Business in the Community's Time to Read Mentoring Programme, Belfast: Centre for Effective Education, Queen's University Belfast.

⁸ Morris, K (2014) Number Partners: Impact Report. London: Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnerships

⁹ ibid