January 2023

NEW YEAR, NEW CAREER!

FREE STAYCATIONS WITH NIGHTS ON LOTTIE

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS
FOR APPRENTICES

For Parents Of Children And Young People With Special Educational Needs And Disabilities in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

ITIS PROJECT



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HELLO AND WELCOME TO YOUR WINTER ISSUE OF IRIS MAGAZINE

With the New Year being a great time to start afresh, with National Apprenticeship Week coming up in February, and National Careers Week taking place in March, we've decided to make this issue a Careers Special for parents and young people alike!

For the parents, we've spoken to some careers professionals to get advice about your most asked career questions, including how to find a job that is flexible around your family and how to overcome worries about getting back into work after time off.

For young people, we have a guide for those taking their first steps into the world of work and a look into the benefits of starting an apprenticeship.

There's also the chance to win a free staycation, and a whistlestop tour of half-term activities that the whole family can enjoy.

Happy New Year!







As the evening light remains a little later and we near the end of the winter season, we find ourselves reflecting on the year that has passed, and planning for the year ahead.

New Year is a time for reflection. With all of the planning, organising, budgeting and celebrating that goes on over Christmas, I always like to stop and reflect on the wonderful enthusiasm and energy that is given by our children's educational staff teams at Christmas time each year. We have heard from parents and carers who have been 'blown away' by the adaptations made, to be inclusive of our children with Special Educational Needs and Disability. To all of those members of our communities who go the extra mile, at Christmas time and throughout the year, we would like to say a big 'Thank you'.

In this reflective period, I would like to draw your attention to our Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Local Offers. If you feel that you require some additional support, or want to explore what is available in our area, these are directories of local services for families of children and young people with SEND. We know that we have many wonderful services and support groups available throughout our county, and we would like to promote them to you. For Nottinghamshire County Local Offer please go to www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk and click on the link that says - Local Offer - Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). For the Nottingham City Local Offer, please go to www.asklion.co.uk and click on the Special Education Needs and Disability Local Offer link.

For those families who may be struggling this New Year, please use the Local Offers to access information about food banks and benefit and debt advice. You are in our thoughts and we are happy to signpost you to support, if you want to get in touch, please call us on **0800 121 7772**.

We would like to wish all members of our community, children and young people, parents and carers and professionals that support our families, a very happy New Year.

All the best for 2023!

Ask Us Nottinghamshire Team

Please call us on 0800 121 7772 if you would like to chat.

NEW YEAR, NEW CAREER

This year, National Careers Week will run from 6th - 11th March. Traditionally, National Careers Week is a time for students to access resources, hear from businesses, and learn about the different career paths they could take as they get older - but getting careers advice shouldn't have to stop when you leave school.

That's why we've spoken to some of Nottinghamshire's expert careers advisers, to answer your questions about getting back into work, developing new skills, or finding a career when you have a family to think about.

Getting Back into Work

Many parents who have children with additional needs find that they need to take time away from work to provide full-time care for their child. In fact, a study from Working Families found that 30% of parents of disabled children are not working.

If you're thinking about getting back into work after your child has settled into a school routine, it's natural that you might be feeling nervous, but there's plenty you can do to help build your confidence and feel ready to take your next steps. Here's some of the advice from the career professionals:

A conversation with an impartial Careers
Adviser is a must, as it provides an open
platform for discussion, learning and
understanding of opportunities. A Careers
Adviser can help you to explore how you are
feeling about work, including anything you
may be apprehensive about, and identify and
plan suitable steps that will improve your
confidence and readiness for employment.

Finding a Job That Fits Around the Family

For most parents looking to get back into work, one question is how to find a job that fits around the needs of their family and caring for their children. With 91% of parents of disabled children saying finding a job that offers a suitable working pattern is their biggest barrier to getting back to work, it's an important question to ask.

Luckily, our experts have the answers on how you can do just that:

There are many different types of work that are available that can match skills, interests, and of course availability. The key is to understand how and where to access these opportunities.

A conversation with a qualified Careers Adviser can often lead to a greater understanding of family-friendly employers who offer a more flexible approach to working, including homebased opportunities that suit your needs.

Developing New Skills

Before you start sending out your CV, you might decide to update it with a few new skills first. But not everyone is able to join face-to-face courses - especially when there's a family to take care of!

Online learning is a great alternative to being sat in a classroom and there are plenty of courses available, some of which are completely free.

Online courses can be done from the comfort of your own home at a time and pace that's best for you - no early mornings or late nights necessary! Plus, there's a massive range of courses that can be taken, from brushing up on your Maths and English skills if they're a bit rusty, to learning something completely new, like Digital Marketing.

Here's what the experts have to say about it:

Online learning can largely be completed at the pace you require, and there are a huge variety of courses lasting from as little as a few hours to over a year, depending on what you're interested in. You can choose courses that work for your skill level, situation, and availability.

Whilst online, these courses retain all of the benefits of a traditional course, including the development of skills, confidence, and opportunities. They also look great on a CV when thinking about returning to work.

Interested in Further Support?

Reading advice online and in magazines can be a great first step, but if you're interested in getting further support, speaking with a Careers Adviser is a fantastic option. They can help you find flexible jobs in your local area, enrol on the courses that best suit you, give you top tips for interviews, help you to update your CV, and more.

The National Careers Service offers free support, advice and guidance in Nottinghamshire, with appointments that are available face-to-face, over the phone, or online via webchat. Give them a call on 0800 100 900 or visit www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk to talk to a friendly adviser who is ready to help.



Paid and unpaid carers are being giving the opportunity to claim one of a thousand free three-night staycations at a London or Manchester Unplugged cabin.

Care home market-place Lottie is giving away luxury cabin getaways as a way of saying 'thank you' to unsung heroes. The campaign has been launched by dancer Anton Du Beke, who has first-hand experience of the work of carers as his mother worked as one.

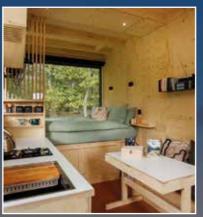
He said: "The majority of adults will care for a family member or friend at some point in their lives, and naturally the impact on a whole range of things is underestimated. This initiative is a way of giving much needed respite to carers both paid and unpaid on the frontline."

Will Donnelly, co-founder Lottie, said: "Despite being a fundamental part of the UK's healthcare system - especially over the last few years - the UK's social care workforce are often overworked and underappreciated. Many carers, especially unpaid carers (someone who cares for a friend or family member due to illness, a disability, or a mental health issue) feel invisible and unrecognised for all that they do.

To kick start the nationwide mission, Lottie have teamed up with Unplugged, who run a variety of digital detox cabins in the UK countryside, to offer 1000 three-night stays for carers (and a plus one) in need of a break.

Hector Hughes, co-founder of Unplugged, said: "We started Unplugged to help busy and burnt-out people rest and recharge. Carers are always on and always putting others before themselves. We're so pleased to be a part of this and to help them switch off in nature for a few days with an Unplugged digital detox."

To submit a nomination, simply provide the details of a deserving carer and the reason they should win the opportunity to rest and recharge in luxury at www.lottie.org/nights-on-lottie/



ACTIVITIES IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE DURING FEBRUARY HALF TERM

Can you believe that the February half term 2023 is almost upon us? Running from Friday 10th - Sunday 17th February, many of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's attractions have created some must-see events and activities that will keep the little ones entertained this half term.

Paid and funded respite activities:

Children's Multi-Activity Holiday Camp

S4K Camp is at Kimberley Leisure Centre - the most engaging and inclusive multi-activity holiday camp for your child.

S4K Camp is a truly unique experience for children from the age of 5 to 13 years. The multi-activity camps operate innovative and exciting programs that are designed to capture every child's interest and imagination. From football to rugby, dance to tennis, Nerf to dodgeball and cricket to arts and crafts, there is something for every child to enjoy.

They accept childcare vouchers and are open every 8:30am-5pm during school half term and holidays.

Find out more: https://sport4kids.biz/camp-venues/kids-holiday-camp-kimberley/





Forward Thinking Movement and Dance (FTMD)

FTMD delivers dance, drama and music respite sessions to people (0-65) who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEN/D), profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), physical disabilities, sensory impairments.

Monday-Wednesday during school holidays 10am-3pm

Find out more: https://ftmdance.co.uk/

Frame Football with Nottinghamshire FA

Welcoming any child aged 3 - 18 years using walking or gait training equipment such as a frame or a walker, who wants to get involved with football! Frame football with Hucknall Rolls Royce Leisure Frame Team is supported by the Football Association's Disability Committee as a grassroots development programme.

Training: Sundays (Fortnightly sessions) 12:15-1:30pm Cost: £3 per session

Find out more: www.nottinghamshirefa.com/ways-to-play/disability/frame-football





Nottingham Playhouse Relaxed Performances

Offering performances that are more relaxed for all those who benefit from a show where loud noises are reduced, elements of surprise are kept to a minimum and moving around the auditorium is not a problem.

The house lights will be partially up throughout and 'chill-out' areas will be available before, during and after a performance. If a familiarisation visit would be helpful, the Playhouse would be very happy to accommodate this.

To find out more call the Box Office on 0115 941 9419 or email access@nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk.

Free family activities:

Bilsthorpe Heritage Museum

In the early 1900s Bilsthorpe village's population was approximately 200 and slowly declining. Then coal mining arrived in Bilsthorpe in the 1920s and considerably changed the landscape and social development of the village. The Bilsthorpe Heritage Museum was officially opened in July 2014 marking a new beginning for the society and village. The museum is open to the public on Mondays, Wednesdays and Sundays, and boasts well-stocked displays and memorabilia for visitors to see, along with knowledgeable staff (very often ex-miners) on hand to guide you through the displays.



Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre & National Nature Reserve

A new visitor centre opened in 2018, managed by the RSPB and their partners on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council. From Robin Hood to learning about woodland crafts, or the rich history of Sherwood and Edwinstowe, to finding out about the conservation work being done there, there's something at Sherwood for all interests.

Clumber Park family dog walking socials

Weekly dog walking socials, every Wednesday. Come along to explore the Park and enjoy a cuppa and a bite to eat in Clumber Park's dog-friendly café afterwards. Meet at Central Bark at 10am.

You'll find Central Bark between the Walled Kitchen Garden and the cricket ground. Open every day from 9am - 3pm (8am on Saturday), we serve hot and cold snacks and all your favourite drinks made to order.





Well for Work offers personalised help for you to feel confident and supported when it comes to work, for life.

We support people facing barriers, whether it's mental health, special educational needs or disabilities in taking the next step in further education or employment.

Our advisers can help you with:

- Finding the perfect job for you
- Qualifications, including English,Maths and sector based training
- ☐ Work programme assistance
- ☐ Wellbeing and therapy services
- ☐ Housing support, financial advice and travel assistance

The focus is on you. We want to support you in being and feeling the best version of yourself.







The Well for Work Programme is part-funded by the European Union through the European Social Fund (ESF)



INFORMATION AND HELPLINES

LOCAL SEND SUPPORT

Ask Us (City and County)

Help maintaining a good working relationship with school. Help with applications, resolving issues and many other education-related issues.

Web: askusnotts.org.uk

Phone: **0800 121 7772**

Currently running a voicemail service, please leave a voicemail and we will call you back.

Nottingham City Council SEN

Local Authority Support for young people 0-25 with SEND

Phone: 0115 876 4300

Email: special.needs@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Schools and Families Specialist Services (County)

Teachers and teaching assistants who provide specialist assessments and interventions, including services for children and young people who are deaf, visually impaired, autistic and have cognitive learning difficulties.

Communication and Interaction Team, Cognition and Learning Team, Sensory Team: 0115 854646 Early Years Team: 0115 8041232

Partnership Team (County)

Providing advice and support to parent/carers, schools, partnerships of secondary schools and working with other agencies with an aim to reduce fixed term suspensions and permanent exclusions.

(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark) -

Julie Jones: 0115 8040974 julie.jones@nottscc.gov.uk

(Broxtowe, Gedling, Rushcliffe) Clare Walker: 0115 9773025 clare.walker@nottscc.gov.uk

Health Related Education Service (County)

Supports children who are unable to attend school for health-related reasons, including learners in hospital receiving treatment and children who are too ill to attend school

Main office and general enquiries Telephone: 0115 9773481

Hospital and Home Education Learning Centre (City)

An education provision based in the City of Nottingham for children and young people with health needs.

E: SENCO@hhe.nottingham.sch.uk

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

BEMH (Behavioural and Emotional Mental Health) (City)

Support for children and young people with behavioural, emotional or mental health needs, determining where further assessment is required, signposting to or providing information about other suitable services and delivering one-to-one work. A range of parenting programmes is also available.

0115 876 4000 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

SEMH (Social Emotional Mental Health Team) (County)

Specialist teachers and teaching assistants who provide advice and support, to reduce fixed term suspensions, permanent exclusions and secure and strengthen the school places of primary aged children aged 3 to 11 years with the most severe and complex social, emotional and mental health needs.

Contact SEMH@nottscc.gov.uk

South Team

Gedling

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Rushcliffe

Kirstie Phipp

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Lucie Keeling

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Team Manager

Julie Jones 0115 8040974

julie.jones@nottscc.gov.uk

Be U Notts

FREE Early Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Support

0115 708 0008 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm leave a message to be called back

www.beusupport.co.uk

NottAlone

Local mental health advice and help for young people in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

nottalone.org.uk

Your Guide to Finding Your First Job or Apprenticeship

As a young person, there may come a time when you start to want more than your weekly allowance of pocket money, feel ready to take on some more responsibilities or start thinking about your future career If that sounds like you then it might be the perfect time to start looking for your first job.

There aren't many things that will beat the feeling of seeing your first pay go into your bank account. Getting your first job is an amazing achievement and one you won't forget, so we've put together some advice to help you find your first job.

It's okay if you're not sure where to start. For many, a first job is a chance to dip your toes into the world of work, figure out what you enjoy and gain some transferrable skills.

Below are some first jobs that do not require experience, just some enthusiasm and a positive attitude:

Fast Food Worker

There are plenty of big fast-food companies that strive to create a diverse workforce and encourage employees to use accommodations so they can complete their best work. The average age for fast-food workforces is 24 years-old, giving you the perfect opportunity to learn new skills and make friends at the same.

Working in a café or restaurant

Lots of cafes and restaurants need extra staff at busy times like evenings and weekends when you are likely to be free. You may be serving customers or working in the kitchen, both ideal first-time jobs which allow you to develop good transferable skills for future jobs.

Customer Service Assistant

This role can vary from supermarkets, to call centres, to your favourite clothes shop. You could be a retail assistant, meeting and greeting customers or stationed in a call centre answering calls and emails. These roles bring a lot of flexibility in terms of location and working hours, giving you the opportunity to pick one that works best for you.

Dog Walking

If you love your fluffy friends, why not earn some money whilst walking them? Dog walking vacancies are becoming more and more popular now owners have busy schedules to keep up with. You can spend between 20 minutes and two hours walking a range of pups, with an average wage of £10 per hour.

Charity Volunteering

Even though not all volunteering roles are paid, volunteering for a local charity can help you gain essential transferrable skills whilst giving back to the community. There are plenty of charities in Nottinghamshire that support volunteers with mental health challenges and learning disabilities, including Stonebridge City Farm and Disability Nottinghamshire. People can find it easier to get part time work once they have volunteered

If you're not quite ready to jump straight into work and think that an apprenticeship might suit you better, there are plenty of websites you can visit to learn more about them. Within this issue of IRIS we've dedicated multiple articles to learning more about apprenticeships.

Applying for your first job can be a little daunting, so we've put together a list of top tips to help you feel more comfortable approaching employers and applying for roles.

Complete a CV highlighting your achievements:

This is your opportunity to show employers what you have to offer. Ask your school or careers adviser if they can help you do this. There are also many good websites with CV templates and advice on how to complete your first CV, including successatschool.org and icould.com.

Apply in person if possible:

This gives you a chance to create a first impression even before an interview. Employers will appreciate the effort of visiting their business to hand in your CV. Make sure you check first though, as some jobs only ask for online applications.

Keep your eyes peeled:

Look out for job vacancy adverts in shop windows and restaurants. In addition to online adverts, many small or independent businesses will advertise their vacancies for customers to notice inside the business.

Use your contacts:

Sometimes it's who you know - ask your friends and family if their companies are looking to recruit. They may be able to put you in touch with recruiters and put in a good word for you!

Look out for disability confident employers

This is a government scheme designed to encourage employers to create inclusion and diversity in the workplace. When applying for jobs on company sites, look out for the symbol as pictured below.

Once you have applied, don't give up, follow up:

If you haven't heard back from an employer in two weeks, consider giving them a call or email. You never know, your enthusiasm and drive could land you the job! If they aren't able to offer you the job, ask for feedback so you can learn for your next application.

And remember - this is just a beginner's guide! There is lots of information online that can help you find your first job or apprenticeship. Some websites we recommend visiting are:

https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk

https://icould.com



BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS FOR APPRENTICES WITH SEND

The opportunities for apprentices with SEND are growing, helping learners to succeed and complete their qualifications.

Recently, the government have announced new support to help apprentices with learning difficulties with funding. Businesses will now be able to claim an extra £150 a month to support their apprentices who have SEND - meaning their apprenticeship journey will be smoother!

This is fantastic news for both learners and employers! Now, more businesses can open their doors to dedicated and motivated employees whilst making sure they're offering the correct support.

Unfortunately, apprentices with learning difficulties or disabilities can face multiple barriers when completing their qualification.

This new funding means that business can support their apprentices in a number of different ways, including:

- Hiring additional staff to support their apprentices
- Organising extended or more frequent assessor visits
- Purchasing specialist equipment
- Providing additional time on exams and tests

With this support, every apprentice has the chance to work to the best of their abilities and succeed throughout their learning journey and career.

Courtney Chambers, a Learning Mentor at the Futures Group, shares how this funding will have a positive impact on her apprentices:

"We're able to create a bespoke individual learning plan and can discuss how their barriers can be removed. It helps us mirror support they've received in pervious environments to help them succeed.

Discussing your disability with a training provider or employer can be a scary thought - but it doesn't need to be!

Being open and honest about your needs means that your employers and tutors are more knowledgeable about your disability. This means they can do more to support you, and to give you help that means you can complete your apprenticeship feeling understood.



Deciding what your next steps are after school can be a stressful process – but there's plenty of help available.

The 6th - 12th February is National Apprenticeship Week, so we've put together some information to share all you need to know about just one of your options - becoming an apprentice.

There are loads of benefits to gaining an apprenticeship that you might not have thought of.

Here are just a few of them!

Personalised support and guidance

When completing an apprenticeship, you will be assigned an assessor who will be responsible for guiding you through your course and marking your work - just like a tutor at school!

They will be there to remove any barriers and make changes where they are needed, helping you to succeed in your goals.

Training providers and employers will receive support funding for apprentices with disabilities. This means they can provide specialist equipment, extra time on exams, or more frequent one-to-one assessor meetings to see how you're getting on.

Earn and learn

Alongside gaining a qualification, earning a wage whilst learning is one of the biggest advantages to becoming an apprentice.

Having your own money is a great way to feel independent - and it doesn't have to end when your apprenticeship finishes. Many employers offer permanent jobs to apprentices after their course has been completed.

Gain independence and confidence

Working as part of a company will teach you how to take responsibility for your work, how to behave in a working environment and how to be independent when completing tasks.

These are all really valuable skills!

Feeling supported whilst learning and working can give you the confidence to try new things, meet new people and say yes to more opportunities.

Starting from scratch

Did you know that you don't have to have any experience at all to start some apprenticeships?

There are loads of different levels available, so you can still become an apprentice even if you've only just finished school and have never had a job before

Some apprenticeships ask you to have English and Maths GSCEs or a Functional Skills qualifications to get started. If you don't have these, they might be able to offer you support in getting them.

A lot of employers will appreciate your passion and interest in the subject - so, as long as you have the motivation to learn, the experience and knowledge will follow.



'I FEEL CONFIDENT IN MY JOB ROLE' - DOMINIC SHARES HIS STORY SINCE STARTING HIS APPRENTICESHIP

Apprenticeships are training jobs open to school leavers. You can earn money whilst you learn a job, gain qualifications, and get paid at the same time. Apprenticeships are available in lots of work areas.

Finding your first apprenticeship might make you feel nervous, but you're not alone!

If you're worried about finding an apprenticeship that's right for you and your disability, help is available.

Take Dominic for example - with support he was able to start an apprenticeship with the NHS.

We chatted to him to find out more about his experience:

What steps did you take to find your apprenticeship? Did anybody help you or give you advice?

I worked with my Careers Coach at Futures to look at the employers who were advertising jobs and to see which ones were saying that they were Disability Confident. I knew then that I could talk to them about any additional help I may need.

The Job Centre said at first that I had to apply for lots of jobs each week, but my Careers Coach came to my appointment with me and it was agreed that I would not apply for any jobs, but look for good vacancies with employers who said they would support me.

How do you feel about working? Do you enjoy it?

It has taken me a long time to find my job as an apprentice with the NHS. I feel proud that I am working now, and I feel confident in my job role.

Does your employer support you and any extra needs you might have?

My employer put in the advert that they were happy to support people who may need some sort of extra help, so I chose to disclose my condition. Everything was discussed before I started my new job. My employer is aware of any help I need and supports me in that help.

We also chatted to **Marie**, Dominic's fantastic Careers Coach, who gave some great advice about finding your first job:

"Check out all the support and advice that's available to you from school staff, employers, support groups and your local careers service, who may have designated teams of experienced staff available to help support every step of the way.

They may be able to support you with writing your first CV, finding the best jobs and Disability Confident employers, completing job applications and preparing for interviews.

Don't feel you have to go it alone!"



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