



# Bell Baxter High School

## Employability and Work Experience Update – September 2015

Welcome to the Employability and Work Experience Newsletter August 2015. This newsletter is intended to give staff a summary of key activities undertaken in this area last session.

### **Wider Achievements - Saltire Award**

A school priority is developing opportunities to promote the recognition of skills and wider achievements. The Saltire Award has been introduced to reward voluntary and extra-curricular achievements. These awards have now been established and 49 pupils successfully obtained an Award in session 2014/15, as shown below:

|    |    |    |    |    |   |
|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| S1 | 5  | S3 | 12 | S5 | 9 |
| S2 | 13 | S4 | 3  | S6 | 7 |

It is important that all extra volunteering is recognised and those running groups are encouraged to promote the Saltire Award to pupils. A particular advantage of the Saltire Award is that it requires no additional work from staff or pupils save completing a time sheet.

Accrediting wider achievement remains an area for development in session 2015/16.

### **Modern Apprenticeships**

A number of events were held in session 2014/15 to promote Modern Apprenticeships and encourage pupils to consider a variety of pathways. These included talks from industry experts, visits to careers fairs and the promotion of local events. Many pupils have applied for opportunities identified at these events. Pupils have been offered the opportunity to engage with employers or representatives from the following areas:

Oil and Gas  
Construction  
Hospitality  
Tourism  
Engineering

### **Employability – Curriculum Developments**

The Technologies Faculty offered an accredited employability award as part of a senior enrichment. Whilst the course did not go ahead due to uptake it will be offered again in session 2016/17. The new S3 enrichment – Stock Market, Big Business and Employability - gives pupils the opportunity to begin developing employability skills at an early stage.

The Expressive Arts Faculty is currently working in partnership with the Association of Business in Cupar and District. The Photography Enrichment pupils are working to produce photographs of the local community that may be used in publicity materials. This partnership offers a very real context to pupils undertaking the course and pupil achievement will be recognised with the award of SQA National Progression Award Units.

The Health and Wellbeing Faculty are delivering a range of employability inputs and are developing the opportunity for S2 and S3 pupils to work towards SQA Personal Development Awards.

All faculties are encouraged to consider whether their enrichments may lead to outcomes that could be formally recognised.

### **Partnership Working**

Partnership working is a priority and many relationships were initiated and developed in session 2014/15. These are ongoing and include working closely with Opportunities Fife, the local colleges and various employers. Faculties are encouraged to continue to develop partnerships to support learning in specific curriculum areas. New partnerships should be shared with PT Employability so they can be added to the database.

### **Fife Voluntary Action**

Fife Voluntary Action have been supportive in offering pupils voluntary opportunities in their spare time or as a way to boost employability skills. The organisation supported the Study Leave event by offering placements to pupils. Three S6 pupils are now undergoing training from the NHS to allow them to work in support of older people in the local area.

### **OPITO**

This Oil and Gas industry body oversees the Modern Apprenticeship Programme which allows successful candidates to progress to careers in engineering. A series of events involving OPITO, parents and employees from the industry were held in session 2014/15. These encouraged several pupils to apply for this programme as well as giving some younger pupils insight to engineering careers and the entry requirements.

### **SRUC**

The relationship with SRUC continued to grow with an increase in the number of courses delivered in partnership and new initiatives, such as Chef Club, being offered to pupils.

Chef Club was particularly successful in session 2014/2015, with 11 S1-3 pupils participating with a mixture of mainstream and pupils with additional support needs. This Club will continue with a new group into session 2015/2016.

### **Kingdom Housing**

This partnership was been established to focus on developing skills in the heritage construction industry. A key part of the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) and Townscape Heritage Initiative, this is a growth industry in Cupar with significant investment. It is intended to develop a programme of training, work experience and school visits in partnership with Opportunities Fife and Kingdom Housing.

### **Fife Council**

The relationship with Fife Council continued to strengthen in session 2014-15. As a key local employer the Council has promoted numerous job opportunities through Bell Baxter. These included job opportunities for outdoor summer jobs, traditional apprenticeships and modern apprenticeships. Staff from Employability and Skills are working with the school on an ongoing basis to maintain and develop relationships while Human Resources have attended the school to make presentations to targeted pupils.

### **Opportunities Fife**

A closer relationship with Opportunities Fife allowed the school to promote the latest local job opportunities to pupils. Opportunities Fife are supporting the development of construction training programmes in partnership with Kingdom Housing.

### **St Andrews Old Course**

The open evening of St Andrews Old Course was promoted throughout the school. Pupil attendance at the event directly led to the offer of employment to 2 S4 pupils.

### **Local Schools**

Reciprocal visits have taken place with staff from Kirkland, Lochgelly and Dunfermline to share best practice in employability. Additionally the primary school cluster proved very helpful in offering work experience to pupils.

### **Parent Teacher Association**

The PTA continued to play a supportive role in promoting employability skills in session 2014/15. Representatives have recently developed a database of parents willing to offer employability inputs to pupils. This resulted in the production of a directory of parents with a wide range of skills who are willing to assist pupils in various ways such as work shadowing and information talks. Please contact PT Employability should you wish to make use of this resource.

### **Association of Businesses in Cupar and District**

Work is ongoing with the Association to enable partnership working in areas including photography (Art) and Graphic Design (CDT).

The Committee will continue to publicise job vacancies and training opportunities through the school.

### **Use of Partners**

A database of key partners and employers was created. Staff wishing to help pupils into work experience or looking for other support from employers or local community should contact PT Employability in the first instance.

### **Employment Opportunities**

A central Employability Noticeboard was established in the corridor area outside Room 205. A range of opportunities with various partners, including full/part time and summer jobs are displayed. The intention is to have one place in which pupils can access information about vacancies. Even at this early stage there has been an increase in enquiries about these opportunities. Staff are asked to encourage pupils to make use of this facility.

Vacancies and training opportunities are also regularly being collated and distributed to House Heads. If any staff are interested in receiving these please contact PT Employability.

### **Work Experience**

The newly established work experience database has grown in size with pupils obtaining work experience in a diverse range of industries. Pupils should be encouraged to consider work experience. A wide range of partner relationships means pupils have the opportunity to access work experience in a variety of settings.

It is very important that any pupil undertaking work experience completes the relevant forms, available from the main office. This allows the capture of accurate data of pupils and is a Fife Council requirement.

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|----|----|----|----|
| S3 | 1  | S5 | 9  |
| S4 | 10 | S6 | 12 |