



My Future My Choice

A Programme for Young People in the last two years of primary school (age 9 – 11) or early secondary (age 11 – 13)

Connecting Education to Aspiration

Volunteers Handbook

My Future My Choice

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For More Information

My Future My Choice

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Introduction

It is widely recognised by primary and secondary head teachers that low aspirations and a narrow view of the world are one of the root causes of low attainment in schools.

As part of its strategy to raise attainment, Bristol City Council has worked with the Bristol based charity ABLAZE, to create and deliver a unique programme for children in their final two years of primary school which will widen their knowledge of options for their future and raise their aspirations.

Most careers based programmes are aimed at young people in secondary school and may come too late for some. By building a fun programme based on humour, multi-media and games MFMC introduces an exciting range of opportunities for the future.

These messages run through the whole programme.

- Life offers lots of exciting job opportunities for everyone
- Everybody can have a fulfilling future if they set goals and work for it
- Learning at school is related to skills for life and work

Tellus3 is the third in a series of annual study commissioned by the schools' inspectorate Ofsted, which put nearly 40 questions to 150,000 10- to 15-year olds to establish what problems they face. The biggest change since the survey was carried out a year ago was a rise in young people who are concerned about their future lives after they leave school. Half said their futures are now a major concern compared with just 30% last year.

The majority (81%) said that more interesting lessons would be the most important thing to help them learn more - compared with 38% who said they wanted better behaved classrooms.

The proportion of children reporting they want to go to university rose from 50% to 54% last year. Some 62% said they needed more careers advice and 10% said they were not even sure whether their school offered any.

That finding tallies with a separate study conducted by the influential educational charity the Sutton Trust. The London School of Economics researchers found that widespread poor education and careers advice is preventing large numbers of academically able pupils from non-privileged homes going on to higher education.

It concludes: "It seems that swaths of young people with the potential to go on to higher education are being missed by current advice and guidance provision."

Tuesday, October 28th, 2008 – The Guardian

The Programme

There are three elements to My Future My Choice:

1/ Multi-Media event – A narrative presentation lasting one and a half hours held in June/July each year. Short chapters take the audience into different industry sectors to meet people and see places. Business volunteers talk about their roles and industry sectors in an accessible and entertaining way. The event is part film and part live and involves two skilled facilitators to interact with the audience.

2/ In-School Resources - Teachers are supplied with lesson plans, information about the business world and DVDs which they can use in the classroom to continue the learning from the multi-media event.

3/ Business Volunteers – Volunteers have the opportunity to use the My Future My Choice card game to engage with the children or be interviewed about their career as part of a literacy activity. These cards can either be used to support the multi-media event or as a stand alone resource.

Measurement and Evaluation

If the full programme is in place, children can be surveyed in Year 5 prior to starting the programme when they are asked about their aspirations. They are then surveyed again after the event and at the end of Year 6. A sample questionnaire is on the next page. It is important that exactly the same questions are asked at each of the data collection points.

The data provides valuable material to measure impact and give the schools an insight into the experiences and needs of children in their school community.

Similar evaluations could take place at Key Stage 3 using a before and after survey with some additional more in-depth questions around not only aspirations but intentions for further education.

Key Messages

All My Future My Choice activities focus on the following key messages which reflect the purpose of the programme.

Messages from the My Future My Choice performance are -

1. Life offers lots of exciting job opportunities for everyone
2. Everybody can have a fulfilling future if they set goals and work for it
3. Learning at school is related to skills for life and work

Supporting messages

1. There are lots of different industry sectors in which people can work
2. Each work place in any sector has people doing different jobs to make the business function
3. There are common capacities and dispositions needed to succeed -
 - Communication and team working skills
 - Independence and questioning
 - Persistence and stick ability
 - Planning and reflecting
4. Know your own areas of weakness and work on them
5. Know your areas of strength and use them
6. Working hard gives a better life style
7. Its good to have a passion for something
8. Numeracy and Literacy are important in achieving success
9. Science at school relates to jobs in art and sport
10. All school subjects relate to life
11. Exciting things in life relate to learning in school
12. Your chosen secondary school is a route to success in life
13. Be the one who takes more from the secondary school than others do
14. Its good to take risks if you have thought about it
15. Make opportunities happen
16. Take opportunities that are offered to you
17. Helping people or volunteering is a great way to learn and achieve
18. Joining in and accepting challenges is rewarding
19. There are lots of routes to success
20. See a job as part of a career – even if some jobs are only tiny steps towards success
21. Going straight into work after school does not limit your potential career
22. Going onto Higher Education is a worthwhile investment
23. Other people can be an inspiration
24. You get lots of friends through work
25. Work is only half the fun – enjoy life to the full

Sample Questionnaire – Key Stage 2

Please fill in this questionnaire in your neatest writing!

First Name	Surname
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Which school do you go to?

I am a (please put a circle around your answer)

Girl	Boy
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What job do you want to do when you leave school?

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How important will going to Secondary School be for helping you get the job that you want in the future?

(Please put a circle around your answer)

Important	Not Important
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Volunteering

Business volunteers are vital to the success of My Future My Choice. Children in the majority of schools will benefit from meeting people outside of their normal experience. This contact will excite children about their future, encourage them to aim higher and help them to explore their options.

It is both national and local policy for schools to engage learners in activities beyond the confines of the classroom. By 2013 all fourteen year olds will be able to pursue their learning through vocational courses. MFMC is part of the first steps in the process of developing learners that grasp the purpose of secondary schools as a route to future success.

The programmes pilot was held in Bristol, which is currently near the bottom of secondary school performance tables and employers are frustrated by the lack of key skills in school leavers. At the start of the programme MFMC surveyed over 2000 Bristol ten year olds and revealed that only 21% were aspiring to professional jobs. The stage show has already given over 400 of these children new ideas about what they could be and with support from business community volunteers in schools, in the work place and on stage we aim to ensure that all children have ambitions as they move to secondary school.

Ways Volunteers can Support

Multi-Media Event – volunteers appear on stage talking about their own experiences. Involvement in the performance takes half a day with no need for rehearsals.

Literacy Activity – visiting a primary school to work with a Year 6 (aged 10-11) class. They will have requested a visit from a specific type of business person and will then interview the volunteer about his or her job. The class will have prepared questions and may use film or the written word to record the responses to their questions. The activity will take about one hour.

MFMC Card Game – a pack of cards has been created for the programme based on the game Top Trumps. There are 52 cards each one representing a job. The illustrations are colourful and amusing aimed at engaging the young people. Also on the cards are more details about the job indicating the range of skills involved. The game can either be played as a whole class or with children working independently in groups. The activity will take about one hour.

Workplace Visits

Most children don't have any conception of what the workplace looks like and imagine it as an extension of school! A class visit to a business or a variety of businesses will give them an insight into how people behave and interact while at work as well as seeing what sort of facilities there are.

NB: All volunteers should be aware of the GE "Guidelines for working with children" published on the GE Volunteers UK Support Central Site.

Multi-Media Event

The Multi Media Event takes place every year in June/July, it can be shown in a secondary school hall or at a local theatre depending on available funds.

The event is a stage show which takes the main character back in time to when s/he was a similar age to the audience. The main parts are taken by actors using humour and audience interaction. Interviews with business volunteers, are woven into the production, they discuss how they made decisions about their future and achieved their current role. To see a short film about the event go to the Ablaze website www.ablazebristol.org and click on My Future My Choice under the Programmes tab.

Volunteers will demonstrate not only what technical expertise is needed for their job, but also the soft skills such as team working, communication, creative thinking etc. Volunteers for the performers in delivering the messages outlined on page 3.

Live Presentation

Volunteers for the live presentation do not need to prepare a script, attend rehearsals or prepare a presentation. However, they are encouraged to bring any props e.g. hard hat, medical equipment etc which will help to explain their role. Volunteers will be called up from the audience as a “Successful Person of the Day” and respond to questions from the performers.

In advance, volunteers are asked to provide a photo of when they were a similar age to the audience. This photo is not essential but it can be used during the show to help the children identify with them.

Each show lasts for about an hour and volunteers arrive half an hour earlier to confirm the process and seating arrangements at the venue.

What volunteers say -

“Impressions of working for the NHS is largely influenced by TV programmes and does not reflect reality. More and more the NHS is not seen as a career choice. MFMC is one part of our commitment to encouraging the young people of Bristol to consider all the options” - United Hospitals Bristol

“Completely consistent with our mission and position so we got involved” - Bristol Zoo Gardens

“This was a learning experience for me. I had to communicate with lots of colleagues and seniors at the hospitals and co-ordinate with the film crew.” - Medical Student

“The actors were superb, their pitch was perfect for their audience and the time machine clearly demonstrated to the children how the young actor could change his life.” - Care Learning

Literacy Activity

Teachers will plan lessons that use an exploration of the jobs and roles people can have in life to both inform and to improve the children's interviewing and communication skills. The outcome is an extended piece of research, writing and presentation by the children.

Volunteers for this activity are a first hand stimulus for children to find out the facts about different jobs for themselves. Children will learn how to turn their raw research into a published communication for their peers.

This activity increases children's enthusiasm for writing while at the same time providing really useful knowledge and inspiration for their future.

Prior to the Business Volunteer Visit

The children will have chosen which type of volunteer they want to interview. It may be that they want to learn a bit more about a particular skill, role or career. In some locations children show little aspiration for professional careers, thinking that they are not available to them and teachers may well use this knowledge about their neighbourhood to help them decide who is needed.

The teacher and business volunteer will have a conversation prior to the visit to outline what sort of questions they are likely to be asked and whether the children are going to film the interviews or just take notes. The teacher will have helped the children prepare questions based on the messages listed on the key messages on page 3.

The Visit

Volunteers should try to arrive at the school at least 10 minutes before the lesson starts so that they can sign in and get to the allocated room. Lesson times can't wait so don't be late! If possible take some brochures or "props" from work with you to use to demonstrate what you do.

The teacher will have set the room up so that the volunteer can be interviewed by groups for a set time. You will have a space to display information and equipment/props if needed. There will be a brief introduction and then the children will ask their prepared questions.

When you introduce yourself, let the children know what you would like to be called. You need to decide if they use your first name or should they address you as Mr/Ms Surname. When the children question you about your job try and keep your answers brief and allow time for them to make notes.

At the end of the session thank the teacher and the children for inviting you into the school and, if you are interested, ask when you will be able to see what they produce. You may want to invite a small group to your workplace to present their outcomes to you (perhaps in the board room), or you can offer a return visit to the school. Make sure you leave your contact details.

Pupils complete outcomes and present

After the visit pupils will use their research to complete the outcomes that were planned by the teacher. These can then be presented to others in the school or can involve you as described above.

Workplace Visit

One of the simplest ways to introduce young people to the 'World of Work' is to invite them to your workplace. This is especially important for those whose parents are either unemployed or who work in an environment where they can't take their son or daughter for a visit.

A lot of businesses believe that their site will not be of interest but the simplest of office settings can provide a rich learning experience for those who have never encountered it. Revolving doors, open plan offices, tall buildings and security badges will fascinate ten year olds. They will learn how people interact in business, what they wear, how they address each other and what sort of things they have on their desks.

Planning the visit is important to make sure that the children get the maximum benefit. Work with the school to see if there is a particular area they want to concentrate on. Schools can use the site visit for a number of purposes beyond just the experience. Depending on the business it can support many curriculum subjects such as Maths, Science or ICT.

If the visit is to be a general one it is a good idea to give the children things to look for to keep them interested. You could create a Quiz Sheet which means that they have to discover things around the building to answer their questions (maybe items on notice boards), or they have to go to specific departments to find things out.

Simple give-aways also go down well. This may be as simple as a pencil for a completed Quiz Sheet or a "goodie bag" with a selection of company branded items.

Health and Safety is crucial, even in an office environment and both the site and the school should expect to carry out simple risk assessment prior to the visit. There is a sample Risk Assessment form in the Addendum. You may also need to check your insurance and ensure it covers young visitors.

Not all sites are able to accommodate groups of young children, particularly in manufacturing. The site could be so 'interesting' that it is unsafe for ten year olds. Seeing these sites from a very safe distance and meeting people who work on the site in a safe office base are still good learning opportunities for children.

The maximum time for such a visit is about one hour and there is the added benefit of no volunteer travelling time!

MFMC Card Games

Designed to raise aspirations by giving a glimpse into some of the different jobs there are in the world and how they relate to learning in school.

Volunteers are provided with a set of playing cards. The cards represent 52 different job roles from the thousands that exist in the world. The cards come with full instructions (see next pages) Discuss with the teacher in advance how to use them based on his/her knowledge of the pupils.

Each card has an illustration of a job role, and scores seven important employability skills or capacities for that role. The volunteer can use the cards to reveal what their job is like and how different types of jobs compare for the importance of the key skills or capacities for employability. If there isn't a card representing your job or something similar, there are some blanks that you can use to create your own card – maybe the class can provide the illustration!

A variety of whole class, team activities and discussion can be structured across a teaching session lasting about 60 minutes.

The children need very little encouragement or instruction to enjoy playing the games. The role of the volunteer and teacher is to focus the children on the objective and ensure they end the session with greater awareness of the different jobs there are in the world and how they relate to learning in school.

The cards are not concerned with the exact professional qualifications required, but more the talents needed which are a combination of academic, life and interpersonal skills. The purpose is to demonstrate that there are many careers to choose from, not necessarily the obvious and that there is something exciting for everyone. There are no hard and fast rules about how the cards can be used; the games on the next pages are guidelines to help you get started.

Measuring Impact

These cards are aimed at widening the understanding of future career opportunities. If the class know about more jobs at the end of the volunteer session than they do at the start then the activity has been a success. There are several ways to do this;

Kick-Off - Before playing the games ask the children to name all the jobs that they know and write them up (you will need help!). You could work through the alphabet getting jobs that start with each letter. This may be an activity the children could do in groups if you have enough volunteers. Alternatively, the teacher may want to do this in another lesson prior to your visit.

Close – At the end of the session ask the same question, but see how many additional jobs that they now know about. Ask them which appeal to them and suggest they take the ideas home to discuss with the parents.

If the list at the end of the session is longer than at the beginning you are a success!

Example Card Games Activities

Introduce yourself

Give a brief presentation about who you are. Describe what you do, where you work, who you work with, your clients, your environment, your interests, your background. What made you choose your profession and your career path.

At various stages throughout your visit use the cards to relate to the skills needed for your job.

Activity 1 - What's my Job?

Aim. To engage the whole class in a discussion about different jobs by mixing Top Trumps with a guessing game. Packs needed-1

Play with one pack and the whole class. Take any card from the pack.

- The cards are dealt out to the class - one each.
- Ask the children to read the cards. Get them all to stand.
- From the 'job details' start with the lowest number. Get those children with a figure lower than yours to sit down. Challenge from the next highest job detail.

Example questions: Volunteers card - Mechanical Engineer

Q1. Do you have 'communication lower than 32? - yes then sit.

- Continue until you have less than half the class standing.
- Continue but now using your highest value

Q2. Do you have 'using numbers' higher than 97'

- All those with less now sit down.
- Ask what jobs they have - discuss the conclusion - same details different professions!
- Get the remaining to try and guess what your card is.
- Give them a few clues such as - I work with machines? etc

When they have guessed the profession get the others in 'Your Family' to discuss why you could all do similar jobs.

Activity 2 - Trumps

Aim. Stimulate discussion about the skills needed for a variety of jobs using a familiar game format. Packs needed-2

- Divide class up into groups of between 4 and 8. Each group needs a pack of cards. (Half a pack will suffice or play as teams rather than individuals)
- Deal the cards face down to each player.
- Each player looks at their top card and the player going first decides 'job details' with which to challenge the other players.
- The player with the highest number for that "job detail" collects the cards from the other players
- Whoever wins a round starts the next round and the game continues.

Example Card Games Activities

continued

Activity 3 - What do you want to be?

Aim. To help the young people start to examine how their skills could be translated into a career.

Packs needed-1 (may need more than one volunteer)

Hand out a card to each child. Go around the class at random and ask them to read the 'Job description'. Would they like to do that job, if not why not etc. What would they like to do? What are the values on the 'job details'? Compare with others as to why it is that similar criteria can involve quite different jobs?

It's a great way to get the children involved in the discussion. The problem might be getting them to stop.

Activity 4 - Professional Families

Aim. To examine the variety of roles within an industry group.

Packs needed-2

The class is divided into four groups. They are given half a pack each but this must contain complete 'family' (set of four) sets.

- These cards are then dealt out.
- The children are asked to sit and read their cards.
- Each child decides which 'family' they are going to collect. During the game they might switch their 'family'.
- Someone starts by asking one of the others in their group for a specific member of their chosen 'family'.
- If the child has that card they hand it over. If they don't, they then take a turn and ask someone for the card that they want.
- The game is won by the child who has the most families.

Activity 5 - Get moving

Aim. To get to know what jobs have similar skills. Packs needed-1

- Use one pack - select 'families' (sets of four) appropriate to the number of children.
- Deal out one card to each child.
- Ask the children to sit and read the cards.
- Find the other members of the 'family' by miming what they do.
- After a time go round the groups to find out if they have found their 'family' members. Any complete ones get a cheer! Those not in their family have 10 seconds to do so!
- They can now read each others cards and discuss what they all do and why the 'families' are linked. Would they like to do those jobs? etc.

Hints and Tips from a Volunteer

- 1** Find a friendly school - plenty out there - Warrington population of ~ 200,000 has ~ 70 Primary Schools - some one you know will know a teacher!!
- 2** Meet with the Head teacher and Class teacher - use the Cards, Handbooks and PowerPoint to explain more - send in advance so they can get questions ready. Will you be a lone volunteer or in a group? Be prepared to work with volunteers from other companies.
- 3** See the classroom - is it OK? Enough space to move around or rearrange groups - flip charts, projection screens? What do you need? Is it open plan - do you need to move to the hall? Could you do it at your offices as part of a visit?
- 4** Any priorities / special issues - special educational needs, class size, support staff, discipline process, timings?
- 5** How to dress for the day and what to be called? (Miss and Sir seem to be favourite!!). Are you allowed to take photographs?
- 6** Plan the activities you want to use for the time available - practice at home - just how will you introduce yourself and the activities?
- 7** Lesson Plan - check what the school want and they will help you develop it and guide how best to run the class for their particular pupils. It may be part of a wider series of lessons.
- 8** Typically up to 30 pupils - understand how they are sub-grouped - and how you need to communicate to get all involved - refresh yourself on GE Facilitation techniques! How to ask questions - look for quiet and raised hands - share answering around the room.
- 9** If you are playing Top Trumps agree the rule of the game and how it is going to be played
- 10** Time goes fast!! - keep track of time - or ask the Teacher to. Know if / when you need to cut short anything to work to a hard stop (Playtime or lunch etc)
- 11** Leave enough time to close the session with a "what have we learned" session.
- 12** Ask for feed back from the class
- 13** Review with the Staff - what went well, what could be done differently?
- 14** Share your experiences with the UK GE Volunteer network
- 15** Talk about it and advertise at work (and in the local press with Schools permission - Kids love to see their photos in the local paper)
- 16** Book your next session!!

Press Release

The press are very interested in My Future My Choice activities. Here is an example press release that could be adapted and used in your location.

NEW CARD GAME INSPIRES CHILDREN TO THINK ABOUT THEIR FUTURE

GE, the [your description of the business or location], have provided the funding and inspiration for the creation of a unique and fun card game based on the popular theme of “Top Trumps”. It will be used by GE employees in the classroom of primary and younger secondary school children introducing them to the variety of opportunities available for their future and helping to raise their aspirations. This is particularly relevant at a time when government figures show a falling knowledge of work options amongst younger children. The game is part of the “My Future My Choice” programme launched in Bristol in 2008.

[School name] is the first school in [location] to put the cards to the test with six volunteers from GE spending time with children from Years [age or year groups]. [Local GE manager] said “quote”

Early trials of the cards have proved very positive. One ten year old commented “I didn’t know any jobs for when I was older. Now I know some and what they do” while another said “The pictures are great because they are done in a fun cartoony way!” They also go down well with staff according to one Year 6 teacher “The cards are particularly useful for challenging stereotypical opinions that pupils hold, furthermore they have helped the children to recognise the qualities for a variety of different professions and the transferability of skills that exist. Great fun too”

The pack of 52 illustrated, colourful and graphically designed cards come with full instructions to help the business volunteer work with the class. Each card contain easily readable information about individual careers, listing the skills and qualities needed for any profession, none is represented as better than any other, just different, and it is not only academic qualifications that are represented but softer skills like working as part of a team.

Rosalind Atterwill from GE Corporate said “Education is a primary focus for GE, we believe that businesses must work with education if we are going to raise aspiration and attainment in our young people and develop the skills of the work-force of the future”

Add in GE boilerplates and contact details