

Press release: Government launches new collaboration with Barnardo's to support care leavers into work

The collaboration will provide care leavers with opportunities to gain high quality work experience placements in [Barnardo's](#) high street shops, to help them get the necessary skills to move into employment.

The placements will help young people learn practical skills in the workplace, whilst also allowing them to develop their 'soft skills' – all within a supportive Barnardo's real working environment, alongside trained staff and volunteers.

Just over 12,000 young people aged 16 to 18 leave care in England each year and the number is rising. Many care leavers have complex needs and are at risk of long-term unemployment.

That's why, in addition to the support already provided in line with the cross-government strategy for care leavers, children's charity Barnardo's will be providing work experience opportunities in their high street shops.

This work will help build people's confidence and employability skills, while making them more attractive to potential employers.

DWP and Barnardo's are also exploring options for a longer-term partnership, which would deliver a broader range of support for care leavers to help them thrive in the workplace.

Barnardo's has worked with children and young people for over 150 years. They run over 1,000 services across the UK, working with over 300,000 children, young people, parents and carers each year. This includes employment and skills training for young people and care leavers.

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Esther McVey, said:

Barnardo's are a wonderful charity and we are very proud to be working with them on this important initiative. We want to ensure that whatever your background you are able to fulfil your ambition and develop a career. I hope this will be a long-term partnership helping care leavers on their career path.

Javed Khan, Chief Executive of Barnardo's, said:

Barnardo's is really proud to be at the forefront of this innovative scheme. Sadly too many young people leaving the care system miss out on the opportunities they deserve, and face a

future without hope.

This new partnership gives care leavers valuable experience in Barnardo's innovative high street shops, and helps them get ready to move into paid employment or further training. We are also exploring how we can work with jobcentres and employers to improve care leavers' access to a wider range of support, aimed at developing their practical skills and resilience.

As well as the direct benefits to care leavers, working in our stores will also help generate income to boost the charity's frontline – so we can continue to transform the lives of vulnerable children and families across the UK. It's a win-win situation.

People involved with the pilot will be able to gain a variety of employability skills that are transferable into any workplace. Successful completion will provide the care leaver with concrete work experience that could be included on their CV.

Many people struggle with the transition from care into employment, with those first steps onto the career ladder often being the hardest. This scheme will help boost people's chances of securing fulfilling employment, enabling them to access the benefits that work can bring.

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