

Date of issue 11 February 2009
Publication number em-20-AWpreviewleics.doc

LSC PREPARES TO LAUNCH APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

All employers in Leicestershire are the target for the second national Apprenticeship Week from 23 to 27 February 2009, organised by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) – and one Birstall company is a shining example.

The week is a national celebration of the success of Apprenticeships across England. The event seeks to raise the profile of Apprenticeships and encourage more employers to take on apprentices.

There will be a variety of events going on through the East Midlands – from visits to schools from employers advocating the Apprenticeship programme, to Sir Alan Sugar’s former “apprentice” Saira Khan visiting the region and spreading the word about the campaign which aims to get apprentices into jobs.

Company managing directors will be “going back to the floor” to turn back time and try out the work of an apprentice. Meanwhile, East Midlands MPs will be having a go at being an apprentice for the day – and regional journalists will be given the chance to sample courses like brick laying and stable management at local colleges and training providers.

The LSC - who fund Apprenticeship programmes - is charged with raising the number of Apprenticeship placements offered by employers by matching them with approved training providers who can support them and their new apprentice throughout their period of training.

Nick Rashley, LSC director of Apprenticeships for the East Midlands, said: “Our aim is to let local employers know just how beneficial an apprentice can be to their continued business success. We have many success stories where businesses

have taken on apprentices and those people have gone on to senior roles in the organisation. It is essential that this type of investment is made to develop the future, skilled workforce that the East Midlands needs.”

Apprenticeships can help businesses across all sectors by offering a route to harness fresh new talent. The programmes provide on and off the job learning so that apprentices achieve the right mix of practical skills and qualifications to suit them and the needs of their employer.

Nick added: “A business can benefit greatly from the ideas an apprentice can bring to it and, at the same time are training their workforce of the future. Apprenticeships offer cost-effective recruitment leading to a well-trained, motivated workforce and contribute to increased productivity and performance.”

One company which is a big believer in Apprenticeships is **Rainbow Nursery in Birstall**.

It's not often people go back into training after years of working but 51 year-old Lorna Nuttall from Birstall, Leicester did just that. Lorna had already worked towards an NVQ Level 2 in childcare, but in order to develop her career, Lorna required another formal qualification.

Lorna said: “When I first started working in childcare there wasn't a real need for recognised qualifications as skills and techniques developed through experience. It's only recently that it's become a necessity. I've already completed an Apprenticeship and I am currently working towards my Advanced Apprenticeship. It covers areas I am familiar with, but also shows me updated methods and modern practices to integrate with the habits I've picked up over the years.”

Paul Wright, general manager at Rainbow Nursery, said: “Lorna has been exemplary in her approach to the course; she is highly competent and aware of the individual needs of the children. I think the course has been a great way to encourage Lorna to build on everything she's already learnt and put it to use working with more challenging children.

“Since taking over the managerial role at Rainbow 15 years ago, I've insisted that all members enroll on Apprenticeships. By taking on apprentices we are able to recruit enthusiastic and willing individuals, ensuring they are working through their qualifications in line with the nursery's ethos.

“Because we focus on training staff, our retention rate has always been high, which is great for the children to see a familiar face and develop a rapport, but it’s also reassuring for parents.”

Ends

Pic caption: Lorna Nuttall far right with children and staff at Rainbow Nursery

Contacts:

Liz Cartwright or Katherine Simon on 0115 9410714 or 07769 713919.

Notes for Editors

Learning and Skills Council: The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers. www.lsc.gov.uk

Apprenticeships: Apprentices follow a framework, which consists of a NVQ qualification, key skills qualifications, and, where applicable, a technical certificate. Two levels are available – an Apprenticeship Framework and an Advanced Apprenticeship Framework, offering qualifications at either NVQ Levels 2 or 3* (equivalent to add GCSE and A level equivalent). There are over 160 occupational frameworks on offer including business administration; information technology and customer services and many sector specific frameworks such as chemicals and pharmaceuticals through to tourism and hospitality.

Level 2 is equivalent to five GCSE passes

Level 3 is equivalent to two ‘A’ level passes or one vocational ‘A’ pass.

www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Apprenticeship Awards: The LSC East Midlands Apprenticeship Awards 2009 will be held at East Midlands Conference Centre on 2 June 2009. The national awards event will be held in London on 16 July 2009. All regional winners will be automatically entered into the national awards. The closing date for entries is 27 February 2009. For more information please email: realsuccess@headstorm.co.uk or call 0845 058 0490.

