



Coventry Primary Aspirations Week

3rd to 7th March 2025



Event Review

Introduction

During National Careers Week, March 2025, partners from across schools and the world of work came together to give primary aged children an insight into the wide variety of options that their futures could hold. The aim was to broaden horizons and inspire children to connect their education with their lives beyond school. This year was bigger and better with events every morning and afternoon of the week involving even more children, more schools and more businesses and organisations than in 2024!



What events did we run?

The week saw two main kinds of event taking place:

Special Events

Special events involved one particular business or organisation running sessions for groups at a host school or their own venue. For these events, there were multiple sessions over a day enabling more schools and more children to be involved.

Rotation Events

At these events, volunteers from four different business or organisations visited a school and met four groups of children from different schools within the city. Each event lasted approximately two hours, split into four equal sessions.

Special Events:

Tech She Can	Tech She Can is a charity who work to improve the ratio of women working in technology roles. They ran an online session to introduce children to exciting advancements in technology as well as a wide range of exciting careers in cyber security and the amazing people who protect us online. Nearly 3000 children attended from 26 Coventry schools!
E.ON	E.ON are an international company but they have a very real local presence in Coventry. They held sessions at their offices in Westwood to give children an insight into their working environment and the great many roles people carry out for them.
National Grid (with Now Press Play)	National Grid and Now Press Play ran four sessions which gave pupils an innovative and interactive experience that helped engage them in understanding the values of National Grid as a company and the many job roles of the people that work there.
West Midlands Fire Service	West Midlands Fire Service ran two days of special events. These sessions focussed on the wide range of roles they carry out both solving issues and working to prevent problems happening. One day was hosted at Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School and another SEND focussed day was held at Alderman's Green Primary School.
Coventry Building Society	CBS hosted an event that saw groups of children rotating between a carousel of activities at the CBS office to get a range of experiences: visiting a real-life workplace; thinking about maths in action; understand the jobs that people at CBS do; and raising aspirations.





Sky Blues in the Community	A bit of Coventry City Football Club came to Aspirations Week with sessions looking at aspirations in terms of careers but also lifestyle. Sky Blues in the Community held three sessions at Park Hill Primary School.
Ascension Dance Company	Ascension Dance Company held three workshops at Howes Primary School. These combined children enjoying getting active and also learning about the people who make their living in the arts.
NHS Coventry & Warwickshire	What do people do who work for the NHS? NHS colleagues ran three sessions at Moat House Primary School that gave children the chance to see who is involved in the care pathway when somebody needs medical help.
Jaguar Land Rover	Four sessions at Hill Farm Primary School enabled children to meet the creators behind JLR's exceptional vehicles. JLR brought a wide range of employees who are involved in the process of getting a car from initial design and planning through to the road... and also some cars to bring it to life!
Coventry City Council	The council is one of the largest employers in the city and that includes people doing a huge range of jobs. At this session, children met people from a variety of departments who have taken apprenticeship routes within the council and were also lucky enough to meet the Lord Mayor and learn all about her role.



Rotation Events:

Stivichall Primary School	Volunteers from: Canal & River Trust; University of Warwick; West Midlands Fire Service; Coventry Music
Little Heath Primary School	Volunteers from: Severn Trent; Lioncourt Homes; Voluntary Sector; Leamington Art Gallery & Museum
Moseley Primary School	Volunteers from: Into University; Lioncourt Homes; West Midlands Fire Service; Coventry Music
Parkgate Primary School	Volunteers from: Transport for West Midlands; Severn Trent; Leamington Art Gallery & Museum; PET-XI
John Gulson Primary School	Volunteers from: NFU; Coventry Building Society; Immortal Monkey (Estelle Keeber); Siemens Electrical
Willenhall Community Primary School	Volunteers from: Sense; Coventry City Council; West Midlands Police; Coventry Careers Hub



Who got involved?

Approximately 1400 pupils attended in-person sessions...

...with 13 schools hosting events...

Stivichall Primary School, Little Heath Primary School, Moseley Primary School, Parkgate Primary School, John Gulson Primary School, Willenhall Community Primary School, Park Hill Primary School, Alderman's Green Primary School, Howes Primary School, Moat House Primary School, Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School, St Osburg's Catholic Primary School and Hill Farm Primary School.

...and a further 20 schools sent children to events...

Manor Park Primary School, Longford Park Primary School, Coundon Primary School, Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Joseph Cash Primary School, Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Sowe Valley Primary School, Frederick Bird Primary School, St Christopher Primary School, Whitmore Park Primary School, All Souls Catholic Primary School, St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Mount Nod Primary School, Sherbourne Fields School, Charter Academy, Courthouse Green Primary School, Potters Green Primary School, Aldermoor Farm Primary School, Wyken Croft Primary School, Earlsdon Primary School.



...and nearly 3000 pupils engaged online!

26 businesses and organisations got involved by sending volunteers to events...

NHS Coventry and Warwickshire, E.ON, Sky Blues in the Community, Coventry Building Society, Ascension Dance, Jaguar Land Rover, West Midlands Fire Service, Tech She Can, Transport for West Midlands, Coventry City Council, University of Warwick, National Grid (with Now Press Play), Sense, Coventry Music, NFU, West Midlands Police, Canal & River Trust, Severn Trent, Lioncourt Homes, Into University, Leamington Art Gallery and Museum, PET-XI, Siemens Electrical, Estelle Keeber, Roy Barrett and Coventry Careers Hub.



How was the event publicised?

The following press release was published on Coventry City Council's website during Aspirations Week and shared with the media. The Coventry City Council communications team also shared news of the events using a range of social media channels:

After a successful first year, the second Coventry Primary Aspirations Week took place this week, running from Monday 3 March to Friday 7 March.

Coventry City Council worked with partners across the city to bring the event back bigger and better for 2025.

Primary Aspirations week coincides with National Careers Week, which aims to raise young people's awareness of future career pathways. Primary Aspirations Week aims to encourage primary school-aged children to think about possible career choices in the future, and how to develop some of the skills they might need to get there.

Over 1000 children in schools across Coventry took part in in-person events during Primary Aspirations Week 2025, hearing from a wide range of businesses and organisations in the city and beyond. Even more pupils (over 2500) engaged in an online learning session on Monday 3 March!

The children, aged between 7-11, were given the opportunity to learn about things in a fun way. For example, National Grid gave an insight into their world of work using an interactive app "Now Press Play" which provided a really engaging way of getting children to live the experience of a National Grid employee.

NHS Coventry and Warwickshire also hosted a session on giving the children the chance to see who is involved in the care industry when somebody needs medical help. Children asked questions and talked about this could be a possible future career choices for them.

Councillor Dr Kindy Sandhu, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, said: "It's really great to see how Primary Aspirations Week has expanded so much for this year. Once again, the feedback we've received from schools and children has been nothing but positive. "We really wanted to give more children an opportunity to think about their futures and imagine the types of careers they might want to pursue. We know that children's aspirations are shaped by their life experiences, so we wanted to create an event that gave children an insight into what they could go onto do after school."

Jo Stanley, the headteacher at Little Heath Primary School, which played host one of the events, said: "It was a fabulous opportunity for primary children to hear from external speakers who brought their own experiences and skillset to inspire the children. The morning had an immediate impact on the children to think about their own skills and future aspirations outside of the classroom too. Providing opportunities for children to see and hear that they can set goals for their future career, and they do come true, is invaluable for all Coventry pupils."

What was the impact?

We gathered feedback from schools throughout the week and also with a post-event survey.

Schools were asked a range of questions, including ones which asked them the extent to which they agreed with given statements on a 1-5 scale (with 5 being the most positive):

Statement	Average Score
"Hosting an event was a positive experience for our school."	5.00
"We would be happy to host similar events in the future."	5.00
"The children we took really enjoyed themselves."	4.79
"The children we took gained a lot from the experience."	4.50
"We would want to be involved in similar events in the future."	4.71

We also asked schools for qualitative feedback on the effectiveness of the events – here are a selection of their responses:

"The event was really fun, active and engaging."

"Handy that the events were held in a school locally so easier to access."

"The Ascension Dance workshop was really engaging for the children."

"Small numbers, rotation and timings worked well – presenters were clearly well-informed."

"The coach was very engaging and adapted sections dependent on children – they managed the session well and they set high expectations for all children."

"JLR – it was great seeing men in design roles and women in engineering. It really gave pupils the message that their gender will hopefully not be a factor for their future job. It was a very positive experience for all the children who attended."

"The tour of the office was the most interesting and valuable part in my opinion."

"There was a variety of careers which made sure every child was targeted in some way or another. One of the volunteers had practical resources which our children liked."

"The children loved that the NHS jobs were all interactive and they got to learn different skills as well as being able to ask lots of questions."

"I liked the ability to meet multiple volunteers in one setting."

"The activities provided by SBitC were engaging and exciting for the children and demonstrated that there are alternative careers in sports beyond that of a footballer (a common aspiration in our school)."

"The rotation event was a great opportunity for children to explore a wider range of careers and open up children's minds to jobs they may not otherwise be exposed to."

"The logistics enabled so many schools to take part. I liked the range and quality of the organisations taking part."

"Best day ever!"

"Severn Trent Water were particularly good at mixing interesting facts with the jobs involved. They had good props and memorable stories."

"The children loved the event and as I took disadvantaged pupils it really benefitted their personal experience of sport / dance and participation."

"A child in my class who was really enthusiastic about cars impressed me – they aren't necessarily the most confident in class but came alive when learning about potential careers in the future in the car industry and got really excited at the idea of it."

"The children loved meeting the only female HGV mechanic at the council. It led to a lot of interesting conversations."

"Children enjoyed the police talk. They liked the reveal of their job and practical elements."

"One child was mesmerised by the building firm and kept asking lots of really good questions."

"Our group who attended a rotation session were really inspired by an ex-pupil who talked to them about his background and the avenues he has taken in his life. This was really encouraging for the children as they can see people from their area can aspire to be anything they want."



We also gathered feedback from the volunteers who supported events throughout the week.

Statement	Average Score
"I enjoyed volunteering in Coventry Primary Aspirations Week."	4.90
"I felt I was able to give the children interesting information about my job role and organisation."	4.73
"I would like to take part in a similar event in the future."	4.79
"My organisation would like be involved in similar events in the future."	4.93

"It was great to see 6 schools in one day to reach as many students as possible. It was also great to be hosted at a school rather than use one of our sites which wouldn't have provided as good an experience."

"The sessions ran really well and the kids' faces said it all – it was lovely to see them so animated and engaged in the activity. Really great that the teachers got involved too."

"Each event was well planned and thought out which meant we could focus on interacting with the students and providing them with all the information about the different jobs within our organisation. I felt very informed about how the days were going to run."

"The children were so interested and asked so many questions."

"I thought the rotation idea was especially good. It allowed for smaller groups and students participating with pupils they knew."

"I enjoyed speaking with the children about their aspirations – some of them shared the career paths they want to take and we had interesting conversations about my role and how it relates to school."

"Wide range of children. Well organised. Lovely moments with all groups of children."

"I asked the children what subject they thought would be most use for me in my role as bid manager at a technology company. They didn't expect the answer to be English (my primary tasks are writing persuasive bids and talking to people) – I saw some lights go on with each group."

"Giving the children photographs and memorabilia from my various jobs sparked conversations."

"The children from across the primary schools were engaged and inquisitive, polite and respectful."

“There was a moment when an EAL child who had only been in the country a couple of weeks looked really engaged and was able to take part in the class activity.”

“I think the way that the children got to explore a variety of careers via the event was wonderful as was the variety of careers and companies involved. It was lovely to see how engaged the students were throughout and the questions posed showed real thought which as a speaker was great to see.”

“Standout moments were the insightful questions that the children asked. It seemed that this was not a standalone interaction with an employer and that was great to see.”

“The rotation event was an excellent way to engage with primary children and to share insight into careers in the arts which they may not otherwise have known about. As well as speaking we brought in objects from the museum and took an activity which gave pupils the opportunity to imagine they were the curators of an art gallery. It was useful to take an interactive activity as it sparked lots of conversation.”

“All of the events I attended went really well, so many thanks to everyone that helped organise and volunteer.”

“It was a fun event and I felt that it helped my speaking and presentation skills. I was nervous at first but feel it was beneficial and I am glad I took part.”

“I felt it was important to show children they can and will have a number of jobs as well as working for different organisations... and that learning / education / training is the access / passcode to a brighter fulfilled life.”

“It was an absolute pleasure to be invited along and I would be more than happy to attend future careers / aspirations events.”

“This is a brilliant idea and should be replicated across LAs everywhere.”



What are our future plans?

Coventry Primary Aspirations Week 2025 involved far more events and far more people than the inaugural event in 2024. The engagement and positive feedback from all involved suggests there is a continuing appetite for similar events in the future.

The Coventry Primary Aspiration Steering Group will use feedback from the week to reflect on the positive impact and also what could work well for future events (we have collated ideas from everyone involved to help with this – all contributions have been much appreciated and will be taken into consideration).

As a steering group, we will be considering:

- Opportunities to share and learn from great practice
- Looking at whether we can facilitate events on a more regular basis
- Further developing links between schools and businesses / organisations

Huge thanks to...

- **The children – fantastic ambassadors for their schools**
- **All of the host schools**
- **Staff in all schools for engaging with the activities**
- **All the businesses and organisations for letting us borrow their people to volunteer and to those who also hosted events**
- **All of the volunteers for their time, effort and positivity**
- **The Coventry Primary Aspirations Steering Group**