

HELPING YOUR CHILD CHOOSE THEIR GCSE OPTIONS



Before we start...

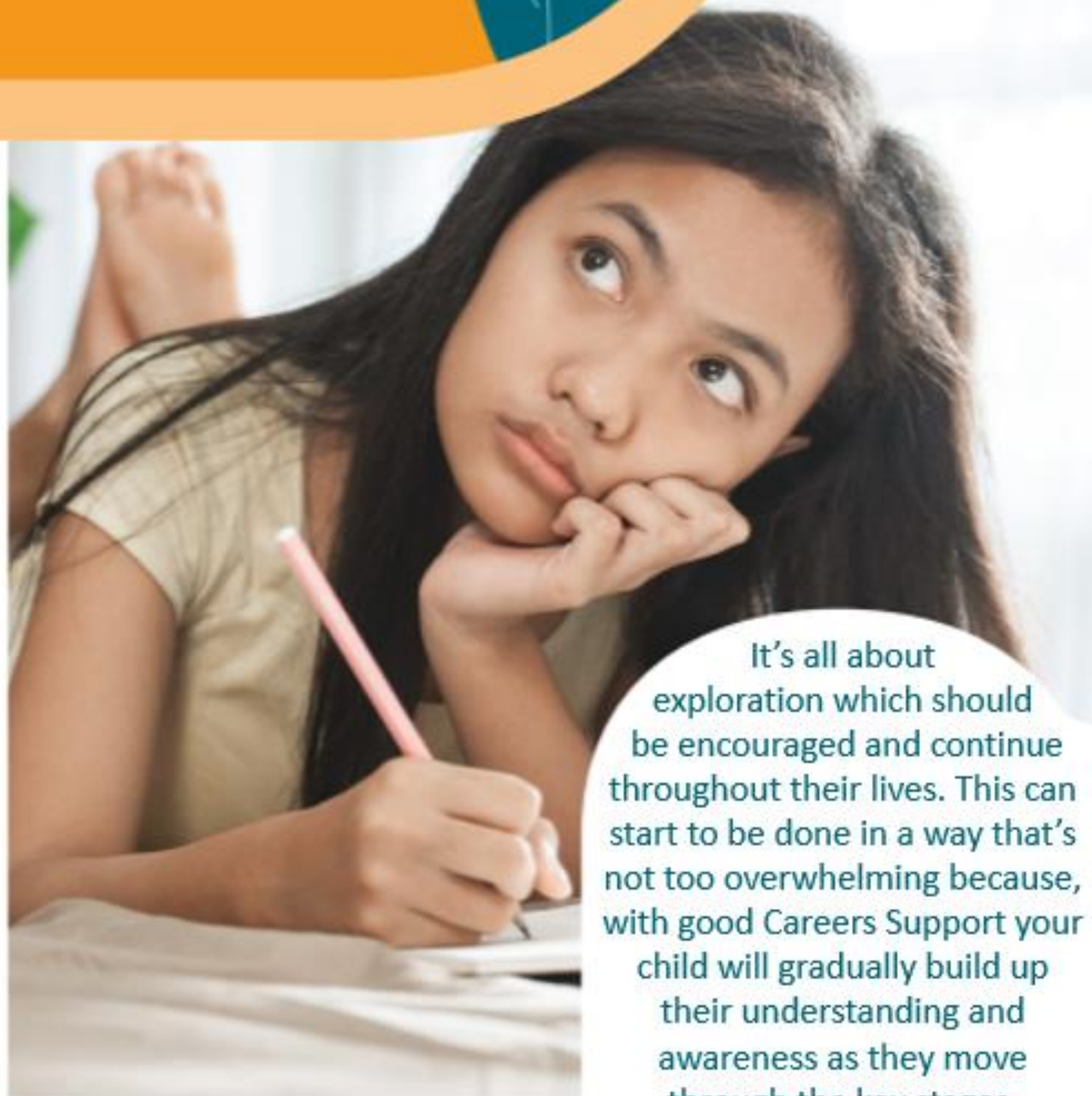
Shaping Futures is a part of the National Uni Connect programme and we cover schools across the Liverpool City Region. We deliver a range of programmes and activities that aim to raise aspirations and provide impartial Higher Education Information, Advice and Guidance to local learners aged 14 and over.

We are able to provide impartial information, advice and guidance to learners, parents, carers, teachers and anyone with an invested interest in their own or a child's education.

You are able to access one to one advice on your child's future through our live chat function on our website!



It's never too early to consider the long-term future for your child. In fact, it is a really good idea to try and make links between what they enjoy and their strengths to their future options.



It's all about exploration which should be encouraged and continue throughout their lives. This can start to be done in a way that's not too overwhelming because, with good Careers Support your child will gradually build up their understanding and awareness as they move through the key stages.

WHAT IF 'THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY WANT TO BE WHEN THEY GROW UP!' ?

This is often something many parents and carers feel anxious about and, in some cases, start to feel despondent that their son or daughter *still* doesn't know what they want to be – forget about that, it's not important!

There're so many careers that exist and many of those may not exist by the time your child is close to entering the working world as well as those careers we don't even realise will be an option yet.



HELP YOUR CHILD TO BECOME EMPOWERED!

It's going to be a really good idea to encourage your child to start to take responsibility for their own decision making as after all, it is their future we're talking about.

Just in the same way that they may get involved with choosing a new pair of trainers or the latest games console, they should be actively participating in the process and where possible gathering information to help feed into their own informed decision making. This will result in them being more motivated and driven to take on the demands of the pathway they choose.





WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

There are many ways in which your child can start to take responsibility for exploring their options and careers in general. There are a variety of online resources that they can access independently even if they feel that they do not quite have 'something' to investigate further at that point in time.

For example, they are being asked to decide on their GCSE option choices but are feeling a bit frustrated with the sense of not knowing what careers there are to consider and how this links with their subject choices.



It is always difficult to know where to begin and so some things to consider when thinking about the subject choices are:

- What do they enjoy most?
- What are their strengths academically? (teachers will be able to advise on this too)
- Encourage them to find out about what a GCSE in a particular subject will involve – do they like the sound of what they're going to be learning about or is it not what they expected?



Careers Research is the part where you and your child can start to consider the longer term if you feel that this is going to be helpful at the stage. Once they get into the practise of doing their own careers research they will be able to apply this approach throughout their learning and working life!



This part will be very individual to each young person and where they are in thinking process, they could be at the very start and have not ever considered their future and this is absolutely fine. There's always going to be a temptation to compare themselves to their peers and they will always have friends who say they have a clear plan – good for them, your child will gradually move forward with their thinking, the more they find out!





CAREERS RESEARCH CAN INVOLVE:

- Speaking to the Careers Adviser who works at their school. There may be opportunity for them to make an appointment or even give them a note with a question on giving the Careers Adviser time to come back to them.
- Start to access online resources of which there are many and it all depends on where they are at with their thinking. For example, simply googling 'what careers are linked to history' will bring up websites for them to explore.
- Using careers questionnaires online which match your personal characteristics to potential job roles. These are a great way to get the ball rolling in terms of making links between your likes, dislikes, strengths and weaknesses and future career ideas. Once they have completed the questions, they can go on to find out more about those different careers that take their interest

THINK AHEAD!

Looking at Higher Education provider websites. Yes, you read that right, even whilst in Key Stage 3!

This may sound like a silly idea as there are many years of learning still in front of them, but it shouldn't stop you and your child from checking them out.

For example, your child may be showing a particular interest in English as a subject but doesn't know what this could mean when thinking about the future. Looking at the details of a degree course in English can start to open their understanding of the prospect of studying at university when they're older.

This should be kept light touch where possible and not get too tied up in the fine details of all it entails. Looking at tabs such as 'entry requirements' or 'careers' should be most beneficial.





Overall, when it comes to GCSE options it's really important that they are clear on their expectations of the subjects they've chosen to take as so to avoid any unwanted surprises during key stage 4.

Their school will provide lots of really useful information leading up the decision deadline so it's really important that you encourage them to engage with this and what is even more important is that they are encouraged to ask questions!

GCSE GRADING SYSTEM

The way in which GCSE's are graded has recently been changed. Below is a chart to help you understand what the new grades are equivalent to:

Old grades	New grades
A*	9
A	8
B	7
C	6 5 STRONG PASS 4 STANDARD PASS
D	3
E	2
F	1
G	1
U	U

AN ACTIVITY TO HELP WITH YOUR CHILD'S RESEARCH

Careers Research

Name:

Using this template, try researching a career you have chosen. If you're looking for any support, check out what is available on our Careers Week uploads!

Career:

What do they earn per year? £

What are the requirements for this job?

What environment will you work in?

What does the job involve when it comes to the day to day tasks and responsibilities?

What are the challenging aspects of the job?

How much competition is there?

Are there many opportunities?



For all the information you need for your research, visit:
nationalcareers.service.gov.uk
and click **explore careers**

WHAT FACTORS ARE IMPORTANT IN GCSE CHOICES?

Relist the factors below in order of importance

FACTORS

Enjoyment

Good at it

Required for future career

Friends are taking it

Interested in it

Like the teacher

TOP PRIORITY



SHAPING FUTURES

The Merseyside Collaborative
Outreach Programme



If you would like to know more
please visit the Shaping Futures
website!

Talk to us on
our Live Chat!



Contact us

You can contact us by
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