



# SCHOOLS ENGAGEMENT RESOURCE PACK



BRITISH FLUID POWER ASSOCIATION

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# Why do we need to engage the younger generation?

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With many industries struggling to recruit young people there has never been a more crucial time for members of the BFPA to consider their own local community skills programme through schools engagement.

Recruiters are now struggling to find experienced and qualified candidates and with an ageing workforce retiring faster than we can recruit, many business are going to start feeling the effects of the skills shortages, if they aren't already.

Unless we take immediate action the country will see slower economic growth overall and businesses will struggle to compete, grow, and perhaps even survive.

By having a regular programme of schools engagement not only are you creating relationships with students who could be your next employees, you are also lining up your future talentpool.

Such a strategy shows how compassionate a company is and a business that is committed to improving the world is likely to attract more talent and have a more productive and positive work environment for employees. Helping to raise awareness and getting involved with important causes is not only good for your public image, but for both attracting and retaining customers and investors.

However, we understand how time consuming creating and delivering content can be, particularly for our SME members. Therefore BFPA in conjunction with Marvelous Manufacturing has created this Schools Engagement Pack to make it easier for our members to start their engagement journey and fulfill their skills programme.

If however you still find you need help Marvelous Manufacturing offer a range of services from connecting you with your local schools right through to delivering content into schools on your behalf. For more information the BFPA will be happy to put you in touch with Marvelous Manufacturing so they can offer advice and assistance with your jobs recruitment programme.

***“There is a place for everyone within UK Manufacturing”***





Angela Lawlor, Managing Director, Marvelous Manufacturing

# What type of engagement is right for you?

The first thing to consider is the time you have available. Schools normally have a number of events throughout the year and it is entirely up to you how many you participate in – remember most events are only an hour long so if you plan 4 events per year that is only 4 hours of your time – not a huge amount in the big scheme of things and once you have done one the rest are easy. Remember though, the engagement has to bring value to your business, so be selective about your engagements.

By participating in the events you will become a name and business that the students and school are familiar with and as we all know people are more comfortable with things that are familiar to them.

**Some events you could consider:**

	<p><b>Open Door</b>                  Invite schools to bring students to your facility. This is a really good opportunity to showcase what your business does and let the students as well as teachers have real life experience of the work place.</p>
	<p><b>Careers Fair – Usually all day</b>                  Make sure you have an activity on your stand to create interest rather than just handing out leaflets which will end up in the corner of a bedroom. Creating a QR code which links to a landing page about jobs and opportunities in your business is a good way to get your message across.</p>
	<p><b>Assemblies – Usually a half hour session</b>                  These are a great way to get in front of whole year groups with a short, snappy talk about your business and the types of jobs students might want to apply for.</p>
	<p><b>Lesson Support</b>                  More time consuming but also more specific to your business. This is where you can provide a term time project which is relatable to the students’ lessons, with a prize for the best project at the end.</p>

# Who are you appealing to?

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Once you have done a few events and built a relationship with the Careers Lead you might want to consider talking to them about offering a work experience placement. But rather than taking on anyone, be specific about the type of student you are interested in.

It's always good to think about your short and long term plans for the business and then plan out which students you want to appeal to rather than taking a scattergun approach.

It is also worth bearing in mind that some of the career events that Schools run will be for certain years only, however assemblies, workshops, open door etc., can be applicable to all of the year groups.

If you are hoping to recruit soon then you might want to target sixth form students, think about the roles within your business that you need to fill and create your ideal employee avatar as it will help you to identify the type of student you should target.

For a longer term view start off with Year 7, they are full of enthusiasm, are inquisitive and don't yet have any pre-conceived ideas. Work with them and follow them through their school years with regular touch points so that by the time they leave school they are primed to come and work for you.

You may think this is a waste of time, but think about it, you create a five year plan for your business so why wouldn't you create a five year plan for developing your future talent pipeline?



# Creating your content

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This is probably the hardest part, so to help you we have provided a presentation template with some basic information slides to get you started. There are also some blank slides to enable you to slot in content more relevant to your business.

Remember though to try and make it exciting and relatable to young people!

Think about when you first set up your business, what made you decide that this is what you wanted to do? What was the draw for you? What excites you about your business?

Another way to do this is to think about how you attract new clients. You use language that will entice them in to buy, so why not apply that to attracting young people (but remember to dumb it down, they won't understand if you are too technical).

Show them what your products look like, where they can be used, what would happen without them and particularly about future developments which might include upcoming technology.

Tell them about the process, what other people in your business are involved, for example someone to purchase raw materials, someone to do the sales and marketing etc., so that they get a real overview and understanding of the types of job roles.

You might want to include a workshop or activity following your presentation, which again is a great way to get the students thinking about your business. Look at the Appendix for some possible ideas.



# Getting the message right

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One of the most important points when engaging with students is getting the message right and using relatable language.

Both young people and their parents lack an understanding of what a career in engineering and manufacturing entails. There is a lack of awareness of the different types of business which operate within the fluid power industry and the jobs available within.

## Using the right language

For every piece of engagement you have with young people, you need to ensure that the language and presentation is right. It needs to be clear, easy to read and understand and relevant to young people. Will they understand the job title, will they have a clear idea of what the job description means? Working within the business you may understand the words you have used but to an outsider with no knowledge of manufacturing they may find it hard to picture what that job entails.

## Company websites

Whilst most of our members will have a website very few will have a careers page. Even if you don't have any current vacancies it's always good to have a section specifically for young people which details what vacancies you might have, how they can apply, which subjects they should be studying and how they can progress their career with your company. Where possible steer clear of words such as "Technical" because students won't consider themselves to be technical and it may put them off applying.

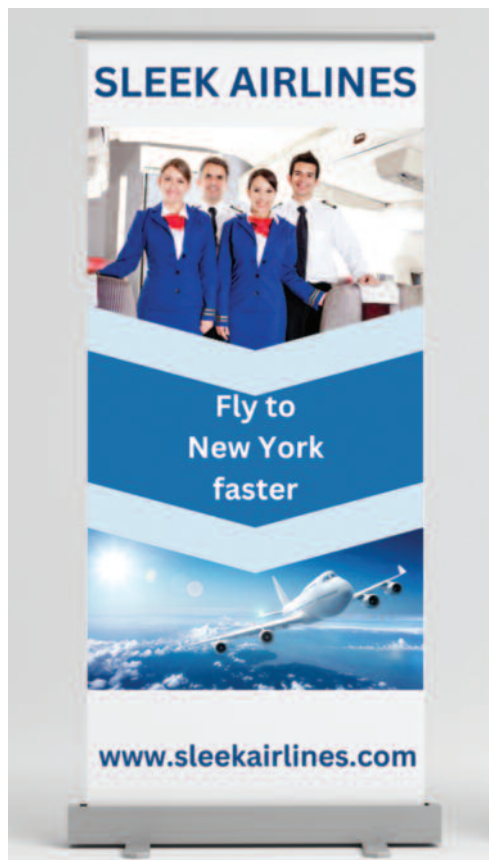
Helping young people to see the art of the possible is crucial, many of you will have started out your career as an apprentice and have gone on to have some fantastic roles, but young people don't see that, they can't see how that progression works. They think they are going to be put on a production line and spend the rest of their days there, so it's important that we show them through career mapping just what they could achieve.

# Getting the message right

## Schools engagement – what’s in it for me?

Careers Fairs may be an opportunity to promote your business but many business get their messaging completely wrong when going into schools.

Below are two images of pop up banners used at Careers fairs this year. The one on the left tells you what the company does but provides no information at all about the benefits to the student. The banner on the right absolutely nails it, this is what you can do, this is how much you can earn. Treat the students like potential customers, what are their pain points, what information do you need to provide to seal the deal.



# Top tips for engaging with students

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## Make the delivery relevant

How can young people relate to your business? What your business does may make sense to you but to a young person who may never have come across your industry before it will just sound like gobbledygook. Think about the things they use in their everyday life and whether you can match up what you do with what they use.

## Who is delivering?

Students respond well to their peer group, so if you have enthusiastic apprentices in your business consider asking them to do the delivery.

## Make it interactive

This isn't always possible but a great way to keep students engaged is to encourage them to participate in your delivery – even if it's just asking them questions or a quick quiz at the end with a bar of chocolate as a prize.

## Use visuals

Students are more likely to be interested if you use video/visuals in your presentation, having to sit around for half an hour listening to an old fart droning on isn't going to spark their interest.

## It's not just about STEM

If your business is STEM related, remember that not everyone is academic and appealing to those on the creative side is just as important. If you offer Apprenticeships then tell them about how they can earn and learn and about the different types of jobs people do within your business.

Finally – enjoy it – if it's fun for you then it will be fun for them.

# Connecting with your local schools

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## Step one

So hopefully by now, you will have decided how much time you want to spend engaging and what activities you want to take part in.

You will have created some engaging content to talk about or designed a competition or activity.

Schools are particularly looking for engagement which will meet their Gatsby Benchmarks, so if you can combine one of these too it will make the schools far more receptive to inviting you back. There is a copy of the Gatsby Benchmarks in the Appendix.

The next step is to see what schools you have in your local area, remember these must be close to your business and not your home.

You may want to just approach senior schools or you may want to reach out to primary schools too. And don't forget there may also be Grammar and private schools within your area.

The best way to find this information is by looking on the Government website **Find and check the performance of Schools and Colleges in England**.

It is actually the site for finding out about OFSTED results but is the only site which provides a comprehensive list which you can filter along with a link to each of the Schools websites.

## Step two

Once you have identified the schools you would like to engage with, the next job is to find the name and contact details for their Careers Advisor or sometimes they are known as Aspirations Co-ordinator.

You will be glad to know that schools are legally bound to provide these contact details on their website, however they also do a very good job of hiding them away, so you may find yourself having to search through every page.

Once you have decided on your target schools and identified the careers contact for each school, give the school a call to check that the details are still correct. Careers Leaders don't tend to stay in the job very long so always worth checking that the details are still relevant.

Now you are ready to send them an email and we have included a sample email in the Appendix, which may be of use.

Unfortunately, Careers Leaders aren't great at responding and we would recommend you follow up a week later with a phone call to the school and ask to speak with the Careers Leader by name.

Again we would reiterate that because they aren't familiar with you, you may find them reluctant to contact you when they have events going on, so it's always a good idea to ask them what they have planned for the next twelve months and then ask them to add your name to their list of participants.

# Safeguarding and behaviour in schools

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One of the key concerns for many visitors to schools is whether they need to have a DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) Check.

Some schools may request this but on the whole schools have their own procedures in place for safeguarding their pupils. Further details about DBS are in the Appendix.

You will be expected to sign in upon arrival at the school reception and will be issued with a visitor badge. From this point onwards you will be accompanied at all times by a teacher or member of staff until you leave. If at any point it looks like you will be left alone with students then please ensure you raise your concern with the member of staff.

As a visitor you should make sure you comply with the school's procedures and understand what you need to do to keep children safe. A copy can be obtained from the school prior to your visit.

It may be that you wish to create your own safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures to distribute amongst your employees who will be taking part in schools engagement. Taking a responsible attitude to the welfare of the students and safety of your own employees only serves to enhance your Corporate and Social Value.

The NSPCC have a useful template which you might want to adapt for your own use. A link is in the Appendix.

Remember – if you plan to take photographs of children and young people as part of your work, you must seek prior permission from the school.

## **During your visit:**

- Be prepared to show identification when you arrive.
- Follow the school's code of conduct.
- Only go into areas of the school you have been permitted to enter.
- You should only be alone with children if the school has given you permission.
- If you are working one-to-one with a child, make sure you put the appropriate safeguarding measures in place.

## **If you identify a safeguarding or child protection concern:**

- Report it by following both the school's and your own procedures.
- Keep a record of your concern.
- Work with the school to support any ongoing work with that child and their family, including referrals to other agencies.

# Appendix

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## Activity ideas

If you have someone in your business who is creative you might want to ask them to design an activity. Similarly if you employ young people you might want to get them involved as they will have done workshops at school. Ask them which were the most memorable and what it was about them that they enjoyed and then try to incorporate that feedback into your activity.

Some activities you might want to consider;

**Create an arm** using cardboard which is powered by tubes and syringes – the arm has to be able to move an object from one place to another.

**Create a simple crane** using lolly sticks, tubing and syringes – you could suggest that the students try to make their crane stronger by offering other materials and then see which one can pick up the heaviest item.

Make a hydraulic hand again using lolly sticks, syringes, glue – could the students make the hand stronger to be able to pick up heavier items?

Continued on next page...

# Appendix

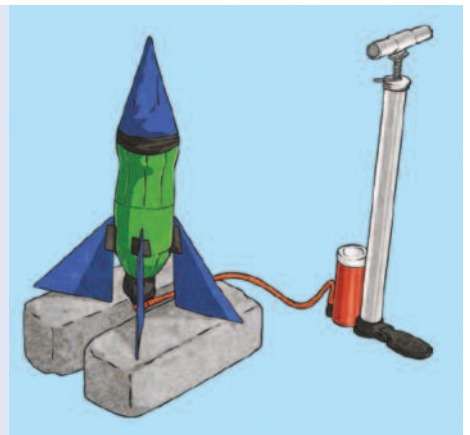
## Make an air powered rocket

A simple idea which you could expand on.

This activity is suitable for outdoor use. Please make sure you have a suitable area of space to work within and that the correct risk assessments are completed.

### What you will need:

- 2-litre water bottle.
- Suitable craft resources to make your bottle into a rocket.
- A cork (this needs to be pre-cut by an adult to ensure the needle will be able to go all the way through it).
- An air pump with a needle adapter (e.g. bicycle or football pump)
- A launch pad (e.g. a garden fork) to place your bottle on in preparation for launch.



### Instructions:

1. Decorate your bottle to turn it into a rocket. It is a good idea to put fins on either side.
2. Push the cork into the neck of the bottle.
3. Pierce the cork with the needle adapter, ensuring the needle comes through on the other side.
4. Place the bottle onto the launch pad, bottle neck down.
5. Attach the pump to the needle adapter and begin to pump air into the bottle.
6. When the rocket bottle is full of air, it will launch into the sky.

### Extension activities:

- Can you find a way of measuring how high your bottle launches into the sky? Can you make it go higher?
- Fill your bottle with different amounts of water before pumping it full of air. What happens when it launches?

# Appendix

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## Email template

Dear...

We are a local business based on XXXX Street who (describe briefly what you do i.e. make widgets).

As a business we believe in creating strong ties with our local community and in particular schools and colleges and would like to offer our time to take part in your careers events and perhaps contribute with XXX(mentoring/workshops/assemblies etc)

We believe that all students should have an opportunity to know and understand the wealth of career options available to them and feel that we can bring much valued content into their careers learning.

Would you therefore let us know what career activities are planned for the remainder of the year and how we can get involved please?

Kind regards

# Appendix

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## Check list

### Before the event

1. Identify schools
2. Contact careers lead
3. Agree a programme of engagement and add to the business diary
4. Check the schools policies and procedures for safeguarding
5. Decide who is to carry out the engagement
6. Add in your own slides to the presentation
7. If you are running a workshop go through your resources to make sure you have everything you need, including a prize for the best team
8. Follow up with the school to confirm dates/times etc.
9. Arrive early to allow time for signing in etc.

### After the event

1. Create a lessons learned document, what could have gone better/what worked well?
2. Consider following up by offering a student visit to your business
3. Stay in contact with the careers lead and continue to build your relationship

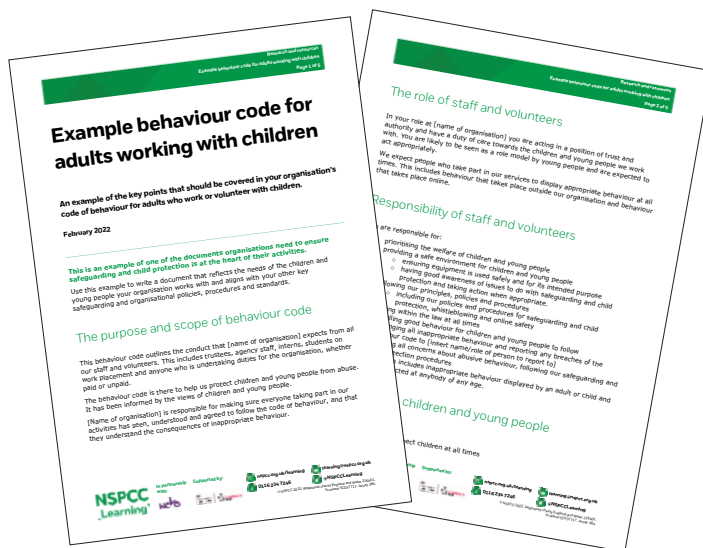
# Gatsby benchmarks



# Safeguarding in schools

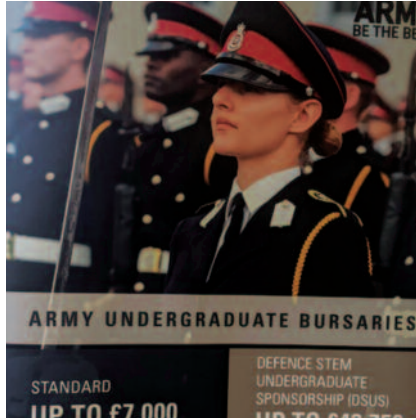
NSPCC Example behaviour code for adults working with children. This document has been produced by the NSPCC as an example of the key points that you might want to cover in your organisation's code of behaviour for adults who work or volunteer with children.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1586/behaviour-code-adults.pdf>



If you are still unsure as to whether you need to obtain a DBS then further details and how to apply can be found on the .gov website:

<https://www.gov.uk/dbs-check-applicant-criminal-record/get-a-standard-or-enhanced-dbs-check-for-an-employee>



Created in conjunction with  
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