

Your students have the potential, we've got the opportunity

Kickstarting the careers
of young disabled people



**Change
Now**

**Leonard
Cheshire** 

Introducing Change Now

At Leonard Cheshire, we think every young person should have the opportunity to develop a successful career, whatever their ability. We know that work experience is one of the best ways to kickstart a young person's career. However, it's not always easy for young disabled people to find a placement that's a good match for their needs or aspirations.

Our Change Now programme provides work experience opportunities for young people aged 11-25 with special educational needs and disability (SEND) in the North East of England and Greater Manchester. If you're from a mainstream school, specialist school, pupil referral unit or further education college we'd love to talk to you about how you can get involved in our programme. Together we can support young disabled people to boost their employment skills, grow in confidence, and receive the best possible support for their future careers.

How does the programme work?

We work closely with schools and colleges to identify students who will benefit from taking part in Change Now. We meet with each young person to discuss their needs and ambitions, helping us to match them with a suitable work placement and ensure they have a positive and meaningful experience. We will also deliver a pre-placement workshop for students to develop their work skills and confidence.

In order to provide the most suitable opportunities, we are able to offer 1 day workplace visits or work experience placements that are either 2 or 10 days long. We can also arrange 9 month supported internships where appropriate.

We work with local employers who share our belief in the positive impact a young disabled person can bring to their business. All employers receive bespoke training before hosting a placement and are supported to ensure they provide an inclusive and accessible experience.

We offer:

- 1 day workplace visits
- 2 or 10 day work placements
- 9 month supported internships

What kind of support does Leonard Cheshire provide?

We provide support and advice to students every step of the way, including:

- **Pre-placement workshops** to develop work skills and confidence before starting work experience.
- **Visits to the workplace** in advance of the placement, including a tour of the building and introduction to colleagues.
- **A mentor** to provide support and advice throughout the placement.
- **Follow up support** and advice after the placement, including help with CVs and future career choices.
- **Engaging with parents and carers** to make sure that students can get the most out of the opportunity.
- The opportunity to take part in Leonard Cheshire's **Can Do** programme – supporting young disabled people to build their skills and confidence while working on projects that benefit the local community.

What's on offer for schools and colleges?

Throughout the programme, Leonard Cheshire will manage the administration and employer engagement aspects of securing work experience placements. This allows staff to focus on supporting your students. Students will gain access to Leonard Cheshire's fantastic network of employer connections, helping them to get the very most out of a quality work experience opportunity.



Why is Change Now important?

There's a great deal of evidence to show that meaningful work experience is an effective way to support young disabled people to develop their careers:

- Increased exposure to employers and the workplace is associated with a decreased likelihood of NEET (not in education, employment or training) status.
- First-hand experiences of the workplace are one of the eight Gatsby benchmarks of high quality careers education.
- Work experience has been identified as a priority for preparing for adulthood as part of the 2015 SEND reforms.
- 66% of employers believe that work experience is a critical or significant factor when they are recruiting young people.



Want to find out more?

If your school or college is interested in taking part in Change Now, we'd love to hear from you.

T: Greater Manchester – Tim Dowling: **07511 169 083**

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leonardcheshire.org/changenow

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