

PRESS RELEASE

Collaboration between educators and employers brings a wealth of opportunity for 6-to-18 year olds in Scotland.

Glasgow, 29th August, 2018: Jamie Hepburn, Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills, marked the start of the new academic year in Glasgow today, by celebrating the successful roll out of career support services to schools across Scotland using the Founders4Schools (F4S) platform.

Such services, including careers talks, student-employer workshops or workplace visits, have been proven to improve the life chances and employability of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds by connecting them to leaders of successful, growing businesses.

Originally funded as a pilot by the Hunter Foundation just eighteen months ago in 6 cities, the success of uptake in Scotland has enabled Founders4Schools to employ three regional leads to work with schools and employers across East, West and North of the country.

Services are supported by the network of 21 industry-led *Developing the Young Workforce* (DYW) regional groups, which are designed to encourage and support employers to engage directly with schools and colleges and to recruit more young people into their workforce.

To mark the occasion, Mr. Hepburn said: “ Founders4Schools are making great progress in Scotland and with the support of £120K of Scottish Government funding, I further welcome the roll out of the system into more schools in Scotland. Having employers play an active role in shaping the education system is a key priority for our Youth Employment Strategy and with the partnership between Founders4Schools and DYW Regional Groups, we’re on a pathway to achieving that.. We owe it to our young people to connect them with business leaders who can share the knowledge and skills they need to enter the world of work, and even start up successful businesses of their own.

“There are also benefits for employers in getting involved, such as those connected to supporting their community, securing future talent, and raising awareness of their business locally.”

Student-Employer Encounters are proven to help young people understand the skills they need and are particularly important for the more marginalised young people who lack access to professional role models in their immediate environment.

Sherry Coutu, Executive Chair and Founder, Founders4Schools said: “We are delighted to have the opportunity to work in Scotland, which has been a huge success story for us.

“We are grateful for the support we have received from both The Hunter Foundation and The Scottish Government in enabling our ongoing work. We are proud to take our place within the DYW agenda in Scotland, and as part of the wider ecosystem, working with all our partners to drive Student Employer Encounters across Scotland.”

Founders4Schools technology allows teachers to find and invite business leaders and entrepreneurs to a specific event, following which teachers are given recommendations from employers to enable future connections throughout the school term. Results in England and Wales show significantly increased [engagement] and reduced likelihood of NEETS (Not in education, employment or training) amongst 13 to 16 year olds following such encounters

Founders4Schools have adapted their website to enable reporting of their free services by DYW areas.

Sir Tom Hunter, Chairman of The Hunter Foundation, said: “Founders4Schools and their digital matching service offer our young people precisely the right opportunities. We really need to forge far greater links between business and education, it’s mutually beneficial and fundamental to our economic future and this takes one more step in the right direction.

“The successful roll out of Founders4Schools across Scotland proves in itself the benefit these services bring to young people, and the future economy of the country.”

Educators, Business leaders and Parents can sign up now:

<https://dywscot.founders4schools.org.uk/>

ENDS

Notes to Editors: School case studies

https://media.founders4schools.org.uk/documents/Kings_Park_Secondary_Case_Study.pdf

https://media.founders4schools.org.uk/documents/St_Peters_Case_Study.pdf

About Founders4Schools

Founders4schools is a charity which provides a free to use service to increase the employability skills of pupils by facilitating encounters with employers. Founders4schools is aimed at primary and secondary pupils aged between 6 and 24.

Our mission is to inspire pupils and prepare them for the rapidly changing world of work. We do this by enabling educators to invite business leaders for encounters with their pupils . Our online platform connects educators with leaders of successful growing businesses in their community.

Founders4schools have teamed up with the [DYW](#) agenda of Scottish Government to help increase youth employability across Scotland and close the skills gap by making it easy for business leaders to connect with local pupils. Founders4schools is part of the [Marketplace](#) portal which will also make offers of opportunities to schools and we are working closely with our partners at Skills Development Scotland to make this available.