

THE PARENTS' GUIDE TO GREEN CAREERS

2025 Edition



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GREEN CAREERS
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Getting Started

Now in its fourth year, [Green Careers Week](#) will take place between 3 and 8 November 2025 to provide young people with an insight into careers that protect the environment.

Led by Green Careers Week, in partnership with a wide range of organisations including the Department for Education, Green Careers Week is an inspiring week, with plenty of information on how young people can get involved with green careers.

Tackling climate change is a global effort. In 2019, the UK pledged to reach Net Zero by 2050. Everyone can play their part in contributing towards this goal and young people are especially important. As the future workforce, they need the right education and tools to support them in developing innovative ways of doing things better. We need to help them find rewarding and fulfilling career opportunities that positively impact the environment.

Use this guide to find out more about:

- ✓ why your teen might be interested in green careers
- ✓ how your teen can get into green careers, whether after GCSE or sixth form

- ✓ easy ways to talk to your teen about their future plans
- ✓ what green careers look like and why there's something for everyone
- ✓ a personal viewpoint from an engineer working on climate action
- ✓ helping them get work experience while they're at school

Get Involved:

Check with their school or college to see what special events are planned

Chat to your teen about their future and what careers interest them. Use this guide to help with conversations.

Look out for [#GCW2025](#) and [#GreenCareersWeek](#) on social media to see what individuals, schools and organisations are doing throughout the week

Follow [@Green__Careers](#), [@CareersWeek](#), [@parentsguideto](#) and [@EducationGovUK](#) on X to explore the latest information, films and opportunities as they're released.

Visit [greencareersweek](#) and [greencareershub](#) to access the latest resources and information.

Jargon Busting

Every movement loves its own language, and sustainability is no exception. As it becomes more important in business and everyday life, the key terms and phrases can be a barrier to understanding what's at the heart of the matter. Here's a quick summary, so you don't get caught out by tricky terms.

Sustainability

Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Global Warming

The increase in temperature of the earth and changes in weather as a result of human activities

Greenhouse Gases

Gases that help to control the earth's temperature. Producing too much of these gases traps heat in the earth's atmosphere, raising the temperature. As humans have developed, increasing in numbers, travelling around the world, building cities and products, we've used up natural resources and released a lot of these gases

Net Zero

When the amount of greenhouse gases produced equals the amount removed – so we are not adding extra gases to the atmosphere. The UK has pledged to reach net zero by 2050 (so by 2050, the UK will not add any more greenhouse gases to the atmosphere than we take away).

Eco-friendly

Having no (or little) damaging effect on the environment

Carbon Footprint

The amount of greenhouse gases produced by an individual (or organization)

Greenwashing

Companies who present information to give the impression they are taking more action against climate change than they are

Carbon Offset

Using a different way to remove greenhouse gases that we've added from an activity – i.e. paying a company to plant trees to balance the amount of greenhouse gases produced from flying abroad on holiday

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Why Green Matters to Teens

Over the last few years, there's been a variety of polls asking young people about their thoughts on climate change and whether they're learning enough about it at school.

The results are strikingly consistent: a high number of 16–25-year-olds say they're worried about climate change. Many feel the future is frightening, and a significant proportion don't believe their voices are heard when it comes to finding solutions.

At school

Young people understand that climate change will directly affect their lives – and they're passionate about making a difference. But many feel they're not getting enough information or support from schools to do so.

Climate change is typically only covered in a handful of subjects, such as geography or science. This makes it difficult for students to connect the dots across different areas of learning and see the bigger picture.

Classroom discussions often focus on exam content, leaving little space for open conversation, critical thinking, or exploring real-world ideas beyond the syllabus.

Addressing the concerns of young people

The Department for Education has acknowledged its role in helping young people feel empowered, not overwhelmed. This includes providing practical activities, clear pathways into green careers, and guidance that shows students how they can be part of the solution.

Plans are underway to increase climate education across all schools, alongside training for teachers and support staff in carbon literacy – so they can lead by example.

Bath University is already taking steps forward by introducing carbon literacy training to all students during freshers' induction – helping young people understand their personal impact and how to take action in everyday life.

Empowering your teen

Young people want to be involved in finding solutions to our environmental challenges. It's vital that we provide opportunities to show them how they can play an active role both in their personal lives and within the world of work. Showing them how they can contribute should help restore their confidence in a positive and sustainable future.

Over the next few pages, we'll take a look into different routes towards green careers, depending on how your teen learns best.

Further Reading:

[British Science Association Climate Change Education 14-18 year olds - 2023](#)

[Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health: children and young people's perspective on how to tackle climate change -2023](#)

[The Prince's Trust and Public First: Generation Green Jobs - 2023](#)

[DofE: Sustainability and climate change, a strategy for the education and children's services system](#)

[Children's Commissioner Big Ask – 2021](#)

[Bath University Carbon Literacy](#)



Action At Home

Individual action may seem like a drop in the ocean when it comes to solving the green challenges we face today, but if we all work together our efforts add up.

Importantly, personal action restores feelings of control over our own life and can contribute to improving mental wellbeing. So how can your teen boost their green credentials?

Buy Less:

Avoid fast fashion, opt for quality over quantity, and choose local foods instead of imported goods.

Recycle & Reduce Waste:

Recycle appropriately, avoid single-use plastics, and never litter.

Conserve Energy:

Walk, cycle, or use public transport when possible, and turn off lights and electronics in empty rooms to save energy.

Support Sustainable Brands:

Choose products from companies committed to ethical and sustainable practices.

Get Involved:

Participate in local clean-up events, tree-planting, or other conservation activities.

Find School Opportunities:

Join or start an environmental club.

Learn About Climate Science:

Encourage curiosity about environmental science through books, documentaries, or online courses.

Use Sustainable Alternatives:

Switch to reusable bags, bottles, and containers and limit disposable items.

Explore Green Careers:

Learn about careers in sustainability, renewables, and environmental science that align with future goals.

[Check out the Green Buzz.](#)

Green Impact Programme:

Gain skills through environmental projects and receive discounted membership with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA).



THE GREEN BUZZ



FOR THE SUPERHEROES OUR GREEN ECONOMY NEEDS!

TAKE THE QUIZ

The Green Buzz

The Green Buzz is a fun and simple online quiz that helps your teen discover green careers that match their personality. It's part of Green Careers Week and was created by experts to help young people find career ideas that are both meaningful and good for the planet.

Why is it useful?

Many young people care deeply about climate change but don't always know how they can help. The Green Buzz gives them real-life job ideas based on their natural strengths – from practical roles like electric vehicle technician, to creative ones like sustainable fashion designer.

It's a great way to:

- ✓ Start conversations about the future
- ✓ Help your teen feel more confident about their skills
- ✓ Show how their personality can guide their choices

How does it work?

Your teen will answer a few simple questions about how they like to think, learn and work.

Based on their answers, they'll be matched with a personality animal and shown green careers that suit that personality type.

Some of these careers include short videos of people working in those roles, sharing how they got started and what they enjoy most. It's a great way for your teen to get a feel for what those jobs are really like and picture themselves in similar careers.

TAKE THE QUIZ

There are no right or wrong answers – it's all about helping them understand themselves better.

How you can support them

Take the quiz together. It only takes a few minutes and could spark great conversations.

Talk about the results. Ask them which careers stood out and why.

Follow up. Take a look at the careers your teen matched with, then use the short videos and this guide to find out what qualifications or experience could help them get started.



Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a fantastic choice for many students, either straight after GCSE or after sixth form. They provide a way of getting qualifications while doing a real job and are a great alternative to full-time study for those students that prefer practical experience over classroom learning.

Apprenticeships help build solid, professional skills transferable from one organisation to another. Employers pay a salary and tuition fees are covered by the employer and the government.

Apprenticeships offer students versatility. Depending on their age, experience and qualifications already achieved, there are different entry levels for apprenticeships, starting at Level 2 (straight after GCSE for those that have few or no GCSE passes) through Level 6/7 (degree level). The qualifications obtained at each level range from GCSE/BTEC equivalent, A/T Level, diploma/foundation right through to masters degree. Qualifications are nationally recognized.

Length of study

Apprenticeships can last for just one year or as long as seven (or more) depending on the final qualification. If your teen isn't comfortable with committing to several years of further

study, they can take one- or two-year options and still gain recognised, valuable qualifications. Better still, if they change their mind later on and decide they wish to extend the apprenticeship to gain higher level qualifications, this is often possible.

Green options

Every apprenticeship can build skills that support a greener future – but green apprenticeships go further. These roles involve tasks that make a direct impact on achieving Net Zero. From Waste Management Specialists and Electric Vehicle Technicians to Climate Change Policy Advisors and Greenhouse Gas Analysts, there are a growing number of apprenticeships designed to tackle environmental challenges head-on.

Find out more:



Finding An Apprenticeship

Search the Government Apprenticeships Site



Most apprenticeships are posted on the Government's website. By creating an account, your child can set up alerts and filters to see opportunities that are of most interest to them and to be emailed when new opportunities arise. However, not all apprenticeships will appear.

Explore Industry and Sector Websites



Your child can search for apprenticeships directly on company, university, or college websites. If they're unsure where to begin, encourage them to research sectors that interest them first – then look up key employers within that field to see what's on offer.

Check Company Websites Directly



It's a good idea to check company websites directly, especially for large or well-known organisations. While apprenticeships at big-name companies (like Amazon, Google, or Virgin) are very competitive, the role descriptions can be helpful in finding similar options elsewhere using job boards or the government site.

Speak to a School or College Careers Adviser



If your child is still at school or college, encourage them to speak with the careers adviser. Advisers often have up-to-date knowledge, local employer connections, and early access to apprenticeship opportunities that aren't widely advertised yet.

Use Job Boards with Filters



Apprenticeships are also advertised on general job boards such as Indeed or Reed. These can be filtered by location, industry, and level – especially useful for finding Level 3 to Level 5 opportunities close to home or in specific sectors.

Read Reviews



Before applying, it's helpful to see what others thought. Websites like [Rate my Apprenticeship](#) include honest reviews from students who've completed programmes – giving your child a clearer idea of what to expect and how different employers compare.

Other Routes to Green Careers

However your teen studies best, they will be able to find a route to green careers. As well as apprenticeships, there are routes via more popular sixth form qualifications (such as A Level, BTEC and International Baccalaureate) and straight after GCSEs.

Technical Qualifications

Teens that don't want to commit to long-term study can take professional qualifications in green technology. Examples include Vocational Technical Qualifications (VTQs), Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs), City & Guilds, Cambridge Technicals/Nationals. These are offered by colleges and some schools.

University

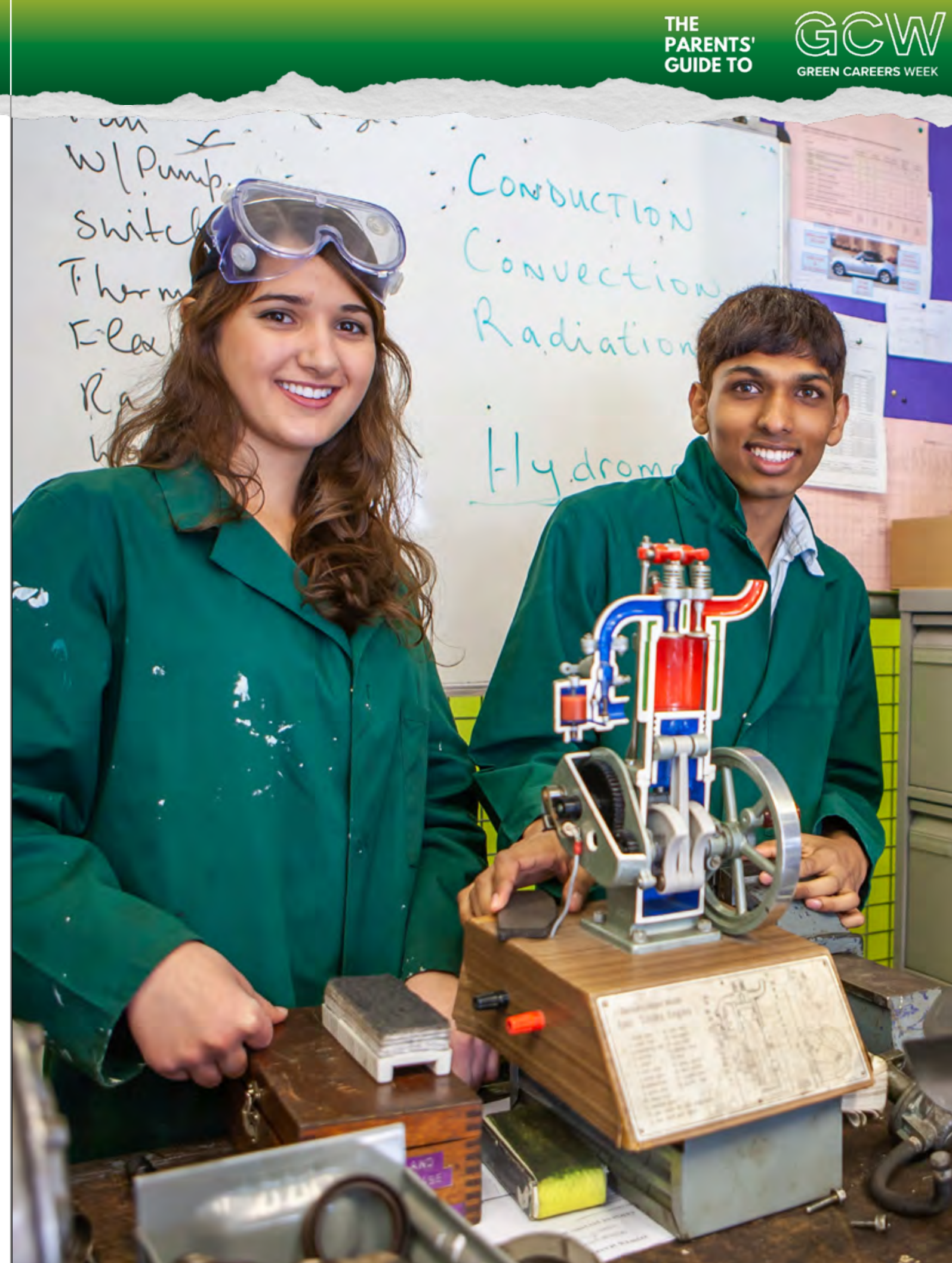
There are thousands of undergraduate courses related to the environment or with modules focusing on sustainability. Some degrees are specialist such as Anglia Ruskin University's course on Sustainable Tourism Development, Bangor's Sustainable Development degree or Stirling's MSc in Environmental Management. Others include modules on sustainable design, environmental management and environmental sustainability. There are also many courses with

relevance to environmental issues including agriculture, biodiversity, biology and biological sciences, botany, horticulture, forestry and geography.



Buy now - Post 16

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Talking To Your Teen

It's not always easy to get teens talking – especially when it comes to their future.

They might feel unsure, overwhelmed, or simply not ready to have those conversations. But helping them think about what they enjoy, what they're good at, and where they might want to go in life can make a real difference.

As a parent or carer, you don't need to have all the answers. Just creating a safe, open space to talk and listening is often the most valuable thing you can do.

Here are some of our favourite tips to help make these chats easier and more productive.

1

Accept their idea of success may be different to yours

Their dreams and ambitions might not align with your ambitions for them. This can be disappointing, but let them walk their own path.

2

It's OK if they're not sure on a career route yet

They don't need to make that decision right now. They do need to develop skills that will help them progress, and that should be their focus.

3

Help them if they are struggling to look far ahead

Setting short-term, achievable goals will help them strive towards a long-term ambition.

4

It's OK if they change their mind!

Reassure them that if they tell you they have their heart set on one direction, then later change their minds, you won't berate them for it.

5

Encourage them to turn passions into money-makers

They're more likely to be successful (and happier) pursuing a career in something they enjoy.

6

Help them navigate their limitations

Not being academic should not be a barrier to success and there is usually more than one way to reach a destination.

7

Try not to make the decisions for them.

They have more options that you when you were their age. Your guidance is valuable, but the decision is theirs to make.

8

Let them explore careers that are interesting to them

This is especially relevant if you have a family tradition of all going into the same field of work or if you own a family business.

9

Encourage them to explore all their options

Help them plan out a route that focuses on their strengths. Different educational routes can often provide entry points into the same industry.

10

Empower them: they have control over their future

The decisions they take and what they do matters.

Exploring “Green Careers”

In the simplest terms, green careers include roles within businesses that benefit the environment and conserve natural resources. These roles have been growing over recent years and are bound to increase further as the necessity for greater energy efficiency becomes more urgent.

Let's take a closer look at which industries focus on particular aspects of climate change, and explore examples of job roles.

These job roles are not niche – they cover all aspects of working life.

The Built Environment

Building and construction accounts for nearly 40% of global CO2 emissions according to the World Green Building Council. Whether it's creating new structures or modifying existing ones, there's no doubt that any role within the built environment will need to look at ways of improving environmental impact.

This reaches across architects, civil and structural engineers, procurement and transportation managers and site workers to name a few. Each will have a significant part to play.

Think outside the box for different careers:

1. Urban Greening Officer:

Designs living roofs, vertical gardens, and tree-lined streets to improve air quality and biodiversity.

2. Sustainable Materials Scientist:

Creates low-impact building materials like mushroom bricks or carbon-capturing concrete.

3. Digital Twin Technician:

Builds virtual models of structures to test energy use and reduce waste before construction begins.



Food Production & Distribution

We can't live without food! There may be variances in the impact of meat or meat free diets, but all our food has a significant environmental impact. It's not just in growing/producing it. Take a stroll round the supermarket to see first hand what's involved.

Food has to be harvested, processed, packaged and transported. Any role within the food industry has the potential to be 'green', including educating people to eat local, natural and in-season produce. You need only look at what sells in supermarkets to know that for many consumers convenience often trumps good intentions.

Interesting ways to get involved include:

1. AgriTech Researcher:

Creates new tech to grow food with fewer emissions and resources.

2. Packaging Technologist:

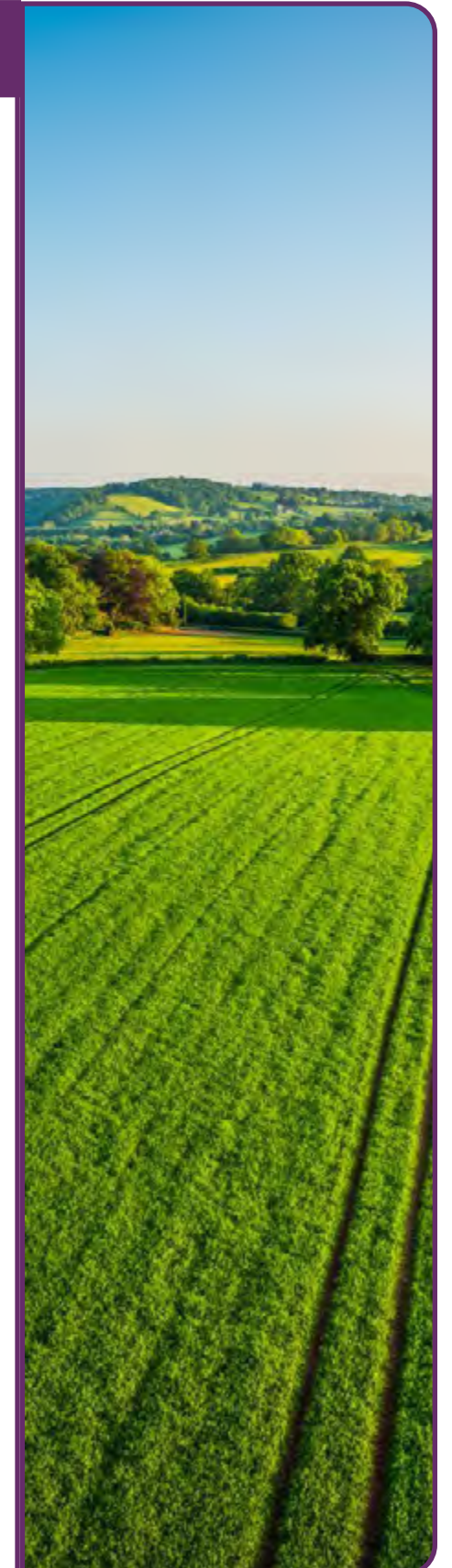
Designs eco-friendly packaging that protects food and reduces waste.

3. Sustainable Food Buyer:

Chooses ethical, low-impact ingredients for shops and restaurants.

4. Food Campaigner:

Educates the public about greener diets through charities or social media.



Energy

Energy is crucial to climate change, not least because many greenhouse gases are generated through energy production. Renewable energy (where resources are replenished faster than they are consumed) will play an important role in moving towards a green Britain.

Renewable energy sources include hydro-power, bio, solar and wind energy. Roles can include project managers, solar power technicians, tidal power developers and wind energy engineers.

Less obvious ways to be involved include:

1. Tidal Power Developer:

Harnesses energy from the sea – predictable, powerful, and growing fast.

2. Carbon Auditor:

Investigates how much carbon companies use and how to reduce it.

3. Energy App Designer:

Builds tools to help people track and reduce their energy use at home or work.

4. Home Energy Assessor:

Helps households reduce bills and emissions through smart upgrades.

5. Smart Grid Analyst:

Designs intelligent energy systems to balance supply and demand in real time.



And some surprises...

Your teen doesn't have to go mainstream to find a role they love. If they have interest, passion and the curiosity to find out more, they can find a job that's rewarding and satisfying - it might just need a little imagination and investigation!

How about:

1. Green UX Designer:

Designs apps and websites to nudge users into more sustainable choices

2. Upcycled Fashion Designer:

Turns vintage clothes and textile scraps into new fashion pieces, keeping fabric out of landfill.

3. Soundscape Ecologist:

Records and analyses natural sounds to monitor biodiversity

4. Bio-Plastic Innovator:

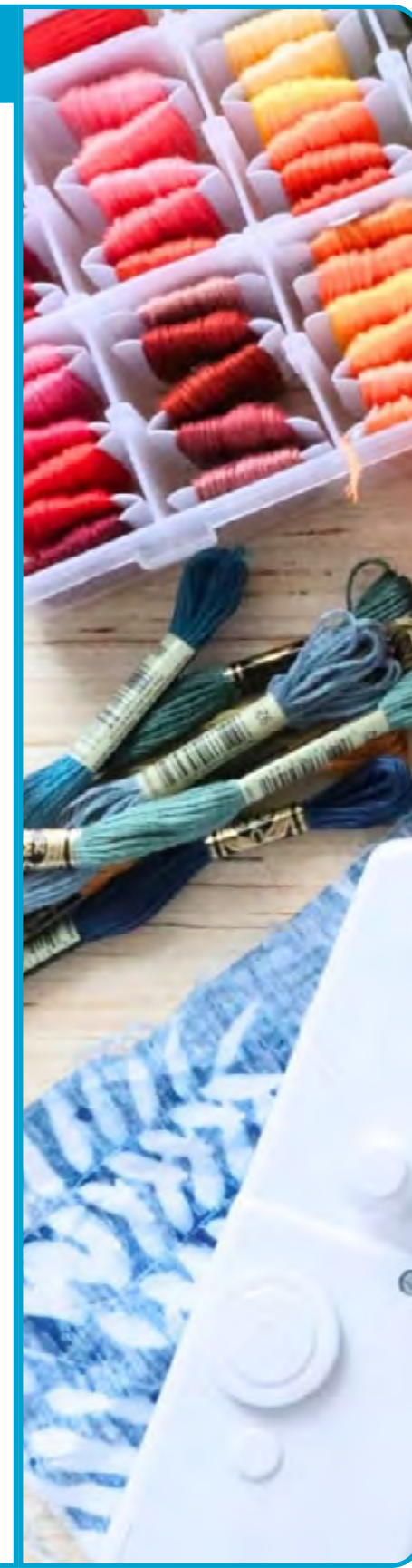
Creates plastic alternatives from things like seaweed, potato starch or even banana peels.

5. Wildlife Bridge Planner:

Designs overpasses and tunnels for animals to safely cross roads

6. Eco-Tourism Coordinator:

Builds travel experiences that protect local ecosystems, benefit communities, and educate tourists about nature.



Work Experience

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Work experience is important for getting into any career. It provides your teen with first-hand experience of what it's like to work; dealing with colleagues and the public; working to deadlines and how it feels to do things "for real".

If they're lucky, they might find work experience within an industry that is related to their course or ultimate job goal. If this is the case, it can help your child discover more about the industry and may help them realise whether it is or isn't for them. A lesson much better learned sooner than later!

How to find work experience

1. Speak to the careers team at school. They have excellent connections with local and national employers.
2. Do you have any contacts, through your own work, friends or family that could help and take on your child?
3. Contact employers directly and ask.
4. Apply for a job (Saturdays, evenings, holidays) – it may not be their aspirational job, but they'll learn a lot from it.
5. Search green volunteering opportunities



Virtual Work Experience

SEE WHAT'S ON OFFER

Virtual Experience

Virtual work experience, also referred to as online, remote or digital, is a broad term that includes any opportunity which provides young people with an insight into what it's like to work in an industry or job role while at home.

Opportunities expanded during lockdown and proved so successful they look set to stay. Most virtual work experiences range from half a day to one week, but some may last longer depending on the nature of the work experience and the age of your child.

Not all virtual work experience is the same. Some are open to everyone and provide a platform for students to discover more about the job, view pre-recorded videos on what it's like to work with the organisation and go on virtual tours. Others may require your child to go through an application process and offer regular online meetings with a supervisor, individual project work, networking sessions, training opportunities and video tutorials.

What are the benefits?

Think global

Virtual work placements are open to everyone and location does not need to be a limiting factor.

This opens many possibilities for your child to explore new jobs and industries in areas that may not be possible face to face.

It's free

The majority of virtual work placements are free and working from home will also mean your child will not incur any travel related costs.

Future proof

Remote working is likely to be important to many businesses in the future and learning how to conduct business and work online will develop extremely valuable skills for the modern workplace.

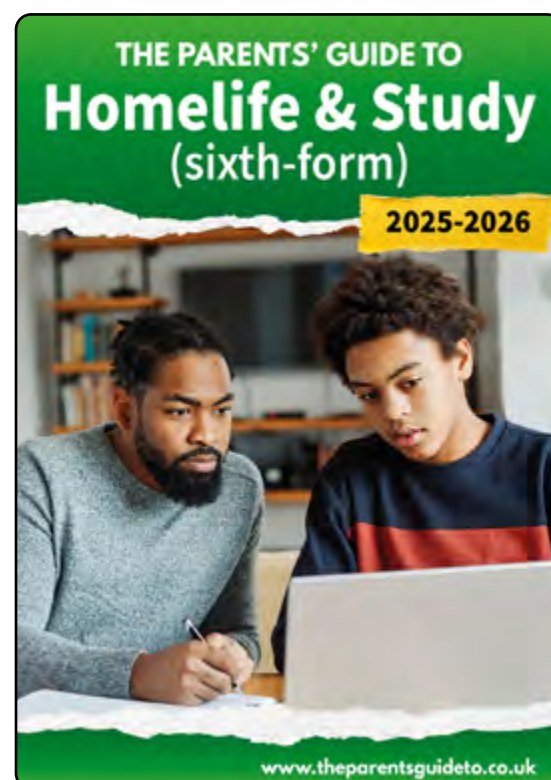
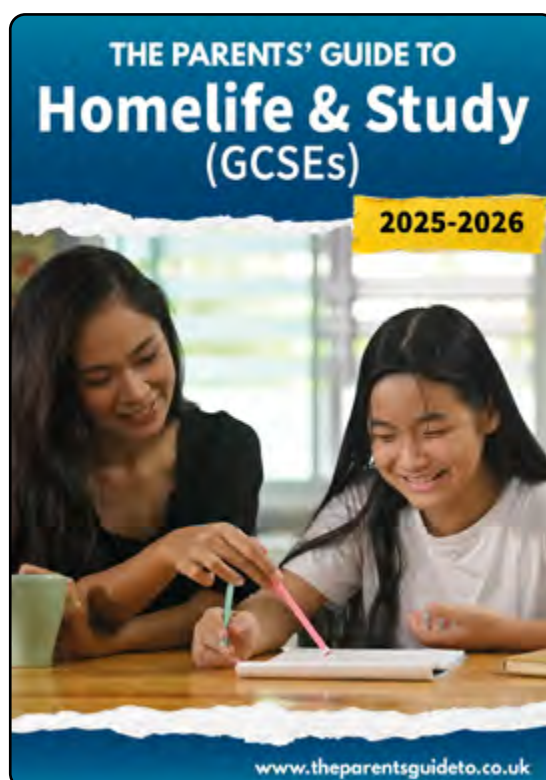
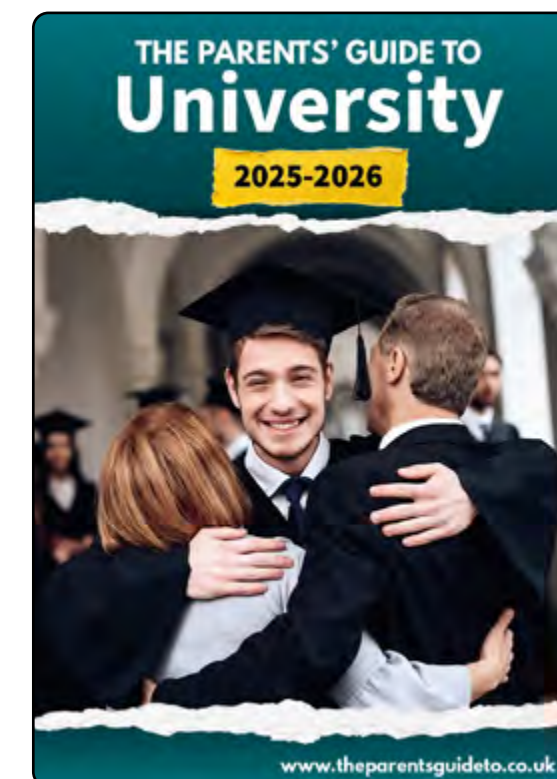
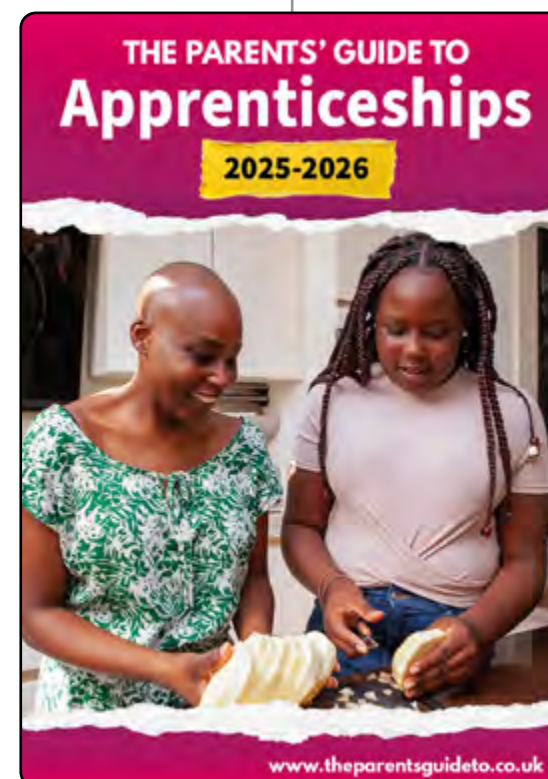
Transferable skills

It's not always easy working from home and taking part in virtual work experience placements will help your child develop those soft skills that all employers are seeking, such as self-motivation and time-management.

Knowing what's right (or what isn't)

Understanding what a job or a career entails might help your child make decisions about whether or not that role is right for them in the future.

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