

# Recommendations



## Practical approach toolkit: Retaining the next generation

These recommendations are inspired both by St Monica Trust and wider good practice. They outline practical ways to test, refine and embed an approach for recruiting and retaining younger workers through apprenticeships. Each recommendation includes examples of how it can be achieved, and we suggest referring back to the relevant building block for deeper context. These insights are informed by strategic, operational and cultural learning and can be adapted by other providers seeking to engage younger people in adult social care.

At the end of this section, you'll find a list of resources to support implementation.

Pilot, refinement and embedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Pilot approaches to recruitment, onboarding and support to identify what works best for young apprentices and be prepared to refine your approach accordingly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Test cohort sizes, communication styles and mentoring models to assess impact on engagement and behaviour.</li><li>■ Trial wellbeing tools like sensory boxes and wellness plans to support emotional resilience and inclusion.</li></ul>			
Action			

Pilot, refinement and embedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Enhance visibility and access to wellbeing support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Promote mental health first aiders with visual identifiers and contact details.</li> <li>■ Formalise access to pastoral care and peer support networks, especially for care-experienced or neurodiverse apprentices.</li> </ul>			

**Action**

Pilot, refinement and embedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Select apprenticeship providers with care and establish clear expectations for delivery, communication and accountability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Choose providers with experience of supporting young and neurodiverse learners in care settings.</li> <li>■ Set up monthly progress reviews and feedback loops to monitor apprentice development.</li> <li>■ Ensure providers deliver blended, workplace-based learning and respond quickly to concerns.</li> </ul>			
<b>Action</b>			

Pilot, refinement and embedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Make strategic adjustments based on operational realities and apprentice feedback to improve programme delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Consider revising classroom formats to prioritise hands-on learning and real-world scenarios over traditional instruction.</li> <li>■ Establish informal service-level agreements to clarify expectations and improve provider responsiveness.</li> </ul>			

**Action**

Pilot, refinement and embedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Develop a realistic timeframe that allows for phased onboarding and continuous improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use flexible apprenticeship durations with buffer periods to accommodate individual progression and readiness.</li> <li>■ Recruit in small cohorts and stagger start dates to ensure manageable integration and support.</li> <li>■ Conduct reviews after each intake to refine delivery and strengthen future planning.</li> <li>■ Ensure learning plans created with trainers are shared with line managers to support integration and goal alignment.</li> </ul>			
<b>Action</b>			

Pilot, refinement and embedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Monitor apprentice progress closely and intervene early to maintain momentum and improve retention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use monthly provider reports to track progress and identify delays or risks.</li> <li>■ Celebrate milestones and share success stories to build motivation and belonging.</li> </ul>			

**Action**

Pilot, refinement and embedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Engage families early to support apprentices' transition into the workplace and promote independence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Communicate expectations clearly to help families understand workplace norms and boundaries.</li> <li>■ Reassure families about pastoral support while encouraging apprentices to take personal responsibility for their role and performance.</li> <li>■ Recognise ongoing family roles in transport and wellbeing while reinforcing apprentices' autonomy and accountability.</li> </ul>			

**Action**

Pilot, refinement and embedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Involvement of existing staff in recruitment and training to build ownership and improve support for apprentices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Include managers in interview panels to foster preparedness and shared responsibility.</li> <li>■ Deliver safeguarding and youth development training to equip staff with relevant skills and increase empathy.</li> <li>■ Encourage open feedback to refine strategies and scale successful practices across teams.</li> </ul>			

**Action**

Pilot, refinement and embedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Align apprentices' work and learning with staffing patterns and service needs, to fully integrate apprenticeships into the organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Schedule training and onboarding to complement staffing patterns and service needs.</li> <li>■ Use remote and on-site learning options to reduce travel and improve flexibility.</li> <li>■ Co-ordinate with providers to ensure delivery fits around shift structures and team availability.</li> </ul>			
<b>Action</b>			

Pilot, refinement and embedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Reinforce professional expectations through consistent messaging and informal coaching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use plain language and visual aids to explain workplace norms and responsibilities.</li> <li>■ Address issues promptly and privately to support learning without stigma.</li> <li>■ Encourage staff to model behaviours and offer real-time feedback to apprentices.</li> </ul>			

**Action**

Pilot, refinement and embedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Embed apprenticeships into everyday practice to ensure sustainability and cultural integration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use staggered recruitment to onboard apprentices in manageable sized groups.</li> <li>■ Treat apprentices as colleagues, not students, to build professional identity and accountability.</li> </ul>			

**Action**

Pilot, refinement and embedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Reframe ‘off-the-job’ training to include meaningful, hands-on learning experiences within the care environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Encourage apprentices to shadow different roles, attend training or support activities.</li> <li>■ Avoid sending apprentices home for off-the-job time; keep learning structured and supported.</li> <li>■ Provide templates and examples to help staff understand and record off-the-job learning.</li> </ul>			

**Action**

## Further support

- [Assessing and measuring quality resources](#) – Learn more about monitoring service quality and outcomes during pilot phases and roll outs.
- [Working with families](#) – Read these practical guidelines about how adult social care employers and workforce can work well with families.