

Recommendations



Practical approach toolkit: Retaining the next generation

These recommendations are inspired both by St Monica Trust and wider good practice. They outline practical steps to recruit, develop, support and retain younger workers through apprenticeships. Each recommendation is accompanied by 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.

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
Recruitment Strengthen outreach by engaging with schools, colleges and youth organisations to promote care careers. <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Attend career fairs and deliver interactive workshops like dementia awareness and life support.■ Use platforms like adultsocialcare.co.uk and Find an Apprenticeship to reach younger audiences.■ Develop joint brochures with training providers to explain apprenticeship pathways clearly.			
Action			

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Redesign recruitment processes to prioritise candidates' values and potential over formal experience or qualifications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use values-based interviews to assess motivation, empathy and willingness to learn. ■ Create accessible application pathways tailored for apprentices and first-time job seekers. ■ Offer pre-interview support and informal tours to reduce anxiety and build confidence. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Promote transparency and realism in role promotion to build trust and attract the right candidates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use honest, jargon-free language in job adverts and promotional materials to clearly describe the role, its challenges and opportunities. ■ Actively challenge misconceptions about the sector and apprenticeships by sharing real stories, day-in-the-life content and myth-busting FAQs. ■ Set realistic expectations from the outset to help candidates self-assess fit and reduce early attrition. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Tailor recruitment communications to be inclusive, accessible and confidence-building for young applicants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use clear language, visual aids and bullet-pointed expectations to reduce barriers. ■ Offer help with applications, interview prep and sourcing appropriate clothing. ■ Provide informal tours and early contact to build trust and reduce anxiety. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Partner with organisations to support care-experienced young people with tailored recruitment and onboarding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collaborate with virtual schools to enable early planning and personalised support. ■ Make reasonable adjustments to recruitment processes to remove barriers to entry. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Onboarding and induction</p> <p>Provide clear expectations and structured guidance to help apprentices adjust to workplace norms and culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use visual aids and clear language to explain punctuality, conduct and responsibilities. ■ Break down expectations into manageable steps to support neurodiverse and anxious learners. ■ Reinforce professionalism through mentoring, supervision and peer modelling. 			
Action			

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Introduce supernumerary roles for apprentices to allow learning without pressure or staffing responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enable apprentices to shadow staff and build confidence before taking on duties. ■ Use staged uniform systems to reinforce progress and belonging. ■ Celebrate milestones with residents and staff to build pride and motivation. 			
Action			

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Adapt shift patterns and provide transport support to ensure apprentices can reliably attend and feel valued.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer flexible scheduling to suit wellbeing and personal circumstances. ■ Provide subsidised taxi schemes to improve attendance and accessibility. ■ Address practical barriers such as ID checks and travel logistics. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Provide consistent trainer relationships to build trust, continuity and personalised support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If possible, assign one trainer per apprentice to ensure familiarity and build rapport throughout the programme. ■ Adapt delivery to individual learning styles, including bite-sized modules and practical observations. ■ Offer additional face-to-face visits when apprentices need extra support or reassurance. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Deliver trauma-informed training to staff to improve empathy and support for young apprentices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Equip managers to respond to emotional and behavioural challenges effectively. ■ Embed inclusive practices for neurodiverse and care-experienced learners. ■ Improve communication and understanding across teams through shared learning. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Support and development</p> <p>Embed mentoring and buddy systems to provide informal, peer-led support for new apprentices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pair apprentices with approachable peers or senior staff for guidance. ■ Encourage regular check-ins and feedback to build trust and confidence. ■ Use peer-led support to reduce anxiety and promote inclusion. 			
Action			

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Provide flexible learning formats to suit diverse educational backgrounds and learning styles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use bite-sized training and simplified materials for better comprehension. ■ Adapt delivery methods to individual preferences and needs. ■ Maintain consistent trainer relationships to build rapport and continuity. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Celebrate achievements and career progression to motivate apprentices and encourage long-term commitment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use recognition schemes like ‘Learner of the Month’ to boost morale. ■ Share success stories to inspire ambition and build confidence. ■ Offer clear pathways to senior roles and further qualifications. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Equip staff with training to support apprentices' emotional wellbeing and personal development effectively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Deliver sessions on safeguarding, resilience and managing difficult conversations with young people. ■ Help staff understand generational differences and learning styles to reduce misunderstandings. ■ Encourage informal mentoring roles across departments to build trust and motivation. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Retention</p> <p>Offer mid-point career guidance sessions to help apprentices explore future opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide visual career mapping tools to show progression routes within adult social care. ■ Provide tailored advice aligned with individual interests and aspirations. ■ Support transitions to higher-level qualifications or university programmes. ■ Help apprentices identify broader roles in health and social care. 			
Action			

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Offer competitive pay and structured contracts to improve retention and financial stability for apprentices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide hourly rates above the national apprenticeship minimum to attract and retain talent. ■ Structure contracts to offer consistent hours and better work-life balance for young workers. ■ Communicate pay progression clearly to reinforce long-term career value. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Promote and support access to funding schemes that benefit care-experienced and disadvantaged apprentices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Where relevant, encourage use of the Care Leavers' Apprenticeship Bursary to reduce financial barriers. ■ Help apprentices apply for grants and subsidies to support transport and training costs. ■ Use funding to signal organisational commitment to inclusion and long-term development. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Maintain peer relationships and social connections to reduce isolation and strengthen team engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage apprentices to form social groups and share experiences informally. ■ Promote peer-led support and champion roles to build leadership and confidence. ■ Use team-building activities to reinforce belonging and shared purpose. 			
Action			

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Maintain a culture of non-judgemental support to welcome back apprentices who leave and wish to return.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use wellness action plans and occupational health resources to support wellbeing. ■ Reinforce growth and development over rigid expectations and outcomes. ■ Develop a formal returner pathway for apprentices who leave and wish to return, including wellness plans and flexible re-entry options. 			

Action
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Further support

- [Recruitment support](#) – Access tools and guidance for values-based recruitment and widening applicant reach.
- [Employing young people](#) – Read practical advice on adjustments needed to recruit young people into your service.
- [Induction resources](#) – Deliver structured onboarding aligned with organisational values and quality standards.
- [Care Certificate standards](#) – Ensure your organisation provides consistent foundational training for new care staff.
- [Apprenticeships](#) – Learn more about the various apprenticeship opportunities that adult social care providers can offer.
- [Find an apprenticeship](#) and [Adult Social Care](#) – Advertise job opportunities for free on these two websites.
- [The Care Workforce Pathway](#) – Develop your workforce with clear roles and career progression.
- [Wellbeing](#) – Promote staff wellbeing with these practical tools and resources.
- [Retaining your workforce](#) – Gain further insight and resources to help you to retain your workforce.