

**SHIREBROOK  
ACADEMY**



# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY

## *Alumni*



This folder contains profiles on past students.

Read how they tell in their own words about life after Shirebrook Academy, the pathway's they took to get to their desired career destination and the highs and lows they faced along the way.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



## CONNOR LIDDLE

*Class of 2011*

After I left Shirebrook School in 2011 and decided I wanted to learn more and have a career in computing. I applied, and completed a BTEC Level 3 Extended National diploma at West Notts College. As part of the course I volunteered at Shirebrook Academy as a teaching assistant in ICT.

On completion of the course I felt that computing didn't excite me as much as I had hoped so took an alternative path and decided engineering might be the profession for me.

I applied to Chesterfield College and completed an electrical engineering apprenticeship. I liked the idea that with an apprenticeship I could be learning at college and experiencing the workplace at the same time.

I began my first apprenticeship at a company called Weightron, here they did industrial weighing scales from 40 tonne weighbridges to small 100th of a gram scales. I worked there for 2 years. From there I got a job at a place called MOBA, similar to Weightron they also handled scales, but no ordinary scales these were ones specified for garbage trucks which were built on the back of the trucks so rubbish could be weighed and recorded at the same as being loaded into the back of the truck.

After a month I moved to a company called Graphoidal. Which is where I am today. Here we make cabinets for glass factories for lubricating shoots where molten glass falls and for coating glass bottles with a protective substance. A year in and I am loving it! Everyone, especially my boss is very supportive and helpful both with work and college.

Looking for a new job isn't easy, my advice would be to apply to as many job as you possibly can, send your CV out to as many places as possible and go to every interview, even if it would just be for practice as every interview counts. Once you have a job you enjoy stick with it, work your hardest and you will go far.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**ASHLEIGH EVERETT**

*Class of 2012*

After finishing my exams and school in 2012 I decided to apply to stay continue in Post 16 education and do a Level 3 in Sports Coaching, Development & Fitness. I was successful completing the course with Triple Distinction.

When I left 6th form, I had a Conditional Offer to go on to do Joint Honours Degree of Sports Science & Media Studies, unfortunately after the first year I realised that the University lifestyle wasn't for me.

Following on from that I started working for Post Office LTD scheduling all the jobs for refurbishments of Post Offices all over the North East, North West & Scotland and Northern Ireland on a Temporary Contract. After being with the Post Office for just over a year I used my experiences & Skills gained to apply for a Permanent Role at a company called Trust Security System LTD.

I have been at Trust now for 18 months, I started with scheduling jobs for the Service Engineers working my way up to also completing down job sheets from engineers and sending the invoice out to customers. I am now currently doing a Level 3 Qualification in Customer Service and being taught how to order parts for new installs because I will be soon working alongside the Installations Manager with a goal of becoming the Install Manager myself.

I really enjoy my job and what I do, I still have a lot to learn but I am learning new things every day.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**DANI WELCH**

*Class of 2015*

Level 4 Student, an employee, a volunteer and a mentor.

Balancing both your social life, employment, education and additional activities can be very hard and very stressful at times but it is very much possible. Since leaving Shirebrook Academy in 2015 I have been offered some amazing opportunities that have contributed to the person I am today.

In the summer of 2015, I chose to take part in the NCS programme which is a fantastic programme for those aged 15 – 17 to develop important life skills, take on new challenges and adventures and spend 4 weeks of the summer holidays getting involved in activities to help support the local area. For me, NCS was the best part about my summer and it led onto further employment with the company as both a Mentor and a Leader. Every year I now look forward to the summer holidays just to get involved over and over again...

Once summer was over, I chose to continue my studies at sixth form. During my time at sixth form I was provided with many opportunities such as coaching, leading lessons, organising sports day, supporting students from Stubbin Wood and taking part in external qualifications all whilst studying.

My two years at sixth form studying sport inspired me to want to teach sports. After achieving a D\*D\*D\* in an extended diploma and a D at A Level, I was set to enrol at Sheffield Hallam University to perform a course in sports. After moving into my accommodation, it soon dawned on me that something wasn't right and I began to realise that I maybe had not made the right choice for myself.

After only 1 day in my accommodation I decided to follow my gut and move back home, deferring my university place to the following year and finding an alternative to fill my time. I had always been really interested in Public Services having worked closely with the MAT Team and the local PCSO's and so I decided to spend my year studying a HNC Level 4 in Public

Services, fulfilling my interest, gaining a qualification and figuring out what I wanted to do for a year sounded a good plan to me and what a good plan it was.

Although I still think about the things I might be missing out on having not gone to a university, I have still gained so much more by staying local and studying at Chesterfield College's Higher Educational setting. This past year I have made so many fantastic friendships, relationships with tutors and achieved so many things.

Alongside studying my HNC qualification I also volunteer as an adult instructor in the Nottinghamshire Army Cadet Force, work at McDonalds part time, support local charities with various fundraising, and was a proud runner up of the Miss Mansfield and Sherwood Forest 2018/19 Ambassador programme and mentor young adults to help them understand that anything is possible.

After successfully achieving the opportunity for full time employment with HMP Doncaster, I have listened to my gut once again and have decided to continue with my studies at Chesterfield College, progressing onto a HND at Level 5 in Public Services. I have now realised how important continuing education is and how much further you can get by doing so. Studying at a higher level isn't as tedious as it sounds, it has in fact been my best year in education so far and it hasn't prevented me from getting involved with the other activities I love to do such as volunteering and working alongside.

Three years after leaving Shirebrook Academy, at 19 years of age I still had no idea what career I wanted to fulfil, all I do know is that anything can happen and it doesn't always happen how you plan it to! Don't ever be afraid to try something new and do the things you love...

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**KEIRA LOWE**

*Class of 2014*

Throughout my GCSE's I was always really indecisive in what I wanted to do following on from school. Choosing to do A Levels allowed me to have a range of experiences throughout different subjects whilst having experience through placement and exchanges abroad whilst doing both French and Spanish at A Level and experiencing different ways of life. Whilst in sixth form, I applied for university in a degree to work with children, which always deep down is something I have wanted to do. The course I am currently studying is BA (Hons) Child and Youth Studies. This course allows me to gain a range of experiences throughout different settings, i.e. teaching and social work.

Experience credits employability for future careers and also has allowed me to progress with my skills in practice and allows me to develop my knowledge throughout my degree. From school and after leaving I have become more independent throughout experience in different settings whilst studying towards the career of my dreams, teaching abroad, which deep down is something I have always wanted to do. I hope my experience can help you fulfil your dreams!

Never give up and good luck to you all.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**ROBYN MOORE**

*Class of 2014*

I left Shirebrook Academy in 2014 and continued to study BTEC Level 3 Health and Social Care until leaving in 2016. I decided to further my study at Sheffield Hallam University, studying Radiotherapy and Oncology. Radiotherapy is quite an unknown profession and involves treating cancer using radiation.

I have enjoyed my first year at Sheffield Hallam; meeting new people, learning in new ways and attending my clinical placement at Derby Royal Hospital. At the beginning I found university quite daunting as I was moving away from home and didn't know anyone studying my course. However, this soon changed as university staff were really welcoming and helpful. This was made even easier after meeting my flat mates and making friends with other students on my course. I really enjoy the social aspect of university as there are so many different things to do! Moving away from home to university makes you a lot more independent and allows you to develop life skills.

Now I am now a term in to my my second year and I am settled in at university. I am used to the increased academic workload in comparison to that of school and feel confident with my academic writing, referencing and delivering power points due to the support provided from the university during my first year. Learning is definitely more independent at university, after attending, lectures, seminars and practical sessions you have the freedom to study or develop your own learning the best way that suits you.

I believe I made the right choice furthering my education at Sheffield Hallam, as I have made friends for life, get to enjoy the social aspect of university for 3 years, and I aim to graduate and begin my career within radiotherapy.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**BLAKE STARKEY**

*Class of 2015*

“After leaving secondary school I had the choice of going to 6th form or college, and to follow my passion for physical education I chose to do a BTEC Level 3 in Sport at 6th form. Throughout the whole of 6th form I was supported with all my work and had an amazing experience, yet as 6th form came to an end and I began at University there was a big change. When I first started at Sheffield Hallam University the change to my lifestyle was huge. I’d gone from living at home with my parents and catching a bus to 6th form, to living alone and having to find my own way to University. This was one of the best things to happen to me throughout all my education as it allowed me to become independent. I had to begin to cook and shop for myself, get to my lectures and seminars on time with no organised transport, and find a new social group away from home. This was something that I loved and thoroughly enjoyed the independence.

I did nothing but enjoy every moment in and out of university. I made friends that I will have for the rest of my life and grew a real passion for physical education. I am now in my second year of university with units ranging from dance to politics and swimming, not all as enjoyable as each other but being at university is not just about the course, it’s a whole lifestyle that develops you as a person as you work towards your goals”



# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**DECLAN GLOVER**

*Class of 2018*

**Where are you now?**

"I am currently at West Notts College studying A Levels, which are Maths, Biology and Chemistry.

**What is your favourite course?**

"Currently my favourite topic is medicine within chemistry where I have learnt how different properties such as magnesium hydroxide neutralises stomach acids and can help heart burn to how other properties such as barium sulphate can be used as an X- absorber for intestinal diseases"

**What do you want to do in the future?**

"In the future I want to study medicine at the University of Nottingham, as I want to make a positive change to the world and be part of the future of science whilst also having a stable career"

**What other things are you doing to reach this goal?**

"I am currently part of the medicine society with The Access Project at West Notts where we gain minor clinical skills, learn how to get into medicine and experience life as a medical doctor or dentist"

**What other things are you doing to reach this goal?**

"I am currently part of the medicine society with The Access Project at West Notts where we gain minor clinical skills, learn how to get into medicine and experience life as a medical doctor or dentist"

**What would your advice be to the current GCSE students now that you have been through it only just a year ago?**

"My advice for current GCSE students is to strive for the best even if they are unsure of future aspirations as GCSEs count to more than you think!! I didn't realise their importance until looked at different careers and universities".

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**ELLIE-JAE LOCKE**

*Class of 2016*

After leaving Shirebrook Academy in 2016, I attended West Notts College. I studied the Level 3 CACHE diploma in childcare and education, which was a 2-year course. After completing a range of placements and assignments I achieved a grade A. I applied for a range of universities, and I am currently at Sheffield Hallam University studying Primary Education with QTS, so hopefully in 2 years' time I will be a primary school teacher!

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**HANNAH BERGIN**

*Class of 2018*

My name is Hanna Bergin and I went to Shirebrook Academy from 2013 to 2018. For my GCSE's I picked Art, Health and Social Care, Food and Geography. I picked Art in particular because it was my favourite lesson and I really enjoyed being creative throughout the course. Being at Shirebrook Academy was not easy for me at first because English is not my first language. I had to learn English and be on top of my work, but with support of the teachers I've been able to better myself. I am doing Art and Design level 2 at West Notts College and so far my experience has been great. Since leaving school and coming to a different environment – college, it has been exciting to start a new chapter in my life and focus more on my hobbies and passions, which for me is art. I have learnt the importance of the time needed to do our assignments and how to be more independent. I really enjoy having freedom to do things that I like and developing my skills in my own way.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**ISLA HOWE**

*Class of 2018*

I am currently in my first year studying A Levels at West Notts College, in which I chose to do English Literature, Law and History.

My favourite subject is currently History as the topics we learn about are amazing and so interesting. We are learning about the social change in America and Britain in the 19th and 20th century such as immigration, class and social minorities. I find it fascinating how this links to our lives and the society we live in today.

I have also carried on The Access Project at West Notts College, in which I have been given a super friendly online tutor that works at Google, and helps me with English Literature. We have had over 10 sessions this term and she helps me with my English Literature preparations. Tutors just want the best for you and want you to do well so use the help given.

I am also currently on the Oxbridge society at West Notts which is for students who want to/have the potential to go to Oxford or Cambridge university. I'm also an Access Project ambassador for West Notts which involves public speaking and other social skills.

I'm in the Brilliant Club too which is a mini undergrad course with a PHD student, in which I am currently doing my project on the 20th century epistolary Literature. I have also visited Leeds, Nottingham and Cambridge University with College.

I want to hopefully study History and Politics at a top university as I love the political side of history and how it's influenced our country and societal views of today.

My advice to the Year 10 and Year 11 Shirebrook Academy students would be don't over stress, keep reminding yourself that your health and happiness during exams is a lot more valuable than a few grades on a sheet. Happy and healthy is more likely to get you better grades.

Also, small amounts of revision and remembering is better than hours and hours of revision and remembering near enough nothing off it. Little and often is my best advice.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**JAKE CARRINGTON**

*Class of 2016*

When I first started at Chameleon School of Construction, I had no idea what I was doing. But after a few weeks in the practical workshop I began to learn how to use the tools, equipment and the materials and I progressed onto more real work. I learnt how to apply render which is sand and lime onto the walls and then learnt how to apply a backing plaster and finishing plaster to walls and ceiling. Fixing plasterboards to walls and ceilings, laying a floor screed and running moulds. I now have a Diploma in Plastering level 1 and have just progressed onto level 2. My goals are to finish level 2 and then find a job in construction as a plasterer.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**LIBBY PARKER**

*Class of 2016*

I went to All Saints school for A levels, now at Nottingham university doing Maths. Her advice 'start getting experiences now that will help you with university and job applications'



**LAURA DALE**

*Class of 2016*

I went to West Notts College for a Cache diploma in childhood studies, and is about to start an Open University degree in Child Psychology. She will be getting childcare work experience at the same time as studying and hopes to specialise in SEN work in the future. Her message for students - you will need to work and get qualifications in the future, so you may as well do something you really enjoy.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*

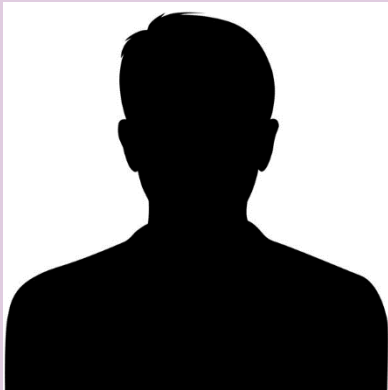


**CHLOE FORD**

*Class of 2014*

I began an apprenticeship at Freshstart Recruitment in June 2017. An apprenticeship is a great option to allow you to gain skills and experience you don't get with other qualifications. I am currently working towards an administration qualification within a recruitment agency. There are many opportunities for progression within the industry and as such I hope to become a recruitment consultant in the future.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**DANE WAGSTAFF**

*Class of 2014*

After leaving school I completed a Level 3 Sports development and coaching course at 6th Form. Once I had completed my course I was then presented with an opportunity to work with Chesterfield College as a level 2 Business Administration Apprentice. Even after I had left school I was still unsure of what career pathway was best for me, but I was eager to start earning my own money. An apprenticeship sounded like the perfect fit for me as I would be able to earn money as well continue learning valuable skills and gain higher qualifications.

After completing my level 2 Apprenticeship I decided to take a slightly different route and progress onto a level 3 IT apprenticeship. My first year as an administration assistant was very enjoyable and I feel as though the whole apprenticeship was worthwhile and helped kick-start my progression. The main thing that I took from completing my level 2 was that it helped me to realise that this was a career I would be happy to pursue, the experience that I gained from this was invaluable to me.

I was given support and guidance through my apprenticeship providers to progress onto a level 3 which would be better suited to me. After my first apprenticeship I had a better idea of what I wanted to do and I am now still currently completing my level 3 IT Apprenticeship. Due to my progression through the apprenticeship programmes and the higher qualifications that I've achieved I have recently secured full time employment in a well-paid job that I thoroughly enjoy.

Before I started my apprenticeship I was very sceptical about if it would be the correct decision for me. I am now glad that I decided to make the choices that I did and I am very proud of what I have managed to achieve by progressing through the apprenticeship scheme.



# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**TRAFFORD KIRBY**

*Class of 2018*

**Current place of work or study:**

Wheelgate and West Nottinghamshire College

**Current job title or course title:**

Currently working as a Park Ranger and studying Childcare and Education at college.

**What one piece of advice would you give to current students?**

Enjoy it while it lasts... the world is bigger than you think.

**What have you done since leaving school?**

Joined a community club run by Keeley Howson in order to help children stay safe around Shirebrook. I have also joined college and I am working towards my Level 3 diploma for childcare and education. I got a job in September 2019 at Wheelgate family theme park which allows me to continue with my studies at college.

**What experience and qualifications did you need to do your job, and do you have advice for current students looking to go into your sector?**

They want people with experience with children, whether that being babysitting younger siblings or working in schools. They also want people who have passed their Maths and English with a minimum grade 4/C. Some advice I'd give is "smile every day, you never know what's going on in someone's life and that smile could change their day!"

**What do you find most challenging about your job?**

What I find most challenging is dealing with the heat on the hot summer days and when the park is really busy... but we all try our best and make the most of it.

It's also very difficult to get up in the morning... as it is for most jobs - but once you do the day will fly by and you'll never want it to end.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**Alan Clark**

*Class of 1986*

**Current place of work or study:**  
Department of Health and Social Care

**Current job title or course title:**  
Head of Parliamentary Briefing Hub

**What one piece of advice would you give to current students?**

Learn from your mistakes, grow from them, and try not to make them again.

**What have you done since leaving school?**

Royal Air Force officer from 1991 to 2018, leaving as a wing commander from the NATO Headquarters in Belgium having served all over the world including Iraq and Afghanistan. Joined the Civil Service in August 2018 and have since worked on EU Exit and now Coronavirus.

**What experience and qualifications did you need to do your job, and do you have advice for current students looking to go into your sector?**

When I started work I needed 5 O-levels (GCSEs), leadership potential and commitment - the minimum for officers in the RAF is now 2 A-levels and preferably a degree. I didn't do as well as I should have in my exams but got a second chance - don't rely on being so lucky, work hard and get the best results you can. If that doesn't work out, keep working hard and look for opportunities, but don't expect anything for free.

**What do you find most challenging about your job?**

Very tight deadlines and answering very complex questions. It's amazing how much what I learned at school helps me every day at work - even after all this time.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**PAYGE BISPHAM**

*Class of 2014*

**Year of leaving:** 2014

**Current place of work or study:** Private day nursery

**Current job title or course title:**  
Level 3 Nursery Assistant

**What one piece of advice would you give to current students?**

My advice to students would be to put the best into everything that you do whilst you can and to think carefully before choosing subject options. It is important to think about what you might want to do as a career when leaving school before you choose your options as those subjects could help significantly.

**What have you done since leaving school?**

Since leaving school I have completed a level 2 and level 3 apprenticeship in the children and young people's workforce. I have completed many online courses and I am now currently studying an access to higher Education course for midwifery and hope to finish by next year ready to apply for university.

**What experience and qualifications did you need to do your job, and do you have advice for current students looking to go into your sector?**

The entry requirements for a nursery assistant are mainly about the care and compassion that you have as an individual and what you can bring to the team and the families in your care. You need to understand the role of being a nursery assistant and be able to manage real life, sometimes stressful situations. A basic A-C grade in core subjects such as maths and English is usually the minimum requirements but health and social grades can help in your applications. You must have a passion for helping young children to develop, tracking their progress and helping them to reach milestones whilst feeling safe, happy and secure. No two days are the same and it is an extremely rewarding career.

**What do you find most challenging about your job?**

There are a variety of things that can make the job difficult, such as dealing with sensitive situations and difficult behaviours, but with experience and a lot of caring and understanding you learn calm strategic ways to deal with those situations effectively and appropriately whilst keeping everyone happy.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**MATTHEW BULLARS**

*Class of 2013*

**Current place of work or study:**

Macalloy, Caxton Way, Dinnington, S25 3QE

**Current job title or course title:**

Mechanical Engineer/Site Services Manager

**What one piece of advice would you give to current students?**

Take all opportunities presented to you. You are young enough to take a chance- if it doesn't work out, you can change it up.

**What have you done since leaving school?**

My current position allows me to travel globally. Places visited to date- UAE (Dubai, Qatar, Kuwait), New Zealand, Austria, Botswana, UK and Ireland. It can be chaotic but its great seeing new places and meeting new people. After all- it's not what you know it's who you know.

**What experience and qualifications did you need to do your job, and do you have advice for current students looking to go into your sector?**

From leaving school I went straight into an Apprenticeship (BTEC Level 3 in Mechanical Engineering), I then proceeded to complete my HNC and HND at Chesterfield College. Being paid to learn is great and provides fantastic opportunities for developing skills; managing money, the importance of a work/life balance and understanding how to get things done. Everything links back to engineers in some way- which opens so many doors in respect to job opportunities. (Engineers are paid really well!)

**What do you find most challenging about your job?**

The commitment. Being an engineer and managing projects/people is not a 9-5 job. Upholding your own and other's expectations can be very stressful so it is important to take time to relax. Taking holidays is vital for your mental wellbeing.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



**LUKE EATON**

*Class of 2020*

**Current place of work or study:**

Study - West Notts College.

Work - GGS Esports League.

**Current job title or course title:**

Course - Creative Digital Computer Science - Level 1.

Job Title - EU Administrator.

**What one piece of advice would you give to current students?**

Have fun and make the most of it!! :)

**What have you done since leaving school?** Revise for college and play games.

**What experience and qualifications did you need to do your job, and do you have advice for current students looking to go into your sector?** You need experience in the gaming and esports industry and you need to be straight forward and need experience in teamwork and many other skills.

**What do you find most challenging about your job?**

Nothing really it's just straight forward and is a dream job for me.

# SHIREBROOK ACADEMY *Alumni*



## Where did they go?

### Leavers 2017

Georgia Woolley — Apprenticeship with NCC

Jamie Radford – Rose Bruford College London– Stage Management

### Leavers 2016

Dylan Collier – The University of Birmingham – Chemistry

Chantal Gascoigne – Deferred entry, FE Beauty for 1 year.

Emily Parker – York St John – Psychology

### Leavers 2014

Georgia Southwell – The University of Sheffield - Biology

### Leavers 2013

Natalie Ford – WNC Graphic Design

Shannon Gladwin – Nottingham Trent University – Early Years & Educational Development

Jemma Shelton – The University of Nottingham – Management studies

### Leavers 2011

Kirsty Baker – DeMontford Uni, Creative Writing and Journalism

Blake Baker – The University of Nottingham, Medicinal and Biological Chemistry

Craig Canning – WNC Performance Studies

Darren Collier – The University of Sheffield, Chemistry with study in industry

Ryan Sunderland – Accountancy Apprenticeship