

Case study - a school-business project Jim Reid Vehicle Sales and Kemnay Academy



Kemnay pupils Liam and Niah take to the airwaves

Have you got a great idea for an activity that would inspire and inform young people about the workplace?

That's what businessman Jim Reid had. And working alongside DYW North East, he turned an existing successful business platform into a valuable insight into the world of work.

Kintore-based Jim Reid Vehicle Sales decided to hand over the mic on its popular ListenIN podcast to two Kemnay Academy pupils.

Usually managing director Jim Reid was the other side of the fence as he and colleague Phil Buchan interviewed a string of local business personalities as part of the podcast series. These have included Findlay Leask from Caber Coffee, Stuart McPhee of Aberdeen Hospitality Together and Graham McWilliam from Glencraft.

But on this occasion, he was prepared to field the questions and the Kemnay pupils picked up the challenge of interviewing him about his personal career path and his business.

Cracking idea

Jim had taken part in activities with local schools in the past, through career talks and mock interviews, but this was the first time he'd tried using his podcast as a way of inspiring the future workforce.



"I thought it was a cracking idea," said Jim. "It was after a conversation with Developing the Young Workforce that we hatched the plan and approached local schools to find a couple of willing volunteers.

"We have some great podcasting idea here and my fellow director Phil Buchan is the master of everything technical so it was

reasonably straightforward to adapt our existing production process to accommodate some 'guest interviewers'."

Meanwhile, DYW employer school coordinator Karen Phillip had approached Kemnay Academy who had identified pupils Niah and Liam to take part in the broadcasting experiment.

"We went into the school for a session to prepare Niah and Liam and they spoke to us about what they thought they'd like to find out.

"We carried out a bit of coaching on interviewing skills, how to choose content that would interest the audience, as well as how to frame questions and – importantly – how to start and end an interview.

"There was also a bit of rehearsal interviewing the DYW team, which included communications consultant Joanna Fraser, as well as some fairly willing volunteers from the academy teaching team.

"It was really interesting to see how quickly the pupils grasped the concept, and how they grew in confidence as the process developed."

Recording

It was then time for the recording session, which was carried out remotely over Zoom with a couple of microphones helpfully supplied by the business.

Supported by the DYW team, Niah and Liam were introduced to Jim and launched into their questions as they shone a light on his career background and inspirations.

It was quite the range of topics, as they veered from how he ended up in Kintore from a farm in Keith, his experience at school and his missed career in advertising, as well as his love of technology.

"There were some fantastic questions from the guys and I really enjoyed the opportunity to share my experiences and offer any advice that might be helpful.

"One of the things I love about DYW is their saying that there's 'no wrong path'. It is so true and it was good to be able to reinforce that message.

"It's important to connect with young people because they are our future decision makers, our future leaders and our future customers.



We can help them by sharing our knowledge and wisdom to make the world a better place."

Ready for broadcast

The result, after careful editing by Phil, was an 18-minute podcast episode ready for broadcast.

Listen to the podcast here

"We are so pleased about how this all turned out," said Karen. "It perfectly captures an interesting conversation.

"Niah and Liam really enjoyed themselves and we are hoping that there might be another episode.

"It was such a positive experience for the school and the pupils as Jim and Phil were really approachable and generous with their time.

"It is a great example of how a local business can take what is a fairly unique part of themselves and turn it into something that can engage, inspire and develop the young workforce in our region."

- The ListenIN podcast started in 2021 and there are 14 episodes so far, all of which can be accessed here

DYW (Developing the Young Workforce) works to connect employers with education. It bridges the gap to provide young people with more opportunities to develop their employability skills and help them find fulfilling careers. To find out more, get in touch at info@dyw.org.uk