

JOBLESS TREND BUCKED IN DERBYSHIRE



... Geoff & Cheryl

Boycott's
ger at
Cheryl's
ly axe

THOMAS GODFREY

AND cricket great
Boycott once
a furious letter to
Cowell over the
of Cheryl Cole
the X Factor, it has
revealed.
forthright York-
an, 85, contacted
media mogul after
cloud singer Cheryl
fired as a judge
the US version of
ow in 2011.
er England cricket
Michael Vaughan
"When Simon
Cheryl Cole, he
happy.
liked Cheryl. He
she was fantastic.
fry was so disap-
Cowell had given
the sack that he
him a letter."
ott, who played 108
between 1964 and
so wrote to former
United boss Sir
erguson suggesting
r targets.
han told the Stick
cket podcast that
once told Fergie
face after one of
ers: "I was f****g
wasn't I?"

BAFTA

T Alan Cum-
asked last year
is US Traitors
might have a
robe malfunction.
id: "Whatever
out, pops out."

MAGIC

o-up for
st-buys

birds of first-time
last month got a
r property needing
ion to save cash, a
found.

going for a "doer-
meant four in ten
ble to buy in their
ed location.

nwide Building
found nine in ten
least one project
moving in.

most common
d painting and
ing, kitchen and
m improvements,
oring and repairs.
nwide quizzed
first-time buyers
month. Head of
ge products Carlo
said: "A cheaper
y that needs work
avvy choice rather
compromise."

BAFTA

ER losing to
ly in 2024,
ss Hannah Wad-
ham smiled gra-
ly then took a
from a flask
into her bracelet.

MAGIC



"I wasn't a
high achiever
but teachers
said no matter
what level
you're at,
there's a job
for you"

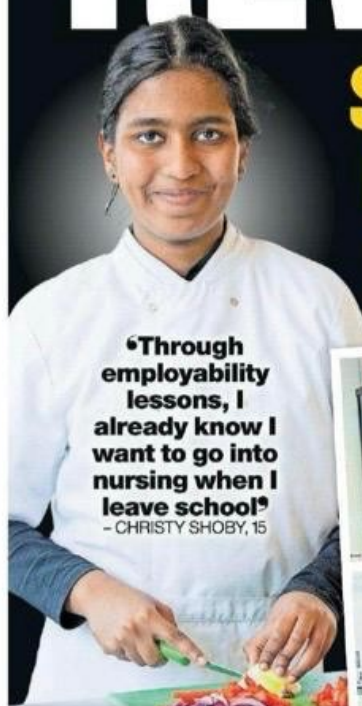
- AARON MEYRICK, 21



CLASS... head Richard White, left, with Minister
Pat McFadden and local MP Linsey Farnsworth

ACADEMY REWARDS

School that has wiped out NEETS



"Through
employability
lessons, I
already know I
want to go into
nursing when I
leave school"

- CHRISTY SHOBY, 15



BUILDING
CONFIDENCE
... Maisy Durham, 13



"I already
work in a
local Indian
restaurant
and I'd like to
work on a
cruise ship"

- RILEY DAVIES, 15



EXCLUSIVE by
SAMANTHA YULE

DRIVING a JCB digger, Aaron Meyrick knows he is lucky.

The engineer went to a school that ensures its pupils go on to further education, training or employment.

But across the UK, it is a different story. One in eight 16- to 24-year-olds - more than 1.3 million - leave without any further planned, and there are now nearly 2 million NEETs - Not in Education, Employment or Training.

Aaron went to David Nieper Academy in Alfreton, Derby, where from the age of 11, children take careers and employability classes.

They are taught how to write a CV, given practice interview sessions and told what is expected of them in the workplace.

Children take part in bus challenges that resemble an episode of The Apprentice, have talks with former pupils and learn about vocational and academic courses as well as apprenticeships.

Aaron, 21, said: "I owe everything to that school."

"I wasn't a high achiever but teachers said that no matter what level you're at academically, there's a career for you. Companies talk to the school about job opportunities and one of them, TC Harrison, was looking for an apprentice."

"I started when I was 16 on a three-year apprenticeship. Now I have my own van and I'm a country fixing JCBs as a mechanical engineer."

"I have a great wage and I have a meaningful and important job."

Youth unemployment in Derbyshire stands at 4.6 per cent - well below the national average. But the past two years all the 18- to 24-year-olds at The Academy have gone to jobs or education, and just 16-year-olds have become a NEET, giving it a 99 per cent success rate.

The Sun on Sunday visited the school last week with Labour MP for Alfreton, Linsey Farnsworth, and Minister Pat McFadden, the Work and Pensions Secretary.

'Well-paid opportunities'

The Academy was in the top two per cent of schools in England before local businessman David Nieper took it over in 2017.

It now has around 800 pupils, oversubscribed and is being seen as a model for schools around the country.

Head teacher Richard White said: "We put vocational qualifications on an equal footing with academic subjects."

"We try to recognise the strengths in each student. We have a strong emphasis on teaching practical skills, appearance, being respectful and collaborating."

Emily Thorpe, head of Technology, Art, and Computer Science, said: "From the minute they start at the school they have a goal to work towards."

Maisy Durham, 13, says: "I am a bit shy but our school promotes the idea that losing is all part of learning and this helps with confidence."

"One day I think I'd like to be a lawyer or maybe childcare."

Riley Davies and Lacey Smith, both 15, love cookery. Riley works at a local Indian restaurant but "wants to work on a cruise ship."

Lacey told us: "I like the idea of being in the hospitality industry."

Sophia Miller, 14, wants to go to university so the school has arranged visits for her to around, while classmate Alfie Brown, also 14, says: "For me, it's hospitality as my dad is a baker, or woodwork like my uncle."

And Christy Shoby, 15, says: "Through employability lessons, I already know that I want to go into nursing when I leave school."

MP Linsey said: "Alfreton has a history of deprivation and failing schools. Having nearly zero NEETs is a success. There are well-paid opportunities for young people whose talents lie in the practical rather than the academic - trades such as plasterers, plumbers and joiners."

Britain has a chronic shortage of workers in these trades which is worsening the housing crisis.

That's why The Sun on Sunday launched the Builder Better Building Campaign to encourage home-grown talent to help build.

Mr McFadden said: "This school provides a clear alternative for young people who are not academically inclined."

Picture: JOHN ARON & PAUL TONKE