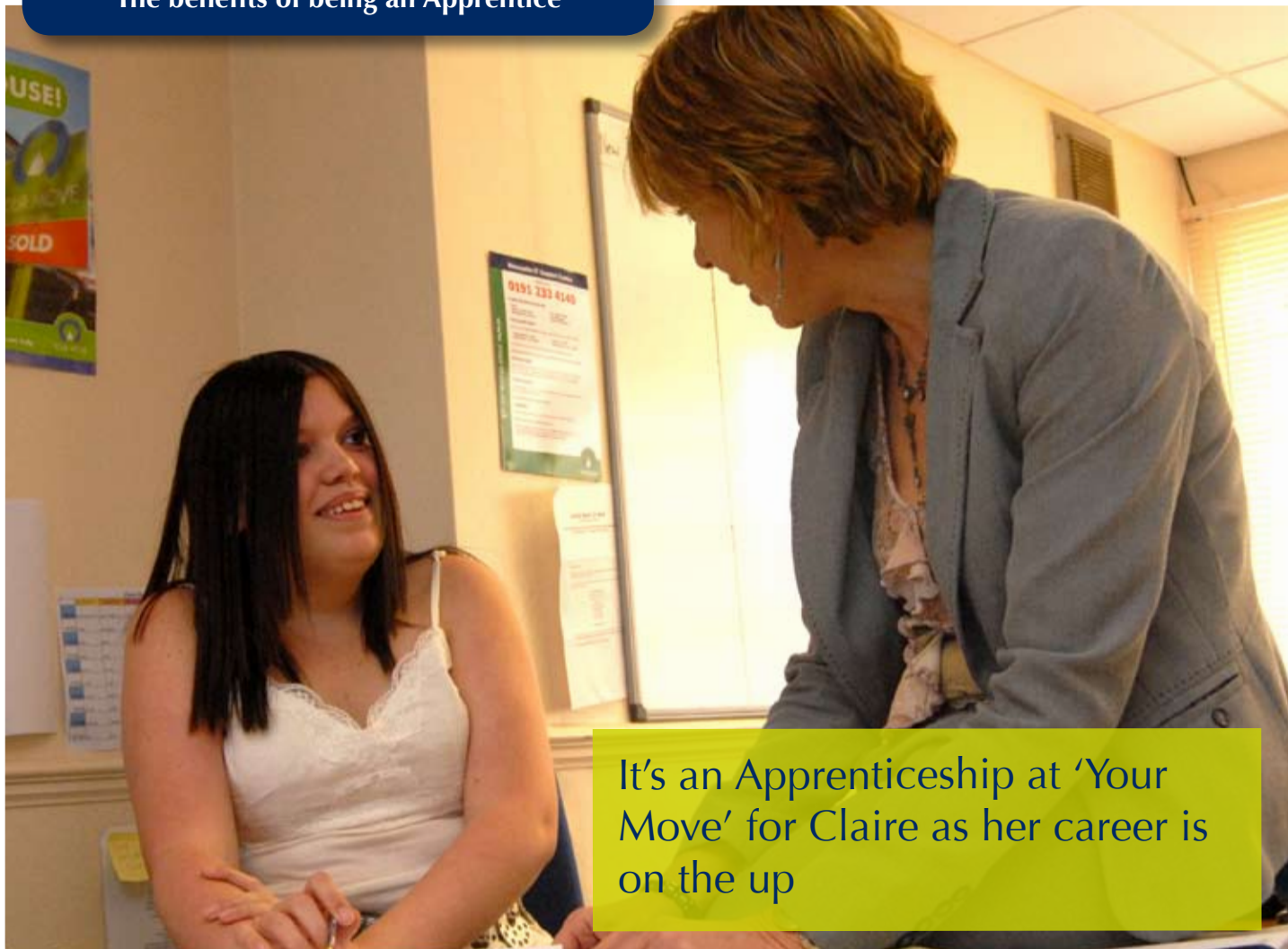


The benefits of being an Apprentice



It's an Apprenticeship at 'Your Move' for Claire as her career is on the up

"When I started I didn't know anything about the estate agency business, but I have learned so much already and my manager is really helpful." Claire Baker, Apprentice, Your Move Estate Agents.

When Claire, aged 17, completed her GCSEs, she had no intention of staying at school.

"I didn't like school and I knew that whilst I needed training to follow a career, I didn't want to do it in the classroom."

Part of a team

Claire liked the idea of working in an office...and being part of a team, something which she hadn't really experienced at school, so she started looking for a job.

"I looked at the situations vacant pages in the local newspapers and elsewhere but it wasn't as easy and I had perhaps thought," she explains. "I'd apply for jobs and not hear so eventually I visited a local training provider, YMCA Training, who helped me put a training plan into action."

Work experience

YMCA organised and encouraged Claire to do work experience and voluntary work. For a number of months she worked at a "Pop-In for the Elderly" and then at the administrative offices of Age Concern. Then she began an NVQ in Administration organised by YMCA Training.

Having proved that she was capable and willing, Claire applied for a job at local estate agents, Your Move.

"The interview went well and despite competing with other applicants, I got the job," said Claire. "Perhaps it was thanks to the advice from YMCA Training to do work experience which showed them that I was capable and motivated to work hard."

"My hours are 9am – 6pm every day, and I work some Saturdays if required, but I'm not pressurised to do this"

Its 'Your Move'

Claire started as an Apprentice at Your Move in January 2007, and things are going very well. Her work covers answering the telephone, talking to the customers and preparing newspaper advertisements – but she says that there are a lot of other things to do during the day and she's learning a lot.

"My hours are 9am – 6pm every day, and I work some Saturdays if required, but I'm not pressurised to do this."

Broadening knowledge

An assessor visits Claire every week at her place of work to support her Business Administration Apprenticeship. "I am doing my key skills at the moment and have just completed my technical certificate, which includes learning about health and safety and other practical aspects of working. It's useful information which is essential if I am to develop a broader knowledge of working in administration."

High standards

Claire's manager is Lynnette Balch. Lynnette said: "There is no official qualification for working as an administrator in Estate Agency so we recruit staff who we think have the potential to develop in this industry. I would rather train my own staff so that they understand the way this business works and I can apply my own high quality standards from the start, rather than taking on administrative staff who have worked in another estate agents and might find it difficult to adapt to the way we work.

"Claire is working really well and is proving very capable. We're doing everything we can to support her in gaining her Apprenticeship which we hope she will achieve later this year or early next."

Happy

Claire is equally happy with her life since leaving school. "For a number of reasons, my school life wasn't a success – but my life since leaving school seems to be turning out that way. I'll be 18 soon. I'm happy with my life, my family are very supportive with my choice of career and I hope that I'll be at Your Move for a long time to come."



If you would like further information about Apprenticeships in South London call the Apprenticeship Hotline on 0800 169 4824 or visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk