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**N E W S R E L E A S E**

**Mandeville School Year 10s take on the App-prentice Challenge**   
**and design their own app**

In under three days, The [Mandeville School's](https://www.mandeville.bucks.sch.uk/) Year 10 student group have managed to design, market and build a working prototype of a mobile App.

The year group took part in the App-prentice Challenge from 16 -18 July led by local business Cloudy Group and partners: [Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership](https://www.buckstvlep.co.uk/) (BTVLEP), Microsoft Education UK and Technovisual Education.

Competing in teams of 10, the 110 students took up the challenge using the resources on hand from the 34 members of staff, 90 ICT workstations and 18 Microsoft Surface Pros they had dedicated to supporting them.

"This is such a fabulous challenge!" says Jackie Campbell, Skills Development Manager at BTVLEP. "It has encompassed the development of so many vital skills including team work and leadership, project management, independent learning, innovation, adaptability, problem-solving, time management, communication and presentation skills. All of which are so important in whatever career or next steps the students choose.

The insightful and inspiring challenge has brought to life careers in this vital growth sector and has connected Cloudy Group to tomorrow’s workforce."

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Technovisual Education's Managing Director and event leader for the Design sub-team, Mark Vanstone, added: "For those who are interested in careers in technology, game or software development, the App-Prentice Challenge has provided the students with a real-life insight into what it's like to work on the development of an app. It has been exciting to witness how these young minds have taken to the challenge and pieced it all together, working in their teams.”

The commitment and motivation of the students shone through in how much they were able to achieve in only a few days. The creative thinking, organisation and entrepreneurship were evidenced not only in how quickly students took up using the new technology and software, but in how they worked with their team to produce some exceptional app ideas that were proudly on show in the final exhibition and presentation pitch to the judges.

Senior Marketing Manager at The Careers & Enterprise Company, Tanya Albert, was part of the final judging panel, and reflects on it by saying: “The App-Prentice Challenge has been a fantastic event to attend. It is clear to see how much preparation has been made, how each student has identified and understood their role, and how some have also mastered the art of pitching. These types of event are a great opportunity for young people to develop the skills they need to help prepare them for the world of work.”

79% of participating students surveyed said they would recommend the App-Prentice Challenge to other schools. When asked how helpful the programme has been to help them make decisions about their next steps in terms of education, training or work, 87% were positive it had.

Also on the judging panel, Chris Penson, PSHCE, Careers, and Critical Thinking Coordinator at The Mandeville School, commented: “This has been a fantastic experience for our students. As the first Year 10 Enterprise event, this pilot has proven how worthwhile it will be to do again.”

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All students have been awarded with a certificate of achievement in recognition of their hard work and aptitude in using core competencies that will be useful in future education and employment.

Aaron Hussain from Team "Equipo Seis" was on the peer prize winning team and was also one of the students recognised to embody the school's core values. When asked for his feedback on the Challenge and what he'd learned he commented: "This programme has improved my leadership skills. As I was Project Manager I have had to assign roles to my team and trust them with their work. I have gone over their work and was very happy, so I have been happy for my role and happy with this programme."

The judges' winning team ("Black & White") and team in second place ("Group 4"), will be rewarded with an exclusive day trip to the Microsoft offices in Reading. There, the 20 students will have the opportunity to explore and create in the unique spaces of the office and learn more about some of the applications, tools and digital skills that will support jobs of the future and these individuals throughout their lives.

In keeping with BBC's*The Apprentice* show, Cloudy Group will be "hiring" one person from each of the winning teams to develop the winning app proof of concept.

David Hall, Director of Cloudy Group says: "It's a wonderful coincidence that both winning teams came up with similar app ideas around revision guidance for students. We're delighted to be able to invite the two winning candidates to the Cloudy Group offices for a week's employment over the summer holidays.”

**Ends**

**Photo caption:** *Mandeville School Year 10s take on the App-prentice Challenge*



**Note to editors**

The aim of BTVLEP’s[Skills Hub](https://oppsinbucks.org/) – one of the first LEPs to develop such a hub – is to make a difference to young people’s employability while addressing the needs of employers. In Bucks, the level of employer engagement activity in schools can vary from school to school, and the Buckinghamshire Skills Hub is working to ensure all schools have access to effective and impactful employer interactions.

In order to help young people gain the valuable, constructive, rewarding work experience required, the Bucks Skills Hub launched WANNABE ([www.wannabebucks.org](http://www.wannabebucks.org)) where employers can post opportunities for young people to apply for. The site provides extensive information, guidance, a careerometer tool to explore earning potential and career prospects, as well as work experience, apprenticeship and part/full time job vacancies. Young people can look for work experience opportunities which are in line with their ambitions, rather than perhaps spending time at their parents’ place of work or finding placements via their parents’ network. There is a broad range of opportunities for young people to apply for.

The [Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership](http://buckstvlep.co.uk/) (BTVLEP) is a business-led ‘partnership of equals’ between local government and the private sector, building the conditions for sustainable economic growth in the County. Formed in January 2012, the partnership balances a uniquely strong collective business voice with a cohesive elected local leadership. Coming together to engineer the conditions needed to drive forward business prosperity in the county and beyond, BTVLEP recognises that an important part of this is to support education and skills providers and employers to ensure our young people have the right skills to meet the needs of the economy, including the growth sectors such as life-sciences, space, creative industries and advanced engineering.

[Buckinghamshire Business First](http://www.bbf.uk.com/) (BBF), is the Growth Hub for Buckinghamshire and is backed by Buckinghamshire based entrepreneurs, thousands of SMEs and Local Authorities.  BBF provides the link between public policy and the business community in Buckinghamshire and works with partners to create a dynamic business environment in the Entrepreneurial Heart of Britain.

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