



Chloe Price

- **Course:** BSc Children's Nursing. (3-year course.)
- **University:** University of Nottingham.
- **GCSE subjects:** Triple science, History, Spanish, Health and Social Care.
- **A-Levels:** AS Core Maths, Applied Science, Diploma in Health and Social Care (2 A-Levels equivalent.)

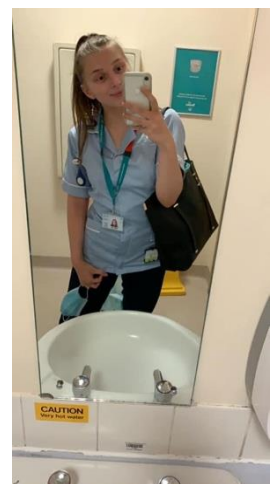
Looking back to year 11, which feels like yesterday! I knew what I wanted to study due to having a career goal in mind for a while (it's completely fine if you don't!) I wanted to make sure that I was studying subjects that were both relevant for Nursing, as well as having an interest in these subjects and being good at them. My best advice would be, if you have a goal in mind for the future, research into what grades and subjects both Universities and Apprenticeships that offer your chosen course require, depending on the course,

most Universities are flexible in requirements, whether they are BTEC or A-Level, if you are unsure, ask! They will always be happy to help you. If you don't currently have a goal in mind, then don't worry, choose subjects that you are both interested in and do well in, try to show some variety between chosen subjects, to provide yourself with many opportunities when you know what you want to do. I would also recommend speaking to your subject teachers and careers advisors (Mrs Etherington was so helpful to me and my friends!) As well as this, there are a variety of resources such as fast tomato, which provides a variety of career opportunities based on your skills, attributes, and interests. Just make sure you enjoy all your subjects that you are studying, this will increase your motivation and will make your time at post-16 a lot more enjoyable.

Post-16 for me was a time that I will never forget, even though it was cut short due to the pandemic. I made some good friends and was taught by some amazing teachers (Miss Hare and Mrs Twilley really stood out for me!) I enjoyed the independence of study periods and having the responsibility to carry out learning independently, this allowed me to focus on my own targets and areas in which I needed to improve. As most of my workload was coursework based, I enjoyed spaces such as the common room and computer rooms to carry out assignments, allowing me to have more free time with friends and family at home. Furthermore, I enjoyed the small class sizes, with my double health and social classes only having 4 students; this promoted a focused approach, one in which the teachers were able to identify where you needed to improve, carry out an action plan for this, and for teaching to be more specific to your own individual needs. My cohort at sixth form felt very close, and small class sizes allowed for us all to work together, even when teachers were not present. During my time at Walton Sixth Form, I was provided with a myriad of opportunities to develop my interpersonal skills, as well as advice on how to maintain a budget whilst at university, although not all of these were specific to my career goals, they allowed all students to feel as though support has been provided to them, regardless of plans after sixth form. I thoroughly enjoyed the placement week which we carried out in year 12, I used this week to gain experience at Queen's Medical Centre and City Hospital and observed practice on wards such as oncology, pharmacy, post and antenatal care and theatres. This experience confirmed to me that I wanted to pursue a career in nursing and become aware of skills and attributes required for the role.

The most challenging part of sixth form for me was balancing all subjects and units at the same time and keeping motivated whilst doing this. Fortunately, Walton completes the core maths course in year 12, in comparison to a 2-year course at other sixth forms. This allowed me to have more time to focus on health and social care and applied science, being able to designate study periods to work on units. Like GCSE's, a way to overcome this challenge is to formulate a plan or to do list which you can tick off when complete, I still do this to this day. In this, I gave myself targets for the day, for example, I would set targets to get paragraphs written or to read a specific text required for coursework. This allowed me to feel productive as well as gradually completing goals and helps to provide a sense of achievement for the day. In health and social care, certain units overlap from the extended certificate class into the diploma class and vice versa, this provided a baseline of knowledge when preparing for exams and formulating assignments.

After the University of Nottingham open day, I fell in love with the University, my heart was set on going there. I loved the people, the campus and most importantly the course and how they laid it out in terms of



placements and opportunities that would be available for us. I visited other universities but didn't get the same feeling as Nottingham, this was a motivating factor when I was struggling with getting work done and feelings of stress, knowing that I had a goal that I had my heart set on achieving. My advice for attending open days would be to explore the campus and town or city where your university is, as you will go there a lot! As well as this, speak to the subject lecturers that you are interested in and ask any questions that you may have, no question is a silly question. Collect any leaflets about the University or course that you are interested in and approach every open day with an open mind and eager to be there. If you are wanting to move into halls, ensure you visit these if the opportunity arises, Nottingham has a wide range of catered accommodation on campus, with all self-catered accommodation just a walk or bus ride away.



When preparing for University, I wrote a list for everything I needed to take with me for my accommodation, ensuring I had all of this in plenty of time before moving in day. I joined many group chats for both my accommodation and course, as well as adult and mental health nurses, by doing this, I started to speak to people who were also nervous prior to starting and was able to keep busy when I was feeling homesick. I also did research about the clubs and societies that Nottingham had to offer for me, there was some that I never even imagined- Lego society stands out for me! There was a lot of shopping for me as I decided to stay in a studio room due to a food allergy.

My first year at university has not been as I expected due to the pandemic, with most of the course being taught online thus far and only attending campus a handful of times. However, I have absolutely loved it, particularly the placement side of my course. My first placement was in a surgical and medical ward, where I worked with a variety of children, from babies with feeding problems, to teenagers with suicidal ideation. I loved the variety on the ward, and my mentors were so supportive, I completed night shifts and they were not as bad as I thought, even though I was tired after they had finished. During my time on this ward and in labour suite, I witnessed procedures such as c sections, forceps births, lumbar punctures, PEG feeding and MRI scans. As I was living in a studio room, I never had the social experience of sharing a kitchen but have still made lots of friends both in my block and on my course, some of which I am moving into a house with for second year and will be friends for life. The social life has been good in Nottingham, with my friends and I managing to fit a lot in when restrictions allowed, and we were not too tired from placement! First year has been stressful and a lot of work at times, but so rewarding to see my effort being worthwhile after passing everything so far, as well as seeing the smiles on the faces of children and their families. I have managed well with my budget, when food shopping, I have ensured that no food is wasted and making meals as cheap as possible and limiting having takeaways which has helped. We didn't go out all the time and took advantage on going to campus and movie nights when restrictions allowed us to. I have enjoyed the independence that University has bought me, when feeling homesick, I ensured that I made plans with my friends rather than staying in, I have liked the responsibility of cooking for myself and having the choice on what to eat. Although I have missed my family at times, the course and social life has provided me with distraction.

After I have completed University, I am planning to take a few months break, go on holiday with my friends and then begin my career as a paediatric nurse, I currently don't know where I will end up just yet, so hoping University can provide me with more experience on wards as well as the community.



