CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE and GUIDANCE (CEIAG) POLICY

Equalities Statement

In our Trust we work to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all members of our community who hold a range of protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, as well as having regard to other factors which have the potential to cause inequality, such as socio-economic factors. For further information, please see our Equalities Statement.

Document Management	
Version Number:	3
Date Approved:	October 2026
Next Review Date:	September 2027
Approved By:	Board of Directors
Responsible For:	Secondary Improvement Team

Policy Revision Log	
Date	**Version No. Brief Detail of Change**
October 2024	V1. N/A
September 2025	V2. Scheduled review. Significant strengthening of the Gatsby Benchmarks and DfE expectations.
September 2026	V3. Scheduled review - changes reflect the updated statutory guidance

Contents

1. Aims..... 2
2. Statutory requirements.....2
3. Roles and responsibilities 3
    3.1 Careers leader.....3
    3.2 Senior leadership team (SLT)..... 3
    3.3 The governing board.....4
4. Our careers programme.....4
    4.1 Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).....5
    4.2 Access to our careers programme information..... 5
    4.3 Assessing the impact on pupils.....5
5. Links to other policies and documents..... 5
6. Monitoring and review.....5

1. Aims

This policy aims to set out our school's provision of impartial and informed careers guidance for our pupils. This includes the ways in which pupils, parents, teachers and employers can access information about our careers programme.

High-quality careers guidance is important for our pupils' futures, and our provision aims to:

- Help learners prepare for the workplace by building the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for self development and career management through a whole school approach linking curriculum learning to careers.
- Provide opportunities for a variety of quality activities and experiences of the workplace. These should be delivered from KS3 and sequenced to enable learners to develop their understanding of career planning.
- Develop learners' awareness of the variety of education, training and careers opportunities available to them.
- Help learners to understand routes to careers that they're interested in, and to make informed and aspirational choices about their next step to make effective and sustained transitions.
- Promote a culture of high aspirations and equality of opportunity

Key staff within the school include:

- The senior leader with careers responsibility is Sam Naylor, Assistant Headteacher and can be contacted by emailing sam.naylor@swale.at or phoning 01634 240416.
- Other members of the careers team include: Chelsea Stradiotto, Careers Advisor and can be contacted by emailing chelsea.stradiotto@swale.at or phoning 01634 240416.
- The link careers governor is Andrew Jennings.

2. Statutory requirements

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory Careers guidance and access for education and training providers, updated June 2026.

This guidance refers to:

- The Education Act 1997
- The Education and Skills Act 2008
- The School Information (*England) Regulations 2008

This policy is also in line with the more recent Skills and Post-16 Act 2022, which came into force on **1 January 2023**. It explains that our school must provide a minimum of **6 encounters** with technical education, apprenticeships or training providers to all pupils in years 8 to 13, acting impartially and not showing bias

towards any route. For more detail on these encounters, see our provider access policy statement published on our website.

As an academy in England we must have regard to the Statutory Guidance when carrying out our duty to ensure that a range of providers are able to access and inform our pupils about technical education and apprenticeships.

This policy accepts the 8 Gatsby Charitable Foundation's benchmarks (updated and published Nov 2024) as set out in the DfE guidance. They can be seen on the school's careers programme.

Definition - 'Careers guidance' covers the full range of activity delivered under the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks.

The Holmesdale School Careers Plan

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 School Responsibilities:

- All learners throughout their secondary education (for all 11 to 18 year olds) should receive independent careers guidance.
- The school will centre its Careers Programme around the Gatsby Benchmarks. A summary of these can be seen in careers programme and they cross reference with the objectives of this policy.
- This careers guidance must be represented in an impartial manner, showing no bias towards a particular institution, education or work option. This advice must cover a range of education or training options. This guidance must be in the best interests of the pupil.
- The school provides opportunities for education and training providers to access pupils in Year 8 – Year 13 in order to inform them about approved technical qualifications and apprenticeships. Please see above link to the Provider Access Legislation Policy which sets out the manner in which providers will be given access to pupils. This policy and these arrangements must be published on the school website.
- Ensure all learners engage in meaningful workplace activities and experiences to explore career options and build networks - by the age of 16, every pupil should have had meaningful and varied experiences of workplaces and at least one further meaningful experience by age 18.
- Two weeks' worth of work experience should be broken down into:
    - one weeks' worth of work experience activities in years 7 to 9
    - one weeks' worth of work experience placement(s) in years 10 to 11
- The school bases its Careers Programme around the Gatsby Benchmarks and cross reference with the objectives of this policy.
- The school will regularly measure and analyse its CEIAG offer to inform evaluation, reporting and continuous improvement of the careers provision.
- Where learners have EHCPs, their annual reviews from Year 9 onwards will include a focus on preparing for adulthood, including employment. For those without an EHCP, transition support is provided through SEN support and impartial careers guidance. In all cases, appropriate advice is sought and information shared to ensure continuity of support and smooth transition into post16 pathways and employment.
- Schools should build careers into ongoing staff development for teachers and all staff who support young people, using resources such as: CEC's teacher development course
- The school should keep parents and carers informed at key decision points, help them understand the importance of their role, and ensure their diverse needs are considered throughout the learner's journey. Parents and carers should be:
    - given relevant, current careers information
    - supported to make the best use of current information
    - encouraged to get involved in opportunities offered
    - Provided with a roadmap - See Appendix 1.

- Schools are required to publish online:
    - (a) the name and contact details of careers leader;
    - (b) a summary of the careers programme,
    - (c) details of how students, parents, teachers and employers can access information about the careers programme
    - (d) how the institution measures and assesses the programme's impact on learners
    - (e) the date by which the institution will review information.
    - (f) the roadmap for the students careers learner journey
- Further guidance can be found for academy trusts and maintained schools Schools should work with their local Careers Hub – Kent and Medway Careers Hub – to utilise the resources, information, guidance, training and digital tools on offer.
- Schools have a statutory responsibility to work with the local authority to support young people's participation in education and training. A successful careers guidance programme is reflected in higher numbers of learners progressing to positive and sustained destinations.

3.2 **All teachers and subject staff**

All teachers and subject staff ensure that every year, every pupil in every subject has the opportunity to explore how their learning supports career readiness and workplace effectiveness. This includes:

- proactively link curriculum content to relevant careers
- communicating how subject-specific knowledge and skills apply to a range of future career pathways.
- communicating clear progression routes within the subject, including further education, training, and employment opportunities.
- discussions of employability and transferable skills
- embedding discussions of employability and transferable skills as part of regular teaching and learning practices across the curriculum.

3.3 Careers Team

The careers team will:

- Embed a programme of careers education and guidance, structured around the eight Gatsby Benchmarks, that is known and understood by learners, parents and carers, staff, those in governance roles, employers and other agencies. This information will be available on the school website.
- Plan and manage the Careers Learning Journey and ensure it is progressive and responsive to leaner need.
- Work closely with relevant staff, including our special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) to identify the guidance needs of all our learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and put in place personalised support and transition plans. Address the needs of all learners and work with staff who support vulnerable and disadvantaged learners, such as, looked after children (LAC) and previously LAC learners, to target support and transition plans if required.
- Support teaching staff to highlight the progression routes for their subject and the relevance of the knowledge and skills developed in their subject for a wide range of career pathways and future career paths, signposting relevant training through the school's CPD programme.

- Plan and manage a strategy for how to engage with parents and carers in their child's career learning journey. Utilise the Your Child's Future feature within Compass+ to identify, develop, and promote the key information and resources needed to support parents and carers at each stage of their child's career development.
- Strategically lead and continuously review employer partnerships to ensure employer engagement is high quality, curriculum-aligned, informed by labour market needs, and delivers meaningful learner outcomes.
- Ensure meaningful workplace experiences are planned, embedded, monitored and progressively delivered for all learners, with equitable access and clear links to curriculum and learner development.
- Plan and manage PAL compliant encounters and review the school's Provider Access Policy statement annually.
- Quality assure the Careers Programme, along with SLT and wider SLT, to ensure continuous improvement that aligns with the whole school vision and priorities; this should include regular evaluation from all stakeholders, alongside reviewing progression data. This quality assurance includes the completion of the Compass+ Gatsby Benchmark evaluation 3 times per academic year, an annual review using the Compass+ Internal Leadership. Review and a Peer to Peer review every 3 years as part of the Careers Impact System.
- Establish and develop links with employers, education and training providers, and careers organisations
- Work towards the strengthened Gatsby Benchmark 6 to ensure learners access multiple experiences of the workplace ensuring that any work experience is carried out with due attention and regard to health and safety and safeguarding expectations.
- Work with the Kent & Medway Careers Hub to drive continuous improvement through the effective use of the CEC's digital tool - Compass+. Complete the Compass Evaluation, (Careers Impact System) Internal Leadership Review. Analyse outcomes to inform strategic careers planning, strengthen the Careers Learner Journey.
- Manage and deliver the CEC Future Skills Questionnaires to all students (where appropriate), capturing student voice and career readiness. Use the insights to inform and continuously improve the Careers Learner Journey, identifying gaps and targeting support to groups and individuals where additional development is needed.

3.4 Senior leadership team (SLT)

Our SLT will:

- Undergo appropriate training.
- Provide strategic leadership of the careers provision, ensuring it is embedded across the institution, aligned to organisational priorities, and continuously improved to achieve positive outcomes for all learners.
- Hold overall accountability for the quality of careers. Measure and analyse impact evaluation and quality assurance to inform continuous improvement in line with the vision, intent and priorities of the school and share this information with governance and wider school staff.
- Ensure careers roles and responsibilities are understood and implemented across curriculum, pastoral and inclusion teams.

- Ensure careers learning is embedded across the curriculum and supports skills development, pathway knowledge and includes essential skills language.
- Promote the effective use of Labour Market Information (LMI) to inform curriculum planning and learner decision-making.
- Ensure meaningful workplace experiences and employer encounters are planned progressively across year groups in line with the Equalex framework for Modern Work Experience.
- Ensure the school's Careers Leader is allocated sufficient capacity and appropriate training to deliver a strategic Careers Provision and regularly meet to review progress and provide ongoing support.
- Support the delivery of whole-school CPD to equip all staff — including teachers, subject specialists, and learner support roles — with the knowledge and confidence to understand and apply impartial careers guidance, as part of the school's Careers Provision.
- Report regularly to governors and the wider senior leadership team on careers provision, learner outcomes, Gatsby Benchmark progress and statutory compliance. Oversee the use of Compass+ and impact evaluation tools to monitor and improve careers provision.
- Ensure careers provision is equitable and meets the needs of all learners, including disadvantaged learners and those at risk of becoming NEET. Lead/Oversee the development of sustainable employer partnerships and foster collaboration across employers, further education, higher education, apprenticeship providers, and community organisations to align opportunities with local, regional, and national skills priorities.
- Ensure compliance with Provider Access Legislation (PAL) and guarantee access for apprenticeship, technical and vocational providers.
- Regularly monitor participation, destination and progression data to evaluate the impact of careers provision, ensuring findings inform self-evaluation, continuous improvement planning, and readiness for Ofsted inspection, including Gatsby Benchmark progress.

3.5 The local governing body

The local governing body will:

- Appoint a member of the governing body who will take a strategic lead in careers education as a Careers Link.
- Make sure independent careers guidance is provided to all pupils throughout their secondary education (years 8 to 13 and that the information is presented impartially, showing no bias towards particular institutions or option, and includes a range of educational or training options, including apprenticeships and technical education routes and promotes the best interests of pupils
- Undergo appropriate training via the CEC Learning Academy (Governors Introduction to Careers) and other available training. (i.e the Governor Hub/The Key) Ensure sufficient resources, staffing, leadership capacity and senior leadership support are in place to enable an appropriately trained Careers Leader to deliver effective careers provision.
- Ensure the evaluation and continuous improvement of careers provision, and that it aligns with the school's educational objectives, supports positive learner outcomes, and maintains progress towards the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Oversee the development and clear communication of the school's Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance provision and that it is clearly communicated to all stakeholders.
- Make sure that arrangements are in place for the school to meet the legal requirements of the provider access legislation, including that the school has published a provider access policy statement

- Monitor and uphold compliance by ensuring the school's careers webpages are accurate, up-to-date, and meet statutory requirements. Receive and scrutinise regular reports on careers activities, learner participation, destination data and programme impact.
- Seek assurance that employer engagement, workplace experiences and provider encounters are high quality, inclusive and aligned with local labour market needs.
- Monitor how the school develops and sustains strategic partnerships with employers, further education, higher education and apprenticeship providers.
- Hold senior leaders to account for the quality, effectiveness and statutory compliance of the careers provision.
- Ensure the careers provision promotes equitable access and addresses the needs of disadvantaged, vulnerable and under-represented learner groups.

4. Our careers programme

Our school has an embedded careers programme that aims to inform and encourage pupils to consider their career options, and take steps to understand their choices and pathways. We provide statutory independent careers guidance to pupils from year 7 onwards.

Our programme has been developed to meet the expectations outlined in the **Gatsby Benchmarks**:

1. A stable careers programme with a careers leader
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experience of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

Our careers programme:

- Does not show bias towards any particular career path and promotes a full range of: apprenticeships, including foundation apprenticeships
    - technical routes, including T levels, Occupational Certificates and Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs)
    - vocational and applied routes, including V levels, Foundation Certificates and other approved qualifications
    - academic routes, including A levels
- Delivers aims, objectives and careers related activities that are appropriate for each year group.
- Is structured in a way that builds upon previous years, and the overarching aim is divided between the Key Stages so that learners are encouraged to think appropriately about their future.

4.1 Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)

We expect that the majority of pupils with SEND will follow the same careers programme that meets the Gatsby Benchmarks as their classmates, with adjustments and additional support as needed. There may be

bespoke provision and encounters with specialist provisions that the school have identified as suitable for those learners.

Our careers leader will work with teachers and, where appropriate, professionals from relevant organisations, to identify the needs of our pupils with SEND and put in place personalised support and transition plans. This may include meetings with pupils and their families to discuss education, training and employment opportunities, supported internships and transition plans into higher education.

Our careers leader may, as appropriate, invite adults with disabilities to visit and share their experience and advice.

Information given to pupils without SEND will also be offered to our pupils with SEND.

4.2 Access to our careers programme information

A summary of our school's careers programme is published on our school website, including details of how pupils, parents, teachers and employers can access information about the careers programme.

To further support parents and carers in guiding their child through key careers education milestones, we have also published a Parent/Carer Careers Roadmap, see Appendix 1, which outlines important decision points and the support available to help them effectively support their child's journey.

The school will start to develop its use of the Your Child's Future questionnaires to help gain a better understanding of parents' and carers' confidence, knowledge and awareness of careers education, and progression opportunities. This evidence will be used to shape and strengthen the Parent and Carer Roadmap.

Pupils, parents, teachers and employers can request any additional information about the careers programme by contacting relevant staff in section 1.

Our Careers Programme meets the Provider Access Legislation:

For pupils of compulsory school age these encounters are mandatory and there will be a minimum of two encounters for pupils during the 'first key phase' (year 8 to 9) and two encounters for pupils during the 'second key phase' (year 10 to 11). For pupils in the 'third key phase' (year 12 to 13), particularly those that have not yet decided on their next steps, there are two more provider encounters available during this period, which are optional for pupils to attend. See our Provider Access Legislation Policy on the school website and linked at the top of this policy.

5. Monitoring, review and assessing impact

Our school systematically measures and assesses the impact and quality of our provision as part of the whole school annual review in line with the development of the School Improvement/Development Plan, through:

- **Monitoring, Reviewing and Evaluating the Careers Programme**: Our school systematically measures, monitors, and evaluates the quality, effectiveness, and impact of its careers provision as part of the annual school improvement cycle. The Careers Leader, senior leadership team, governors/trustees, and wider staff work collaboratively to contribute to the monitoring, review, and evaluation of the careers programme, ensuring it is embedded within whole-school development planning. Evaluation findings inform strategic decision-making, continuous improvement, resource allocation, and reporting to stakeholders, supporting the ongoing development of a high-quality careers programme that meets the needs of all learners.

- **Recording and tracking:** The school systematically records careers activities and events which is used by the Careers Team to measure impact of the Careers programme and to inform continuous improvement. Learner-level data is used to monitor engagement, identify gaps in participation, track progression against intended careers earning outcomes and inform strategic improvement planning.
- **Feedback and learner voice:** All relevant stakeholder voices are systematically evaluated by the Careers Leader to inform impact evaluation and strategic development planning of careers. Additionally findings from evaluation activities are shared with relevant stakeholders.
- **Evaluation against Learning Objectives:** The school conducts an annual evaluation of the careers programme against defined learning objectives for each year group and assess impact.
- **Destination data:** Destination data is collected, (including intended and actual) analysed and reported on. This includes analysis of different learner groups and consideration of factors such as sustained destinations, aspiration, alignment with labour market opportunities, reduction in NEET risk, successful transitions, and equitable access to careers provision and opportunities.
- **Monitoring and Quality Assurance:** The school annually completes the Careers Impact System- Internal Leadership Review to continuously measure and develop the quality and effectiveness of the Careers Programme. This includes annual Careers Impact System – Internal Leadership Review, Compass evaluations, monitoring of progress towards the Gatsby Benchmarks, review of Provider Access Legislation arrangements, assessment of meaningful employer encounters and workplace experiences, and evaluation of curriculum integration. Careers provision is reviewed against current statutory guidance and relevant quality frameworks
- **Sharing evaluation data:** We provide information to parents and other relevant stakeholders on the strengths and development areas of the Careers Provision highlighted from the monitoring, reviewing and evaluation processes.
- **Reporting and Continuous Improvement**: Evaluation of the strengths and development areas of the Careers Provision findings are regularly reported to the wider senior leadership team, governors/trustees and other relevant stakeholders.

6. Links to other policies and documents

This policy links to the following policies:

- Provider access policy statement (see school website)
- Careers Programme (see school website)