



# Careers Related Learning Policy

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Headteacher: Mrs Lisa Munro

Written By: Rebecca Brown - Head of Destinations

THE WOODLANDS SCHOOL | THE ASPIRE FEDERATION, MILTON KEYNES



### Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to outline the approach and principles underpinning the career-related learning programme at our special needs school for students with autism. This policy is designed to meet the statutory guidance for career education and guidance for special educational needs (SEN) students, aligning with the Gatsby Benchmarks, and providing a structured, personalised approach to career development. We are committed to preparing our students for successful transitions into adulthood, ensuring that they are equipped with the skills, confidence, and understanding needed to navigate a range of career pathways suited to their abilities, aspirations, and interests.

### 1. Vision and Aims:

Our vision for career-related learning is to provide a holistic and person-centred programme that supports every student in discovering their individual strengths and interests, while fostering a sense of independence, self-awareness, and preparation for the world of work. The programme aims to:

- Develop meaningful career-related knowledge and skills through practical learning experiences, in alignment with the student's developmental stage.
- Ensure that all students, regardless of ability, receive guidance on their post-16 and post-19 options, including supported employment, vocational training, further education, and independent living.
- Provide a robust framework of guidance, advice, and support tailored to individual needs, ensuring that career development is integrated into their overall educational experience.

### 2. Gatsby Benchmarks and Framework for Career Development:

Our school adheres to the Gatsby Benchmarks as a guiding framework for career education. These benchmarks ensure that our career-related learning programme is comprehensive, structured, and meets the high standards set for good practice in career development:

#### 1. A Stable Careers Programme

The school will have a well-established, planned, and coordinated career programme with clear structures, objectives, and timelines that span the students' time with us, from early years through to post-19. This programme will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

#### 2. Learning from Career and Labour Market Information

Students will have access to current, relevant, and accessible information regarding the labour market, including job opportunities and career pathways. This information will be provided in an appropriate format for students with autism, such as visual aids, digital resources, and one-to-one guidance sessions.

**3. Addressing the Needs of Each Pupil**

The careers programme will be personalised to meet the individual needs, aspirations, and abilities of each student. This includes creating individualised career pathways based on their interests, skills, and developmental progress. The programme will provide opportunities for a range of learning styles and sensory preferences.

**4. Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers**

All subjects, including functional and vocational learning, will be linked to career opportunities and real-life application. Students will engage in career-focused learning, exploring how academic subjects, life skills, and vocational training contribute to various career options.

**5. Encounters with Employers and Employees**

Students will have opportunities to meet with employers, employees, and other role models from different sectors to enhance their understanding of the workplace. This could include virtual or in-person visits, job shadowing, and workplace experiences. The school will ensure these encounters are tailored to meet the sensory and communication needs of the students.

**6. Experiences of Work**

The programme will facilitate practical work experiences, including work placements, internships, and volunteering opportunities, that are adapted to the needs of the students. These experiences will be designed to build employability skills, social interaction, and understanding of the workplace environment in a safe and supportive manner.

**7. Encounters with Further and Higher Education**

Students will be supported in exploring post-16 and post-19 education options, including further education colleges, supported internships, and vocational training. Where appropriate, the school will provide visits to local colleges and institutions and facilitate interactions with university representatives to build aspirations.

**8. Personal Guidance**

Every student will receive individual careers guidance from qualified professionals, ensuring that advice is tailored to their needs, preferences, and future ambitions. The guidance will be delivered in an accessible, empathetic manner, involving families and external agencies when appropriate.

**3. Career Learning Framework:**

The school will provide a structured and progressive career learning framework that reflects the developmental stages of students:

- **Key Stage 1-2 (Ages 4-11):**
  - Introduction to the concept of work through play-based activities, role-playing, and familiarisation with different careers.

- Early career awareness activities that explore personal preferences, interests, and strengths.
- Development of social communication skills relevant to workplace contexts.
- **Key Stage 3 (Ages 11-14):**
  - Enhanced awareness of different careers and job roles, including local and national opportunities.
  - Introduction to basic life skills (e.g., time management, hygiene, personal care) and employability skills (e.g., teamwork, communication).
  - Work experience simulations and exposure to local employers through workshops, visits, and guest speakers.
- **Key Stage 4 (Ages 14-16):**
  - Focus on identifying potential career pathways, including supported internships, vocational courses, and apprenticeships.
  - Practical work experience, community service, and job sampling to build confidence and social skills.
  - Personalised careers guidance, including information on post-16 options (e.g., local colleges, training schemes, supported employment).
- **Key Stage 5 (Ages 16-19):**
  - Comprehensive career planning and support in preparing for life after school, including independent living, work-based learning, or further education.
  - Strong focus on transition planning with support for applications to colleges, training programmes, or employment.
  - Further opportunities for work experience, internships, and supported work placements in various settings.
  - Life skills development, including money management, self-advocacy, and preparing for adult responsibilities.

#### **4. Roles and Responsibilities:**

##### **Careers Leader:**

The Careers Leader will oversee the implementation and evaluation of the career programme, ensuring that it meets the needs of the students and aligns with Gatsby Benchmarks. The Careers Leader will coordinate careers guidance, partnerships with employers, and the monitoring of career learning progress.

##### **Teachers and Support Staff:**

All teaching staff will integrate career-related learning into their subject areas, ensuring that students understand the relevance of their studies to future career opportunities. Teachers are expected to highlight career pathways, industry connections, and transferable skills within their

subjects, demonstrating how their subject knowledge applies to real-world professions. This may involve:

- **Mathematics:** Showing how numeracy skills are essential in industries such as banking, construction, retail, and manufacturing.
- **Science:** Linking lessons to careers in healthcare (nursing, medical laboratory work), engineering (mechanical, electrical), and environmental industries (waste management, renewable energy).
- **English:** Demonstrating how reading and writing skills are used in customer service, administration, marketing, and journalism.
- **History:** Highlighting roles in museums, heritage sites, law enforcement, and government services where research and analytical skills are valued.
- **Geography:** Connecting learning to jobs in transport, logistics, urban planning, and tourism.
- **Art & Design:** Introducing careers in advertising, product packaging, fashion, and interior design.
- **Technology & Computing:** Showing pathways to IT support, software development, cybersecurity, and digital marketing.
- **Physical Education:** Discussing careers in sports coaching, personal training, physiotherapy, and the fitness industry.

All support staff will assist in implementing personalised career plans and provide pastoral support during career transitions, ensuring students receive tailored guidance as they navigate their future pathways.

### **External Partners and Employers:**

The school will work closely with local businesses, employers, and external agencies to provide real-world encounters, work placements, and career advice. Partnerships will be tailored to the needs of our students and will be an essential component of the school's career education strategy.

## **Our Current Employer Links**

- **John Lewis Magna Park 1**
- **Food Cycle**
- **Willen Hospice (Grounds maintenance team and Off the Record music shop)**
- **D&G Noble Haulage**
- **Kardi Motors**
- **Mk Storehouse**
- **Nifty Lift**
- **MK Flyer**
- **Midsummer Place Shopping Centre**
- **Apple store**
- **Buttons Nursery**
- **IT Networking**

## **Job Coaches:**

Qualified Job Coaches will provide essential support to students during work experience and internship programmes. Their key responsibilities include offering tailored, one-on-one assistance to help students understand tasks, integrate into the workplace, and develop job-related skills. They will liaise with employers to ensure tasks and environments are suitable, offering guidance on adjustments and communication. Job Coaches will mentor students, monitor progress, provide feedback, and assist with problem-solving on the job. They will also support students in transitioning to employment or further education, ensuring long-term career readiness.

## **5. Monitoring and Evaluation:**

The effectiveness of the career-related learning programme will be monitored through:

- Regular feedback from students, parents, and external partners.
- Tracking the progression and destination of students post-16 and post-19, ensuring that they are supported in their career paths.
- Annual review of the career programme to ensure it continues to meet the needs of students and aligns with changes in the local labour market and national policy.

## **6. Conclusion:**

Our school is committed to providing a high-quality career-related learning programme that meets the needs of students with autism at all stages of their education. By providing personalised career guidance, work-based learning experiences, and a comprehensive support system, we aim to empower every student to transition successfully into adulthood, with the skills and confidence to achieve their career aspirations.

