

# Pathways School

## Careers Guidance Policy

### Policy Monitoring

Date policy last reviewed: November 2025

Signed by:

Neil Jones Headteacher

Date: November 2025

Saima Ali Chair of governors

Date: November 2025

Date of next review: November 2026

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedure.

## **1. Introduction**

High quality careers education and guidance in school or college is critical to young people's futures. It helps to prepare them for the workplace by providing a clear understanding of the world of work including the routes to jobs and careers that they might find engaging and rewarding. Pathways School aspires for our students to access fulfilling jobs and careers with the right preparation and support. We support this aspiration with an ambitious careers policy and programme.

## **2. Legislation**

- Section 42A, 42B, 45 and 45A of the Education Act 1997
- Section 72 of the Education and Skills Act 2008
- Schedule 4 (15) of the School Information (England) Regulations 2008

## **3. Links to other school policies and practices.**

- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy

## **4. Careers Leader**

Pathways School has appointed a Careers Leader who works closely with colleagues, and the careers adviser, to identify the guidance needs of all our students and puts in place personalised support and transition plans. This includes helping students and their families to understand the full range of relevant education, training, and employment opportunities, such as traineeships and apprenticeships, supported internships or routes into higher education.

The Careers Leader is **Neil Jones** and is responsible and accountable for the delivery of Pathway's programme of careers advice and guidance.

In addition, Pathways School work in partnership with Prospects Services, part of the Shaw Trust, to deliver independent Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance (CEIAG).

## **5. Transition Planning**

Where students have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP), their annual reviews must, from year 9 at the latest, include a focus on adulthood, including employment. We co-operate with local authorities, who have an important role to play through their responsibilities for SEND support services, education, health and care plans and the promotion of participation in education and training. The transition plan includes ways in which adults with SEN or disabilities can be supported in the workplace (e.g., disability rights, supported employment, ways in which jobs can be "carved" to fit a person's abilities, job coaching, reasonable adjustments for disabled people in the workplace and Access to Work (DWP support)).

## **6. Pathways Careers Programme Activities**

Our Career Programme activities include:

- Work-related and careers learning;

- Employer engagement activities through internal and external careers advisers and leaders;
- Work experience;
- Business enterprise;
- Independent living skills;
- Travel training;
- Community trips, such as, shopping, swimming, horse riding, park, etc.
- PSHE;
- Regular communication about careers and employment opportunities with parents and carers, staff, pupils and employers through an e-newsletter, news on the website or Instagram page;
- Role-play activities relating to different work settings and organise visits, guided tours of workplaces or involvement of community helpers in the school;
- Older students to support younger students to build communication skills;
- Vocational profiling helps us to identify the students' interests, skills and talents and it is a way of opening doors to what is possible;
- Encounters with employers can be transformational for students, particularly hands on experience in the workplace, and we facilitate this where possible;
- Transition reviews;
- ASDAN;
- Possibility of parent and family workshops and parent and teacher association activities.

## **7. Gatsby Benchmarks**

The Department for Education expects all schools to use the internationally recognised Gatsby Benchmarks to develop a careers programme that increases opportunities for students to access everything from experiences of the workplace and personal guidance with a career's adviser, to engagement with employers, colleges, training providers and universities. The Careers & Enterprise Company has published a range of free resources for schools and colleges working with students with SEND which includes a Gatsby Benchmark toolkit for SEND, teacher guides and practical advice for schools and colleges on how their careers programme can support children and students with SEND.

Pathways School embraces the advice from the Careers Enterprise Company and has adopted the principles outlined in the SEND Gatsby Benchmark toolkit.

### **7.1 A stable careers programme**

The aims of careers provision are the same for all young people: independent living and working, choice, hope and optimism, adaptability and resilience, access to and engagement in decent work in all its forms (personal, gift and paid work), opportunities to learn and make progress, and the pursuit of wellbeing and happiness. Where the differences lie for young people with SEND is in how they need to learn, their priorities within that learning, how far they can get, at what rate they can progress and the willingness of the businesses and people around them to accommodate their needs.

Pathways School careers programme includes:

- Opportunities across the curriculum to develop transferable life and social skills that support careers, employability, and enterprise;
- The development of students' self-advocacy, negotiation, decision-making and transition skills;
- Purposeful interactions with a range of trusted and familiar adults including school staff and visitors;

- Partnership with parents and carers;
- Recognition of the student voice and the active involvement of young people in decisions that affect their future, both individually and collectively;
- Information, advice, and guidance.

## **7.2 Learning from career and labour market information**

It is important to help young people start thinking early on about transition and future careers. Students with SEND may develop socially, emotionally, cognitively, or physically at different rates and careful consideration needs to be given to help them process information. We include Goal Planning from Year 8 which considers transition into post-16 education including further or higher education, apprenticeships, training, employment, or self-employment.

- We seek out partnerships with employment services, businesses, housing agencies, disability organisations and arts and sports groups, to help students understand what is available to them as they get older, and what it is possible for them to achieve.
- Our students and their families need information about which support mechanisms are available to help them enter the workplace. These may include disability rights, assistive technology, and available benefit packages.

## **7.3 Addressing the needs of each learner**

- Pathways offers a person-centred approach, and every student has an education, health, and care plan (EHCP) that considers all aspects of their lives.
- Transition support is tailored to what the student wants to achieve and what practical help is needed to do this.
- Parents and carers are fully involved in the transition planning process.
- We use vocational profiles to understand an individual's experience, skills, abilities, interests, aspirations and needs in relation to employment. The aim is to understand the person in-depth and to allow for the best possible job match or work experience placement. It provides a picture of the ideal conditions needed in a workplace for the student to be successful
- There are many potential career pathways and options for a young person with SEND. These opportunities are identified by addressing the individual needs of the student, for example, by looking at their healthcare needs, cognitive ability, capacity to regulate emotions or social awareness.

## **7.4 Linking curriculum learning to careers**

- To compliment the individual curriculum, we embed our careers education in subject and topic learning, and co-curricular provision such as clubs, celebration events and productions.
- Teaching and learning focus on the relevance of subjects to everyday independent living, future learning and leisure, livelihood planning and employability skills. Careers provision is integral to the whole curriculum and not relegated to the margins.
- The medium is the message. Linking curriculum learning to careers is also about using teaching approaches that develop transferable career skills. This includes working as autonomously as possible, organising thinking, meeting deadlines, persisting and being reliable
- Linking curriculum learning to careers involves harnessing the concepts, methods, perspectives and forms of explanation of the subjects taught in the school, for example and where possible:

- Maths for numeracy, time management and money skills
- Science and technology for investigation, and exploring the wide range of jobs in STEM
- English for self-presentation, writing and reading
- PSHCE for self-care, building safe relationships, managing emotions
- ⊖ Music and Art to promote an alternative way of communication, to improve their wellbeing and enhance social skills
- ⊖ Computing and digital technology for freeing some students from the barriers of production such as handwriting difficulties
- Having careers as a cross-curricular subject in the school curriculum can give young people access to both work-related experiences and explicit skills, alongside ensuring the subject curriculum relates to the workplace.
- Our careers programme incorporates a broader curriculum of independent living skills, social skills and travel training delivered by regular staff at school or by employer volunteers or mentors.
- Pathways School students have a tailored approach that considers their own pace of learning and unique abilities.

### **7.5 Encounters with employers and employees**

We seek to work together with employers in creative ways to ensure students build a rich picture of the world of work and are well prepared to take up workplace opportunities. We provide first-hand meaningful encounters with employers as part of careers and enterprise programmes for Years 7-13 and we celebrate these links on our website. We carefully plan mentoring, careers talk, mock interviews, enterprise competitions and workplace visits. These encounters help to increase students' enthusiasm and confidence. We take care to brief employers about the needs of the students and ensure that there is a thorough debrief as part of the process.

### **7.6 Experiences of workplaces**

We seek to provide our students with meaningful experiences of workplaces, interacting with the world of work in a real work location. Schools are real workplaces too, and Pathways offers a balance of challenge and support for carefully identified students such as sheltered work experience placements.

- It is important to create a range of workplace experiences such as visits, work shadowing, work experience and career-related volunteering and citizenship.
- Effective workplace experiences can be incredibly rewarding for everyone involved and for our students we ensure that we spend time on planning and communication and agreeing expectations on both sides.
- We hold pre-work sessions with the employer before the student arrives and we agree the level of support necessary for the student and employer. In some circumstances we offer training in autism for the employer.
- For students with the most severe learning difficulties, internal work experience can provide similar effects to external experiences and help them develop work-related skills, confidence, and self-esteem.

### **7.7 Encounters with Further and Higher Education**

We ensure events are purposeful:

- Before any event, we address any questions or concerns from parents and families. Where possible, we undertake a virtual experience prior to any visits to enable students to have an idea of the environment.
- It can be a challenge for some parents and families to get to the school, therefore we schedule information alongside other events to reduce travel obligations.

## **7.8 Personal Guidance**

We aim to support students with continued guidance and support to help them explore opportunities and develop skills to make effective transitions.

We develop individualised plans which include student self-determination, advocacy and input in transition planning, and family or parent involvement.

- All our students have EHCPs and annual transition reviews from year 9. This is an opportunity to discuss their futures and put a system of support in place. This draws on support from a range of agencies.
- The EHCP will aim to support students achieving goals in relation to learning and future employment, home and independence, friends, relationships, community, health, and wellbeing.
- Our staff provide careers guidance and advice.
- We invite the external careers advisors to come into school before the transition review and get to know the student before the review takes place.
- We enable the young person to prepare for the review and talk about their aspirations beforehand.

## **8. ASDAN**

Our Post16 students take part in ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) which is a British education charity and awarding organization that provides a wide range of accredited courses and qualifications. Its main goal is to help learners develop personal, social, and employability skills that prepare them for further education, work, and life.

The purpose and approach is to:

- Promote personal growth and independence by encouraging learners to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Develop practical and transferable skills such as teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and self-management.
- Provide flexible learning pathways that can complement traditional academic studies or vocational training.

ASDAN offers different types of programs suitable for various age groups and abilities, including:

- Personal Development Programmes (PDPs): Focus on building confidence and life skills.
- Employability Qualifications: Help learners prepare for entering the workplace.

- Short Courses: Cover specific topics such as volunteering, sport, or expressive arts.
- Life Skills Challenges: Designed for learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE): A qualification that develops key skills valued by employers and educational institutions.

ASDAN qualifications are widely recognized by schools, colleges, and employers across the UK and in many other countries giving our students a wider range of job opportunities.