

Birches Head Academy



CEIAG Careers Education and Guidance Policy

Policy/Procedure Leader	Careers Leader
Policy/Procedure Approval Date	Summer 2025
Frequency of Review	2 Yearly
Review Date	Summer 2027
Signature of Principal:	Signature of Chair of Governors:
	
Mr P Masher	Governor

Vision

Promoting a career development culture is an essential part of the mission and ethos of our school. We aim to support the aspirations of all our learners and to ensure that they gain the understanding, skills and experience they need to make progress, to succeed in life and work, and to become independent and active citizens.

We believe that effective careers education and guidance not only contributes to the well-being of individuals but also to the well-being of their families and communities, and to wider society, businesses and the national health and economy.

The purpose

Birches Head Academy is an 11-16 Comprehensive serving Stoke-on-Trent's Community.

Stoke-on-Trent is recognised as an area with significant levels of deprivation and a culturally embedded lack of aspiration in some communities. CEIAG is vital at Birches Head in enabling our students to make the most of the opportunities that exist locally and further afield. CEIAG is central to our processes of 'preparing students for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life' (Education Reform Act, 1988). It promotes equality of opportunity and challenges stereotypical attitudes to education, training and work, because it is inclusive of all pupils, irrespective of their contexts, needs and interests, as required by the CEIAG: An Evaluative Framework, DFE 1995 and by the 2010 Equality Act. It prepares them to meet fully, and meaningfully, the requirements of the RPA, by which students are to stay in learning, either in education or in accredited training until their 18th birthday. It begins to prepare them for choices at 18, by introducing them to universities, apprenticeships and jobs with training. It encourages them to see themselves as part of a nation by engaging with visits and events that would be outside the usual experiences of young people from Stoke-on-Trent.

CEAIG, at Birches Head Academy, is centralised around the Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire LEP priority sectors, the DfE Statutory Guidance and Gatsby Benchmarks. It is part of the curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 11. It permeates the full curriculum, teachers being made aware of their responsibilities in linking their subjects to the world of real work, to the local and national economies and to national growth.

Birches Head Academy's rules are in line with the world of work. Pupils are expected to be on time, to follow the rules and to communicate effectively with all adults. Destination data is scrutinised annually to determine the degree to which individual pupils have met their goals; pupil voice data determines where additional support for pupils is needed.

The Careers Lead has access to a team to support and develop the in-school programme and to work together to organise activities. A member of the governing body has been allocated the position of Careers Link and is expected to take strategic interest in careers education and guidance. Regular meetings will see the Careers Lead supported in evaluating the programme with the CEC (Careers Enterprise Company) Advisor and the activities in which learners are engaged in to inform future developments. The governing body will receive reports on the progress of CEIAG at regular intervals and is responsible for ensuring statutory duties are met. The Careers Lead attends regular meetings with careers staff from other establishments at the Local Authority (LA), to discuss issues relating to delivering CEIAG. The Careers Lead and CEC Advisor will meet regularly regarding employer links and enterprise projects.

National and local expectations

We are committed to meeting national and local expectations in relation to careers by:

- securing independent and impartial careers guidance for Y7-11 as required by the Education Act 1997 and the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022. This includes at least 6 provider encounters across Years 8 to 13, covering technical education and apprenticeships.
- fulfilling our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity, foster good relations across all people, eliminate harassment and discriminatory practices and support children with protected characteristics
- being a Careers Enterprise Company Academy and working with the careers Hub to network with schools,

colleges, employers and apprenticeship providers to connect with the local skills needed and offer meaningful experiences

- maintaining the Quality Award for Careers and working towards the national Quality in Careers Standard
- embedding the updated Gatsby Benchmarks from September 2025, including themes of leadership, inclusion, meaningful encounters, data usage, and parental engagement
- preparing for the government's vision to guarantee 2 weeks of work experience for every young person

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- fulfilling our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity, foster good relations across all people, eliminate harassment and discriminatory practices and support children with protected characteristics
- working with the CEC (Careers Enterprise Company) to improve careers education and secure better outcomes for young people
- maintaining the Quality Award for Careers and working towards the national Quality in Careers Standard
- embedding the updated Gatsby Benchmarks from September 2025, including themes of leadership, inclusion, meaningful encounters, data usage, and parental engagement
- preparing for the government's vision to guarantee 2 weeks of work experience for every young person

Good Career Guidance Benchmarks/The Gatsby Benchmarks

Birches Head Academy is working to develop a CEIAG programme and work plan that follows both statutory guidance and Gatsby Benchmarks. The updated benchmarks from 2025 include:

- A stable careers programme
- Learning from career and labour market information
- Addressing the needs of each pupil
- Linking curriculum learning to careers
- Encounters with employers and employees
- Experience of workplaces
- Encounters with further and higher education
- Personal guidance
- Themes: Careers at the heart of education and leadership, Inclusion and impact for every young person, Meaningful and varied encounters, Use of information and data, Engagement of parents and carers

The Careers Lead has access to a team to support and develop the in-school programme and to work together to organise activities.

Access and Entitlement

Within CEIAG each student is entitled to:

- be at the centre of a CEIAG process that includes support from teachers, advisors and wider partners
- support in developing an understanding of softer skills and employability skills
- a broad and balanced careers education programme that will support futures planning, by developing an awareness of own skills and preferences, and opportunity awareness
- equal opportunity and access to current, impartial information about work, training and further education
- practical experience of the world of work
- access to individual, impartial and informed careers guidance, at points in the learning process appropriate to the individual
- an approach that listens to the learner and is non-judgemental and open

- exposure to employers

Current priorities

Our careers strategy is informed by these current priorities:

- offering a 1:1 guidance interview with a qualified Careers Advisor for all young people in Year 11
- supporting individual aspirations, improving attainment and ensuring positive destinations
- meeting the needs of specific groups, including looked-after children, young carers, children from economically-deprived backgrounds and children with special educational needs and disabilities
- developing learners' career management skills, especially those associated with career adaptability, resilience, enterprise and employability
- improving young peoples' working lives by helping them to identify the values that are important to them, such as contributing to the wellbeing of others through their paid and voluntary work
- working with parents/carers, alumni and education, community and business partners to meet pupils' career development needs
- to further develop CEIAG provision in order to raise aspirations
- work towards keeping the NEET figure at 2% or below
- arranging high-brow activities to promote positive destinations and raise outcomes
- to further develop the Careers section on the school website as per the DfE Strategy
- to analyse application data to identify those who have low aspirations.

Implementation

- pupils in Y10 will have the opportunity for a mock interview with appropriate individuals, from local business, colleges, universities and advisors
- pupils in Y9 will have the opportunity for a 1:4 decision-making interview with a Qualified Careers Advisor to aid with choosing their option subjects
- pupils to be encouraged to make realistic, but inspirational, decisions based on ability, aims and career aspirations
- pupils will have access to support in preparation for the transition to further education or training, including building on the softer skills which employers value
- where necessary, contact will be made between the advisors, Careers Lead and parents/carers to support applications and transition
- external speakers will be invited in to support student learning and to support the thinking and decision-making process
- The Careers Lead maintains and oversees the tracking data of applications and destination data of leavers
- planning and implementation of a week of work experience for Year 10, with a view to promoting independent learning skills and aspirational placements.
- all KS4 students have the opportunity for work experience, through links with local businesses to provide placements, including extended placements, and tasters
- all information is given without bias and prejudice regardless of race, gender, religion, disability, background, financial implications or sexuality.
- to work with the CEC to implement changes to the Careers Statutory Requirements
- to ensure that all pupils have at least one good employer contact for every year of attendance from Y7 to Y11

Birches Head Academy also seeks to further develop meaningful links to bring young people into working contact with adults who can give them insights into the world of work, outside their family or local experience.

Pupils are selected for each project in a planned and co-ordinated manner, based on their individual needs. Current examples of our practice are taking part in established industry projects, such as the KMF Young Engineers of the Year and the Siemens Roller Coaster Challenge, where the pupils compete against other young people on engineering projects.

Where appropriate, pupils attend the local college to study for a vocational qualification, to learn in a manner different to the classroom and to prepare for post- 16 full-time attendance.

Birches Head Academy is an 11-16 school, which means that our students need to be aware of the opportunities available to them for future study or training. We have a long and successful history of supporting pupils into positive destinations at 16. This is brought about through a careers guidance programme that encourages pupils to engage with planning their futures.

Development

- The Careers Lead has access to a team to support and develop the in-school programme and to work together to organise activities.
- A member of the governing body has been allocated the position of Careers Link.
- Regular meetings will see the Careers Lead supported in evaluating the programme and the activities in which learners are engaged to inform future developments.
- The governing body will receive reports on the progress of CEIAG at regular intervals.
- The Careers Lead attends a regular meeting with careers staff from other establishments at the Local Authority, to discuss issues relating to delivering CEIAG.
- The Careers Lead is line managed by the Assistant Head, Personal Development. Meetings are fortnightly.
- The Careers Lead will meet regularly with the CEC Consultant regarding employer links and enterprise projects.

Strategy

To achieve the objectives of this policy, we will:

- ensure that the governing body is actively involved in shaping careers policy and strategy through its committee structure
- the Careers Lead to advise the senior leadership team and governors on curriculum, staffing and resource requirements; and to lead the development, implementation and evaluation of the school's careers provision with the support of other key post holders and specialist careers staff
- commission independent careers guidance services from individuals/organisations that meet the standards set by the Quality in Careers Standard
- set out clearly the contribution expected of all staff, including subject teachers and tutors for pupils' career learning and planning
- communicate the benefits of effective provision to our partners, including feeder schools, and engage them in co-ordinating provision
- actively involve learners themselves in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the careers programme.
- actively seek to evaluate and reflect on practice, including evaluations from parents, pupils and outside agencies

Staffing

Governor: Suzanne Finlay
SLT Link: Mrs A Orlando
Careers Lead: Ms L Walker

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years.

Related documents

<http://bircheshead.org.uk/school-life-2/careers/>
