



**Blackburn with Darwen L.A.**

St. Thomas's Centre

**Careers and Guidance Policy**

**2025/2026**

**Review Date: September 2026**

## **Careers Education and Guidance**

St Thomas's Centre is a pupil referral centre located within Blackburn with Darwen Local Authority, which provides both full time and part time education for young people aged 5 - 16. St Thomas's works with pupils who have or are experiencing difficulties in the mainstream setting due to medical, social, emotional, mental health or behavioural needs.

We believe that all our pupils are entitled to the very best education, including careers education and guidance, through a developed personalized curriculum, delivered by highly dedicated, experienced and qualified staff.

At St Thomas's it is our expectation that pupils succeed – No exceptions! No excuses!

### **“Ambition, Belonging, Success.”**

St Thomas's Centre School is committed to providing its pupils with a varied programme of Careers education and Guidance activities to equip and enable them to make informed decisions and choices at key transition points both during school and Post 16. It aims to help pupils develop, identify and add to their employability skills throughout their school life. It also contributes to the school's key values in ensuring excellence, raising aspirations whilst enabling pupils to acquire social and vocational skills. Importantly it seeks to help pupils understand and be prepared for the ever changing and challenging work and career environment.

## **Statutory obligations for Careers work in School**

From September 2012 the Education Act 2011 placed schools under a duty to secure access to independent and impartial Careers guidance for their pupils in years 9 to 11. The Careers Guidance in Schools Regulations 2013 extended the age range to include pupils in year 8 and in years 12 and 13 from September 2013. These changes supported information and advice from an earlier age, enabling better informed decisions at ages 13 and 14 and assisted with the raising of the participation age, requiring young people to participate in education or training up until the end of the academic year in which they turn 18. Careers education is assessed within the new Common Inspection Framework that Ofsted are implementing from September 2015 with key descriptors focusing on the provision in school of high-quality impartial Careers guidance. This guidance should:

- enable learners to develop clear ambitious and realistic plans for the future;

- support preparation for their next stage, whether it will be education, training, self-employment or employment;
- help pupils be informed about local and national skills

## **Implementation of Careers Education and Guidance**

Careers education will be delivered throughout the academic year and across the curriculum.

It will also take place on days when there are Careers conferences, fairs, workshops, college visits, training provider visits or when there are employers visiting school.

The Careers education programme will be organised by the school Careers Adviser. The targeted programme of activities will be delivered by employers, Further and Higher Education representatives, training providers, training organisations, tutors and teaching staff

The Guidance will be delivered to all pupils by the Careers Adviser with some targeted guidance support for pupils in Years 10 and 11. The Careers Adviser is a fully qualified and experienced Careers Adviser who holds a Post graduate diploma in careers guidance Level 7

## **Entitlement to the Careers Guidance and Education**

All pupils are entitled to, and will receive, impartial and independent Careers education and guidance support during their education at St Thomas's.

The key features of these include:

### **Guidance**

- Access to impartial and independent individual advice and guidance from the school Careers Adviser open to Years 7 to 11.
- All year 11 pupils receive a one-to-one Careers interview and a written summary of the meeting which focusses on their post 16 progression options.
- Targeted support for identified vulnerable pupils in Year 11 at risk of becoming NEET [Not in education employment or training] to discuss their post 16 options.
- One-to-one guidance interviews with Year 11 pupils, supporting them with constant advice throughout the year

### **Advice and Information**

- Targeted support for some Year 10 and Year 11 pupils who require help with finding a work experience placement.
- Pupils in Year 11 can have a mock interview with the Careers Adviser whether this is for an apprenticeship, sixth form, college or university place.
- The Careers Adviser undertakes tracking of all of Year 11 and follows up each case, checking they have offers and providing destination data back to the Local Authority.
- The Careers Adviser meets a duty to the Governors of providing an up to date list of destinations and intended destinations
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## **Careers education**

There is an extensive programme of Careers Education covering the school's ethos and priorities:

- Employability skills and preparation for work;
- Use of Careers software available;
- Understanding links between subjects and careers; preparation for work experience; introducing Higher Education, progression options post-16 which includes Sixth form; apprenticeships; Further Education;
- CV preparation and completing application forms
- Visits by Employers to the school
- Visits to workshops, Careers related shows, Careers and Higher Education fairs and conferences for pupils to raise aspirations and their Careers knowledge and awareness.

- Work experience opportunities for Yr10 and Yr. 11 pupils who express an interest in doing so
- All of Year 11 to have a mock interview practice
- Access for all to Careers information resources, prospectuses and useful web sites Citizenship, volunteering and community project awareness Career Professional Development.
- All Year 11 pupils receive the support they need to make their best and informed choices.
- Preparation for the wider world.

The Careers Adviser attends regular Careers network meetings across Blackburn, Darwen and

Lancashire with fellow Careers Advisers to discuss school work and all issues relating to delivering Careers Guidance and Careers education. The Careers Adviser will arrange to attend visits to employers, Further and Higher Education institutions, training providers and related Careers conferences and workshops to support LMI knowledge and keep up to date with Careers information. The Careers Adviser also undertakes short CPD training provided in school to support their role.

### **Quality and Impact**

- The Careers Adviser will undergo an observation of professional practice from an independent qualified Careers practitioner during each academic year.
- The needs of most pupils are met
- All pupils have good quality guidance available and provided to them
- All pupils receive the support they need to make their best and informed choices.
- Raised aspirations, important in level and range of sustained destination data is tracked, recorded and monitored.
- Pupil aspirations are raised, pupils begin to build a network with potential employers within their community.
- Careers in curriculum is audited and Vocational pathways entail specific career choices.
- Pupil voice is tracked and monitored on a termly basis with a pupil questionnaire as part of the Academic review days, pupils are given opportunity to review careers and aspirations.
- Parent questionnaire is available and is reviewed on Academic review days.

### **Monitoring Evaluation and Review**

- A programme that is stable and consistent, with feedback used to improve each stage for pupils
- A diverse range of pupil destinations are tracked and recorded.
- Fulfilment of all 8 Gatsby Benchmarks and compliance with all statutory duties.
- The school works closely with the Lancashire Careers Hub, to ensure the schools is meeting the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks and statutory guidance. The programme is regularly reviewed and monitored to ensure learners are getting the most out of the programme.

New careers initiatives are implemented within the School Careers development plan. The Careers Adviser seeks evaluation from pupil's attendance at careers talks and events and individual guidance interviews. Feedback is used to make any changes or revise any aspects of the Careers delivery in School. The Policy will be reviewed every 2 years.