



Blackburn with Darwen L.A.

St. Thomas's Centre
Careers Programme

2025/2026

Review Date: September 2026

MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE GATSBY BENCHMARK FRAMEWORK

GATSBY BENCHMARK 1: A STABLE CAREERS PROGRAMME

What good looks like:

- Every school should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, governors, employers and other agencies
- Every school should have a stable, structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of the senior management team and has an identified and appropriately trained person responsible for it
- The careers programme should be published on the school's website in a way that enables students, parents, school staff and employers to access and understand it
- The programme should be regularly evaluated with feedback from students, parents, school staff and employers as part of the evaluation process
- Providers of technical (including higher technical) education, vocational education and apprenticeships should be given the opportunity to engage with students and their parents so that all routes at 16 and 18 are fully understood and so that students can make informed decisions at key transition points

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), this involves:

- A written programme, delivered through a variety of lessons and activities across school, that is reviewed annually by the Careers Leader and approved by SLT and Governors
- A whole-school approach to careers education
- A link with a CEIAG Governor
- Students are asked for feedback at key points during the programme
- Students have access to the full breadth of education providers, including technical options with enhanced provision at key decision-making points
- Website provides accessible information for students, parents, employers and the community
- Careers displays around different provisions within the school
- A careers leader and careers advisor who is available for students to meet as and when required
- Destination data reviewed as an evaluation tool for the programme
- A full log of all career's activities on Compass+

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), the outcomes and impact are:

- A solid foundation for the St Thomas's Centre (PRU) careers programme that supports the school's ethos and priorities
- Students who are well-prepared for current and future decision making and lifelong career learning and development; they will have an improved understanding of the local LMI and world of work
- A programme that is stable and consistent, with feedback used to improve each stage for students
- Fulfilment of all eight Gatsby Benchmarks and compliance with all statutory duties
- A diverse range of student destinations

GATSBY BENCHMARK 2: LEARNING FROM CAREER & LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

What good looks like:

- Every student and their parents should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make the best use of available information.
- By the age of 14, all pupils should have accessed and used information about all career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options.
- During their study programme all students should access and use information about all career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions about study options
- Parents should be encouraged to access and use information about labour markets and future study options to inform their support to their children

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), this involves:

- Students access quality local and national LMI in the context of the subject lessons and in specialist assemblies led by local employers and school careers advisor
- Students are directed to quality LMI resources to support their decision making. These are highlighted on the website and in written communication to students and parents.
- Staff make links to the variety of future study and employment options and LMI in lessons. Group careers guidance is led by the Careers Leader and future study and training options are explained to parents at transition points.
- Encounters with education and training providers and employers support LMI and career knowledge and understanding

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), the outcomes and impact are:

- Students use LMI to provide context to their decisions. This will help social mobility by connecting students to growth areas and will improve the range, level and aspirations seen in destination data.
- Students make informed decisions because they understand all available future study and training options.
- Students use their skills for lifelong career development and decision making

GATSBY BENCHMARK 3: ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EACH PUPIL

What good looks like:

- Young people have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each pupil. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.
- A school's careers programme should actively seek to challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations.
- Schools should keep systematic records of the individual advice given to each student, and subsequent agreed decisions. All students should have access to these records to support their career development.
- The records of advice given should be integrated with those given at the previous stage of the student's education (including their secondary school) where these are made available. Records should begin to be kept from the first point of contact or from the point of transition.
- Schools should collect and maintain accurate data for each pupil on their education, training or employment destinations for at least three years after they leave school. This data should be used to review a school's careers provision and inform development and continuous improvement.

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), this involves:

- Linking the careers programme to the school ethos of 'Ambition, Belong, Success' to raise aspirations and support students to become ambitious adults belonging to the community
- Challenging stereotyping across a variety of subjects and professions
- Promoting positive role models in staff members, inspirational figures, alumni and employers
- Tracking of student attendance
- Year 10 aspirations survey is used as a benchmark for employability activities and Year 11 IAG support: raising aspirations, challenging ideas and planning interventions
- All IAG is delivered by a level 7-qualified practitioner: this includes all Year 11 students plus annual IAG for SEND students (with EHCP as part of their annual review), Hub students, and students at risk of NEET or disengagement. In addition, co-ordination with LCC for supplementary IAG for Looked-After Children.
- Year 9 GCSE Pathway options supported with interviews.
- Detailed destination data procedure with engagement with local authority and providers
- Accurate student-level activity tracking via Compass+

At St Thomas Centre (PRU), the outcomes and impact are:

- Raised aspirations, improvements in level and range of sustained destination data
- Students are fully supported and are prepared for lifelong career decision-making; evaluation of Year 11 IAG provision indicates students feel more confident about their decisions.
- Destinations are appropriate and aspirational
- Intervention is timely and effective
- All students receive the support they need to make their best and informed choice
- A focus on closing gaps among disadvantaged students

GATSBY BENCHMARK 4: LINKING CURRICULUM LEARNING TO CAREERS

What good looks like:

- All subject staff should link curriculum with careers, even on courses that are not specifically occupation-led. For example, STEM subject staff should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of career paths. Study programmes should also reflect the importance of maths and English as a key expectation from employers.
- By the age of 14, every pupil should have had the opportunity to learn how the different STEM subjects help people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers.
- Throughout their programme of study (and by the end of their course) every student should have had the opportunity to experience how their subjects help people gain entry to (and be more effective workers within) a wide range of occupations.

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), this involves:

- Careers learning in all subjects through speakers, visits, FE & HE enhancement, employer enhancement and workplace visits
- Cross-school use of CEIAG vocabulary to support literacy and oracy development
- Functional skills activities embedded into teaching and learn
- STEM activities promoted
- Every subject, including PSHE, have careers links, pathways, skills and LMI embedded across the curriculum and are highlighted on subject long-term plans
- The use of LMI in all subjects to provide context to curriculum learning
- Careers information is on display in various provisions of the school

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), the outcomes and impact are:

- Staff and students appreciate the links between subject learning, skills for employment and progression and the world of work
- Careers learning is a whole-school priority
- Students understand where their subjects could lead and the skills they develop
- Staff are aware of careers learning and how this supports students with their life choices
- Students understand the value of qualifications, education and training

GATSBY BENCHMARK 5: ENCOUNTERS WITH EMPLOYERS & EMPLOYEES

What good looks like:

- Every student should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes, and should include students' own part time employment where it exists.
- Every year, from the age of 11, pupils should participate in at least one meaningful encounter with an employer
- A meaningful encounter is one in which the student has the opportunity to learn about what work is like or what it takes to be successful in the workplace

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), this involves:

- Employers attend a range of events as speakers and visitors
- A particular focus at key decision points; year 9, 10 and 11
- Curriculum enhanced by local employers and aspirational speakers in addition to an LMI focus
- Support and promotion of apprenticeship routes
- Curriculum leaders tasked with improving and increasing employer encounters for all students

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), the outcomes and impact are:

- Students begin to understand the huge range of employment options and career progression/development through FE, T Level and apprenticeship routes
- Increased student and parental awareness of careers provision and different workplaces
- Increased staff awareness of local LMI
- Aspirations are raised; students are motivated to engage more with careers learning
- Students have the confidence to have meaningful encounters
- Students sustain a wide range of destinations and go on to a range of careers, embracing lifelong learning and career development in line with school ethos

GATSBY BENCHMARK 6: EXPERIENCES OF WORKPLACES

What good looks like:

- Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.
- By the age of 16, every pupil should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part time jobs they may have had.

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), this involves:

- Year 10 & 11 students take part in workplace visits to local companies
- Curriculum enhanced by employers
- Enterprise advisor used to enhance network of employers

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), the outcomes and impact are:

- Students and parents aware of workplaces to allow a smooth process of making informed decisions
- Student aspirations are raised
 - Students begin to build a network with potential employers within their community

GATSBY BENCHMARK 7: ENCOUNTERS WITH FURTHER & HIGHER EDUCATION

What good looks like:

- All students should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both technical and academic routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.
- By the age of 16, every student should have had a meaningful encounter with providers of the full range of educational opportunities, including sixth forms, colleges, universities and apprenticeship providers. This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and students.
- A 'meaningful encounter' is one in which the student has an opportunity to explore what it is like to learn in that environment. This includes academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and the workplace.

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), this involves:

- Visits, talks and presentations by the full variety of local further education, higher education and training providers
- Specialist apprenticeship and training talks delivered by ASK
- Careers fairs with the full variety of providers
- University talks and visits
- Curriculum is enhanced by further and higher education providers
- Drop-in and application support for Year 11 with careers advisor
- Suitable information posted on school website for parents promoting and encouraging visits for Year 11

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), the outcomes and impact are:

- Increased student and parental awareness of the full range of post-16 options and lifelong opportunities available
- Staff understanding of post-16 options is increased with a clear understanding of avoiding stereotyping and not promoting only limited options
- Students awareness of access to a range of destinations.
- Students aspire to higher levels of education and training, and understand the value of lifelong learning and succeeding in their adult life

GATSBY BENCHMARK 8: PERSONAL GUIDANCE

What good looks like:

- Every student should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a Careers Adviser, who could be internal or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level.
- These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all pupils but should be timed to meet their individual needs.
- Every student should have at least one such interview by the age of 16, and the opportunity for a further interview by the age of 18.

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), this involves:

- The Careers Leader holds a Level 7 qualification in Careers Guidance
- All Year 11 students have at least one IAG appointment. Follow-up appointments and application sessions are also used. Action Plans are created in agreement with the student after each appointment.
- Careers advisor follows up with students with the intention to suitably track destination data and ensure all students are supported for their future when leaving school
- All SEND students with EHCP have access to meetings with careers advisor
- Services and providers are listed on the school website.

At St Thomas's Centre (PRU), the outcomes and impact are:

- All students have good quality guidance available and provided to them
- The needs of most students are met
- Students sustain destinations as they are supported through Year 11 in particular.
- Students appreciate careers guidance as part of their lifelong career development