

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy 2025-2027



At St Thomas's centre we work closely with our partners and local employers, to provide pupils with the very best knowledge, skills and behaviours to support them in achieving their career ambitions and aspirations.

Context & Vision

Our school provides for pupils aged 5–16, many with disrupted education histories, SEND and SEMH needs. Careers education is central to re-engaging learners, raising aspirations, and supporting successful transitions to post-16 education, training or employment.

- Every pupil, regardless of age, ability or time with us, deserves high-quality careers education.
- Primary focus: broadening horizons, raising aspirations, building self-awareness.
- Secondary focus: preparing for transitions, developing employability skills, securing sustainable destinations.

Quality Assurance for Careers – The Gatsby Benchmarks

It is recognised that good career guidance is a necessity for social mobility and, the Government has adopted the eight Gatsby Benchmarks as the expected standard for good career guidance in schools and colleges.

1. Providing a stable careers programme.
2. Promoting learning from career and labour market information.
3. Addressing the needs of each student.
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers.
5. Providing encounters with employers and employees.
6. Creating opportunities to experience work places.
7. Providing encounters with further and higher education.
8. Providing personal guidance

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy 2025-2027

Secondary Career Goals

We aim to:

- Deliver a stable, inclusive, personalised careers programme.
- Prioritise practical experiences, employer engagement and personal guidance.
- Work closely with parents, carers and local agencies to support positive outcomes.
- Ensure all pupils leave with a clear next step and access to post-16 pathways.
- Our careers programme is inclusive, flexible and personalised to meet SEND/SEMH needs.

Benchmark	Secondary Actions	Success Indicators
1. A stable careers programme	• Develop a short, flexible careers programme that works for transient cohorts. • Publish a clear outline on PRU website, accessible to parents and external partners. • Careers Leader identified (with SLT link & Governor oversight). • Embed careers into pastoral plans and reintegration/transition support.	• Written, public careers programme in place. • Annual review with SLT & governors. • Staff aware of roles.
2. Learning from career & labour market information (LMI)	• Use Lancashire LEP / Blackburn with Darwen LMI resources. • Create student-friendly resources (visuals, short guides, videos). • Integrate LMI into reintegration meetings, option choices, and careers sessions.	• Pupils can name local job opportunities. • Parents access LMI through newsletters / workshops.
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil	• Create careers action plans for every student on entry, reviewed termly. (Green for KS4, Amber for KS3) • Track destinations by subgroup (SEND, looked-after, attendance). • Offer mentoring for most at-risk pupils.	• 100% of pupils have a careers plan on file. • Reduction in NEET % at 16.
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers	• Train subject teachers & TAs to include careers links in core lessons (English, maths, vocational).	• Teachers record careers links in lesson plans.

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy 2025-2027



Benchmark	Secondary Actions	Success Indicators
5. Encounters with employers and employees	• Use local case studies (e.g., construction in Blackburn, NHS roles). • Project-based learning with explicit career relevance. • Build relationships with local SMEs and larger employers e.g. NHS. • Deliver at least two employer encounters per year per pupil (small group or 1:1). (Green for KS4, Amber for KS3) • Use alumni or ex-students where possible.	• Pupil voice: majority can see “why this subject matters”. • All pupils report ≥2 meaningful encounters. • Employer feedback shows positive engagement.
6. Experiences of workplaces	• Offer short workplace visits / taster days (suited to SEMH needs). • Partner with employers open to PRU learners (construction sites, care homes, catering). • Where placements aren’t possible, run in-school enterprise projects.	• ≥75% pupils complete at least one external experience. • Reflections show increased awareness of workplace expectations.
7. Encounters with further and higher education	• Arrange local college visits (Blackburn College, Myerscough, Accrington & Rossendale). • Invite apprenticeship providers into school. • Provide bespoke visits/interviews for Year 11s.	• All Year 11s have ≥1 FE encounter before leaving. • Evidence that students know multiple post-16 routes.
8. Personal guidance	• Every pupil has at least one career guidance interview per year with a Level 6+ adviser. • Target Year 11s and high-need pupils for multiple sessions. • Build careers guidance into EHCP/PEP reviews.	• 100% pupils leaving have a guidance record. • Student feedback shows sessions were useful.

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy 2025-2027



Implementation Timeline

- Autumn** Baseline audit (Compass+). Careers programme published. Careers plans written for all students. First round of personal guidance (Year 11 priority). Initial employer talks.
- Spring** Workplace visits/tasters. College/apprenticeship visits. Employer mentoring sessions. Mid-year review of destinations & at-risk pupils. Parent engagement event.
- Summer** Work placements/enterprise projects. Final guidance interviews. Transition support for leavers (Year 11). End-year review; report to governors.

Primary Career Goals:

- **Broaden horizons** and helping pupils see a world of possibilities.
- **Challenge stereotypes** about jobs and future opportunities.
- Build **self-awareness, skills, and aspirations**.
- Connect learning with the world beyond school in **fun, accessible, and age-appropriate ways**.

Benchmark	Primary Actions	Success Indicators
1. A stable careers programme	• Develop a simple, published “World of Work” programme across KS1–2. • Integrate into PSHE, SMSC, and enrichment. • Share with parents and governors.	• Programme visible on school website. • Staff know their role in delivering it.
2. Learning from career & labour market info (LMI)	• Introduce local jobs through storybooks, role play, and class themes (e.g. “People Who Help Us”). • Display “Jobs in Blackburn” posters.	• Pupils can talk about jobs in their community. • Parents/carers report children talking about jobs at home.
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil	• Record each child’s “dream job”/interests in pupil profile. • Use this to plan enrichment trips. • Provide additional nurture activities for pupils with low aspirations.	• All pupils have a simple aspiration profile. • Pupils can name at least one job they would like to try.

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy 2025-2027

Benchmark	Primary Actions	Success Indicators
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers	- Highlight careers links in lessons (e.g., “Maths helps builders”, “Science helps doctors”). - Use project-based learning with real-world themes.	- Teachers evidence careers links in schemes of work. - Pupil voice: “This is why school subjects matter.”
5. Encounters with employers & employees	- Invite parents, carers and community role models (nurses, firefighters, shopkeepers, artists). - Run assemblies or class Q&A sessions.	- Each class has ≥ 2 employer encounters per year. - Pupils recall who visited and what they learned.
6. Experiences of workplaces	- Organise local visits (supermarket, police station, museum, farm). - In-school enterprise activities (e.g. run a tuck shop, plant sale).	- All pupils have ≥ 1 external visit each year. - Pupils can describe what people do at work.
7. Encounters with further & higher education	- Invite college/university students to read stories, run workshops. - Introduce “When I grow up” dress-up day.	- Pupils exposed to the idea of “college/university”. - Pupil surveys show awareness of post-school learning.
8. Personal guidance	- Use nurture sessions to explore strengths and interests. - Year 6 pupils receive simple 1:1 transition guidance before moving to secondary.	- Each pupil has a recorded aspiration by Year 6. - Year 6 pupils supported with next-step transitions.

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy 2025-2027



Implementation Timeline

Autumn Launch “World of Work” theme. Baseline survey: “What do you want to be when you grow up?”. First visitor (e.g., nurse, firefighter).

Spring Workplace/community visits. Careers Week project (e.g., class shop, STEM challenge). Invite parents in to talk about jobs.

Summer Enterprise fair (pupils run a stall/project). Transition guidance for Year 6. Final celebration assembly (“Our Future Dreams”).

Learning Outcomes

Activities	Learning Outcomes	Gatsby Benchmarks	Where	When	Who
Interactive talks, assemblies and visits from people in different jobs. Use of virtual speakers and online careers materials.	Pupils recognise that adults work in different jobs and sectors. Begin to understand the world of work.	1, 2	Classroom / Online	Autumn– Summer	KS1 & KS2 pupils
PSHE Jigsaw lessons linked to aspirations, community and work.	Develop early aspirations and awareness of different roles in society.	1, 3	Classroom	All year	KS1 & KS2 pupils
Role play, stories and themed learning about jobs.	Link learning to real-life roles and develop curiosity about future careers.	1	Classroom	All year	KS1 & KS2 pupils
Careers assemblies and presentations introducing careers education and post-16 options (Careers Adviser).	Understand what careers education is and recognise future pathways.	1	Classroom	Autumn	Years 7-9
Introduction to apprenticeships and traineeships (ASK Apprenticeships and virtual resources).	Understand vocational and apprenticeship pathways.	2, 7	Classroom / Online	Autumn– Spring	Years 8-9

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy 2025-2027

Activities	Learning Outcomes	Gatsby Benchmarks	Where	When	Who
Guest speakers from a range of employment sectors (e.g. engineering, hairdressing, health & social care).	Gain insight into job roles, skills and workplace expectations.	5, 6	Classroom / Virtual	Spring	Years 7-9
Blackburn College Inspiration Days (Early Years, Health & Wellbeing, Academic, Business, Creative Arts, STEM, Customer Service).	Broaden awareness of local post-16 pathways and career sectors.	2, 7	College / Virtual	Spring	Year 9
PSHE lessons: Living in the Wider World, aspirations, learning skills and careers.	Develop self-awareness, resilience and aspiration.	3	Classroom	Summer	Years 7-9
Sessions on democracy, British values, media literacy and digital resilience.	Understand rights, responsibilities and safe participation in society and work.	3	Classroom / PSHE	Summer	Years 7-9
Transition-focused activities and IAG interview with Careers Adviser.	Prepare for next stage of education and begin career planning.	3, 7	Careers room / Classroom	Summer	Year 9
Initial 1:1 careers guidance interviews (Year 10).	Identify interests, strengths and possible career pathways.	3	Careers room / Quiet space	Autumn–Spring	Year 10
Individual careers guidance interviews and personalised Career Action Plans with follow-up meetings.	Make informed post-16 decisions and set realistic goals.	3	Careers room / Quiet space	All year	Year 11
Attendance at 'Blackburn's Inspiring' careers convention.	Gain exposure to employers, FE, HE and training providers.	5, 7	External venue	Autumn / Spring	Years 10–11
Online college tours, taster sessions and information events across Lancashire.	Understand course options, entry requirements and progression routes.	2, 7	School / Home / Online	All year	Years 10–11

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy 2025-2027

Activities	Learning Outcomes	Gatsby Benchmarks	Where	When	Who
Blackburn College assemblies and training provider presentations (PVC Construction, 4 Tech, We Are Noise).	Understand vocational and technical pathways.	5, 7	Classroom	Autumn–Spring	Years 10–11
ASK Apprenticeships talks and workshops.	Understand apprenticeships and application processes.	2, 7	Classroom / Online	Autumn–Spring	Years 10–11
Work experience opportunities where appropriate.	Develop employability skills and workplace understanding.	6	Employer settings	As available	Years 10–11
NEET prevention event at Youth Zone (New Directions).	Understand support available and routes into EET.	3, 7	Youth Zone	January	Mainly Year 11
Mock interviews, FE interview preparation and CV writing (PSHE Living in the Wider World).	Develop interview confidence and recruitment skills.	3	Classroom / Careers space	Spring–Summer	Mainly Year 11
Curriculum careers guidance: 2 discrete lessons per term in each subject.	Link curriculum learning to careers and workplace skills.	4	Classrooms	All year	Years 7–11
Subject-specific careers learning.	Understand sector-specific career pathways.	4	Subject classrooms	All year	Years 10–11
Employer, college and university visits (NLTG, Training 2000, Blackburn University Centre, UCLAN, Edge Hill).	Broaden knowledge of FE and HE pathways and progression routes.	5, 7	External visits	Throughout KS4	Years 10–11
Curriculum focus on workplace behaviour, roles and responsibilities.	Understand expectations of the workplace and employability standards.	3, 5	Classroom	All year	Years 10–11