



BLENHEIM  
SCHOOLS

# Careers Guidance Policy

Akeley Wood School

Policy Folder: Operations

## 1. Purpose

This policy sets out how Akeley Wood School delivers careers education, information, advice and guidance so that every student is supported to make well-informed, ambitious and inclusive choices about education, training and employment.

- It covers our planned careers programme for Years 7 to 13, including targeted support for students with additional needs.
- It explains how we work towards the updated Gatsby Benchmarks and meet statutory expectations for careers guidance and provider access.

## 2. Vision, values and ethos

At Akeley, careers education is an entitlement for every young person and a core part of personal development. We want students to leave us with clarity, confidence and the character to thrive in an evolving world.

### Our guiding principles

- Discover, Grow, Achieve: students explore possibilities, develop strengths and take purposeful next steps.
- Akeley Values: Kindness, Charity, Respect and Community shape how we engage with employers, providers and each other.
- Learner Habits: Aspiration, Courage, Responsibility, Resilience and Integrity are explicitly taught and reinforced through careers learning and experiences.
- Equity and inclusion: every student receives high-quality guidance, with additional support and tailored pathways where needed.

## 3. Student entitlement

All students in Years 7 to 13 are entitled to a progressive spiralled Careers Programme, that builds year on year, includes:

- A planned programme of careers learning, published and accessible to students and parents/carers.
- Access to up-to-date career and labour market information (LMI) and impartial advice.
- Opportunities to meet a range of employers and employees and to learn about a wide variety of sectors and routes.





- Meaningful experiences of the workplace and/or workplaces (including virtual and in-person opportunities).
- Encounters with further and higher education.
- We also have an EC provision, where students are encouraged to try new activities, interact with the outside world and make connections.

#### **4. Akeley careers programme overview**

Careers learning is delivered through our PSCE curriculum, tutor programme, subject curriculum links, and enrichment.

For Post 16 students our careers programme is more dynamic and delivered through a range of specialists speakers, assemblies, personalised advice, WEX and enrichment opportunities. With staff a development assembly delivered June 2025 to help support staff and embed this benchmark.

#### **5. Delivering the updated Gatsby Benchmarks at Akeley**

Our program is planned and evaluated against the eight updated Gatsby Benchmarks.

#### **How our provision meets the Gatsby Benchmarks (at a glance)**

Benchmark	Akeley Wood examples
1. A stable careers programme	Careers programme and this policy; SLT oversight; named Careers Leader.
2. Learning from career and labour market information	Teaching of LMI (Labour Market Information) in PSCE; parent/carers signposting; local labour market input via Buckinghamshire Careers Hub.
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil	Targeted support for SEND and disadvantaged students; personalised guidance; monitoring intended and sustained destinations.
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers	Subject-based careers links and role models; curriculum planning prompts; careers and skills referenced in



5. Encounters with employers and employees	assessment feedback where appropriate. Planned encounters across Years 7 to 13 including talks, panels, mentoring, careers fair and mock interviews; alumni networking and role models.
6. Experiences of workplaces	Work experience/work shadowing and other meaningful workplace experiences (in-person and virtual) for 6 <sup>th</sup> form students and day to work with parent in year 8, with structured preparation and reflection in tutor time.
7. Encounters with further and higher education	Visits, talks and application support for FE, HE and technical routes; AW6 guidance on A Levels, BTECs and apprenticeship pathways.
8. Personal guidance	1:1 guidance with a qualified careers adviser at key decision points; additional sessions for priority students; records shared appropriately to support tutoring, SEND planning and safeguarding.

### **Careers leadership and staff development**

Careers is at the heart of education and leadership at Akeley. We invest in staff development so that teachers and tutors can confidently link learning to careers, challenge stereotypes, and support every student to access the full range of pathways.

### **Quality assurance of encounters**

- Encounters are planned with clear learning outcomes and are evaluated using student voice and provider/employer feedback.
- Students are prepared before encounters and supported to reflect afterwards, so that learning is embedded.
- We ensure encounters are inclusive, avoid reinforcing stereotypes, and promote all routes with equity.



## **6. Working with parents and carers**

Parents and carers are key partners in careers decision-making. We engage them through information evenings, webinars, published guides, regular communication and personalised meetings at key transition points (KS4, post-16, post-18). We also signpost families to reliable LMI and pathway information and encourage parent/carers participation in careers events where appropriate.

## **7. Working with employers, providers and safeguarding**

All external speakers and providers are expected to support our inclusive approach and adhere to safeguarding expectations. Activities are planned to be impartial and to promote all pathways. The school applies appropriate checks and supervision arrangements, and ensures students are prepared and supported before and after encounters.

- Requests for provider access are coordinated by the Careers Leader to ensure fairness, timeliness and appropriate scheduling.
- Providers are asked to supply information in advance to support quality assurance and inclusion.
- All visits and workplace experiences follow the school's safeguarding and risk assessment procedures.
- We work to the CDI (Career Development Institute) framework to ensure we cover the main learning outcomes for good quality provision, all documented in the INTENT careers folder. To see how Gatsby and CDI frameworks are merged that guide our LO's.

## **8. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting**

We evaluate the quality and impact of careers provision through a combination of:

- Student voice, parent/carers feedback and staff feedback after key events such as the careers fair, workplace experiences and provider encounters.
- Tracking of participation, aspirations, intended destinations and sustained destinations (post-16 and post-18).
- Review of support for priority cohorts (SEND, disadvantaged, those at risk of NEET) to ensure equity of access and impact.
- Annual review of the careers programme.





Findings inform the annual careers development plan and are shared with SLT. Where appropriate, we work towards external quality standards to validate impact and drive continuous improvement.

## **9. Review and publication**

This policy is reviewed annually, or earlier if statutory guidance changes.

## **Appendix A: Key references**

- Department for Education (2025). Careers guidance and access for education and training providers (statutory guidance). GOV.UK.
- Gatsby Benchmarks (2025). Understanding the updated Gatsby Benchmarks and benchmark guides. Gatsby Benchmarks website.
- The Careers & Enterprise Company (2025). Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit for Schools (V16).
- The Careers & Enterprise Company (2023 to 2025). Provider Access Legislation guidance and resources.
- Career Development Institute. Career Development Framework.
- Quality in Careers Consortium. Quality in Careers Standard.



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