

Careers At Chatten Free School



Chatten Free School Careers Strategy: 2026-2027

Our Vision and Values

Happiness, Independence, Respect

.

**Last reviewed: Summer Term 2026
Next review: Summer Term 2027**



Careers at Chatten Free School

Our Careers Strategy: Introduction

Our commitment

There has never been a time when careers guidance has been as important for young people as it is today. At Chatten Free School, we have a critical role to play in preparing our pupils for the next stage of their lives.

Pupils within our school are statistically the least likely to gain any form of employment and face significant barriers to being included in the local community. We seek to change that.

We seek to understand what our pupils enjoy and their strengths and find opportunities for them in the local community and working world. We seek to ensure that our pupils have the skills and opportunities to have a life filled with happiness and meaningful activity, including the chance to experience employment and community-based opportunities. We also want to ensure that our pupils have their voice heard and have the skills to communicate their preferences as they transition into adulthood.

Our Values

Our key values at Chatten Free School for each and every pupil are **Happiness, Independence, and Respect.**

- **Happiness:** We have created a safe, secure and happy learning environment in which all pupils can thrive. We acknowledge and celebrate their successes widely. We want to ensure that all pupils go onto have a meaningful and happy adult life.
- **Independence:** We strive to teach functional skills that will allow our pupils to live as independently as possible and to be able to independently express their preferences and make choices about their future.
- **Respect:** Respect is the foundation on which our school values are based. We promote care, trust and honesty with our pupils, their families/carers, and all other partners and stakeholders.

Entitlement

We have a whole school approach to careers education with every member of staff helping to deliver quality and impartial Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance. Our careers program supports our individualised careers curriculum and is in line with the most recent careers guidance strategy (Updated June 2026), supporting the achievement of the eight Gatsby benchmarks. Careers Education at Chatten Free School is not just a stand-alone strand; it is integrated into every area of the school and woven into each individual curriculum. Our aim is that each skill pupils are being taught will link to their future pathways.

Aims and Objectives

The careers education, information and guidance program is designed to meet the needs of each and every pupil at Chatten Free School. It is completely personalised to meet the individual needs of every pupil.

The main aims of the careers provision at Chatten Free School are to:

- To develop and maintain a culture of high aspirations for our pupils through a fully embedded careers education, information and guidance program.
- To raise and track pupils' and parents/carers' engagement with the careers programme during their journey through Chatten Free School and evaluate to ensure that learners and families are supported in raising their aspirations for their journey into adulthood.
- To build a continuously increasing and relevant network of partners and providers who can provide a range of opportunities for pupils for employment, community participation, and transitioning to adulthood.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to current legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Department for Education (DfE), *Careers guidance and access for education and training providers* (statutory guidance, updated June 2026)
- Education Act 1997 (as amended) – including Sections 42A, 42B and 45 relating to careers guidance duties
- Education and Skills Act 2008 - Section 72 is referenced in statutory guidance
- Education (Careers Guidance in Schools) Act 2022 – extends the duty to provide independent careers guidance to all pupils throughout secondary education, including academies and special schools
- Provider Access Legislation (PAL) (strengthened January 2023) – requiring schools to provide a minimum of six encounters with technical education and apprenticeship providers
- Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014 – including duties relating to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) up to age 25
- Technical and Further Education Act 2017
- Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 (supporting wider technical pathways and post-16 progression)

Associated statutory expectations and frameworks

- Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance (updated and embedded in statutory guidance, implementation expected from September 2025)
- Duty to secure independent, impartial careers guidance for all pupils throughout secondary education (Years 7 to 14)

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for:

The Governing Body ensures the school meets its legal duties for careers education and that provision is inclusive, high quality, and suitable for all pupils, including those with SEND.

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure the school complies with statutory careers guidance, including the Gatsby Benchmarks and Provider Access Legislation.

- Ensure pupils and parents/carers have access to a range of education and training providers, including vocational, community or technical pathways where appropriate.
- Ensure all pupils receive independent, impartial and appropriate careers guidance, tailored to individual needs and EHCP outcomes where applicable.
- Promote equality and inclusion, ensuring no discrimination and that reasonable adjustments are made so all pupils can access careers provision.
- Ensure a named Careers Leader is in place and that careers education is effectively delivered across the school.
- Monitor and review the impact of careers provision, including student destinations and outcomes.
- Ensure the school website includes up-to-date careers information and policies.
- Ensure careers activities, including work experience, meet safeguarding and health and safety requirements.
- Support effective transition planning for post-16 and post-18 pathways.
- Ensure complaints relating to careers provision are managed in line with the school's Complaints Procedure Policy

The careers leader is responsible for:

- Leading and managing the strategic development of careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) across the school, ensuring it is appropriately adapted for pupils with severe learning difficulties.
- Working closely with the Headteacher, senior leadership team and specialist staff to implement and sustain an inclusive and meaningful careers programme.
- Reporting regularly to senior leaders and governors on the impact of careers provision
- Establishing, maintaining and developing effective partnerships with supported employment providers, local employers, further education settings, and specialist post-16 provisions.
- Provide training and support class leads, teachers, tutors and therapists to embed and promote careers learning within personalised curriculum pathways and EHCP outcomes and to be able to provide initial information and advice.
- Monitoring teaching and learning in careers education.
- Advising senior leaders on careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) policy, strategy, and resource allocation, with a strong focus on preparation for adulthood outcomes (daily life skills for growing independence, community participation, vocational skills to support future employment).
- Designing, implementing and reviewing a strategic development plan for CEIAG aligned with statutory guidance and Gatsby Benchmarks, adapted for SEND contexts.
- Reviewing and evaluating the program of CEIAG.
- Using the [Gatsby Benchmarks](#) to improve the school's careers provision and ensure compliance with legal duties, with an ultimate aim to meet all benchmarks.
- Using the [Compass tool](#) and other resources for self-evaluating the careers provision the school offers.
- Leading the coordination of personalised careers guidance and transition planning, ensuring each pupil has appropriate, meaningful pathways beyond school.
- Overseeing transition processes, including multi-agency collaboration with families, social care, health professionals, and post-16 providers where applicable.
- Developing opportunities for meaningful encounters with the workplace, including employer visits to school, work-related learning, internal work experience, community-based experiences and supported work experience placements where appropriate for the individual student.

- Publishing details of the school's careers program and a policy statement on provider access on its website.
- Engaging with the designated teacher for LAC and previously LAC to ensure they know which pupils are in care/are care leavers, to understand their additional support needs and to ensure that any personal education plans can inform careers advice.

Teaching and support staff are responsible for:

- Integrating careers education into their pupil's individualised learning plans, ensuring that each pupil's curriculum reflects their needs, interests, strengths, and future pathways.
- Engaging in relevant CPD and training to remain informed about the school's careers programme and best practice in preparing students with SEND for adulthood and employment.
- Creating inclusive learning environments that encourage pupils to engage with real-life situations, develop independence, manage risk appropriately, and build transferable skills for the workplace and wider community.



Careers At Chatten Free School

The Gatsby Benchmarks

An overview of the Gatsby Benchmarks

SEND Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit

'The **SEND Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit** is a practical guidance resource designed to help schools, special schools and colleges deliver high-quality, inclusive careers education for young people with SEND. Developed in partnership with Talentino and the Career Development Institute, and updated by Talentino as The Careers & Enterprise Company's strategic partner for SEND, the toolkit combines wider context on the career challenges and opportunities facing learners with SEND with detailed, benchmark-by-benchmark guidance on what good looks like in practice.

It brings together practical advice, case studies, resources and planning tools to help practitioners build careers provision that is ambitious, personalised and rooted in positive outcomes.' [SEND Gatsby Toolkit | Talentino](#)

Gatsby Benchmarks	<i>'The analysis of the Gatsby Framework using the content devised for the Special Schools version of Compass identified that the following changes could easily be made and located within a broader guidance document and the essence of all the Benchmarks themselves can stay intact.'</i>
1. A stable careers programme: Every school, special school and college should have an embedded programme of careers education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, governors and employers. Every school, special school and college should have a stable, structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of the senior management team and an appropriately trained person responsible for it. The careers programme should be published on the school's website so students, parents, teachers and employers can access and understand it. The programme should be regularly evaluated with feedback from students, parents, teachers and employers as part of the evaluation process.	The content of a holistic careers programme to reflect the core themes of the Preparation for Adulthood programme including employment health, independent living, education, housing options, relationships and community.

2. Learning from career and labour market information: Every student and their parents/carers should have access to good quality information about future study options, labour market opportunities and the Local Offer. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information. By the age of 14, all students should have accessed directly/indirectly and used information about career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options. Parents/carers should be encouraged to access and use information about labour markets, future study options and the local offer to inform their support to their children. Career and labour market information (LMI) includes information on: • Career pathways and progression routes including social care provisions. • Applications and interviews. Educational institutions, courses, qualifications, entry requirements and costs. • Skills and occupations. • Professional bodies. • Employment sectors, employers, jobs, salaries and employment trends. • Job programmes, training and apprenticeships. • Job demands and working life. • Financial planning.	The aim remains the same, but the content will reflect the relevant information that the cohort and their family needs.
3. Addressing the needs of each student: Students have different careers guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each student. 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 aim remains perfectly aligned and needs to refer to the multiple statutory planning processes and achieving participation of students.

Schools should collect and maintain accurate data for each student on their education, training or employment destinations for at least three years after they leave school.	
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers: All teachers link curriculum learning with careers. - Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subject teachers highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths. - By the age of 14, every pupil has had the opportunity to learn how the different STEM subjects help people to gain entry to a wide range of careers. - All subject teachers emphasise the importance of succeeding in English and Maths.	Linking curriculum learning with careers refers to careers education as a discrete learning activity (where appropriate), careers embedded in subject and topic learning, and co-curricular provision such as clubs, celebration events and productions. Whole-school teaching and learning focuses on the relevance of subjects to everyday independent living, future learning and leisure, livelihood planning and employability skills. Careers provision is integral to the whole curriculum and not relegated to the margins.
5. Encounters with employees and employers: 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. - All young people in Years 7-13 should have at least one encounter a Year by 2020, in line with the Gatsby Benchmarks. - Meaningful encounters cover a range of activities with employers, both in and outside the school, but does not include off-site experiences of workplaces.	The aim needs to be re-framed possibly as a two-way learning for employers and the activities to reflect the types of destinations for this cohort.

6. Experiences of workplaces: Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience so they can explore their career opportunities and expand their networks. By the age of 16, every student should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.	It is important to create a range of possible workplace experiences such as visits, work shadowing, work experience and career-related volunteering and citizenship. The school will hold pre-work sessions with the employer before the student arrives. The school and employer will agree the level of support necessary for the student and employer. If necessary, schools can often provide training for the employer. After the encounter, there should be a full debriefing
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• By the age of 18, every student should have had one further such experience, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.	for the employer, school and student to help improve on future workplace experiences. • For students with the most severe learning difficulties, internal work experience can provide similar effects to external experiences and help them develop work-related skills, confidence and self-esteem.
7. Encounters with further and higher education: All students should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and the workplace and the Local Offer. • By the age of 16, every pupil should have had a meaningful encounter with a provider of the full range of learning opportunities. <i>(where appropriate)</i> • By the age of 18, all students who are considering applying for university should have had at least two visits to universities to meet staff and students. <i>(where appropriate)</i>	Included <i>(where appropriate)</i> due to the needs and best interests of the pupils at Chatten. The inclusion of the wider range of destinations and young people's transition into them need to be highlighted.
8. Personal guidance: This group is frequently disadvantaged in society and is the most likely group of young people to be absent or excluded from school (Ofsted, 2010). Young people with SEND are less likely to achieve both in terms of their attainment and progression and more likely to be NEET (not in education, employment or training) than their peers. • The SEND Code of Practice 2015 finds that providing a young person with the relevant life and employability skills so that they can live in semi independence could reduce lifetime support costs to the public by approximately £1 million. • Specific and individualised transition planning that includes identifying potential pathways is central to the SEND Code of Practice. • Early and ongoing support from a trusted adult is critical to effective transition.	Staff who work with students in schools and colleges are ideally placed to provide careers guidance. Vocational profiles are a useful tool used as part of the provision of information, advice and guidance services. In special schools, young people with SEND and those with EHCPs have annual transition reviews from year 9. This is an opportunity to discuss their futures and put a system of support in place. This draws on support from a range of agencies. The EHCP will aim to support students achieving goals in relation to learning and future employment, home and independence, friends, relationships and community and health and wellbeing. At least one interaction with a qualified SEND careers advisor guidance from the Local Authority will take place at an annual review before the end of Year 14.

Strategic Objectives

Benchmark 1 – A stable careers programme

Key Strategic Objectives	
1	1.2 Leader's vision and intent for careers Obtain Governor approval of Careers Programme and Strategy, Work Experience Policy, as well as for Provider Access Policy, Provider Access Legislation Statement and CEIAG Policy. Update school and college websites with approved documentation – ensuring accessibility for staff, pupils, parents/carers, governors and employers.
2	1.1 Careers leadership and distributed leadership of careers Careers leadership is supported with specific training and is embedded across the staffing structure and within school or special school development planning. Systems and processes support a shared responsibility for delivery of careers across the school or special school, enabled by clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
3	2.3 Effective use of recording systems Recording systems (e.g. Compass +) are used to capture careers activities and to track intended and actual destinations.
Outcomes	Ensure clarity for all involved parties (pupils, staff, parents/carers, SLT and Governors) will continue to build firm foundations as the careers provision is developed across the school.

Benchmark 2 – Learning from career and labour market information

Key Strategic Objectives	
1	3.4 Parent and carer understanding of what LMI is and how to make effective use of it Create a Transitions Directory/Next Steps Guidance – obtain SLT and Governor approval and put on website and have paper copies in parent meeting rooms.
2	3.7 Effective provider engagement Continue to develop relationships with local businesses, further education (where appropriate) and social care providers.
Outcomes	Pupils and their parents/carers to receive appropriate information regarding careers and future study options.

Benchmark 3 – Addressing the needs of each pupil

Key Strategic Objectives	
1	2.1 Development of progressive careers learning journeys Develop a progressive careers learning journey which includes progressive careers learning and activities that support learners to: make aspirational and informed decisions; make effective transitions and prepare for adulthood
2	2.3 Effective use of recording systems Recording systems are regularly updated to record and evaluate activities.
Outcomes	Pupil's progress will be monitored and evaluated to improve outcomes for each pupil based on their individual needs.

Benchmark 4 - Linking curriculum learning to careers

Key Strategic Objectives	
1	4.1 Careers Education Develop community job stories and implement their use with pupils to develop career readiness where appropriate.
2	4.2 Staff highlighting the relevance of their subjects and making links from the curriculum Develop and deliver training for all staff to understand the cross-curricular links to careers when preparing for adulthood.
Outcomes	Where appropriate, pupils across the school will have a target relating to careers and community in their individualised pupil programme and staff will understand the how careers is embedded in the Chatten curriculum.

Benchmark 5 - Encounters with employees and employers

Key Strategic Objectives	
1	5.2/5.3 Meaningful encounters with employers and experiences of the workplace Ensure, where appropriate, all pupils to have meaningful encounters with employees/employers through local community access, work experience and transition visits.
2	Systematically record encounters
3	5.2 Meaningful encounters with employers Ensure learners, where appropriate, engage in a two-way interaction with an employer either through an invited speaker in school or out in the community.
Outcomes	Ensuring all pupils are involved in meaningful community activity and have meaningful encounters with employers/employees will raise aspirations and support transitions to adulthood.

Benchmark 6 - Experiences of workplaces

Key Strategic Objectives	
1	5.3 Meaningful experiences of the workplace Ensure, where appropriate, sixth form pupils have access to external work experience placements. Where not appropriate, ensure sixth form pupils have access to meaningful community and enrichment activities or internal work experience opportunities.
2	5.3 Meaningful experiences of the workplace Ensure, where appropriate, all key stage 4 pupils have access to internal work experience taster sessions. Where not appropriate, ensure key stage 4 pupils have access to meaningful community and enrichment activities.
3	5.1 Effective employer engagement Develop relationships with local businesses, social care providers, and community based activity providers who can offer meaningful work experience and community activities for our pupils.
Outcomes	All pupils to have meaningful experiences with places of work and/or meaningful community activities to support successful transitions to adulthood.

Benchmark 7 - Encounters with further and higher education Encounters with further and higher education

Key Strategic Objectives	
1	3.2/3.5 Learner and parent/carer understanding of all routes available to them at key transitions Develop links with local colleges that have specialist provisions and local social care providers.
2	3.2/3.5 Learner and parent/carer understanding of all routes available to them at key transitions Organise taster days at local colleges and/or social care providers for sixth form pupils to support transitions to adulthood.
3	3.5 Parent and carer understanding of all routes available to learners at key transitions Create a Transitions directory including further/higher education to be shared on website and paper copy available in parent meeting room.

Outcomes	Pupils and their families will be provided with all relevant information about further education and social care options to be able to make an informed decision.
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Benchmark 8 – Personal guidance

Key Strategic Objectives	
1	6.3 Personal guidance resourcing Work with the local authority to provide careers guidance to pupils and parents through Annual Review process.
2	6.1 Engagement with personal guidance 6.2 Meaningful approach to personal guidance Embed vocational profile that will be accessible for our pupils to show their preferences for vocational and community-based activities.
Outcomes	Pupils to feel confident and supported through periods of transition and pupils' preferences to be taken into account.

