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COMPANY

The SEND Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit

Practical information and guidance for
schools, special schools and colleges

Second Edition

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Foreword

Helping schools and colleges prepare and inspire young people for the fast-changing world of work is at the heart of what we do. And across the country we have seen countless inspiring examples schools and colleges doing just that for young people with Special Educational Needs.

The Gatsby Benchmarks provide a robust and high-quality framework for career guidance. They help to deliver a system of high aspirations for all students in all types of settings. We have been working closely with the Gatsby Foundation, schools and colleges and other partners to make sure we understand how the Benchmarks can be implemented for students with SEND and have now launched Compass for Special Schools.

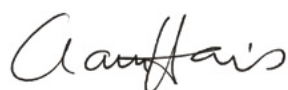
We have already published practical information and guidance for schools and colleges in our SEND Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit, developed in partnership with sector experts Talentino and the Career Development Institute.

I am delighted that we are now publishing an updated and improved version of the SEND Gatsby Toolkit updated by Talentino, our strategic partner for SEND. It contains new case studies from across the country as well as an introductory section which explores the wider context for young people with SEND. It looks at the career challenges and opportunities they face and how we are committed to helping to meet these so they can achieve a positive career and life outcome.

We work with more than a third of special schools through our Enterprise Adviser Network – something we will build upon over the coming years. The Network provides each school with a dedicated senior business volunteer to help provide strategic careers support and strengthen links to local employers. We have also launched two Careers Hubs focused specifically on SEND, to provide strategic, joined-up support to young people with SEND.

I have been hugely impressed by the range of different types of provision, including special schools and specialist colleges, that are confidently using the Benchmarks to improve career guidance for their students, and in many cases, they are well on the way to meeting all eight Benchmarks.

I hope that this publication will help practitioners envision how the benchmarks can be put into practice for young people with a wide range of needs. We hope it will be a source of inspiration as you work to ensure all students with SEND receive the very best careers and enterprise education.



Claudia Harris, CEO,
The Careers & Enterprise Company

The Careers & Enterprise Company

The Careers & Enterprise Company was established in 2015 to help link schools and colleges to employers in order to increase employer engagement for young people.

During our first three years, we have worked with Local Enterprise Partnerships to build a national network which now links 2,000 schools and colleges to employers. We have also funded 150 programmes to provide high-quality employer engagement activities to young people where they are most needed.

Our role is to link schools and colleges to employers and to help them deliver world class careers support for all young people by:

- 1. Building Networks** – linking schools and colleges to employers and other external careers providers through the Enterprise Adviser Network and Careers Hubs.
- 2. Supporting Careers Leaders** – providing training and support for Careers Leader in schools and colleges.
- 3. Backing the Gatsby Benchmarks** – supporting implementation of a best practice standard for careers support, the Gatsby Benchmarks, with tools and targeted funding.

Our national network connects all types of schools and colleges with employers and careers programme providers and supports them to work together to provide young people with effective and high-quality encounters with the world of work. The network is made up of Enterprise Coordinators who we co-fund with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Combined Authorities.

Enterprise Coordinators are trained professionals who work with clusters of 20 schools and colleges to build careers plans and make connections to local and national employers. They support a group of senior business volunteers, known as Enterprise Advisers, who they match with schools or colleges in the network.

Enterprise Advisers use their knowledge of the local business landscape to support the headteacher/careers team to develop an effective careers plan and to create opportunities with their business contacts for their school or college's students.

Careers Hubs are a subset of our national network and are currently being piloted in 40 areas. Careers Hubs are a group of between 20 and 40 secondary schools and colleges located in the same geographic area, working together, and with partners in the business, public, education and voluntary sectors to deliver the Gatsby Benchmarks

Careers Leaders are responsible and accountable for the delivery of their school or college's programme of careers advice and guidance. There are multiple resources for Careers Leaders which can be found on [our website](#).

Careers Leader Getting Started Guide

We have created a [six-step guide](#) specifically aimed at new Careers Leaders in role to help schools meet their statutory obligations. It provides the Careers Leader with essential information, helpful resources, practical tools and sign-posts further support.

The guide draws together the main learnings of the North East pilot, it features our extensive research into 'what works' in careers and enterprise education and first-hand experiences of over 2,000 practitioners in schools in our Enterprise Adviser Network.

Careers Leader Training

Working in partnership with TeachFirst we have developed a free online training course '[Introduction to Careers Leadership in schools, special schools and colleges](#)'. The modules are designed to support Careers Leaders in their role and to offer insight to those supporting the role, including SLT, Headteachers, Governors, Enterprise Coordinators and Enterprise Advisers, to use this free resource.

Through completing the modules, you will understand what good careers leadership looks like, understand each of the Gatsby Benchmarks in detail, understand what a careers programme and strategic career plan for your school could look like and you will have identified the next steps in your development as a Careers Leader.

The free online modules prepare Careers Leaders to access the bursary [funded face to face Careers Leadership training at Level 6/7](#).

We are offering funded training bursaries to 1,300 Careers Leaders in schools and colleges across England. We have selected 14 high-quality Careers Leader training providers to deliver the training and there are a range of different study options available.

To apply for a funded training place please go [here](#).

Our digital tools

Compass is a free tool for schools and colleges in England, that quickly and easily helps you to evaluate your careers activity against the eight benchmarks of best practice – known as the Gatsby Benchmarks. It helps you easily discover your strengths and find areas for improvement. Once completed, the tool will provide you with a confidential report and resources to help you achieve each benchmark. **The newly adapted version of Compass for special schools can be found on [page 6-7](#).**

Compass+ is a new tool, designed to help you benchmark, manage, track and report on your school's careers programme. Careers Leaders can benefit from being able to:

- **Save time and plan with ease.** Quickly map out your careers programme for the academic year.
- **Be more strategic and targeted.** Create custom cohorts so you can target relevant careers interventions to the students most in need.
- **Measure and monitor effectively.** Create detailed reports and data visualisations to monitor performance.
- **Collaborate with colleagues.** Encourage collaboration by allocating tasks, sharing contacts and allowing colleagues to contribute to your careers education programme.
- **Reach and build a wider network.** Receive intelligent recommendations for activities and store your careers partners in one place.

For more information on how to get started with this new digital tool, please visit the [Compass+](#) page on the Careers and Enterprise Company website.

Introduction

Welcome to the second version of The SEND Gatsby Toolkit. If you are working to deliver the Gatsby Benchmarks for young people with SEND in whatever setting – Special Schools, Mainstream Schools, Colleges, PRUs, AP, SEMH, Virtual Schools, Hospital Schools – you will find lots of practical help in this toolkit. There are two sections:

Part 1 explores the wider context and support for you and young people with SEND where you will find information on:

- What The Careers and Enterprise Company does and how it provides support around the early career development for young people with SEND;
- How The Careers and Enterprise Company can support you locally through Careers Hubs, Enterprise Coordinators, Enterprise Advisers Compass, Compass+ and Compass for special schools;
- The role of Careers Leaders on behalf of young people with SEND and training opportunities for new Careers Leaders including bursaries;
- The National Careers Strategy and how it addresses the career development of young people with SEND including a useful infographic;
- Considering the key challenges to achieving a positive career outcome for young people with SEND and The Careers & Enterprise Company SEND Strategy that sets out how it will support young people to overcome these challenges;

- Understanding who the wide range of groups of young people with SEND are and why it is important in terms of overcoming barriers and achieving parity;
- A career development model developed by Talentino (the strategic partner for SEND for The Careers & Enterprise Company) called *#sameandifferent* showing which career aspects need to be considered;
- An explanation of positive Career Outcomes for each Career SEND group;
- A Careers Health Check checklist to use in school/college;
- Additional considerations for students with PMLD, highly complex needs and parents/carers/families.

Part 2 is a larger section which focuses on the Gatsby Benchmarks from a SEND perspective and has been updated with new resource links and case studies, top tips for employers, top tips for schools, information on ‘why this matters’ and ‘what this means in practice’.

Part 1

The National Careers Strategy and Young People with SEND

The National Careers Strategy and Young People with SEND

The National Careers Strategy makes it very clear that ALL young people including those with SEND are to be supported to achieve their optimum career outcome. For young people with SEND, the activities should be differentiated using your professional judgement as you would do in every activity you plan for your students.

The infographic you can see on the page opposite identifies the specific responsibilities all schools have to deliver both the National Careers Strategy and Statutory Guidance. The information in the circle in the middle highlights the considerations that should be made when approaching the early career development of young people with SEND namely as expressed in the National Careers Strategy and Statutory Guidance:

- Consider the widest range of possible career options;
- Raise aspirations of students, their families and staff to start from the presumption of paid work;
- Help parents/families engage more;
- Increase authentic and meaningful employer encounters;
- Differentiate careers activities as appropriate;
- Improve career development for the most vulnerable;
- Use 16-19 bursaries if possible (or 19+ for those with an EHC Plan);
- Facilitate career decisions based on a young person's aspirations, abilities and needs;
- Ensure careers (personal) guidance is differentiated and Careers Advisers' skills are developed;
- Named Careers Advisers are encouraged to build longer term relationships with students and use EHC Plans as a lever.

As a **Careers Leader** there are key aspects to your role when it comes to young people with SEND that may look different including:

- Destination tracking and improving destinations through an increasingly effective programme and understanding more about potential destinations;
- Managing the delivery of careers guidance and the development of an effective careers guidance delivery plan for ALL students;
- Employer liaison will require more preparation of and support for the employer;
- Working closely with SENCOs;
- Greater emphasis on engaging with families;
- Liaising with more outside agencies potentially.

Key Points from the National Careers Strategy 2017 and Statutory Guidance 2018 from Talentino Career Development Company

GOVERNMENT WILL

- Review the Guidance annually
- Publish destinations data at KS4 and KS5

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOLS

- Anything saying 'must' is a legal requirement of the school
- Continued – provide external careers advice from qualified adviser
- New – provide access to providers of Apprenticeships and other Education providers
- New – Publish a Provider Access Policy
- Not doing this will result in a school showing 'unacceptable behaviour' and Dept. Ed could write to the school
- Special Schools have been included in the guidance for Mainstream schools and guidance focused on different SEND groups

SCHOOLS NEED TO:

- Be responsible for the continuous quality improvement of careers
- A trained Careers Leader must be appointed who runs the Careers Programme and backed by SLT by September 2018
- Publish the careers programme on the website for pupils parents staff and Governors
 - Identify a named Governor for Careers
- Keep systematic records of careers activities and decisions for each child
- Have their own dedicated Enterprise Adviser to broker employers
 - Careers Activities should be purchased from organisations with the Matrix Quality award
- Find out if the local Job Centre Plus offers the 'Support for Schools' programme
- Look out for the 20 new Careers Hubs around the country funded by Government / and funding for Careers Leader training in 500 schools

SEND

- Consider the widest range of options
 - Raise aspirations
- Help parents/families engage more
- Increase authentic employer encounters
 - Differentiate as appropriate
- Improved career development for Looked After Children/PRUs/AP
 - Multi agency approach
 - Use best practice from Transitions Review
- Two free resources available from Education and Training Foundation website
 - Use 16-19 Bursaries / 19+ if has EHC plan
 - Use Access to work funding job coaches
- Careers guidance differentiated, person centred
 - Staff work from the presumption of paid work
- Career decisions based on students' aspirations and abilities and needs
 - Careers Adviser's skills to coach SEND pupils will be developed through more CPD available
 - Named Careers Advisers encouraged to build longer term relationships with students and use EHC Plans or PEPs to support them

YOUNG PEOPLE CAN EXPECT A CAREER DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY TO INCLUDE:

- Finding information about their careers programme on the school website which starts in Year 8/earlier
- By the age of 14 have accessed careers information (LMI) to support their study decisions including local LMI
- Information about how important Maths and Science are leading to different rewarding STEM Careers
- Girls will have additional input into developing STEM careers
- By 16 have had 2 meaningful encounters with FE College Sixth Form Apprenticeship providers
- Two Careers Guidance interviews before career decisions are made at 16 and 18
- 7 Employer encounters one per years 7 to 13
- 2 work experiences before 16 and before 18
- By 18 2 University visits if Uni is their goal
- Invited to join the school's Alumni network
- Able to access their individual Careers records

ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

- Careers Guidance is defined as 'the full range of activities under the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks'
- Must secure independent careers guidance which is external to the school – this guidance is defined as careers activities including employer encounters, websites, Apps, phonelines, National Careers Service
- Personal Guidance can be given by trained staff from and in school but must be backed up by external sources
- All pupils should have opportunities for personal guidance interviews with a qualified careers advisor prior to key career decisions at 16 and 18. This can be delivered by an internal suitably qualified careers adviser e.g. Level 6 OCG or the newer OCD and will be registered with the CDI on their professional register

GATSBY BENCHMARKS

- All schools must meet all 8 by end of 2020
- All pupils all benchmarks Schools encouraged to use the Compass tool to evaluate progress against benchmarks – confidential to school
- Enterprise Advisers can use Tracker to help schools create a Careers Strategy
 - Schools encouraged to take the Quality Standards award which will be more closely tied to the benchmarks

The Careers & Enterprise Company and SEND

The Careers and Enterprise Company are supporting the careers of Young People with SEND, Vulnerable, Disadvantaged. We are doing so in a number of ways:

- Engaging with all Special Schools in England
- Inspiring and preparing students with SEND for work
- Supporting progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks in Special Schools
- Providing Compass for special schools
- Providing specialist SEND careers resources directly and indirectly via signposting
- Providing training for Careers Leaders in Special Schools
- Facilitating a network that is knowledgeable around the career needs of young people with SEND
- Building awareness and confidence in Employers to engage further with young people with SEND
- Supporting parents/carers/families of young people with SEND
- CEF18 FUND- 20 organisations awarded contracts, 11 of them working with SEND , 4 Looked After Children, 5 Gypsy, Roma Traveller
- Working with specialist partners – Talentino, National Grid, CIPD, DRUK



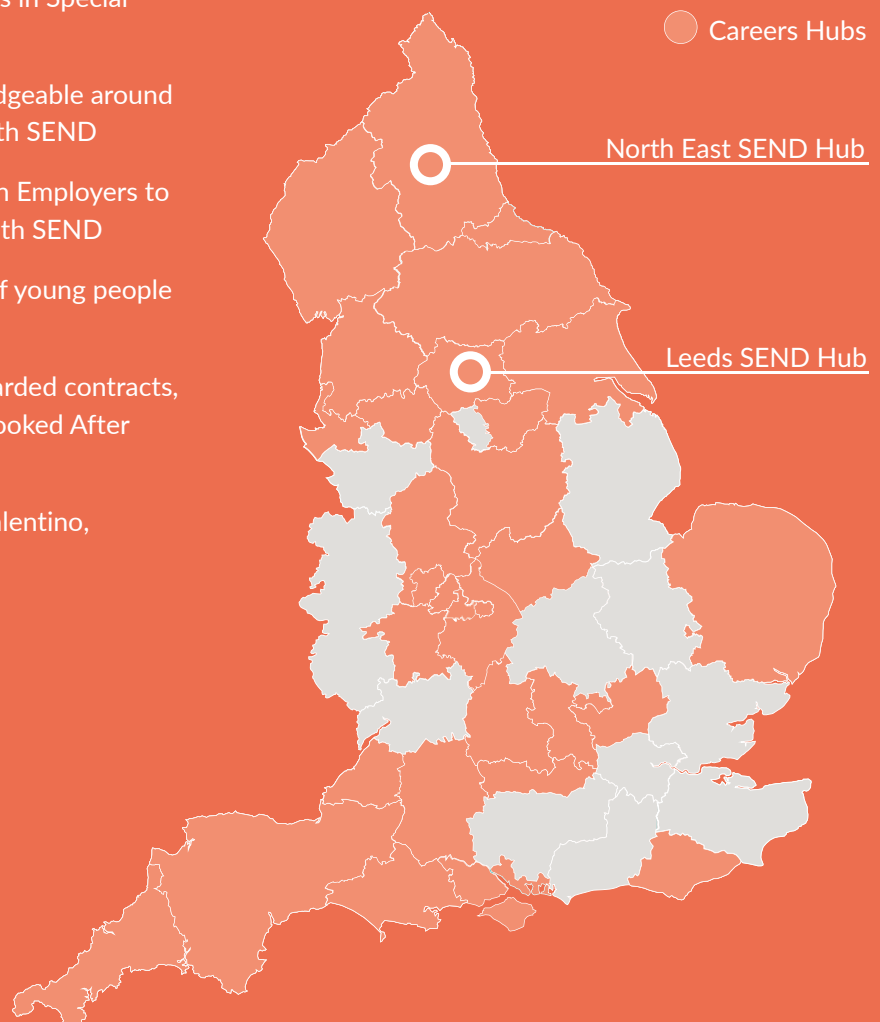
£1.7 million invested in 20 SEND projects.



Approximately a third of special schools in Enterprise Adviser Network.



Two dedicated SEND Careers Hubs.



Compass for special schools

- Compass for special schools is a free tool for schools and colleges in England, that quickly and easily helps you to evaluate your careers activity against the Gatsby Benchmarks.

- We are looking at students in two groups:

Career SEND Group One – students who will typically not take GCSEs/Level 2 qualifications and who should expect career outcomes to include Supported Internships, Supported Apprenticeships, Supported Employment, FE College, Extended work placements, Supported Enterprise/ volunteering, opportunities through the Local Offer.

Career SEND Group Two – students who typically will take GCSEs/Level 2 qualifications and who should expect career outcomes to include Apprenticeships, FE, University, Employment, Enterprise, Self-Employment.

Both groups of students could be educated in different school settings depending on the Local Authority's approach to special schools and including students with SEND in mainstream schools.

How does it work?

- Your EDU number will determine your 'routing'
- You have the choice about which Compass tool to use
- Gatsby Benchmarks are relevant for all their students, but there are some small but important aspects that need to be differentiated
- Special schools can currently ringfence groups within groups and report on smaller numbers without being penalised but the new tool will enable all students to be included
- The time taken to complete Compass for special schools will continue to be around 30 minutes
- It is still recommended that Compass for special schools is completed termly by the Careers Leader in conjunction with the Enterprise Adviser / Enterprise Coordinator where relevant
- For students with PMLD, it is anticipated that broadly speaking the new Compass for special schools will be applicable and further guidance will be issued in due course

Which aspects are different in Compass for special schools – general

- Special schools will often educate students up to and including Year 14 and this is now reflected as 'Above Year 13'
- SEND provision is mandated to age 25 and students up to age 25 can now be included
- The widest range of students' abilities and career destinations are inherently included
- Indicating where far more support is needed for example with families and careers information
- The language is more inclusive and aligned, for example highlighting 'Transitions'
- Highlighting that other agencies may be involved for example the Local Authority
- Reflecting the level of qualifications taken e.g. Functional Skills
- Reference to the suitability of work experience and employer encounters and offering different examples
- The inclusion of HE is not mandatory
- The experience of Personal Guidance is expressed as having to reflect the needs of the student and not a one size fits all

Which aspects are different in Compass for special schools – Benchmark specific

- The Careers Programme should reflect how the broadest range of students needs and career destinations will be met
- Families, Parents and Carers to be more supported to access relevant careers information including the Local Offer
- Personalised Career and Personal Development planning remains at the heart of what special schools do every day
- Functional level skills are now overtly referred to as are non-accredited Science qualifications and wider PHSE subjects
- Refers to use of internal work experience where relevant and more differentiation around employer encounters with the option to ringfence smaller groups and report on them without losing scoring wise
- Reflects providers of relevant career options e.g. Supported Internship Providers
- Reflects the deployment of appropriately qualified Careers Advisers who belong to the school / Special School and the needs of the students more in terms of interview style

You can log onto Compass for special schools [here](#).



Who are we talking about?

Who are young people with SEND?

SEND stands for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and is sometimes written as SEN(D) as not everyone who has SEN has a disability. It is important to understand who we are talking about when it comes to young people with SEND so they can be fully supported to achieve their optimum career/life outcome and provide early career development and support that is aligned to their additional needs. It will also enable employers to better understand how to provide meaningful employer encounters and have a better understanding of and become committed to providing more opportunities. Finally, it will enable ALL young people to achieve parity in their career/life outcomes.

Young people with SEND are often less likely to do well academically, go to University, more likely to be excluded, become NEET, to have mental health problems like depression and are represented statistically in higher numbers in the criminal justice system, have dependency issues and/or be homeless.

Who are we talking about?

There are 1.2 million young people with SEND/nearly 15% of all young people and 250,000 have an EHC plan. Most are in mainstream schools. Young people with SEND are often described as one generic group and VERY different from each other. The type of career outcomes may be different and the early Career Development process needs personalising in relation to the career outcome. It is very common for a young person with SEND to have multiple barriers from more than one grouping and it can be complex picture for the individual and their families/carers.

The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2015 defines SEND as:

“A child or young person has SEN[D] if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions”.

There are many young people who are vulnerable and need additional careers support too.

Broad SEND groupings are defined in the SEND Code of Practice as:

- **Communication and interaction** - speech, language and communication needs, Autistic Spectrum Disorder;
- **Cognition and learning** - specific learning difficulty, moderate or severe learning difficulty or profound and multiple learning difficulty;
- **Social, emotional, and mental health difficulties (SEMH)/behaviour sensory;**
- **Physical needs**, including visual impairment, hearing impairment, multi-sensory impairment, physical disability.

For the purposes of careers planning, the four SEND groupings defined in the Code are put back together and then divided into two SEND Career groups according to whether they will be taking GCSEs/Level 2 Qualifications or not.

- **Career SEND Group One** - Students with communication/interaction or cognition and learning difficulties who typically will not take GCSEs/Level 2 Qualifications and who should expect to achieve positive career outcomes.
- **Career SEND Group Two** - Students with SEND - Social, emotional, and mental health difficulties (SEMH) /Behaviour Sensory and/or Physical needs who typically will take GCSEs/Level 2 Qualifications and **can** enjoy the same positive career outcomes as their peers **but** face significant challenges to achieve them.

Positive Career Outcomes

Students with SEND and who have communication/interaction or cognition and learning difficulties who are less likely to be taking exams that employers recognise like GCSEs **should** expect to achieve positive career outcomes like: Supported Internships (EHC Plan), Supported/ Inclusive Apprenticeships (EHC Plan), Supported employment (EHC Plan), Extended work place interviews, Supported Enterprise, Supported volunteering, FE College or T Levels.

Students with SEND who are taking GCSEs with social, emotional, and mental health difficulties (SEMH)/ Behaviour Sensory and/or Physical needs **can** enjoy the same opportunities as their non-disabled peers in Mainstream schools including Apprenticeships, Further Education, Higher Education including University, Employment, Enterprise and T Levels.

Key Career Challenges faced by Young People with SEND, vulnerable / disadvantaged

For young people with SEND or who are vulnerable or disadvantaged in some way, early career development is not a level playing field. There are key career challenges and the Careers and Enterprise Company through its network and providing resources is seeking to mitigate some of the challenges. Repeated interactions with Special Schools show that the key challenges to achieving optimum career outcomes can include:

1. Low levels of knowledge about who young people with SEND are (a very diverse group)
2. Employers want to engage with young people with SEND but many are still anxious
3. School Leavers from Special Schools mostly go on to FE College and could benefit from more employer led training and employment opportunities
4. College provision varies from place to place so sharing what good looks like would be helpful
5. There is a varied landscape of Supported Employment provision and Job Coaches
6. Much activity is hyper-local so lacks visibility surfacing what good looks like and sharing
7. Shortage of qualified careers advisers with knowledge of SEND
8. Lack of appropriate careers programmes / resources
9. Families and Carers being provided with careers information and support

This second version of the SEND Gatsby Toolkit provides extensive information to start to address the inequalities faced by young people with SEND or who are disadvantaged or vulnerable.

Careers Health Check Checklist

Schools, special schools and colleges are at different stages of their own development around creating their careers strategy, plans and activities but all schools and colleges have to have delivered a number of statutory actions by September 2020.

We have created a 'Careers Health Check' checklist which those of you at the start of your journey to deliver the Gatsby Benchmarks will find useful to plan your activity. Those of you who are further along with your careers planning may also find it useful.

The full checklist can be found in the back of this toolkit or can be downloaded from [The Careers & Enterprise Company website](#).

There are six areas within the Checklist namely:

- **Careers Leadership;**
- **Careers Strategy and programme;**
- **Gatsby Benchmarks** – this section highlights the deadline by which the benchmarks must be completed by but no further information as the tool which will help you achieve this is [Compass](#) which can be accessed for free from The Careers & Enterprise Company website if you have registered your school;
- **Careers Guidance** and the statutory responsibilities you have to facilitate or and deliver;
- **Young person's career experience at school/college** – a list of the careers activities a young person should be able to engage in that will form their early career development experiences;
- **Considerations for young people with SEND** – this is a list of considerations that has been drawn from the National Careers Strategy and will enable you to demonstrate you have really taken the career needs of young people with SEND into account.

Finally, you will find a glossary of terms at the back of the toolkit on page 86 in case any terms are unfamiliar to you.

#sameanddifferent – A career development model for young people with SEND

#sameanddifferent is a model that enables careers practitioners, employers, families and others to better understand the aspects of early career development that provide value to an 18-year old with SEND. All aspects underpin the delivery of the Gatsby Benchmarks. They are categorised in three ways:

1. **Same** – this is an aspect that will have the same value to a young person with SEND as to those without SEND;
2. **Same and Different** – this is an aspect that will have the same value to a young person with SEND but will need to be delivered differently;
3. **Different** – these aspects will only be relevant to the young person with SEND and will not be relevant to those young people without SEND.

There are two versions of the model. The four SEND groupings defined in the Code were divided into two SEND Career groups according to whether they will be taking GCSEs/Level 2 Qualifications and correspond to each of the two versions:

Version 1 is for SEND Career Group 1 students with communication/interaction or cognition and learning difficulties who typically will not take GCSEs Level 2 Qualifications. **Note – this model is not wholly relevant for students with highly complex needs such as PMLD.**

Version 2 is for SEND Career Group 2 Students with SEND - Social, emotional, and mental health difficulties (SEMH) /Behaviour Sensory and/or Physical needs who typically take GCSEs/Level 2 Qualifications.

You can download the full posters [here](#). As a **Careers Leaders**, you can also:



Track and improve destinations through an increasingly effective programme – **forensic search for appropriate destinations locally;**



Manage the delivery of an effective careers guidance delivery plan – **personalised and utilise EHC plans and/or with Annual Reviews and transition meetings;**



Liaise with employers – **build their confidence**, offer engagement opportunities, increase their knowledge and commitment;



Emphasise engagement with families – **engage early, be prepared to be creative, understand their barriers too.**

9 Key Career Challenges facing Young People with SEND

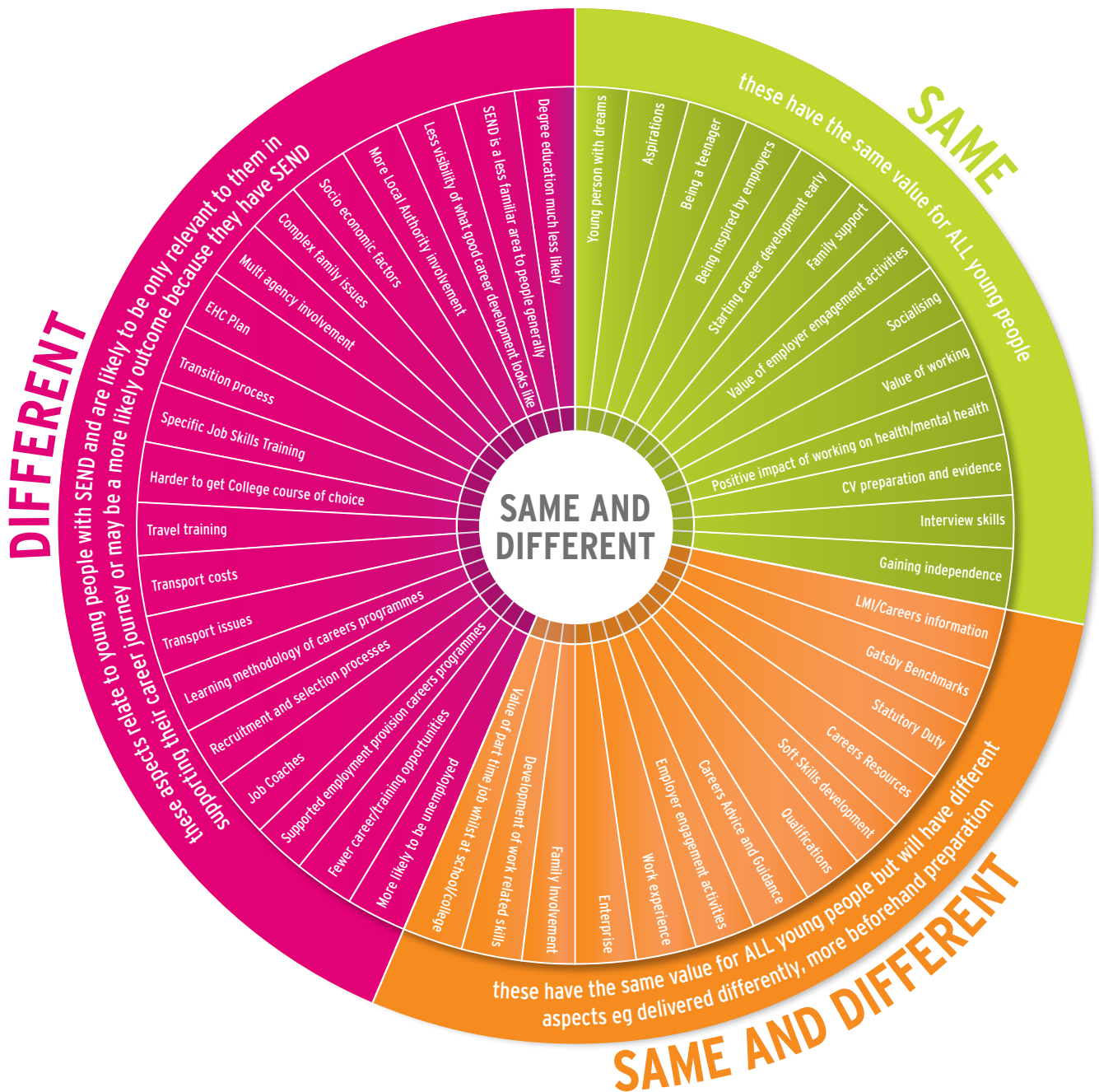
The challenges faced by young people with SEND in achieving their optimum career outcome span a wide range of barriers. The Careers and Enterprise Company is working towards mitigating these barriers through the work it is doing in Schools, Special Schools and Colleges and with employers. Training, resources and toolkits are being made widely available and work is being carried out by the CEF 18 dedicated SEND projects, SEND Enterprise Coordinators and in SEND Hubs across the country supported by Talentino, the strategic partner for SEND. The career challenges include:

1. Low levels of knowledge generally about who young people with SEND are, they are a very diverse group with wide ranging needs around their early career development
2. Low levels of knowledge and confidence of some employers about what good early career development looks like for young people with SEND and how they can engage effectively
3. Supply and demand – there are low number of opportunities for school leavers driven by employers in some areas for example Supported Internships or Supported Apprenticeships
4. Systemic failures e.g. Access to Work funding only available to young people who have an EHC plan and being allocated differently in different areas
5. Many families need more support and encouragement with information being provided in accessible ways and their confidence/ aspirations built upon so they can support their child
6. College provision / opportunities are not consistent everywhere for young people with SEND and more sharing needs to happen of examples of best practice
7. All activity is hyper-local so lacks visibility which means learning can be lost and needs to be surfaced through communities of practice and published research
8. Shortage of qualified and knowledgeable Careers Advisers with the relevant skills who can engage with a young person long term and build up a relationship
9. Lack of appropriate careers programmes and materials

The Careers and Enterprise Company is systematically working to mitigate these challenges through its work in the networks, through Careers Leaders and via the Gatsby Benchmarks.

#sameanddifferent – Version 1 for use with Career SEND Group One

#sameanddifferent is an early career development model for young people with SEND who will typically not take GCSEs or Level 2 qualifications.

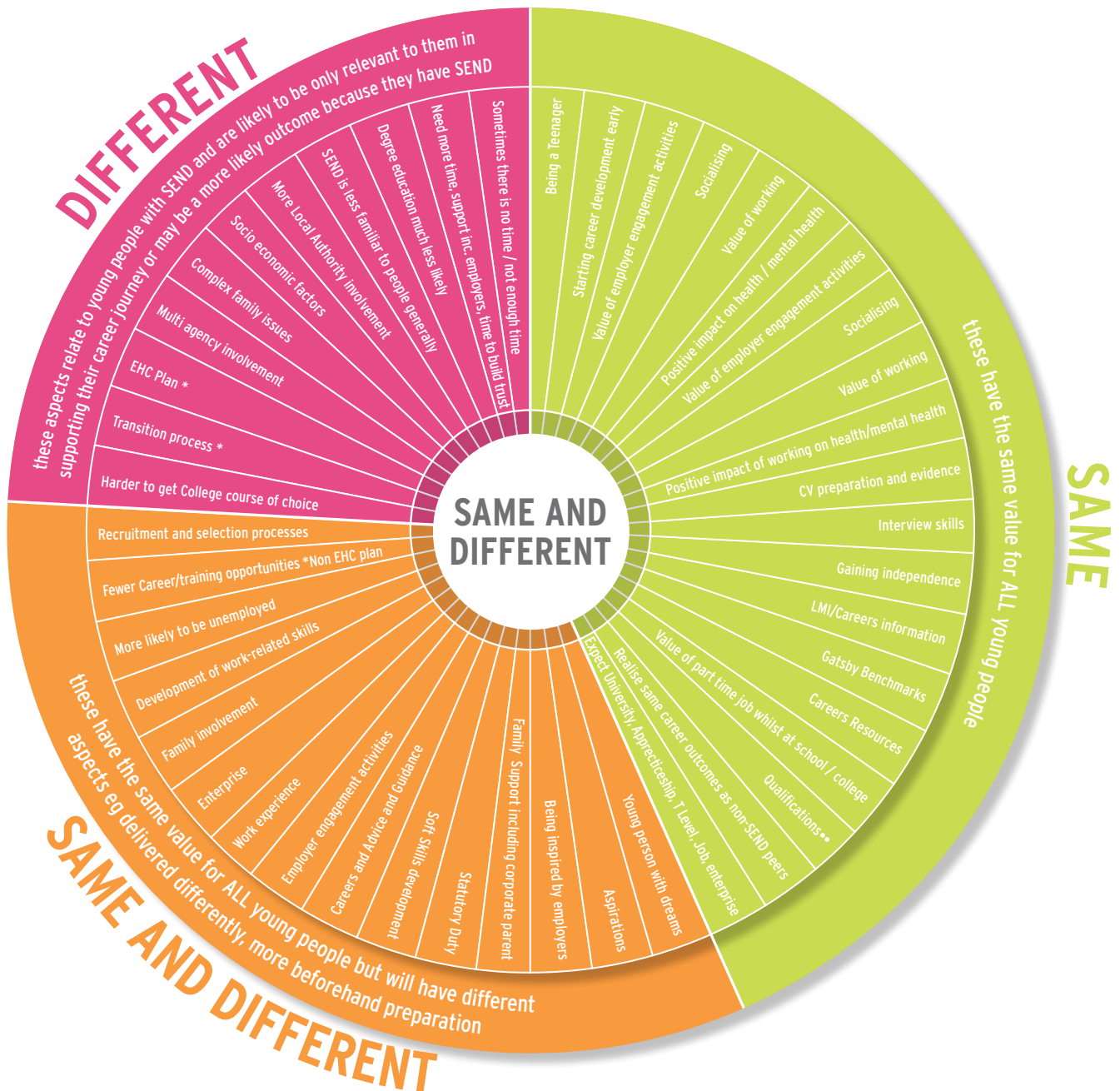


●	Same
●	Same and Different
●	Different

Potential Career Outcomes include – Supported Internships, Supported Apprenticeships / Apprenticeship, Supported employment / employment, Supported Enterprise, FE College, T Level, Extended work placement, Supported Volunteering
 Download poster [here](#).

#sameanddifferent – Version 2 for use with Career SEND Group Two

#sameanddifferent is an early career development model for young people with SEND who typically will be able to take GCSEs/Level 2 qualifications.



●	Same
●	Same and Different
●	Different

Potential Career Outcomes include – University, Apprenticeships, employment, Enterprise, FE College, T Level
 Download poster [here](#).

Positive Career Outcomes for Career SEND Groups 1 and 2

It might be helpful to explore in more detail what positive career outcomes look like for each of the two Career SEND groups. Below you will find an explanation of each career outcome we have referenced in the toolkit.

Positive Career Outcomes	Description
Paid employment	Working 16 hours or more weekly with a contract in place.
Supported employment	Paid employment utilising personalised support e.g... a Job Coach enabling a disabled person to sustain paid work (Access to Work Funding).
Higher Education	University Education – full/part time, open learning – from age 18.
Further Education	College Education – full/part time from age 16 upwards – ranging from Functional Skills to Degree Level and beyond.
T Level	<p>T Levels are new vocational qualifications being introduced in September 2020, which will follow GCSEs and will be equivalent to three A Levels. These two-year courses have been developed in collaboration with employers to ensure alignment with the needs of industry and aims to prepare students for work.</p> <p>T Levels will offer students a mixture of classroom learning and ‘on-the-job’ experience during an industry placement of at least 315 hours (approximately 45 days). They will provide the knowledge and experience needed to open the door into skilled employment, further study or a higher apprenticeship.</p>
Specialist College	Specialist further education and training colleges for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, sometimes residential.
Apprenticeship	A combination of work and study by mixing on-the-job training with classroom learning and being employed to do a real job while studying for a formal qualification, usually for one day a week either at a college or a training centre.
Supported Apprenticeship	A combination of work, study and support by mixing on-the-job training with classroom learning and employed to do a real job while studying for an Entry Level 3 Functional Skills for young people with an EHC Plan, or other formal needs assessment offered on a case by case basis.
Supported Internship	<p>Supported internships are a structured study programme based primarily at an employer. They enable young people aged 16-24 with a statement of SEN, or an Education, Health and Care plan to achieve sustainable paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need for work, through learning in the workplace. Supported internships are unpaid, and last for a minimum of six months but can be longer.</p> <p>Wherever possible, they support the young person to move into paid employment at the end of the programme either with the employer offering the internship or another employer. Alongside their time at the employer, young people complete a personalised study programme which includes the chance to study for relevant qualifications, and English and maths if appropriate.</p>

Positive Career Outcomes	Description
Traineeship	A traineeship is an education and training programme with work experience that unlocks the great potential of young people aged 16-24 and prepares them for their future careers by helping them to become 'work ready'. Traineeships can last up to a maximum of six months and will include work preparation training provided by the training organisation, English and maths support if required, provided by the training organisation and a high-quality work experience placement with an employer.
Own Enterprise	Creating their own business, which could be a social Enterprise focused on improving other lives in some way and which they run themselves.
Own Enterprise with support	Being supported to create and sustain their own business, which can be a social Enterprise focused on improving other lives in some way.
Self- Employed/ Entrepreneur	The young person works on a self-employed basis either for themselves or for another employer and will be responsible for generating their own work, paying their own tax and looking after themselves.
Supported Self Employment	The young person is supported to effect their own employment on a self-employed basis either for themselves or for another employer and will be supported to generate their own work, pay their own tax and look after themselves.
Supported Volunteering	Supported Volunteering aims to provide the support necessary to encourage confidence building and engagement in volunteering activity by people experiencing mental health problems, people with learning disabilities and other complex needs and can lead to other career outcomes.
Extended Work Placement	Longer period of Work Experience providing essential work skills improving employability and providing a real understanding of the workplace. Some Colleges offer bursaries for travel, subsistence etc and can work alongside a vocational course, for example.
Therapeutic Environments	An example could be a Specialist residential college who offer a wide range of therapeutic services/opportunities for young people age 19-25 with complex needs.
Supported Independent Living	This might be part time, respite/short breaks or as support to move into independent living and will be organised in conjunction with the relevant agencies and families.

Young people with PMLD / Highly Complex Needs and using the Gatsby Benchmarks

There is a consensus that the Gatsby Benchmarks are appropriate for all students, although we recognise that some flexibility should be applied when using the Gatsby Benchmarks with students with PMLD/ Highly Complex Needs.

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:



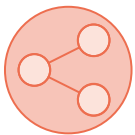
Benchmark 1- The content of a holistic careers programme to reflect the core themes of the Preparation for Adulthood programme including employment health, independent living, education, housing options, relationships, community



Benchmark 2 – The aim remains the same, but the content will reflect the relevant information that the cohort and their family needs



Benchmark 3 – The aim remains perfectly aligned and needs to refer to the multiple statutory planning processes and achieving participation of students



Benchmark 4 – The language does need to reflect this group more strongly and the interpretation of the subjects English, Maths and Science must reflect a cross curricular approach as opposed to the hard-core subject matter



Benchmark 5- 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



Benchmark 6 – The recommendation is to follow the same approach as with Benchmark 5 with an enhanced focus on Enterprise



Benchmark 7 - Universities / HE has already been removed and the inclusion of the wider range of destinations and young people's transition into them need to be highlighted



Benchmark 8 – The focus has been on generating internal qualified Careers Advisers and the advantages to their being in place for this cohort

Part 2

Gatsby Benchmarks

How to use the SEND Gatsby Toolkit

Gatsby Benchmarks - How to use the SEND Gatsby Toolkit

Each of the eight benchmarks have been divided into sections to help you find the information you need easily. The sections are:

- **What Good Looks like** – Describes when a benchmark is being delivered/facilitated effectively;
- **What This Means in Practice** – a fuller explanation of ‘what good looks like’ for young people with SEND;
- **Why This Matters** – Describes some of the challenges faced by young people with SEND with ideas about how to mitigate them;
- **Parents/Carer/Families** – This section highlights some of the challenges faced by families and tips around how to increase engagement;
- **Case Studies** – Real life examples from a wide range of schools, special schools and colleges showcasing what they are doing to deliver the Gatsby Benchmarks for young people with a diverse range of additional needs. The case studies can be found throughout the toolkit. It must be said we had many examples to choose from but limited space;
- **Top tips for employers** – Practical activities and advice for employers so they can effectively engage with and support young people with SEND;
- **Top tips for schools and colleges** - Practical activities and advice for schools and colleges so they can further effectively engage with and support young people with SEND;
- **Resources** – There are many resources that can be accessed, many for free. The resource links we have included represent forty of the larger organisations concerned with the advancement of young people with SEND and the schools and colleges we have used for the case studies.
- **Photos** – We would like to thank the students of Brookfields Special School and Catcote Academy for the student photographs taken during their careers activities.

Compass for special schools

The Gatsby Benchmarks work for young people with SEND and Compass has been adapted for special schools. Compass for special schools is focused on the application of the Gatsby Benchmarks for both groups of SEND students, those students who will typically not take GCSEs/Level 2 qualifications and those students who will typically take GCSEs/Level 2 qualifications.

For Career SEND Group 1 (see page 13) the following changes have been made. When you sign in, you will be asked if your students typically take GCSEs, if the answer is no you will be redirected to the new version. The specific changes are –

- Use of the term ‘Includes Year 14’
- Includes the term ‘for whom it is deemed appropriate’ throughout
- Includes the age range 19-25 throughout
- References the Local Offer
- Benchmark 2 -Relevant career outcomes e.g. Supported Internships
- Benchmark 4 -Functional level Maths and English and accredited/non-accredited Science
- Benchmark 6 - Internal work experience
- Benchmark 7 -The 2 questions about HE have been removed
- Benchmark 8 -Internal qualified Careers Adviser

You can find out more about Compass for special schools in our [introduction webinar](#) and [guidance](#).

We are always happy to receive feedback and if you would like to get in touch, please email us: send@careersandenterprise.co.uk

Gatsby Benchmark 1

A stable careers programme

What good looks like

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.

What this means in practice

The aims of careers provision are the same for all young people: independent living and working, choice, hope and optimism, adaptability and resilience, access to and engagement in decent work in all its forms (personal, gift and paid work), opportunities to learn and make progress, and the pursuit of wellbeing and happiness. Where the differences lie for young people with SEND is in how they need to learn, their priorities within that learning, how far they can get, at what rate they can progress and the willingness of the businesses and people around them to accommodate their needs.

- A whole-school careers programme typically involves an overarching strategy with details of how activities can help students make better decisions about their futures. An effective programme includes:
 - Opportunities across the curriculum to develop transferable life and social skills that support careers, employability and enterprise;
 - The development of students' self-advocacy, negotiation, decision-making and transition skills;
 - Purposeful interactions with a range of trusted and familiar adults including school staff and visitors;
 - Partnership with parents and carers;
 - Recognition of the learner voice and the active involvement of young people in decisions that affect their future, both individually and collectively;
 - Information, advice and guidance.

- The curriculum and the way it is delivered need to be flexibly tailored for each student.
- The process of developing and implementing a careers strategy and programme is the same for all schools and is of value to all young people. Special schools need to develop a programme that is relevant to their students whilst mainstream schools should ensure that their programmes are suitable for all of their learners including those with SEND.
- In order to comply with the SEND Code of Practice 2015, a school's SEND information report must include information about "arrangements for supporting children and young people in moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood. As young people prepare for adulthood outcomes should reflect their ambitions, which could include higher education, employment, independent living and participation in society."
- Research shows that schools can create more positive career outcomes by starting career development early and continuing throughout school and further education. Key elements of this include facilitating family involvement and providing support for young people's transitions to the workplace. In some cases, it may be helpful to continue support following the transition to the workplace.
- Schools, special schools and colleges should seek to help young people with SEND to aspire to a wide range of destinations and to realise these aspirations. Providing students with taster opportunities, work experience, mentoring, enterprise education, access to role models and inspiring speakers can all help to achieve this.

Why this matters

- Nearly 15% of the population have SEND/additional needs. Over 250,000 pupils have a statement of special educational needs or EHCP and around 1 million pupils are on SEND support.
- Careers for all is a social justice issue. A stable careers programme for all young people, including those with SEND, will help to close the gap.
- A longitudinal study of US students with SEND who participated in a careers programme found they had significantly higher earnings five years on, and were significantly more likely to be employed or on a training programme than those who had not participated.
- The government aims to get 30% more disabled people into work by 2020.
- The charity Scope identified in April 2015 that if one million more disabled people were working by 2030, the UK economy would benefit by £45 million.
- 70% of the public think more highly of companies that employ a diverse workforce.
- Young people with SEND need a supportive, long term systematic approach to their careers education and a stable careers programme delivered over a long period of time for the greatest chance of a positive career outcome.

Parents/Carers/Families

Parents, carers and families need to be provided with opportunities to understand the careers programme and careers activities being offered to their child/children. Information about your careers programme has to be published on your website, however, not every family will have online access and there may well be barriers to information getting through so be creative about how to achieve this. Parents/carers may need support to build their confidence to enable them to access up to date information and understand the activities their child/children are being offered. Involve parents/carers in the preparation for careers transitions, career decisions, work experience and employer encounters so their child can fully participate.



Examples of a stable careers programme

Brookfields Special School

Brookfields is a Specialist SEN school in Reading. Brookfields caters for young people who have an EHCP and have learning difficulty as their primary need, which could be a moderate, severe or profound/complex learning difficulty. In addition to a learning difficulty, some pupils may have additional needs such as ASD, ADHD, VI, HI, PD or MSI. Some of their pupils might also have medical needs and require care plans.

Through Brookfield's careers programme "Pathway to Employment", they have achieved some significant outcomes for young people with learning difficulties and additional needs, enabling them to secure full time paid employment.

Thanks to a person-centered approach, Brookfields pupils can articulate their dreams and aspirations for their futures and adult life. To support a common goal of entering the world of work, Brookfields have created a unique and highly regarded 'Pathway to Employment', with five distinct but related strands:

- Way2Work (Careers at Every Level) Careers Education lessons;
- Work Related Learning;
- Business Enterprise programmes;
- Work Based Experience;
- Supported Internships.

Brookfields has developed a careers programme with many stable qualities. For example, they have introduced flexible study programmes, enabling sixth form students to spend up to two days a week out of school in work-based practise or in a part time job.

Brookfields works with many people to deliver the best possible result for the student including the

student's family, the schools fully trained Job Coaches, as well as many local businesses they have partnered with. There is also a designated Careers Governor.

Brookfield's career programme has a clear structure, namely their Pathway to Employment as detailed above. The programme is also clearly backed by the senior management team, as the school's Careers Education Lead is Maurice George, an Assistant Headteacher.

Brookfield's has multiple trained staff responsible for delivering the programme, namely two qualified Job Coaches, two members of staff who are completing Careers Leader training and an additional five staff who are certified Early Career Coaches.

There is a section on their website which details the school's careers programme.

Brookfields evaluates the effectiveness of their careers programme annually. In 2019, Brookfields was the winner of the CDI award for 'Best Practice in Special Education and Employer Engagement' and were commended for The Careers & Enterprise Company 2019 award for SEND Champion.



Catcote Academy

Catcote Academy has an ethos of overcoming barriers in careers, for young people with SEN. They have a mantra of: Focus on what we CAN do, not what we can't! This ethos is embedded throughout the academy with an extensive, long term Career Development programme for their students who have a range of SEND needs most of whom will belong to Career SEND Group 1. They describe themselves as leading the way to not only encourage but inspire and demonstrate how their young people can achieve their full potential despite a very challenging local economy and the constant requests to find out more about what they do is testament to this.

Catcote Academy school and sixth form have developed and created their own careers programme and activities in partnership with employers and external providers. They have also allowed their young people to lead the way, empowering them to guide themselves within the development process, creating resources for young people by young people. The careers activities that they deliver include:

- Foundation learning programme – KS4 vocational options programme including their own extensive facilities which include a fully fitted salon, café and bistro, ceramics, woodwork, horticulture, reprographics, performing arts and enterprise on a weekly basis;
- Inclusive Skills Competitions – opportunities for young people with SEND to gain skills and confidence and access competitions against other young people with SEND;
- Steps programme – specific employability programme heavily weighted with work placements, promoting independence based within the community to encourage maturity and independence/pre-cursor to supported Internships
- Supported internships - front-loaded programmes designed to offer an intensive supported work programme to allow students the opportunities to access working environments with the potential to lead to paid employment.
- Employer engagement – innovation days to present to employers/network of over 70+ employers/ visits to the Academy to be able to observe what is being delivered. They also break down barriers and perceptions that some employers may have with regards to working with and developing the work skills of young people with SEND. Employers are prepared using a variety of strategies ensuring communication is clear and transparent throughout the partnership. Students and employers are continually supported and kept informed at each stage of the programme to stay focussed on the aims, enabling them to confidently progress and develop the partnership;
- Employer partnerships – creating opportunities for young people to access the employers to demonstrate what they can do;
- Innovation Days – invitations to employers view our training facilities/to watch presentations of previous employer engagement/students presenting their work and receiving recognition from the employers;
- Choices Event – specific SEN careers fair for young people and their families;
- Aspire Film – a film showcasing existing employer engagement/promotion of local employers/ testimonies of employers/young people testimonies of their empowerment from accessing work placements see resources section;

- Use of Job Coaches – experienced staff to support the employers and the young people/remove fear and risk of the unknown/raising confidence for young people to try new things and adapt to change;
- Task Specific Training (TSI) – training to encourage productive working at a level and pace relevant to the young person and their needs/a specific way of working with young people to enhance their skills;
- Job Carving – staff going into employers' place of work, training on the job to break the jobs down/skills set match the young person appropriately/ensures the students are correctly;
- As a place of learning, Catcote is committed to providing development opportunities to all staff to reach the high levels of expertise students need. Staff confidence, potential and moral has improved as specialist training has been sourced and delivered. It is essential that our employer group receive a high standard of support, so the knowledge and skills demonstrated by our staff ensures quality assurance.

This is evidenced through the improved outcomes that our students have achieved but also the numerous requests from schools across the region and, indeed, nationally to support them in setting up systems and programmes of study;

Parents – invitation to all parents from Year 7 to Year 14 to parent's evenings/meetings. All stakeholders invited to share and communicate intent and destinations. Parent portal/LMI- links to information advice and guidance. They attend ECHP/annual review – attendance by Careers Lead/destination planning and tracking;

- Destination Planning – tailored individual programme for each student;
- Life Skills Programme – embedded throughout the trust.

Catcote Academy was the winner of The Careers & Enterprise Company 2019 award for SEND Champion.



Top tips for employers

- Ask the school, special school or college for their careers programme to see where your experience will count most and what support students may need to get the most from engagement with your business.
- Consider becoming an Enterprise Adviser and help the school, special school or college maintain and develop its careers programme.
- Be a critical friend – challenge and support the school, special school or college to develop a stable careers programme.
- Make sure your staff are briefed before taking part in activities, including explaining any additional needs students may have.
- Use your networks to encourage other businesses to engage with the school's careers programme and help them access a diverse talent pipeline.
- Access the government's free [Disability Confident](#) training and resources for your employees.



Top tips for schools, special schools and colleges

- Create a Strategic Careers Plan linked to your special school priorities. The plan should include a vision of what you want to achieve and identify where your careers provision could be developed further. This can be done with the support of your Enterprise Coordinator and the Enterprise Adviser Network. This vision should be based on best potential careers outcomes for your students and how they will be achieved.
- Appoint a Careers Leaders at middle or senior leadership level so that they can work effectively with staff across the school and with external partners. Ensure they have the expertise to manage and maintain the Careers Provision effectively for each and every students.
- Publish your Careers Plan and programme on your website and commit to making all stakeholders aware of it including parents, carers and agencies. Keep it up-to-date.
- Look at the connectivity between the activities you currently offer and bring them together to create a cohesive careers programme linked to your intended outcomes set out in the Strategic Careers Plan. Activities could include careers learning, employer engagement activities and internal and external careers advisers and leaders. As well as work-related learning, work experience, enterprise, independent living skills, travel training, PSHCE, transition reviews, parent and family workshops and parent and teacher association activities.
- Communicate regularly about careers and employment opportunities with parents and carers, staff, pupils and employers through an e-newsletter, news on the website or Facebook page.

Useful resources

- [Catcote Academy – video](#)
- [Brookfields Special School – video](#)
- [Westminster School, Sandwell](#)
- [Gatsby Foundation](#) – full information on the Gatsby Benchmarks, Perspectives on SEND.
- [The Careers & Enterprise Company – Compass +/- Compass](#)
- [Good Career Guidance: Perspectives from the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities sector](#) gathers together the views of leading practitioners and national experts on the importance of career guidance for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Each describes how they, or those they support, have successfully used the benchmarks to deliver better career guidance for students with a wide range of needs and disabilities.



Gatsby Benchmark 2

Learning from career and labour market information

What good looks like

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.
- 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.

What this means in practice

- Young people have access to high quality and relevant LMI which is available in accessible formats tailored to students' needs. Suitable formats include Braille, symbol language, British Sign Language (BSL), Makaton, videos and audio formats. Not all career and LMI has to be provided as a series of statistics.
- It is important to help young people start thinking early on about transition and future careers. Young people with SEND may develop socially, emotionally, cognitively or physically at different rates and careful consideration needs to be given to help them process information. The SEND Code of Practice stresses the importance of high aspirations for successful transitioning with long-term goal planning starting well before year 9. Goal planning should consider transition into post-16 education including further or higher education, apprenticeships, training, employment or self-employment.
- High aspirations about education and employment should also be developed through the curriculum and extra-curricular provision. The SEND Code of Practice says "Schools should seek partnerships with employment services, businesses, housing agencies, disability organisations and arts and sports groups, to help children understand what is available to them as they get older, and what it is possible for them to achieve."
- Young people with SEND and their families need specific information about which support mechanisms are available to help them enter the workplace including disability rights, assistive technology and available benefit packages.

- Young people with SEND and their families benefit from hearing about other young people's achievements and what employers are offering regionally. They can do this through connections to their Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) or through career talks via the school's alumni network. According to the SEND Code of Practice "It can be powerful to meet disabled adults who are successful in their work or who have made a significant contribution to their community."
- Careers information for a young person with SEND should focus on raising aspirations, building awareness and understanding personal possibilities as well as providing access to opportunities for developing work-based skills. Every student should have ready access to good quality information about future study options and career opportunities. The information needs to be engaging, with careful thought given to layout and content in a way that is appropriate for that young person.
- Parents' evenings or EHCP annual review meetings are a good way to involve families in labour market and pathway discussions. Involving a young person's family is key to successful transition and is well established as best practice.
- Appropriately trained staff should be on hand to offer students practical help with using careers and LMI.

Why this matters

- Young people with SEND face unique challenges as they progress from school to further learning and the workplace. They 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.
- Being able to understand career pathways and future possibilities is vital for students with SEND. Providing access to relevant careers information can help students determine their work preferences and skills, build a culture of high expectation and connect them to a different future. Students, parents and teachers need to be up to speed on new and developing pathways including the growth of supported internships.

Supporting Parents/Carers/Families

Families need to understand the potential financial impact of each career pathway, course or qualification. A survey by Social Finance revealed that 37% of families with disabled children in the UK had no adult in full-time employment, compared to the national average of 17%. It is important to ensure families have information about the financial aspects of their child's career aspirations and understand how benefits may be affected.

It is not unusual for parents/carers/families to think about their own careers experiences and what things were like when they were at school and relate this to their own children's situation, which is well-intentioned but not necessarily wholly relevant. Things have been moving at a fast pace in the last two-three years with the introduction of the Gatsby Benchmarks and the work being done by The Careers & Enterprise Company around employer encounters in school and the availability of local market information.

Some parents/carers/families may not have had the chance to catch up with all the opportunities their children now have, some may have reservations about how their child will cope or whether they will be able to work. These concerns have completely legitimate origins of course. Schools and colleges can do much to provide the contemporary information that parents, carers and families need, building their confidence to support their child's aspirations. Carers of Looked After Children need to be provided with exactly the same support to improve the possibility of improved positive career outcomes.

It is crucial that we support and involve the parents, carers/ families on this journey alongside their young person.



Examples of good learning from careers and labour market information

BASE (British Association of Supported Employment)

Employment is Everyone's Business is a project delivered by NDTI with BASE (British Associate for Supported Employment) and funded through the Department for Education's (DfE) grant programme.

The project worked with four local partner sites covering Special Schools and Colleges: Berkshire, Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES), Wolverhampton and Kirklees. The Berkshire site included Slough, Windsor, Maidenhead, Reading, West Berkshire, Bracknell and Wokingham.

Each of the sites is committed to improving employment outcomes for young people. The project aimed to demonstrate best practice and how:

- Vocational profiling can be embedded in the curriculum, education, health and care plans and reviews as well as careers advice;
- Post-16 providers like Further Education colleges can create appropriate study programmes and work effectively with employers to support young people moving into employment;

- Local authorities can ensure young people with special educational needs and disabilities and those who are NEET are at the heart of their employment, economic, housing, personal budget and commissioning strategies.

Work in each site was locally driven and designed in partnership with young people, families, education and social care practitioners, employment agencies and, of course, employers.

The work and outcomes are shared through a series of brief 'how to' guides. Which can be downloaded [here](#).

The project sits alongside the DfE's focus on young people with additional needs, the NDTI's Preparation for Adulthood and employment strands and BASEs support to and championing of best practice in employment support.

Cleasewell Hill School

Cleasewell Hill School is a special school in Choppington, Northumberland. The pupils are aged 4-18 years old and have a range of complex learning difficulties and disabilities. Many pupils have additional physical, medical, sensory, communication or emotional needs. They provide specialised learning tailored to each pupil's individual needs. Every child follows a broad and responsive curriculum that is appropriate to their age and/or stage of development.

Cleasewell Hill defines a career as a pathway through life. Their careers guidance includes independent living skills, community inclusion and understanding of post school options. They give support and advice through creative careers education and work-related learning. The careers programme operates under six phases, with a "stage not age" approach. These stages include, for example, role play and scenario learning, vocational curriculum options and work experience, amongst many other things.

After research into the local job market, Cleasewell Hill decided to offer taster courses in subjects such as Health and Social Care, as these are relevant to local industries. Therefore, giving their students information about local labour market opportunities. Cleasewell Hill found that their learners are a lot more likely to explore alternative career options if they know there are job opportunities available locally.

Additionally, each student is given a range of career-related opportunities throughout their time at school, specifically tailored to their needs and ambitions. For example, students may have industry visits, role play activities or research. They also have access to STEM online learning resources, which have developed students' basic science skills. This has highlighted different future opportunities, such as Level 3 engineering courses.

Students are also able to visit educational facilities appropriate for their chosen pathway, such as volunteer organisations, colleges or universities.

Cleasewell Hill has a designated Careers Leader, and it is set out in their Careers Policy that the Careers Leader will support students by giving them the opportunity for individual, impartial careers guidance interviews at key decision points.

The Careers Policy also mandates that parents and/or carers are given updated information and guidance on further educational facilities, work experience opportunities and labour market information, as well as receiving regular reports regarding the progress of their child.

NDTI Pathways to Adulthood

The NDTI is a not for profit organisation that has been working for 25 years with communities, governments and health and social care professionals. They work to enable people at risk of exclusion, due to age or disability, to live the life they choose. They have many, very useful, free resources on their website, which are free for anyone to access, namely students or parents/carers of students.

The NDTI has a national programme “Preparing for Adulthood”, which is funded by the DfE. The aim of the programme is to support young people into adulthood with paid employment/volunteering, good health, independent/supported living and friends/leisure, relationships and community inclusion.

Of these four main sections, the first is the most relevant here; “Pathway into paid work”. The NDTI detail five main ways that young people with learning disabilities can get into employment: Supported Internship (see [page 62](#) National Grid Employability case study), supported apprenticeship, supported employment, work-related learning at college, and self-employment.

They outline a free guideline for activities in Years 9, 10 and 11 to have the best chance of the young person achieving their employment goal. In Year 9, the young person would start their transition plan, begin to plan for future study and/or careers. This planning process would take into account the young person's aspirations and abilities and the information would be captured on their EHC plan. In Year 10, they would have a review meeting where the career plan can be built upon further. They will already have had work experience or, plan it in the review meeting. In Year 11, they will clearly set out what the young person will do in the coming years, and hopefully by this point they will have had or will be able to soon have some part time work.

Key useful resources can be found:

- [This is a guide](#) for improving outcomes when writing EHC Plans.
- [Working with a Job Coach](#).
- [Better off in Work](#).

Have a look at their extensive website, they are many more resources.

Top tips for employers

- Offer activities that can boost belief that paid work is a real possibility.
- Think about the way your career information is presented and which formats would work best for young people with SEND – consider symbol, language, talks, written content or information for parents.
- Make sure you publicise the opportunities you have, such as supported internships, to local and special schools.
- Consider becoming a disability confident employer and enrich your workforce with untapped skills.
- Advertise that you are proud to work with young people with SEND and are committed to developing a diverse workforce. Raise awareness in your communications and marketing materials.
- Encourage your staff to volunteer to support young people in school with SEND. [Volunteering Matters](#) runs an employee volunteering in schools programme.



Top tips for schools, special schools and colleges

- Bring back alumni who are in employment or training, or offer other work-related opportunities to inspire students of their future potential. This is an effective way of sharing information about potential opportunities.
- Work with SEND charities, foundations or organisations with a deep knowledge of the career landscape and who actively use LMI to successfully find workplaces, experience and internships for students with SEND, such as BASE.
- Develop role-play activities relating to different work settings and organise visits or guided tours of workplaces.
- Draw on Jobcentre Plus school advisers to come in to talk to students, families and staff about local opportunities. The Enterprise Adviser Network can facilitate an introduction.
- Train older students to support younger students to make use of career resources and build communication skills.
- Use your skills and professional knowledge base to provide opportunities for a local business to learn more about disability and diversity. Ask them to give talks to your students about the work they do.
- Use the connections available through your staff. Leveraging friends and family networks can be a soft landing to engage with employers who can help raise aspirations and provide insight into the labour market and opportunities available.

Useful resources

- [Career Ready](#)
- [ICould including the Buzz Quiz](#)
- [BASE](#)
- [National Careers Service](#)
- [LMI Career Smart \(Prospects\)](#)
- [LMI for all](#)



Gatsby Benchmark 3

Addressing the needs of each learner

What good looks like

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.
- 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.

What this means in practice

- A student's individual needs are addressed and extra support is provided at the right time to raise aspirations. Outstanding provision in SEND settings offers a person-centred approach and students with complex needs will have an education, health and care plan (EHCP) that takes into account all aspects of their lives.
- Transition support is tailored to what the student wants to achieve and what practical help is needed to do this.
- Parents and carers are fully involved in the transition planning process.
- Schools develop use of vocational profiles. The National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) and the British Association of Supported Employment (BASE) define a vocational profile as a form of assessment to understand an individual's experience, skills, abilities, interests, aspirations and needs in relation to employment. The aim is to understand the person in-depth and to allow for the best possible job match or work experience placement. It provides a picture of the ideal conditions needed in a workplace for the student to be successful."
- There are many potential career pathways and options for a young person with SEND. These opportunities are identified by addressing the individual needs of the student, for example, by looking at their healthcare needs, cognitive ability, capacity to regulate emotions or social awareness.

- A creative approach is taken to the career outcome continuum: at one end, someone can travel independently to a paid job and at the other end, may need 24/7 care and support. Career outcomes along the continuum include part-time or full-time paid work, volunteering, internships, apprenticeships, employer training schemes, enterprise, supported self-employment, charity work, further education and employability or life skills courses. Start with the assumption of paid employment and look for opportunities to shape and carve work so that students can succeed.
- The school collects and maintains accurate data for each student around their education, training and employment destinations for at least three years after they leave. Schools ensure that students can access simple documentation such as a career journal or learning record to help them record their skills and experiences, building a compelling story for job applications and interviews.
- Good use is made of a range of organisations so that there is a multi-agency approach to job exploration and transition support.
- Schools and colleges maintain contact with past students to create an opportunity for an alumni network and inspiring role models for current students.

Why this matters

- The government's [Improving Lives green paper](#) recognises that there is a long way to go to ensure that disabled people and those with long-term health conditions have equal access to labour market opportunities and are given the support they need to prevent them from falling out of work. This costs individuals and wider society.
- With the right level of support a much higher proportion of young people with SEND will be able to contribute to the workplace, benefitting employers, themselves and wider society.
- Mencap cites that almost a third of young people with learning difficulties spend less than an hour a day outside their homes. A personalised approach is critical, supported by a culture of high expectations supported by EHCPs and vocational profiles.
- Students with SEND are the most likely group to be absent or excluded from school according to recent Ofsted findings. They are also less likely to achieve in terms of their attainment and progression and most likely to be NEET.

Supporting Parents/Carers/Families

Mini case study from Brades Lodge, Sandwell.

In many cases pupils have 3rd and 4th generations of parents that have never undertaken paid work in their adult lives, this poses a huge challenge. On three specific days in the year, parents come in and experience life at the Brades. The last Parental Engagement day had a careers focus for parents and extended family of our pupils. The aim was to raise the aspirations of the whole family as this would have a direct impact on pupils. Representatives attended from DWP, Job Centre, Connexions and Universal Credit to give advice and guidance to all that attended. Feedback was sought from parents and families and it was very positive. This will now be a regular feature on the school calendar.



Examples of schools addressing the needs of each pupil

The Castle School

The Castle School has a clear, structured careers programme, that is ingrained across the school from an early age. Their belief is that “Any student with the drive and desire to work should have the opportunity to do so”, and the outcomes they achieve reflect this.

Every student has a bespoke timetable to meet their needs. Work experience is meaningful, carefully matched to the student’s interests and scheduled for times and durations that suit them.

They constantly seek opportunities to expose students to employers through classroom sessions and off-site visits. Students attend careers fairs and open days and inter-schools events including Vodafone day, where the Castle School won! Further education training providers and employment agencies also run sessions in school. They aim to broaden students’ horizons and belief in what they can achieve by showing them the scope of careers available in the local market and broader sectors.

Work experience is built into each student’s personal, weekly timetable to complement their own wider requirements. They move their students through different placements, with different levels of support, developing this alongside their confidence, skills and awareness of their own ambitions.

World of Work activities are tailored around Personal Guidance. Vocational profiling is used alongside constant individual contact to understand each student. Placements are regularly reviewed and adjusted, based on the student’s development and preferences. Additional background support such as travel training or online training modules are tailored to each individual and provided by the school.

Last year 24% of students leaving the Castle School gained paid employment - significantly ahead of the national average for people with disabilities (6%).

Support is flexible, continuously re-evaluated to enable independence, and is complemented by individual coaching.

Another crucial element of their work programme is the “three stage approach”: Stage one is “work experience” - typically lasting a half-day per week, for six weeks. The second is a “work placement”, which usually evolves from a period of work experience, and may extend to several months, with more time spent in the workplace (such as a full day per week). The third is a “supported internship” where students spend the majority of their week at work and are specifically aiming towards paid employment.

Continuous support is given to both students and employers throughout work placements. Initially employers are given an information pack including risk assessment, background information, placement details and key objectives. The school provides all transport, on-site support and job coaching, tailored to the employer’s and student’s needs.

Chadsgrove School

Chadsgrove School is a special education school in Catshill, Bromsgrove. Chadsgrove caters for pupils aged 2–19 years old whose Special Educational Needs arise from their physical disability or a complex health need. Chadsgrove School includes pupils with sensory impairments and mild, moderate, severe or specific learning difficulties in addition to their physical disabilities. Most pupils at the school have an EHCP. A significant number of pupils attend Chadsgrove School after a period in mainstream schools, whilst others have left Chadsgrove School to attend mainstream or other Special schools depending on their progress.

Chadsgrove School has established a range of effective careers guidance activities which guide and support their students to achieve positive destinations such as A Levels, Higher Education, Apprenticeships, Technical routes or employment. They aim to ensure that students are fully prepared for and informed effectively about their next steps and can therefore aspire to achieve their full potential.

Chadsgrove School has a careers programme that addresses the needs of each pupil. For example, the careers team have tailored a bespoke career and enterprise development plan for each pupil in Years 9–14.

In some cases, the local businesses were initially reticent about taking on board pupils with complex medical and physical needs, stuck in the stereotypical view that young people with additional needs would not be employees they would want to take on. However, Chadsgrove School were able to convince them how beneficial it would be for them, and as a result many pupils attained a work placement at a local business, such as at a nursing home, farm or foodbank.

The aspirations of many pupils at Chadsgrove School have indeed been raised, such as a young pupil who had always wanted to be a cook but didn't have the confidence to pursue this. Thanks to Chadsgrove School staff giving him coaching on things like serving drinks, he was then able to transfer these skills successfully at a work placement where he serves customers tea and coffee every week. He has even asked if he can continue after school finishes.

Chadsgrove School is also in the process of developing accurate tracking systems to ensure students can keep track of their own journey. They will be able to record and access the advice they have received and monitor the agreed actions and next steps. These records and data will also be kept by the school.

Admiral Lord Nelson School

The Admiral Lord Nelson School (ALNS) is a school of around 1000 students aged between 11 and 16. ALNS have a well-developed and highly regarded Personal Development curriculum for all students. During both Key Stages, at various times during the year, the curriculum is delivered by more holistic themed activities and events aimed at ensuring students' development of essential skills.

In Years 7-9, students will develop their skills for success through the "Aspiring Futures" programme, Personal Development Days and other additional events. Students learn how to transfer these skills to increase their awareness of personal strengths and interests.

ALNS' Careers programme includes Skills for Success, trying to understand what sort of learners each individual student is, what are their personal skills and qualities, and how to achieve their potential by ultimately implementing a career plan.

In Year 7, an assembly is delivered specifically to raise aspirations and challenge stereotypical thinking. It is delivered by Steve Cunningham, who is visually impaired, and inspires the students to overcome

adversity. Aspirations are also raised in Year 7 and 8 at a STEM Personal Development Day, opening student's eyes to the rapidly expanding variety of careers available in the 21st Century. Stereotypical gender roles are also challenged at ALNS, for example at an event dedicated to girls running their own business or going into engineering.

There are a wide variety of other activities on offer in KS3 at ALNS that are tailored to the needs of a wide range of students. There is a talk from someone who works at the European Space Agency, discussing the importance of languages in the world of work. There is also a day of activities centred around a mock Stock Market, giving students an opportunity to explore the ideas of money and business.

In KS4, there are many further opportunities for the students to be guided and advised in a way that suits them. For example, there are 1:1 interviews in Years 9, 10 and 11 as well as additional support for students considering college and apprenticeships, such as arranging specific taster sessions and interview preparation help.

Top tips for employers

- Consider how you can support students through mentoring with providers such as Talentino, Young Enterprise or Youth at Risk.
- Draw advice from specialist agencies and teachers to ensure your careers support for the school meets the needs of students.
- Review how your support is reaching all students within the school.
- Help the school to engage with parents and carers, to help support career pathway discussions.
- Share personal stories of overcoming barriers and accessing support.
- Support schools and colleges to record careers activities through systematic evaluation.

Top tips for schools, special schools and colleges

You will already have processes and teaching practices in place that reflects a person-centred approach. Adding an early career development plan to the EHCP can be helpful. You could:

- Use the [Compass evaluation tool](#) to assess how well existing provision meets the needs of all students.
- Work with employers to develop the learning goals and skills needed in the workplace.
- Introduce employers informally as early as possible, such as organising employer talks.
- Highlight individual student's career goals and create opportunities to engage with relevant employers.
- Consult with your students about what they see as the most important barriers and opportunities in making good post-school progression.
- Create a careers week to explore a variety of jobs and opportunities, for example, get involved in National Careers Week or National Apprenticeship Week.
- Think about how careers guidance and support can be shared between school staff, dedicated careers teachers, careers advisers, employers, job coaches and other agencies. This should be part of an ongoing conversation with proposed outcomes identified in each student's EHCP.
- Create a balance between generic employability skills and developmental and individual needs, such as travel, training and social skills development.

- Help students to become independent careers managers by maintaining their own records of career development.
- Use information on student destinations to draw together a list of alumni who can support your careers and enterprise programme.

Useful resources

- [Admiral Lord Nelson](#)
- [Releasing Potential](#) – an AP school.
- [CDI Framework](#)
- [Young Enterprise](#)
- [Vocational Profiling](#) – free workbook.
- [Council for Disabled Children](#) signposting other resources.



Gatsby Benchmark 4

Linking curriculum learning to careers

What good looks like

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.

What this means in practice

- Linking curriculum learning with careers refers to careers education as a discrete learning activity, 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.
- One size does not fit all. Young people with SEND need a personalised careers curriculum.
- Schools can benefit by using up-to-date, research-based evidence of what works in SEND teaching and learning such as the [ASK Research and Coventry University DfE-funded resource](#) when designing careers-related curriculum interventions.
- The medium is the message. Linking curriculum learning to careers is also about using teaching approaches that develop transferable career skills. This includes working as autonomously as possible, organising thinking, meeting deadlines, persisting and being reliable.

- Linking curriculum learning to careers involves harnessing the concepts, methods, perspectives and forms of explanation of the subjects taught in the school, for example:
 - Maths for numeracy, time management and finance;
 - Science and technology for investigation, prediction and exploring the wide range of jobs in STEM from CSI to the space industry;
 - English for self-presentation, telling your own story and writing occupational information;
 - PSHCE for self-care, building safe relationships, assertiveness, negotiation, managing stress and emotional intelligence;
 - Geography for independent travel, growth sectors of the economy, green living and working;
 - History for how work has changed and the future of work;
 - Art for the design of work clothes, what to wear and the design of the work environment;
 - Music for influencing the mood of consumers, work songs and planning a performance;
 - Computing and digital technology for freeing students from the barriers of production such as handwriting difficulties or physically carrying books so that they can function at higher levels;
 - Catering for producing food at home or in a catering environment;
 - Modern languages for leisure learning and social confidence.
- The school or college recognises that the reach of subject teaching is far greater than what can be achieved through a few careers education sessions. Having careers as a cross-curricular subject in the school curriculum can give young people access to both work-related experiences and explicit skills, alongside ensuring the subject curriculum relates to the workplace.
- For students with learning difficulties, the careers programme may also incorporate a broader curriculum of independent living skills, social skills and travel training delivered by regular staff at school or by employer volunteers or mentors.
- Students with SEND need to have a tailored approach that takes into account their own pace of learning and unique abilities. This will involve providing a balance between different elements of their learning, such as class-based, experiences of the workplace or enterprise activities.
- Please note the version of Compass for special schools launched in January 2020, identifies subjects at a Functional Level as well as non-accredited versions.

Why this matters

- Enabling young people with SEND to develop their career thinking whilst they are at school is often the best preparation for their future lives and employment. Teachers are highly influential and students are 18 times more likely to be motivated to learn if their teacher knows their hopes and dreams.
- Career-relevant learning improves young people's motivation and engagement in learning.

Supporting Parents/Carers/Families

When planning the careers curriculum and careers activities it can be useful to think about what might be useful for parents, carers and families. Some schools tackle it directly and others take a more indirect approach. For example, Brookfields Special School runs transition workshops in a series from KS3 and invite whole families – parents, carers, siblings and students themselves and talk about the successes of current and past students. Another school runs a programme for parents but subsumes the careers elements into other workshops as they believe parents would not attend if it was solely focused on careers. The format which information is delivered in is important too, for example it is not unusual for parents of children in a Special School to have learning difficulties themselves and this may need to be overcome with symbol language. The 'Corporate' parent of Looked After Children will need information and if the carer changes then repeat information needs to be provided to new carers.

Examples of linking curriculum learning to careers

Woodlane High School

Woodlane High School is a purpose-built community special school for pupils aged 11-16 years with a range of barriers to learning including speech, language and communication difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), dyslexia or dyspraxia, or vulnerable pupils who have failed to thrive in a mainstream setting.

Personal, social, citizenship, health and economic education (PSCHE) is taught directly to Years 7-10, and on a cross-curricular basis to Year 11. The overall aim of PSCHE is to prepare students for future life. It is a developmental programme through which pupils acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need to manage their lives now and in the future. PSCHE offers a skills-based approach to learning which endeavours to use a range of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning activities.

At key stage four, pupils also learn about the world of work and prepare for a work experience placement at the beginning of year 11. The careers adviser runs part of [The Real Game](#) to help students become more aware of the local labour market and groups of students visit [Kidzania](#) in London to explore different work roles.

The school presents careers entitlement using student-friendly language in student planners. Subject teachers explain and link the entitlement to their subjects. The strong focus on developing outstanding teaching is achieved through drawing on real-world contexts to boost confidence and understanding. Within maths,

teachers build pupils' confidence in their own ability and develop mathematical skills through showing them the usefulness and applicability of what they are learning. Examples include visits to local shops to measure up for fencing and carpets, visits to theme parks to study entry costs, and analysing footballers' salaries. This helps draw on students' interests and popular current events to stimulate learning. Key stage three pupils have an additional numeracy lesson every week which is based on developing their problem-solving skills. Year 10 pupils act as mentors during these lessons. Within textiles, teachers show students how stereotypes have been challenged through an innovative card game and demonstrate the wide range of careers within the textile industry.

Students take part in various enterprise activities and run a café and grow produce in the school garden. Students have an opportunity to undertake relevant Level 1 vocational qualifications in horticulture. Teachers work with students to develop and value key skills such as communication, money handling and teamwork through these activities. Students have made and sold Christmas cards and then had their work exhibited at the Apothecary Gallery, an arts project space in Hammersmith.

Alumni return to the school and students have appreciated talking with these former students about their individual transitions and progress, including to university.

There is more information on the [PSHCE](#) page of the school's website.

Glebe School

The developing careers provision at the Glebe School in Bromley, a school for students with complex needs including autistic spectrum disorders, visual impairment, speech and language difficulties and physical difficulties, involves increased collaboration between the head of PSHCE and transition coordinator and other subject teachers. The geography department uses themes from the geography curriculum including rivers and sustainability to link with the working world.

There are strong links with land-based colleges including Hadlow College and Capel Manor College, and students explore apprenticeships and job roles in related fields. Year 8 students take part in a farmers' market in Bromley and grow produce in the school's market garden to sell. The roles they undertake from growing, to setting up the stall, selling the produce and handling the cash to help them develop key employability skills including numeracy, communication, teamwork and problem solving.



Top tips for employers

- Accept invitations from schools to participate in activities and events at options time. Students and their parents are particularly receptive to messages about careers around this time.
 - Work with subject teachers to develop problem-based challenges. These will show how the perspectives, methods and skills developed through subjects are used in working life to solve real problems.
 - Volunteer as a presenter, adviser or judge to help the school or college run curriculum enrichment and enterprise activities such as Dragons' Den type activities.
 - Bring examples of the equipment you use and the products you make to illustrate your presentations and give opportunities for hands-on and multi-sensory experiences.
 - Support the initiatives the school is taking to help students recognise and counter stereotypical thinking about careers and the abilities of students with SEND. This can include highlighting what your own organisation is doing to promote equal opportunities and diversity.
 - Take advice from the school or college on how to pitch your presentation to students at the right level to maintain their interest and enable learning.
- Follow this checklist for employers to plan and deliver activities in the curriculum:
 - Make sure you know your session well and have rehearsed it;
 - Visit the school before your session, if possible, to check that the activities you have planned are pitched at an appropriate level;
 - Arrive early and leave time to sign in - understand that when the bell goes you need to have everything ready;
 - Double-check the room is set up properly and you have all of your materials to hand;
 - Structure your activity with an introduction, a middle and a conclusion;
 - Ask the students to introduce themselves if they want to;
 - Give students time to do what you have asked, clarify what comes next and take your lead from the teaching staff who will be in the room with you at all times;
 - Debrief afterwards.

Top tips for schools, special schools and colleges

- Young people with SEND have individual challenges. Finding solutions is an exercise in problem solving: what does the young person need to learn next about careers? What are their individual barriers and how can they be overcome?
- The Gatsby report acknowledges that this benchmark is aspirational. Identify the subjects that are hot spots for embedding career learning such as English and Maths. Start with these and then build on their success to bring other subjects on board.
- Schools often report initial inertia from teachers in linking curriculum learning to careers because of their existing priorities and workloads. However, once they get going, they quickly become creative, resourceful and energetic.
- Take up the offer of Enterprise Advisers and Enterprise Coordinators who will be keen to work with you in linking curriculum learning to careers.
- Encourage teachers who have moved into teaching from other jobs to make their previous experience and expertise available to students. Try to build a positive culture of applied learning.
- Avoid overloading careers-based lessons for students with SEND with too many learning objectives and be aware of the danger of choosing contexts that overcomplicate subject learning.
- Evaluate primary careers education resources carefully before using them with older students with learning difficulties as visual images and learning objectives may no longer be appropriate. Be prepared to adapt resources.

Useful resources

- [Barclays LifeSkills SEND resources](#).
- [Job Centre schools programme](#).
- [Pearson free careers lesson resources](#).
- [Worldskills free careers lesson resources and tools including career planning](#).
- [Youth Employment UK free resources for Teachers](#).

Gatsby Benchmark 5

Encounters with employers and 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.

- 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.

Why this matters

- Research by the Education and Employers Taskforce suggests that young people need at least four or more encounters with employers for the impact to be effective. Those who experience four or more employer encounters are five times less likely to fall out of education and work and can earn 18% more during their careers. It is important that young people with SEND have access to these advantages as part of the overall commitment to building high expectations.
- Structuring employer encounters within the school curriculum strengthens aspirations and attainment and provides support as students take action to achieve their full potential. It is fully in tune with the culture of high expectations and person-centred approach set out in the SEND Code of Practice.

What this means in practice

- Employers and schools work together in creative ways to ensure young people build a rich picture of the world of work and are well prepared to take up workplace opportunities. Schools provide first-hand meaningful encounters with employers as part of careers and enterprise programmes for Years 7-13 and celebrate these links in their prospectuses and websites. They build sustainable relationships with local employers and plan mentoring, careers talks, mock interviews, enterprise competitions and workplace visits in partnerships. The encounters are well planned and help to increase students' enthusiasm and confidence. Employers are fully briefed to understand the particular needs of the students and there is strong partnership working.
- In the best examples, schools offer a progressive range of encounters taking into account the development needs of individual students.
- Where schools meet Benchmark 5 well, there are strong and lasting links with local employers, supported by an Enterprise Adviser who understands the needs and circumstances of the learners and builds the commitment and involvement of businesses. There is good alignment between the skills and capacities of the students and the strategic economic needs of the region.
- In the best examples, schools and employers draw on evidence of what works including The Careers & Enterprise Company's ongoing study of the evidence base. They take particular account of:
 - The different effects for different kinds of activities;
 - The sequencing of these activities to ensure they are age appropriate and progressive;
 - The importance of effective implementation including proper briefing and debriefing.
- They also ensure that there is a strategic and structured approach to the learning and a shared sense of purpose with key partners including families, employers, teachers and other agencies. It is particularly important in SEND schools to work closely with parents and carers.
- Care is taken to ensure that students with social, emotional or behavioural needs benefit from a longer introduction and preparation for employer engagement activities.

Parents/Carers/Families

Westminster School in Sandwell engage in a range of parent/carer/families activities including:

- Creating a spreadsheet of careers activities that highlights the interventions of every student and at the end of year careers certificates are given to students to share with parents/carers.
- Careers Advisers attend EHCP/parent meetings.
- Work with parents and carers to raise their aspirations for their children and promote a can do attitude, encourage them to allow their child to take measured risks such as travel training, where they may never have considered this before.
- More able students all have work experience placements that they have discussed with careers adviser, many move into internships with the view of getting apprenticeships. Placements are discussed with parent/carers in a series of meetings. It has been found that parents are surprised that their child may work, as they generally have low aspirations.
- As a result of working with businesses, aspirations of both students and parents have been raised, and this is evident in the improvement of employment outcomes.



Examples of encounters with employers and employees

Westminster School, Sandwell

Westminster School prides itself on partnerships with employers. Most of the Post-16 attend work experience in their local community one day a week. Companies include shops, salons, dog groomers, garden centres, nurseries and care homes. The students gain employability skills they need to work towards internship programmes. Companies attend our annual work experience awards sharing the celebrations with both students and parents. The internship programme sees students work for larger companies. This has been recognised nationally, the school has supported nominations for Interserve at the National Apprenticeship Awards at Birmingham ICC and Blakemore's at Prince's Responsible Business Network Awards in London.

Complex needs students are supported in small groups at work placements, pubs, garden outlets and shops. Students speak positively about their experiences and this helps them to consider their future plans. The impact of the work with businesses is reflected in our careers' days and evening, for many years, providers were predominantly colleges and support services whereas now this is replaced by businesses. This will be reflected when we open our new Post-16 Provision on the 27 September by Andy Street, West Midlands Mayor. Businesses support our mock interviews for students and also our enterprise days. Students in key stage two and three worked with a business in three meaningful encounters this academic year (Tesco, Blakemore, Midland Metro and Balfour Beatty). As a result of working with businesses, aspirations of both students and parents have been raised - this is evident in the improvement of employment outcomes. Two students were offered supported apprenticeships in 2017, three in 2018 and this year two students

have been offered apprenticeships at Blakemore's and Autograph catering. Next year we will develop our internship programme by increasing our business partners, working with the NHS and Interserve contract at a local hospital. Roles will include pottering, estates, cleaning, retail and catering. As a result of our links with businesses we are now offering Job Coach training to members of staff in the businesses to ensure the programmes are sustainable. As a result, one member of staff from West Bromwich Albion Foundation and two staff from Blakemore's are now trained Job Coaches. They have also stated that this training has been useful for when they have needed to support current staff in the workplace. It is our intention that this model will be continued in the future.

The school has invested time and finance improving careers, increased supported internships, extended work experience, additional independent advice and guidance and delivering careers from earlier age for all students however complex their needs. We work on a basis that if the student 'has never experienced it, how will they know about it' - offering as many chances to experience the world of work or further education. This helps the students develop their ideas more, raise their ideas and aspirations. Providing opportunities to develop transferable and employability skills through real life work experiences with business/colleges and opportunities within school for those who are unable/not ready to access external placements. Increased purposeful interactions with a wide range of trusted organisations/persons to give our students the chance to build their confidence, self-esteem, employability and enterprise skills e.g. work skills from DWP, work project from Think Forward.

This has fundamentally improved our destinations data over time as students are either moving into paid employment or onto a mainstream college course.

Abbot's Lea School

Abbot's Lea is a SEND school specialising in autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Enterprise Adviser Amanda Follit, Head of Digital Operations at Amaze, and the Enterprise Coordinator, Kath Wyke, have been working on an enterprise and employability strategy with the senior leadership team and governors at Abbot's Lea School in Liverpool. Together they have identified individual students with creative imaginations and artistic flair pointing them to opportunities in the digital and creative sector in Liverpool. Many of the students at Abbot's Lea have great attention to detail; this fits really well with the skills gap identified in the digital and creative industries.

Amanda also attends employment days and has facilitated the national British Interactive Media Association's Digital Day at Abbot's Lea raising awareness of digital opportunities and matching a creative and digital industry company lead to the school to support them in the development of their digital ideas. Amanda has also spoken to parents to demystify the industry, raise awareness of the opportunities available including digital apprenticeships relevant to them.

Michael Tippett College

The college is following the British Association for Supported Employment's (BASE) national standards and the DfE's Preparing for Adulthood curriculum. Three lead staff are undertaking the BASE Certificate for Supported Employment Practitioners. Students have first-hand experience of different work settings and throughout the college there are pictures of students doing different jobs. This helps students reflect on their experience and helps other students identify potential work activities. It also helps ensure staff are clearer about the preparation and support needed. The college works with Jobcentre Plus to help students and parents explore options in the labour market. Local businesses and other external partners are involved in mentoring and support as well as providing work-related activities.

Saxon Mount

Saxon Mount has a well-established programme that has been embedded into the curriculum for a number of years. The programme is mapped against the CDI framework for careers employability and enterprise (2018). All pupils have an EHCP and as part of the annual review meeting in each year they discuss their individual needs, aspirations and future plans. Pupils work towards a portfolio of achievement and employability skills that they leave with at the end of Year 11. Students have a number of opportunities to meet employers and employees from Year 7 to Year 11 in school and at external events. During the academic year every student from Year 7 to 11 will have visited at least one workplace.

The school has invited previous pupils and some employers with learning difficulties to speak to pupils about work. Visits to a wide range of local workplaces are providing pupils with information on the range of opportunities for work and the types of jobs and activities they will be able to engage in. Work experience helps to give the pupils more understanding of the workplace and how they can be successful in it. Taking part in visits off-site helps to improve the pupils' confidence and independence which allows them to consider further opportunities. Pupils go onto to a wider range of courses and destinations at 16 than previously.

All pupils directly experience workplaces at least two times each year. This has broadened their horizons and given them knowledge about jobs in the local area that they did not know existed. On every school visit there is an expectation that pupils will have time to identify different job roles. This has led to pupils being more inquisitive and starting to think differently about their futures and opportunities.

Work experience is offered to all Year 11 pupils with varying levels of support. Open Doors Visits also took place where all pupils in the school visited at least one local workplace in every year for the past four years. The Enterprise Adviser Network – we have support at strategic and operational level from our Enterprise Adviser. This network has enabled the school to make contact with employers to come and speak to the pupils. Pupils in Year 9, 10 and 11 visit external careers fairs and speak to employers and service providers. A range of employers come into school to speak to pupils in all year groups and a range of subjects. They speak about the workplace, job roles, skills, and in some cases support the curriculum. Workshops in school are provided by employers.

Top tips for employers

- Promote encounters as an exciting new staff development opportunity and a way of aiding retention, increasing motivation and attracting new recruits.
- Build links with local schools and colleges and be prepared to reach out to both special and mainstream schools. Being rooted in local communities helps enhance your business reputation and diversifies your talent pool.
- Ensure the role models and staff you deploy are well briefed and encourage interest and achievement from the broadest range of students.
- Develop a shared approach with the school to plan and judge the general effectiveness of the encounters.
- Explore ways in which both teachers and students can benefit from encounters.
- Share approaches and celebrate success within your sector and business networks.

Top tips for schools, special schools and colleges

- Employers may have anxieties about working with young people with SEND. Offer training and support and help them understand more about your students through community activities.
- Connect to the Enterprise Adviser Network to see what additional support is available.
- Use your network of staff, friends and family who are connected with the school to find employers who are positive about supporting employer engagement activities.
- Make sure you are clear about what you want from meaningful encounters framework. Ensure you have thought about the documentation and risk assessment process if you want to organise work experience.
- Agree with the employer well in advance of what the activity is, where it will take place, what your expectations are, what their expectations are and any additional support required. Prepare the students well in advance and organise pre-visits to meet staff if possible.

Useful resources

- [NDTI Employers Guide](#) to working with people with a Learning Disability.
- [MENCAP](#) - A set of six guides to use with Employers.
- [Learning and Work Institute](#) Best practice case studies in designing pre-Apprenticeship programmes.
- [RNIB Support](#) and research for Education professionals and Employers working with for visually impaired students.
- [National Autistic Society](#) Resources for Employers and education professionals on all aspects of working with people with Autism.
- [Remploy Guides](#) for employers to build their confidence.
- [Meaningful Encounters Framework](#)



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 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.
- By the age of 18, every student should have had one further such experience, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.

What this means in practice

- Meaningful experiences of workplaces are interactions with the world of work in a real work location. Schools are real workplaces too, and can offer an appropriate balance of challenge and support for carefully identified students such as sheltered work experience placements.
- It is important to create a range of possible workplace experiences such as visits, work shadowing, work experience and career-related volunteering and citizenship.
- Effective workplace experiences can be incredibly rewarding for everyone involved. For young people with SEND, there may be a need to spend more time on planning and communication and agreeing expectations on both sides.
- 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 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.

- Students with social, emotional, mental health (SEMH) or behavioural problems may benefit from employer engagement activities organised for them on an individual basis. These should be provided with as much pre-work and support during the activity as possible.
- For students with moderate learning difficulties, a planned programme of graduated employer engagement from key stage four can build confidence and employability skills. As students develop more of a sense of the job fields they are interested in, job coaches can be integrated into the programme to help them build job specific skills. Supported employment providers who have great employer connections can start to bring value to the individual student and can result in bringing the young person closer to employment.

Why this matters

- People with negative attitudes to SEND fail to appreciate that young people are differently abled and can be accommodated with sometimes quite simple changes to learning, work processes and environments.
- Transition confidence and preparation is a key benefit of young people's participation in this type of activity. Coping with transitions can be a particular challenge for young people with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or dyspraxia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), speech and language difficulties and ASD. With proper support young people can develop transition capability.
- Research evidence analysed for The Careers & Enterprise Company suggests that work experience, supported internships or employment, employee preparation programmes, self-determination training and family involvement are effective in enabling young people and young adults with SEND to make a successful move from school to further or higher education, training, employment or self-employment.
- Experiences of the workplace can demonstrate the capabilities of young people while providing them with first-hand knowledge of the working environment.
- Employer surveys constantly show that businesses are looking for more than just qualifications.
- Employers value a positive working attitude, an understanding of a business and its customers and real work experience. All of this can be developed whilst still at school – whether or not a young person has SEND.
- Work experience placements can lead to full-time job offers.

Other examples of facilitating experiences of workplaces

The White Room

Digital Advantage SEND, now called Digital Inc. is a digital employability programme developed by The White Room and is designed to close the gap between the natural creative and digital skills of SEND students and the employment demand in the growing UK tech industry. The process and employer engagement reveal the hidden talent in all the students who take part and supports them towards employment and independence. Digital Inc. has been piloted in eight SEND Schools in Manchester with some remarkable results. It delivers five of the eight Gatsby Benchmarks.

The programme begins with pre-planning and customisation of the learning to individual needs of each pupil. They plan with the school and the students deliver a digital social action project. Students are introduced to the employer and the programme, alleviating anxiety and building personal bonds. It builds confidence and collaboration amongst the group. Employer led workshops are run over an intensive five days; the students develop their digital business proposition and launch their branded websites and three-minute film. From here, teachers are trained, and business reset as a school driven project with the employer acting as mentor during six further visits to the school. The students also undertake a workplace visit and interactive workshops with a range of digital business at Sharp Project.

Their immersion in the programme leads the students to fully understand that there are all kinds of jobs out there for them in the digital economy. There is a systemic shortage of coders and software engineers, marketers, data analysts, content creators and support engineers along with jobs that do not exist. Digital Inc. helps the students discover what they are brilliant at; supports them to develop these skills and apply them to a real-world digital project. Along with hands on design, content development, coding, research, script development and film making skills they get interactive workplace visits with other employers. All the employers have been trained to communicate with SEND students and provide further reinforcement of career opportunities in the digital economy. During year two of the project, students will get the opportunity to undertake an extended work experience as part of a supported internship.

Over the space of a week the students achieve incredible results; building a website, a business canvas, a brand, developing content, planning, producing and post producing a three-minute film. The week is punctuated with mini-presentations, stand-ups, and rewards. The students are engaged, stretched and challenged, but achieve great things. The follow-up involves school on-boarding and teacher training. They become facilitators and the employer is retained as coach and mentor to the group thereby extending the relationship between student and the employer to a full ten days.

National Grid and Addington School

National Grid is one of the world's largest investor-owned energy companies, connecting millions of people to gas and electricity. They have an internship programme called "EmployAbility – Let's Work Together", which co-founder Mark Pickles says is proof that far more than the current 6% of students with learning disabilities that are in full time employment, can get into full time employment. The programme helps students with special educational needs take the first steps to full time employment. Students aged 17 to 22 join National Grid for five days a week during term time in an academic year, lasting for a minimum of six months. The placements can be either office based, or in departments like catering and reception.

During the student's time at the internship, the students develop their communication and social skills, as well as doing a BTEC qualification called "Skills for Life, Skills for Work", as well completing any English and Maths qualifications if necessary. EmployAbility started when the co-founders both mentored students with disabilities at work experience. They decided they wanted to give more students the same opportunity.

So far, around 60% of the interns have found paid jobs, which is evidently far greater than the national average of 6%. Those outside of the 60% have gone on to further education.

EmployAbility has also been beneficial for National Grid themselves, making their employees more confident about working with people with disabilities and more aware of issues in their community.

New interns starting the internship are understandably nervous, and hence are matched with a past intern who will let them know what to expect. Past interns also go into schools to talk about their experiences. EmployAbility also engage with parents early on, which is vital as often they are worried that their children won't be able to work. Giving them the opportunity to hear from past interns and see how well they've done helps to allay any fears they may have.

EmployAbility has inspired other businesses to work with young people with disabilities. For example, Sheffield College set up its own programme with companies including Sheffield Teaching Hospital and Amey.

There have been 65 supported internships so far, with partnerships between 11 special schools and colleges, as well as at least seven other businesses being inspired to follow the EmployAbility model.

One intern was diagnosed with meningitis aged one, and soon after diagnosed with autism. This had a negative effect on their life, putting them behind educationally, socially and mentally. Starting the internship as shy, quiet and without confidence, they finished the Internship confident and outgoing, with ambition and determination. They now work as a Safety, Sustainability and Resilience Support Analyst at National Grid.

Another intern was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome aged five. Thanks to an internship at National Grid, they now work for Human Resources as a Resourcing Advisor.

A school that has had a great relationship with the EmployAbility programme is Addington School, in Reading. Addington is a school for children and young people aged 3-19 with special educational needs and disabilities. All pupils' primary need is a learning difficulty, and almost half also have autism.

Addington provide work experiences via Work Ready Days, where an employer hosts a group of students for a day, and Job Safari days, where an employer visits the school with work based interactive activities to develop skills for life after school.

Addington also works in partnership with Central Berkshire Education and Business Partnership to access a diverse range of workplace experiences. Also, the Routes to Work programme provides a framework for working experience projects which can be school based, external visits or work experience.

National Grid have been working with Addington via EmployAbility for 4 years now, and in 2017, five students from Addington successfully graduated from the programme. The year was extremely successful, enabling students to work as part of a new team and embrace the workplace with enthusiasm.

20 National Grid volunteers also visited Addington to help plant 32 trees, with students organising the lunch and tea breaks catering, with horticulture students giving advice on the planting of the trees.

Top tips for employers

- Get to know some of schools' acronyms such as SENCO (special educational needs coordinator), TA (teaching assistant), EHCP (education, health and care plan), SEAL (social and emotional aspects of learning), SLT (senior leadership team), SEMH (social emotional and mental health) and LDD (learning difficulties and disabilities).
- If you are hesitant about whether you or your business could offer experiences of the workplace to a young person with SEND, watch the testimonials of companies that support students from Catcote Academy in Hartlepool on their [Facebook](#) page.
- Working with young people can be incredibly rewarding for your employees who supervise and support them. It impacts positively on employee development, job satisfaction and work culture.
- Formulate a policy for your organisation around the links you want to have with schools and colleges. It should explain the business and philanthropic case for having links, such as social responsibility or encouraging the next generation, and enable you to prioritise how you use your resources.
- Participate in local collaborative networks such as the local enterprise partnership, local chamber of commerce, rotary club or similar group to coordinate and plan links with special schools and colleges.
- Find out what your insurance limitations are, particularly for work shadowing, workplace visits and engaging in the classroom.
- If you are a small business, consider joining up with another small business to offer joint work placement opportunities.
- Schools must decide whether adults working with pre-16 work experience students need to be vetted by the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- Set open-ended and real-life projects to inspire students and develop their enterprise and problem-solving capabilities.
- Explore different experiences of the workplace models and get accredited with the [Fair Train](#) work experience quality standard for employers.

Top tips for schools, special schools and colleges

- Find out what the benefits to employers are and pitch your case to the employer in a business-like way. Be clear about what you are asking of them, such as work experience.
- Young job seekers with conditions such as Asperger's Syndrome often have difficulty in communicating their value to employers. Prepare them, by getting them to apply for their work experience placements with a CV and go for an interview.
- Fully brief employers about a student's learning difficulties or conditions such as obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and behaviour management issues – employers need to know for health and safety reasons, but they also like the challenge of succeeding with a student.
- Support employers by providing training and maintain close links with them during placements.
- Recognise the contribution of employers in simple ways such as presenting certificates at prize days, carrying news stories on the school's website and Facebook page.
- Provide word mats and picture cards with vocabulary specific to experiences of work.
- Take photographs of students taking part in activities to support debrief and reflection.
- Use passports with pages for recording experiences and achievements to strengthen students' reflection, self-advocacy and self-presentation skills.
- Where possible, undertake a virtual experience prior to any visits to enable students to have an idea of the environment.

Useful resources

- The White Room - Examples of the films and websites can be found [here](#). Click on project names to see the depth of work experiences provided in the project websites.
- [NDTI Resources for Employers](#)
- [DRUK](#).
- [CDC Resources for employers, education and families including research](#).
- [Mencap resources for employers](#).
- [National Grid Employability](#)

Gatsby Benchmark 7

Encounters with Further and Higher Education

What good looks like

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.
- 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.

What this means in practice

- Meaningful encounters can be with providers of apprenticeships, work-based training and further and higher education and providers of the Local Offer, facilitated both in school and through off-site visits. Young people can learn about post-compulsory schooling options in a range of ways including through direct interactions with lecturers, current students or apprentices and alumni.
- Careful early planning is essential to avoid young people dropping out or losing confidence.
- Young people with social, emotional or mental health (SEMH) or behavioural difficulties in special schools can find it helpful to be introduced early to the range of options they have after completing school. For example, moving on and transition fairs will invite all local colleges to allow students to find out about courses. Students should be encouraged to explore the full range of routes available including their local college, apprenticeships, traineeships, vocational opportunities or higher education.
- Schools should understand that some students will continue to need transport to college. Families may prefer their child goes to college from school and this may need funding agreed upfront.
- For young people with physical disabilities and other disadvantages but who do not have learning difficulties, the Sutton Trust organises dedicated summer schools at 12 major universities across the country.

Why this matters

- Parents, carers and families are hugely influential in determining the transition path for young people with SEND but will need support to understand what is possible.
- In 2016 just 44% of deaf young people achieved two A levels or equivalent qualifications by the age of 19 compared with 65% of those with no identified special educational need.
- For looked-after children, some of whom have SEND, this transition can be really challenging. Only 6% go to university, compared to 40% of their peers. Schools should look at providing additional support, particularly if they are moving out of care as they move to higher and further education.

Parents/Carers/Families

Moving onto FE College is the preferred choice for many parents/carers and families of young people with SEND as it is viewed as a safe place to continue to develop independence skills. It is a 'known' environment and there will usually have been much preparation by the school in terms of transition activities for an extended period before leaving school and going on to college. For those with an EHC Plan, college is a possibility up to the age of 25. This will depend on individual colleges in reality and provision varies widely across the country. The involvement of parents, carers and families continues to be a vital component for student success. You will find a couple of examples in the case studies about how these colleges achieve this. For example, at Oldham College, families have been fully engaged in the design of the Supported Internship Programme. At Brades Lodge, families were supported to become more confident and aspirational around their children's future careers. Moving from school to college is a big step for both the child and the family. At Oldham, staff continue to work closely with students, families and employers for six months after the course has ended to offer support and maximise achievement.

Examples of facilitating encounters with further and higher education

Derwentside College

Derwentside College is a large further education college in Durham which specialises in vocational courses and apprenticeships. 20% of their learners have SEN support and 10% have EHC plans. The college is located in a deprived area with relatively high unemployment and difficult transport links. This impacts both aspirations to work and availability of work.

Derwentside College has invested in a new Careers Hub, which is open for students and members of the community to drop in and speak to Level 6 Qualified careers advisers. Learners also benefit from a specialist Work Placement Officer who is based in the Careers Hub and works with them to source and support them through industry placements.

The careers team deliver support with applications to higher education, college, apprenticeships and employment, in particular help understanding the range of courses available.

The college has many ways of informing the students about the many options available to them and ensuring that they have a meaningful encounter that informs their decision making and ultimate career plan. There are specific support sessions and workshops designed to maximise the student's success.

For example, there are Higher Education sessions where different Higher Education options are discussed in depth. The college also has a University and Higher Education visit programme that ensures students can visit places of interest to them during their courses. The Careers Advisors host further information sessions to ensure the students are fully informed about every aspect of Higher Education, such as student finance and UCAS.

Another meaningful encounter offered by the college is with the various employers that the students will meet throughout their course. Learners visit employers and places of interest relevant to their studies throughout the year, ranging from beauty students visiting a spa or construction students visiting Durham Cathedral.

The college also offers bespoke advice to those students considering applying for an apprenticeship, covering things from finding a specific apprenticeship to filling in applications and interview techniques.

For those students thinking about college, there are regular Open Events involving expert advice from careers advisers and industry experts. For students considering going directly into employment, there are bespoke sessions available to discuss securing employment, job searching and interview skills.

Shenstone Lodge/Brades Lodge

Brades Lodge is an SEMH school and has some of the most challenging students in Sandwell who have often missed significant parts of their education. Historically this would mean that their life chances are greatly reduced however, Brades Lodge believe that if given the right motivation and experiences then they can improve these chances so that they too can become successful members of society. The new careers programme is quickly being embedded throughout many aspects of the curriculum and students have many opportunities to broaden their horizons and experiences so that they can make informed decisions about their futures. Very few students leave as NEETs.

There is a clear focus on both KS3 and KS4. At KS3 level the motivation is to 'Inspire' and at KS4 the focus is very much around 'informing'. As pupils show an interest in a job the school will match that with either a qualification or experience in that job sector. Pupils will visit all local colleges and University of Wolverhampton and talk to local apprenticeship training providers.

One of the key strengths of the school is to engage the 'un-engageable' and motivate the 'un-motivated'. The ethos of the school ensures that all pupils have individualised learning including careers. When pupils move from Year 9 to 10 all pupils have a dedicated meeting with the Careers Leader and the Connexions officer to identify potential career paths and post-16 Education, Employment and Training. This has proven very successful and ensures pupils are identifying what they are good at and like.

Through The Careers & Enterprise Company Enterprise Adviser Network, the school has been aligned with Adam Harris who is a director at Atlas Forklift. This was a carefully arranged partnership as Adam had been on a similar path to the pupils and is able to relate to the pupils well. In order to give pupils a real-life experience of the world of work, pupils who wanted to complete work experience at Atlas had to complete a 'mock' job application form; then have a full interview with Adam, the Executive Head and Head of School. This gave pupils real hands on experience of what a full interview would be like. Although the pupils couldn't 'fail' the interview feedback was given at every stage. Through The Careers & Enterprise Company, pupils from Year 8 and 9 were given the opportunity to speak to over 150 business volunteers at Wolverhampton racecourse. The groups of pupils had seven minutes with each business leader to identify how they had got their job, what was needed to work in that particular field and any other questions that they might have identified in the questionnaire lessons before the event. This is an area that needs careful planning as meeting with employers who may not understand the needs of our pupils could have a very negative impact upon them.

Oldham College

Through college-wide training, Oldham College has developed a culture where `every Leader is a Leader of SEND` and `every Teacher is a Teacher of SEND`. An innovative Additional Learning Support (ALS) Handbook has been developed to ensure that every member of staff across the college understands and takes responsibility for supporting students with special educational needs. Monthly training sessions for staff take place to ensure each department understands their obligations towards working with SEND students.

The work experience programme is carefully designed to ensure that a stable understanding of work and exposure to work experiences is introduced and then developed throughout the student's college life. This process and the different types of work experience available is communicated to students continuously. Work activity is carefully planned to ensure that it meets the needs of students at different levels. This begins with an introduction to work, and the different industry sectors which is incorporated into a large group project, followed by independent work activity internally and externally and culminating in independent work, with a local business and organisation with the aim of securing ongoing work activity.

Students are very proactive about taking part in work experience and seek out increasingly challenging situations to be involved with. They demonstrate excitement about the next phase of work experience, and they plan what work experience they want to take part in for the current and following year. This has led to an increased interest in the Supported Internship provision, in students having a clearer understanding of the industry they would like to enter and in an increased preparedness for work. As a result of this, students are more ready to secure work, which has meant that 100% of our students have secured ongoing work activity at the end of the Supported Internship provision.

Students are asked what industry they are interested in and then the SEND team and the wider college work together to ensure that these skills can be developed.

The Oldham College Supported Internship programme has achieved unprecedented success this year and ongoing work activity has been secured for 100% of students, in the form of paid work, apprenticeships and voluntary work. At the heart of this provision, and the reason for its unprecedented success, is the belief that students, family and employers should be fully and actively involved in its co-design. To mark the Supported Internships ongoing success, the provision has doubled in size from last year, and is set to double again next year

Tips for employers

- Employers who are engaging with supported internships or apprenticeships can work with colleges to offer relevant and challenging courses fit for their businesses.
- Offer to be a part of annual events at colleges, such as open days. Show young people and their families what you have to offer.
- Offer a fully-accessible careers event for all students, including accessible content for students with SEND.
- Support alumni programmes, such as Future First, to return to your school and discuss your college or university experiences.
- As part of any event, create a space for parents, families and carers to share their questions and concerns, so you can get their buy-in and understand more about their challenges.

Top tips for schools, special schools and colleges

- Use the meaningful encounters framework to ensure events are purposeful and support students to prepare questions for open days in advance and debrief properly afterwards.
- Before any event, address any questions or concerns from parents and families. Where possible, undertake a virtual experience prior to any visits to enable students to have an idea of the environment.
- It can be a challenge for some parents and families to get to the school. Schedule information and open evenings alongside other events to reduce travel obligations.
- Working out the support that one of your students may need can be better done while they are still at school. Anticipate the additional challenges that some of your students may face going to further or higher education such as understanding different expectations, managing money, accessibility issues, needing an advocate or becoming a self-advocate, communicating with a wider range of peers and adults, becoming more familiar with a new setting and, perhaps, relying less on family. Partner with local providers to arrange bespoke visits and taster courses, but also encourage early applications for advertised open days, summer schools and other offers.
- Colleges and universities are at different stages in developing their SEND inclusion provision and will welcome advice from you about what more they could do. Find out the level of provision that the learning provider has in place to support your students such as help with study skills, access to counselling, careers and employment service, buddy and peer mentoring and provision of specialist accommodation.
- Partner with your local university and encourage placement students to provide talks to students as they consider their future options.

Useful resources

- [Leonard Cheshire Change 100 programme](#).
- [The underrepresentation of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils in higher education](#).
- [NATSPEC](#) – National Association of Specialist Colleges.
- [UCAS and Care Leavers](#)
- [Scope Funding](#) disabled students.
- [Sutton Trust](#) summer schools for disadvantaged students.



Gatsby Benchmark 8

Personal Guidance

What good looks like

- 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.

What this means in practice

- Students with SEND have access to continued guidance and support to help them explore opportunities and develop skills to make effective transitions.
- The personal guidance on offer fosters improved self-determination through developing self-awareness, practising decision-making skills and setting goals. Access to career development opportunities start early as possible and involve parents and families. There is consistent, ongoing support for the transition to adult life.
- The development of individualised and comprehensive plans which include student self-determination, advocacy and input in transition planning, and family or parent involvement.
- Interagency collaboration and interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Schools use the [Career Development Institutes Framework for SEND](#) and pupil referral unit settings to review the whole school plan for employability, careers and enterprise support.
- 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.

- 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.
- The Careers & Enterprise Company's research findings suggest that career education and personal guidance have been most effective for young people with SEND when they receive face-to-face careers guidance and ongoing assistance into employment.
- Family involvement will also ensure the best outcome. When parents are involved in the transition planning process, young people with moderate to severe SEND are more likely to earn higher wages, work more hours, remain in employment for longer, have better community adjustment outcomes and live more independently.

Why this matters

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.

Examples of personal guidance

Seashell Trust

The Seashell Trust is a national charity dedicated to supporting children and young adults with complex learning disabilities and additional communication needs. In their provision, a significant number of learners have autistic spectrum conditions and multi-sensory impairment, and all their students have communication needs. Most students are non-verbal, and many present challenging behaviour.

The trust is home to the Royal School Manchester, a non-maintained special school, and the Royal College Manchester, an independent specialist further education college. Both school and college are residential, and together cater for students from the age of two to twenty five.

The Seashell Trust make a concerted effort to listen to the views of their students, even if the student does not have the capacity to make decisions on their own. For example, the student's participation in decisions is secured by gathering pertinent information through first-hand experience and logging their reactions systematically. This ensures that their views are not overlooked, and that decisions are personalised and made in their best interests.

Often, young people arrive at the Seashell Trust with limited functional communication and no established communication method. The trust supports them with a multidisciplinary team to develop their individual communication system, so that the young person can express their views in a personalised way that suits them.

At the trust, students in Year 10 start a series of vocational taster sessions intended to introduce them to different kinds of jobs. Students and their families help to come up with ideas for different sessions to find something the student will get the most out of. For example, they've had vehicle enthusiasts learn about jobs like car washing and maintaining bikes, and students who like being outside learn about gardening. They also think more creatively about how to personalise these sessions for the students. For example, for one student who liked organising things, the trust tried work experience recycling different kinds of rubbish. This proved to be hugely motivating for that student. Or in another case, a student loved meeting new people, and so they learned about customer service working in the school cafe.

Top tips for employers

- Make yourself known to the careers leader and the careers adviser and familiarise yourself with the school's transition process.
- Make links with the careers adviser to help to get to grips with the complex education choices facing students and the existing pattern of destinations.
- Offer interview practice for students. This exercise allows employers to learn about how they could adapt their processes to be more inclusive.
- Think about how you could offer job coaching, extended work-based interviews or supported internships to help young people with SEND develop skills for the workplace.
- Offer to host a transition fair for a school. This will bring together colleges, businesses and other providers in a place of business.
- Offer to host part of a careers week at your business site or get involved with presentations about the jobs at your place of work.

Top tips for schools, special schools and colleges

- Organise a transition fair and invite families, carers, students, local providers, colleges, careers advisers, supported internship providers and employers.
- See if your external careers adviser will come into school before the transition review and get to know the young person before the review takes place. You could also potentially look to upskill within staff to support with personal guidance.
- Enable the young person to prepare for the review and talk about their aspirations beforehand.
- As part of their career development programme, enable them to meet supported employment providers and job coaches



Organising personal guidance – top tips

The statutory guidance identifies that 'Guidance' splits into two lots of activities – Careers Guidance which is careers activity that delivers against the Gatsby Benchmarks and Personal Guidance which is the one-to-one interview with a Level 6 qualified Careers Adviser. All students should be offered a one-to-one Personal Guidance interview with a Level 6 qualified Careers Adviser, one by the age of 16 and one by the age of 18. For some students and for some Special schools this may be more of a challenge. You will find examples below of the some of the different ways schools are meeting this requirement:

- The requirement to have an external qualified Careers Adviser to ensure impartiality has changed with the new Statutory Guidance. The qualification itself is now deemed to ensure impartiality which means that an internal staff member can be trained as a Careers Adviser and deliver Personal Guidance.
- Some schools have an internal existing qualified Careers Adviser who now delivers the Guidance interviews without the need for external Careers Advisers.
- Some smaller schools cannot afford their own Careers Adviser so they are 'clubbing' together and commissioning an independent Careers Adviser to share between their schools.
- Some trusts have Careers Advisers who belong to the central office and then work across the trust with students which gives good continuity for the students.
- Some schools will purchase Careers Advisers from the Local Authority, some of whom have retained their services and will 'sell' services. This can be helpful as there was a considerable amount of expertise around SEND previously.
- Some schools will purchase a dedicated amount of days from a larger Careers Adviser organisation and agree the services required on an annual basis.
- Some schools will ask their Careers Adviser to deliver Guidance in small groups for students with similar sets of needs.
- Personal Guidance can take place on site or remotely via the phone/SKYPE or online.
- It may be that whilst an internal staff member is getting qualified, an external Careers Adviser is brought in on a temporary basis until the qualification is achieved.
- Staff in Special schools, particularly SEMH, PRUs, AP and for students with highly complex needs, who may work closely with students become part of a team who also liaise with the Careers Adviser and attend the EHC Planning meetings and potentially advocate with the student present, encouraging their participation.
- Careers Advisers may contribute to school careers activities and workshops.
- The National Careers Service can provide some support from qualified Careers Advisers in some instances for young people.

Useful resources

- [CDI](#) - Find a registered Careers Adviser.
- [The Careers and Enterprise Company Personal Guidance what works.](#)
- [The Careers and Enterprise Company Transition report.](#)
- [NDTI Employability Let's Work Together resource.](#)
- [CDC My future choices](#) magazine for young people with SEND.
- [Ambitious about autism](#) – Lots of good information about Autism.



Appendix: Careers Health Check Checklist

Careers Health Check Checklist Item	Action needed	Deadline	Review	Action completed
Careers Leadership				
A Careers Leader has been appointed and is a member of SLT or is working closely with SLT in a meaningful way.				
The Careers Leader has applied for training and a bursary.				
The Careers Leader is receiving training.				
The Careers Leader has completed the training successfully.				
The school has appointed a named Governor for Careers.				
The school is considering taking the Quality Standards in Careers Award.				
Careers Strategy and Programme				
Strategic Careers Plan has been created linking to whole school priorities, using templates provided on the CEC website.				
The school has registered with The Careers & Enterprise Company.				
The school has been contacted by the Enterprise Coordinator.				
The school has been allocated an Enterprise Adviser.				
The school belongs to the local Careers Hub.				
A careers programme has been created which is progressive and incorporates the needs of each and every student.				
The school uses Compass or Compass for special schools or Compass+ to assess progress.				
The Careers Programme is published and available on the website.				

Careers Health Check Checklist Item	Action needed	Deadline	Review	Action completed
The Careers Programme is published and available on our website and has information for parents/carers.				
The Careers Programme is published and available on our website and has information for students.				
The Provider Access Policy is published on our website in the approved format.				
Ability to demonstrate an approach of continuous improvement to the careers offering.				
Careers activities purchased from organisations with the Matrix quality award for careers.				
Establish if the local Job Centre offers the Support for Schools Programme.				
Gatsby Benchmarks				
All schools must meet all benchmarks by September 2020.				
Careers Guidance				
A Level 6 qualified Careers Adviser has been appointed either internally or services commissioned from an external Careers Adviser or the Local Authority.				
Provision of Personal Guidance offered from a L6 qualified Careers Adviser – one Guidance meeting by age 16.				
Provision of Personal Guidance offered from a L6 qualified Careers Adviser – one Guidance meeting by age 18.				
Young Person's Career Experience at school/college				
Information available on school/College website.				
By 14 has accessed LMI Careers Information to support careers decisions.				

Careers Health Check Checklist Item	Action needed	Deadline	Review	Action completed
Information has been provided on the importance of Maths and Science that lead to STEM Careers.				
Girls have had additional input in developing STEM related careers.				
By age 16, has had a meaningful encounter with sixth form providers e.g. FE College, Apprenticeship provider.				
Offered Personal Guidance interviews, one by 16, one by 18.				
Experienced a meaningful employer encounter between Years 7 and 13 annually.				
Has experienced two work experiences one by 16, one by 18.				
Have visited a minimum of two HE providers by age 18 if University is the preferred career destination.				
Invited to join school's alumni network on leaving.				
Able to access their individual Careers records.				
Considerations for young people with SEND – show evidence that you have considered:				
The school has used the <i>SEND Gatsby Toolkit</i> on The Careers & Enterprise Company website.				
The school has considered the joint Gatsby/The Careers & Enterprise Company statement on careers and SEND.				
The school has considered the Gatsby <i>Perspectives on SEND</i> publication.				
For students that you have considered:				
• The widest possible range of options;				
• How to raise aspirations;				

Careers Health Check Checklist Item	Action needed	Deadline	Review	Action completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to support families/engage families more; • Increased authentic employer encounters; 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiated your careers offering as appropriate for your students; 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved career development for Looked After Children and children in APs and PRUs; 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content in the <i>Transitions Review</i> published by The Careers & Enterprise Company; 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of 16-19/25 bursaries if applicable; 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of <i>Access to Work</i> funding for <i>Job Coaches</i>; 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff working from the presumption of paid work; 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to secure named Careers Advisers that can create a long-term relationship with students; 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career decisions based on students' aspirations; 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective use of EHC plans and transition planning processes where applicable; 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looked at the free resources on the CEC website resource directory, the Education Training Foundation, NDTI and Barclays Life Skills websites for further support. 				

Note

Feedback from two Headteachers of Special Schools described how their recent Ofsted inspections used the new frameworks and identified what the Inspectors focused on:

- ‘Evidence of improving destinations year on year, plenty about the golden thread, including EHCPs, outcomes, Annual Reviews paperwork, personal goals and linking up with discussions with a group of verbal KS3/4 pupils then tracking it back through the paperwork.
- Careers in terms of it being one of the building blocks of the whole curriculum.
- A ‘golden thread’ which runs through from aspirational outcomes (careers focused outcomes), how the curriculum supports these outcomes, what and how the curriculum is delivered to meet these outcomes, the wider experiences of pupils in terms of work experience, outcomes, impact.
- Looking at a sample of EHCP’s, Annual Reviews, pupils/parents contributions to Annual Review’s, interviewed staff and also pupils. They didn’t want to have a look, nor had time to read, any schemes of work.
- In the discussions the Inspector team had with leaders whether curriculum leaders, SLT, governors, teachers, TA’s, pupils, parents they tested out the what we were saying in terms of the vision of the school. Although they weren’t testing out anything specifically about careers as there wasn’t time, they were able to gain from answers/discussions, that the golden thread of preparation for life after school into either work, FE or community learning runs through everything from vision of the school, EHCP outcomes, IEP targets, PLP’s, the curriculum, what pupils were learning/had learnt and will be learning.
- As mentioned, there wasn’t time to speak specifically about careers nor for the team members to look in detail at careers. However, when talking with the team, all staff were able to weave into the focused conversations/discussions about ambition, life outcomes, process etc. If they were chatting to inspectors about Maths, they were able to weave into that conversation outcomes, ambition, aspiration etc re careers as well as the more specific maths info
- Although they did not spend a lot of time looking at the information, they were very interested in our destinations tracking (we track for 4 years) – it’s a simple spreadsheet – but illustrates overtime the impact of the course’

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Saxon Mount

The White Room

Addington School

National Grid

Derwentside College

Shenstone Lodge

Oldham College

Seashell Trust

Glossary

- ADHD:** Attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder
- ASD:** Autism spectrum disorder
- BSL:** British sign language
- CEIAG:** Careers, education, information, advice and guidance
- EHCP:** Educational health care plan
- HI:** Hearing impairment
- LDD:** Learning difficulties or disabilities
- LEP:** Local enterprise partnership
- LMI:** Labour market information
- NEET:** Not in education, employment or training
- OCD:** Obsessive compulsive disorder
- PD:** Physical disability
- PSHCE:** Personal, social, health and citizenship education
- SEAL:** Social and emotional aspects of learning
- SEMH:** Social, emotional and mental health
- SEN:** Special educational needs
- SENCO:** Special educational needs coordinator
- SEND:** Special educational needs and disabilities
- SLT:** Senior leadership team
- SpLD:** Specific learning difficulties
- STEM:** Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
- TA:** Teaching assistant
- VI:** Visual impairment

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