

Barr Beacon School's Careers Plan 2024-2025

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At Barr Beacon School we work in partnership with a wide range of employers and education providers to offer an inspiring, supportive and motivational careers programme for everyone. We aim to give every pupil to best chance at progressing onto their chosen career pathway, through an exciting range of careers events that showcase the full range of options available, and by helping pupils to navigate that choice with well-informed, up-to-date and impartial advice and guidance.

We offer careers activities to meet everyone's individual needs and allow our pupils to broaden their horizons by meeting new and inspiring people who help us to bring together a careers programme that raises aspirations, challenges stereotypical thinking and promotes equality and diversity.

We take a whole school approach to careers education, with careers support being embedded into the whole curriculum and school journey. The careers programme at Barr Beacon School goes beyond helping pupils to figure out what their next steps should be; it helps pupils to recognise their own strengths and interests and to continually develop the essential employability and life skills to make successful applications to their chosen pathways. Our Skills 4 Life approach and extra/super-curricular opportunities help pupils to see the value in everything they do and empowers them to thrive in the workplace.

Barr Beacon School has been recognised for its excellent work within careers. In 2018, we were appointed **as the Lead School for Walsall in the Black Country Careers Hub**. We go further than simply helping our own pupils, and have built strong partnerships with local schools to share best practice and improve careers education for every child in the Black Country.

Below is the plan for our Careers Programme, mapped to the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Careers Guidance (<https://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance>).

Benchmark 1: A stable careers programme

- Barr Beacon School will measure and assess the impact of its own careers programme using the Gatsby Benchmarks and the Compass+ tool, as well as using our own internal tracking systems. We regularly evaluate our programme using opinions of providers, pupils, staff and parents.
- The Senior Leadership Team and Parent Advisory Board support the careers programme, with the Careers Leader being line managed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team to promote and champion the programme in weekly leadership meetings.
- Resources have been allocated to enhance the careers activities we can provide.
- A dedicated area of the school's website details useful and up-to-date information for use by pupils, parents and teachers.
- Our Provider Access Policy is also published on our website for the benefit of employers and educational establishments.

Benchmark 2: Learning from careers and labour market information

- Pupils will be informed of updated LMI information through their PSHE lessons, annually through assemblies and in their individual careers interviews.
- A dedicated LMI section on the school website is regularly updated.
- LMI is included in careers displays in school.
- Staff will be kept up-to-date in annual CPD careers sessions.

- Employers visiting the school and trips to providers help to contribute to the delivery of LMI information.
- LMI information will be disseminated to parents at key pathway evenings and through the school's website.
- Pupils will be signposted to trusted online sources of LMI through their PSHE sessions, personal interviews or on our webpage.

Benchmark 3: Addressing the needs of each pupil

- Our Careers Programme is designed to support our pupils into the career pathway of their choice. Each student will have tailored advice and support at key transition points.
- We aim to raise the aspirations of all of our pupils, encouraging them to consider a range of pathways at post 16 that will help them to access Higher Education, Apprenticeships and Degree Apprenticeships at post 18.
- We challenge career stereotypes through our PSHE programmes and setting examples through our visiting employers.
- The school keeps an accurate record of all of our pupils' careers experiences and uses this to tailor and target future support. We also use globalbridge to help our pupils access a record of these experiences.
- A detailed database with all pupil's career aspirations allows us to carefully target our invites for careers activities but most are open to all who choose to sign up.
- Our Alumni Network is continually growing so that we can track the destinations of our pupils and use this to inform and evaluate our careers programme.
- Our SEND pupils receive targeted support from our Careers Adviser and extra support where needed; for example in sourcing supportive workplace experience opportunities.
- The school actively works with universities and organisations that support underrepresented groups to access higher level learning. A dedicated member of leadership, leading on Pupil Premium activity, supports this.
- Destinations are collated by the Careers Leader with the support of the Careers Adviser, who reports these to the local authority.
- The Success Centre supports vulnerable groups at key transitions.
- The Careers Adviser keeps accurate records of individual careers advice and these are shared with pupils and kept securely on pupil files.
- Pupil planners include information on accessing careers support and employability skills.

Benchmark 4: Linking curriculum learning to careers

- We have a whole school approach to careers where careers staff, teachers and pastoral staff help to support our pupils as they navigate their career pathways.
- Career learning is incorporated into all subjects, not just PSHE, English, Maths and Science.
- A dedicated Careers Week ensures a career link is included in every lesson for every pupil.
- Each department has a dedicated careers display.
- Subject departments are encouraged to develop links with local employers and universities and use these to create new opportunities for pupils within lessons or for educational visits to work places or higher education providers.
- An annual CPD session for all teaching staff is dedicated to careers.
- Each year group has a series of PSHE lessons dedicated to Careers, which are tailored to the different stages of their career learning.
- Opportunities to gain employability skills will be signposted in lessons to help pupils feel more prepared for the workplace.
- STEM activities will form a large part of the careers programme in general but targeted activities will be organised by the STEM lead.
- Heads of House promote and recognise achievements that can contribute to pupil's future applications or showcase their developing skillset, within weekly assemblies and via the school newsletter.

Benchmark 5: Encounters with employers and employees

- We have built up a strong network of local and national employers, many of whom regularly return to support the school each year. We continually work to expand this network to give our pupils access to a wide variety of external speakers.
- All pupils attend our annual Careers Fair where they meet a range of employers every year.
- All pupils have opportunities to take part in events with employers throughout the year, including trips, assemblies and workshops.
- We have built up a strong Alumni Network which allows us to create a variety of encounters for our pupils and enriches the delivery of our careers programme.
- All Year 8 pupils attend a special employer event with a range of employers.
- Year 10 will have a dedicated Employer Insight assembly.
- All year groups will be supported with a programme of advice offered by the DWP.
- Barr Beacon School will work closely with the Careers and Enterprise Company to engage with their programmes and create new opportunities for our pupils. The school works in partnership with the Enterprise Adviser Network.
- Opportunities for employers to work closely with teachers on projects within the curriculum are growing.

Benchmark 6: Experience of workplaces

- Year 12 pupils take part in a full week of work experience.
- Year 9 pupils have the opportunity to take part in Take Your Child to Work Day.
- Any pupil who wishes to gain voluntary work is also encouraged and supported to do this in their spare time. Opportunities are regularly advertised.
- Older pupils who wish to complete work experience in the school holidays are supported to do so.
- Pupils in Years 10-13 are also regularly sent virtual work experience opportunities to take part in.
- Our structured placements include preparatory sessions with pupils to ensure they get the most out of the experience.
- We value the opportunity for our pupils to not only experience the workplace through work experience but also to develop essential confidence, communication, perseverance and resilience skills when trying to source these placements.
- Year 7 and 8 pupils take on the job role of Duty Monitor for a day in school.
- Year 11 and 12 pupils are encouraged to take part in NCS, which includes a valuable voluntary work placement.
- Pupils have many opportunities to take on leading roles within school that give them a taste of a working dynamic e.g. Prefects, School Council, Cadets.
- Visits to employers are arranged where possible for small groups.

Benchmark 7: Encounters with further and higher education

- The school has built up contacts with a full range of local and national providers and uses these contacts to help inform our pupils of all of the options available to them.
- All pupils attend our annual Careers Fair with a full range of options presented: universities, colleges, apprenticeships, employment, training providers, technical education providers etc.
- Various visiting speakers, taster lectures, trips and projects are arranged throughout the year.
- We have partnerships with many universities and take part in their various outreach projects.
- PSHE sessions and assemblies help pupils to explore all of their options, including T levels, apprenticeships, traineeships and technical qualifications.

- Parents are kept informed through letters, texts, the school website and at events for key transitions.
- Our pupils get 2 opportunities to visit a university, early in Key Stage 3 and then again in Year 12, to help raise their aspirations.
- We recognise the increasing number of highly regarded apprenticeships and Degree apprenticeships and work closely with businesses and Amazing Apprenticeships to keep our pupils informed.
- Year 12 pupils are also encouraged to attend Open Days in the summer term and are granted 3 authorised absences to allow for this.
- Year 11 pupils take part in Next Steps Week to help them make their final crucial decisions. This includes advice sessions from the range of options ahead of them and a taster day at either the Sixth Form or a local College.
- Year 12 pupils will attend careers fairs in Birmingham to reach an even wider range of university and apprenticeship providers.
- We also work very closely with a number of universities and organisations who have tailored Access Schemes and projects to help pupils along their way to university, such as the Sutton Trust, Social Mobility Foundation, Pathways to Birmingham, Aston Pathways, Realising Opportunities and Exeter Scholars.
- Summer Schools are also widely advertised and encouraged amongst our Year 12 and 10 pupils.
- Year 9 pupils and parents are given up-to-date information as part of their Pathways Programme when selecting GCSE options.

Benchmark 8: Personal guidance

- Every pupil will have had at least one interview with our Careers Adviser by the end of Year 11. Pupils do not just simply have discussions about their chosen pathway during these interviews but can also request application support, mock interviews and CV/personal statement advice.
- Every student will have had at least one appointment with our Careers Leader in Year 13. Students receive extensive tailored UCAS and Apprenticeship application support.
- These sessions often occur much more than once and are impartial and conducted by staff with professional careers qualifications, who work to standards required by the CDI Code of Ethics.
- Every pupil and their parents/carers have the opportunity to book a Careers Interview on request.
- There is also a drop in every Wednesday afternoon at 3.10pm.
- Pupils in Year 11 and Sixth Form will be given further application and personal statement support by their tutor.
- Targeted careers interviews take place for those with the most need and requests from pastoral staff, tutors and teachers are also prioritised.
- A record of Year 11 and 13 pupils' Intended Destinations is monitored by the Careers Leader and Careers Adviser to target advice for those in most need.
- All pupils in Year 11 will have mock interviews in preparation for their post 16 applications. Sixth Form students will have additional mock interviews and assessment centre preparation, as required, for their apprenticeship and university course applications.

Benchmark 9: Opportunities for skills development

The Matrix Academy Trust believes the Gatsby Benchmarks do not go far enough. We believe granting pupils opportunities to develop their skillset and enhance their future CVs, goes hand in hand with excellent careers provision. Internally, we refer to this as 'Benchmark 9'.

- All pupils will be offered the chance to take on leading roles in school, such as School Council, Anti-Bullying Committee, Sixth Form Subject Ambassadors, Cadets, etc.
- The school will offer a range of extra-curricular clubs and opportunities to help pupils develop their skills, including Duke of Edinburgh.
- The school will actively promote the NCS Programme to Year 11 and Year 12.
- As well as creating extra-curricular opportunities, the school recognises the importance of supra-curricular activities for university progression and will raise awareness of this in Key Stage 4 and 5 and introduce supra-curricular logs for Sixth Form students.

- The school will help pupils develop self-awareness by feeding skills audits into PSHE sessions and using a career platform tool: globalbridge.