

INVICTUS

Education Trust

Careers Policy Strategy and Action Plan



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Document Control and Version Control

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Invictus Education Trust
Careers Policy

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1. Our Mission, Vision and Values



Mission

'Excellence every day,
unlimited ambition and
transforming lives'



Vision

'To create a community of inclusive schools where
people choose to learn with us, work with us
and belong with us, so that everyone succeeds'



Values

- Respect
- Resilience
- Relationships

2. Aims

This policy aims to set out our school's provision of impartial and informed careers guidance for our pupils. This includes the ways in which pupils, parents, teachers and employers can access information about our careers programme.

High-quality careers guidance is important for our pupils' futures, and our provision aims to:

- Help pupils prepare for the workplace, by building self-development and career management skills
- Provide experience and a clear understanding of the working world
- Develop pupils' awareness of the variety of education, training and careers opportunities available to them
- Help pupils to understand routes to careers that they're interested in, and to make informed choices about their next step in education or training
- Promote a culture of high aspirations and equality of opportunity

3. Statutory requirements

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory [Careers guidance and access for education and training providers](#).

This guidance refers to:

- The Education Act 1997
- The Education and Skills Act 2008
- The School Information (*England) Regulations 2008

This policy is also in line with the more recent [Skills and Post-16 Act 2022](#), which came into force on **1 January 2023**. It explains that our school must provide a minimum of **6 encounters** with technical education or training providers to all pupils in Years 8 to 13. For more detail on these encounters, see our provider access policy statement.

This policy is also in line with the Education (Careers Guidance in Schools) Act 2022. This came into force on 1 September 2022, and amended the existing duty in The Education Act 1997, so that:

- Our school must now secure independent careers guidance from Year 7 (instead of from Year 8, previously)

As an academy in England, we're now required to provide and publish careers guidance.

The above guidance requires that schools publish information about their careers programme on their website. This policy includes this information and shows how our school complies with this requirement.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

We also act in line with our statutory duty under the 'Baker Clause', to be impartial and not show bias towards any route, be that academic or technical. This policy should be read in conjunction with our provider access policy statement, which sets out how our school meets this duty.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Careers leader

Rebecca Foley and Kerry Furnival were appointed in December 2024. Any questions about careers can be answered by phoning the school reception or emailing info@crestwood-s.dudley.sch.uk. Our careers leader will work closely with the senior leadership team (SLT) and will:

- Take responsibility for developing, running and reporting on the school's career programme
- Plan and manage careers activities
- Manage the budget for the careers programme
- Support teachers to build careers education and guidance into subjects across the curriculum
- Establish and develop links with employers, education and training providers, and careers organisations
- Work closely with relevant staff, including our special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and careers adviser, to identify the guidance needs of all of our pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and put in place personalised support and transition plans
- Work with our school's designated teacher for looked-after children (LAC) and previously LAC to:
 - Make sure they know which pupils are in care or are care leavers
 - Understand their additional support needs
 - Make sure that, for LAC, their personal education plan can help inform careers advice
- Review our school's provider access policy statement at least annually, in agreement with our governing board

4.2 Senior leadership team (SLT)

Our SLT will:

- Support the careers programme
- Support the careers leader in developing their strategic careers plan
- Make sure our school's careers leader is allocated sufficient time, and has the appropriate training, to perform their duties to a high standard
- Allow training providers access to talk to pupils in years 8 to 13 about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships, and set out arrangements for this in our school's provider access policy statement
- Network with employers, education and training providers, and other careers organisations

3.3 The governance board

The governance board (trust board and academy committees) will:

- Provide clear advice and guidance on which the school can base a strategic careers plan which meets legal and contractual requirements
- Appoint a member of the governing board who will take a strategic interest in careers education and encourage employer engagement
- Make sure independent careers guidance is provided to all pupils throughout their secondary education (11- to 18-year-olds) and that the information is presented impartially, includes a range of educational or training options and promotes the best interests of pupils
- Make sure that a range of education and training providers can access pupils in Years 8 to 13 to inform them of approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships
- Make sure that details of our school's careers programme and the name of the careers leader are published on the school's website
- Make sure that arrangements are in place for the school to meet the legal requirements of the 'Baker Clause', including that the school has published a provider access policy statement

5. Our careers programme

Our school has an embedded careers programme that aims to inform and encourage pupils to consider their career options, and take steps to understand their choices and pathways. We provide statutory independent careers guidance to pupils from Year 7 onwards.

Our programme has been developed to meet the expectations outlined in the **Gatsby Benchmarks**:

1. A stable careers programme with a careers lead
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experience of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

Our programme doesn't show bias towards any particular career path, and promotes a full range of technical and academic options for pupils.

It is structured in a way that builds upon previous years, and the overarching aim is divided between the Key Stages so that pupils are encouraged to think appropriately about their future. We provide aims, objectives and activities for each year group.

Our careers programme is delivered through a number of methods, including:

- Careers breakfast deliveries by guest speakers
- Assemblies by local colleges and sixth form providers
- Visits to local universities, colleges and apprenticeship providers
- Visits to the national apprenticeship show
- Bespoke careers interviews with all students during KS4
- One-to-one mentoring for our SEND and Pupil Premium students
- Linking curriculum learning outcomes to career paths and real-world employability skills

Key Stage 3

Our Key Stage 3 careers programme will support pupils in their planning and choices of GCSE subjects. This includes:

- A thorough and inclusive year 9 options process
- A year 9 options evening
- Access to careers guidance and meetings for all students
- 'Why are we learning' learning outcomes to have a careers focus

Key Stage 4

Our Key Stage 4 careers programme aims to help pupils research and understand their choices and routes into education and training. This includes:

- Careers breakfast deliveries by guest speakers
- Assemblies by local colleges and sixth form providers
- Visits to local universities, colleges and apprenticeship providers
- Visits to the national apprenticeship show
- Personal Guidance careers meetings with all students during KS4
- One-to-one mentoring for our SEND and Pupil Premium students
- Linking curriculum learning outcomes to career paths and real-world employability skills, with a focus on STEM subjects

5.1 Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)

We expect that the majority of pupils with SEND will follow the same careers programme that meets the Gatsby Benchmarks as their classmates, with adjustments and additional support as needed.

Our careers leader will work with teachers and, where appropriate, professionals from relevant organisations, to identify the needs of our pupils with SEND and put in place personalised support and transition plans. This may include meetings with pupils and their families to discuss education, training and employment opportunities, supported internships and transition plans into higher education.

Our careers leader may, as appropriate, invite adults with disabilities to visit and share their experience and advice. No information will be given to pupils without SEND that is not also offered to our pupils with SEND.

5.2 Access to our careers programme information

A summary of our school's careers programme will be published on our school website Summer 2025, including details of how pupils, parents, teachers and employers can access information about the careers programme.

Pupils, parents, teachers and employers can request any additional information about the careers programme by contacting the school via email or by phone.

5.3 Assessing the impact on pupils

Our career programme is designed so pupils can give feedback, and their progress measured as they move through the Key Stages. We measure and assess the impact of the programme's initiatives by:

- Continually reviewing our careers programme against the 8 Gatsby internal leadership review headers
- Assessing year 11 student destination data, following one-to-one careers interviews and guidance
- Assessing the longer term sustained data
- Ensuring our NEET figures are below national average
- Gathering stakeholder feedback to measure impact and drive school improvements within our careers programme

6. Monitoring and review

This policy, the information included, and its implementation will be monitored by the Deputy CEO and the Careers Lead within each school, and will be reviewed annually.

Crestwood School Careers Strategy and Action Plan May 2025 – July 2026

Crestwood Secondary school is an active member of the West Midlands Combined Authority and supports the development of Black Country community through engaging actively with the Careers Enterprise Company.

Background information. The Careers and Enterprise Company was set up in 2015 to transform careers and enterprise provision in schools and colleges across England.

The Careers and Enterprise Company had an initial remit to improve employer engagement, through the creation of the Enterprise Adviser Network and support schools to increase the delivery of activities which would help them build long lasting employer relationships (Gatsby Benchmarks 5 and 6).

CAREERS STRATEGY Purpose and aims

Crestwood Secondary School is fully committed to ensuring that all of our students acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to manage their learning and career progression.

Crestwood Secondary School has already established a range of effective careers guidance activities which we hope will guide support our students to achieve positive destinations such as A 'levels, Higher Education, Apprenticeships, Technical routes or Employment.

This careers strategy sets out key approaches internally and externally to enhance the current careers guidance activities and participation opportunities already available to our students. The aim is to ensure that students are fully prepared for and informed effectively about their next steps and can therefore aspire to achieve their full potential. We want to ensure that our students have both the aptitude and interpersonal skills to effectively communicate and add value within the workplace.

The school will collaborate throughout this strategy with a range of external agencies to help us ensure we will meet all of the mandatory requirements contained within the Department for Education's new careers strategy. These partnerships will include working alongside The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC), The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) providers, Black Country Apprenticeship providers and a wide range of local employers. High quality careers guidance is a crucial part of improving social mobility. Young people make choices based on what they know and what they think is available to them. If pupils are made fully aware of the career pathways and opportunities available to them, they will be more able to make informed choices about which qualifications and career pathways which will enable them to achieve their goals.

The strategy includes measures to further develop and improve the current provision on offer to students and will ensure that Crestwood Secondary School will meet the requirement to meet the eight "Gatsby Benchmarks", set out within the Department for Education's careers strategy. This strategy outlines our whole school approach to delivering careers guidance to all of our students throughout their journey through education. Careers activity will therefore take place across years 7 through to year 11 as part of the mandatory requirements set by Department for Education and contained within the Gatsby Benchmarks.

Careers Strategy

In December 2017 the government's Department for Education launched the latest version of their "Careers Strategy". This new strategy places the Careers and Enterprise Company at the heart of driving forward careers provision for young people. Their enhanced role is to act as a catalyst in the fragmented landscape of careers and enterprise, supporting programmes that work, filling gaps in provision and ensuring coverage across the entire country.

This new strategy adopted the Gatsby Benchmarks, which were originally developed by the Gatsby Foundation in 2014 (updated May 2025) by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation. These benchmarks were based on international research and helped identify best practice and guidance for education establishments in order for them to deliver high quality careers guidance to young people across England. These benchmarks have also formally been adopted by OFSTED and will now form part of their school inspection process.

The Eight Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance are:

- 1) A stable career programme
- 2) Learning from career and labour market information
- 3) Addressing the needs of each pupil
- 4) Linking curriculum learning to careers
- 5) Encounters with employers and employees
- 6) Experience of workplaces
- 7) Encounters with further higher education
- 8) Personal guidance

Teaching staff contribution to the delivery of careers guidance through:

- Cross subject audits
- Sourcing labour market information
- Integrating Careers Education across subject areas
- Display notices on careers related to subject
- Discussions around potential career and progression prospects with students
- Industry visitors to speak to students in some curriculum areas
- Case studies linked to industry
- Careers Information, Advice and Guidance
- Links with Industry/Higher Education, Further Education and Work Based Learning Providers.

Local Employers contribute to the delivery of careers guidance through:

- Workplace visits
- Work experience
- Assemblies
- Careers fairs/events
- Business Breakfasts

Parents contribute to the delivery of careers guidance through:

- Support to arrange work experience
- Parents employer participation
- Support at Careers Fairs
- Parents labour market intelligence awareness

Action Plan July 2025 to July 2026

- Careers Leads work collaboratively with Senior Leadership Team/ appointed Governor on embedding the Careers Strategy and Action Plan.
- Careers Statutory guidance (May 2025) updates to be implemented from Sept 2025.
- An updated Crestwood Careers Intranet Invictus branded website to be embedded incorporating a user-friendly interface portal for user ease of access.
- Embed a whole school Careers Strategy which is to be published on the school website and has approval from the schools Senior Management Team and the Board of Governors by the end of July 2025.
- Raise awareness of the Careers Strategy with key staff within the school to enable them to contribute towards the need to link careers to the curriculum within school – Sept 2025.
- Inform parents of the creation of the school's new careers strategy in relation to Unifrog and inform students and parents of its location on the school website.
- Improve scores on Careers Impact internal leadership review via Compass against the Gatsby benchmarks and utilise use the Future Skills Questionnaire (FSO).
- Set up of a centralised Careers Hub with allocated time slots for pupils to access careers advice and guidance by a L6 + qualified external Careers nominated person.
- CPD Careers training for Career Leads and work towards the national Quality in Careers Standard.
- Allocated time for Career leads to fulfil the role.

Validation and Evaluation of our Careers programme.

Our careers programme is evaluated, analysed and reviewed using a variety of methods.

- Senior Leadership management meetings with Careers advisors
- Governors have careers as a regular agenda item
- Our careers programme is structured around the eight Gatsby Benchmarks and published on the school website
- The current strategic careers plan is aligned to wider school priorities
- Compass audit tool
- Compass impact model for deep dives career reviews. FSQ questionnaires are evaluated per year group to inform strategy direction.
- One to one career guidance meetings
- Group discussions
- Parent, staff and learner feedback, destination data and questionnaires
- Provider feedback
- Intranet and social media
- Policies and procedures are updated annually to reflect any changes in legislation
- Statistical data on Labour market intelligence, Unifrog Pupil Premium, NEET and SEN to ensure that learners are not disadvantaged.
- Support from the Careers Hub, Jobcentre Plus and nominated Employer Advisor.

Timetable of planned activities				
Spring/Summer Term 2025				
Year Group	Activity description	Date	Gatsby benchmark	Impact
Y11	CV and Interview Skills delivered by Halesowen College	02/04/25	5,7	Advice and guidance to support career aspirations.
Y9	Career focused guest speakers KMPG	01/05/25	2,3,5,7	Improved awareness of variety of jobs and careers available and labour market realities.
Y10	Career focused guest speakers Army	13/05/25	2,3,5,7	Improved awareness of variety of jobs and careers available and labour market realities.
Y10	Career focused guest speakers NHS	20/05/25	2,3,5,7	Improved awareness of variety of jobs and careers available and labour market realities.
Y10	Tall Ships Youth Trust sailing 5 days and RYA certification with personal career guidance.	May/June	3,5,8	Team leading, sailing skills, confidence, aspirations, self-esteem and empowerment.
Y7/8	St Johns ambulance hands on first aid session and career discussion	14/07/2025	2,3,5,6	Improved awareness of variety of jobs and careers available and labour market realities.
Y7/8	Higgs Law Firm Team building activities and employer opportunities	14/07/25	2,5,6	Team building, communication, and discussions with employer.
Y8/9	STEM Warwickshire University Energy: Students will explore the growing importance of hydrogen energy. Robotics & Programming: Students in the Robotics and Programming module will learn to program LEGO® SPIKE™ Prime robots.	6 th -8 th August (Residential)	1,2,4,5,7	Students will take part in a design challenge, where they will design and build a bridge, testing their stability. This module focuses on materials and structural integrity. Linking curriculum learning to careers.
Y7,8,9/10,11	Extra-curricular activities 'per timetable of planned events	Weekly in term time	3,5,8	Fosters confidence, enhances teamwork and develops skills for transition into the workplace.
Y7,8,9/10,11	Curriculum to careers with information and guidance on display board and TV screens around school.	Weekly in term time	3,5,8	Widens knowledge interest in specific subject career related jobs
Y10	Unifrog implementation	May-July 2025	2,3,4	Supports personal profiling, strengths, skills and interest in a career related platform with activities and tasks

Timetable of planned activities

Autumn Term 2025				
Year Group	Activity description	Date	Gatsby benchmark	Impact
Y11	External providers assemblies	Sept/October	2,3,5,7	Presentations to include employers, apprenticeships Further Education and Universities to inspire learners.
Y7,8,9/10,11	Curriculum subject audits	Sept 2025	2,3,5,7	Linking curriculum to career and employability pathways with a focus on STEM subjects
Y11	University and college visits	October 25	2,3,7,6	Inspiring learners to experience university and college life and information about apprenticeships
Y9	Virtual Work Experience three days	1/2/3/10/2025	2,3,6,7	Learn and explore career choices and a variety of situations
Y9	RAF workshop	14/10/25	2,3,5,6,7	Learn and explore career choices and a variety of situations
Y10	RAF workshop	21/10/25	2,3,5,6, 7	Learn and explore career choices and a variety of situations
Y11	External Career guidance and bespoke meetings 1-1 with qualified advisor	November 2025	8,2,3	To support informed and aspirational decisions
Y7,8,9/10,11	Careers fair Apprenticeships, FE/university/Technical qualifications and local employer awareness	26/11/2025	2,3,7	Opportunity to access high quality information with providers and employers
Y8	Guest speakers within assemblies or curriculum	18/11/2025	2,3,4,5,7	Opportunity to learn from professionals
Y7,8,9/10,11	Extra-curricular activities from agreed timetable of events	Weekly in term time	3,5,8	Fosters confidence, enhances teamwork and develops skills for transition into the workplace.
Y7,8,9/10,11	Curriculum to careers with information and guidance on display board and TV screens around school.	Weekly in term time	3,5,	Widens knowledge interest in specific subject career related jobs
Y11,9,8,7.	Unifrog implementation	Sept – Dec 25	2,3,4	Supports personal profiling, strengths, skills and interest in a career related platform with activities and tasks

Timetable of planned activities

Winter Term 2025/2026				
Year Group	Activity description	Date	Gatsby benchmark	Impact
Y11	Destination data coalition in conjunction with Local Authority thorough Connexions	December/April 2026	2,3,4	Identify potential NEET using Unifrog targeted activities for NEET support.
Y7	Guest speakers within assemblies or curriculum which includes apprenticeships	18/11/2025	2,3,5,7	Opportunity to learn from professionals
Y7,8,9/10,11	Extra-curricular activities to agreed timetable of events	Weekly in term time	3,5,	Fosters confidence, enhances teamwork and develops skills for transition into the workplace.
Y7,8,9/10,11	Curriculum to careers with information and guidance on display board and TV screens around school.	Weekly in term time	3,5,	Widens knowledge interest in specific subject career related jobs
Y10	Unifrog implementation	July 2025	2,3,4	Supports personal profiling, strengths, skills and interest in a career related platform with activities and tasks

Timetable of planned activities

Spring Term 2026				
Year Group	Activity description	Date	Gatsby benchmark	Impact
Y7,8,9,10,11	National careers week	2-6 th March 2026	2,3,4,5,6,7	Form activities using resources from National Careers week
Y10	WEX in house programme for pupils not on WEX and linked to apprenticeships	March 2026	2,3,5,7	Students have chance to learn and explore career choices.
Y10	WEX out on placement	March 2026	2,3,5	Students have chance to learn and explore career choices and gain experience.
Y10/Y11	Career Breakfasts/Guest speakers incorporating apprenticeships.	20/04/26	2,3,5,7	An opportunity to learn from professionals in a small social and interactive environment.
Y7,8,9,10,11	Extra-curricular activities linked to an events timetable	Weekly in term time	3,5,	Fosters confidence, enhances teamwork and develops skills for transition into the workplace.
Y7,8,9,10,11	Curriculum to careers with information and guidance on display board and TV screens around school.	Weekly in term time	3,5,	Widens knowledge interest in specific subject career related jobs
Y10	Unifrog implementation	March-April 2025	2,3,4	Supports personal profiling, strengths, skills and interest in a career related platform with activities and tasks

Timetable of planned activities

Summer Term 2026				
Year Group	Activity description	Date	Gatsby benchmark	Impact
Y11	External small group trip to university	May 2026	2,3,7	Awareness' of opportunities and guidance
Y8/9	Career Breakfasts/Guest speakers	15/06/26	2,3,5,7	An opportunity to learn from professionals in a small social and interactive environment.
Y7,8,9/10,11	Extra-curricular activities'	Weekly in term time	3,5,8	Fosters confidence, enhances teamwork and develops skills for transition into the workplace.
Y7,8,9/10,11	Curriculum to careers with information and guidance on display board and TV screens around school.	Weekly in term time	3,5,8	Widens knowledge interest in specific subject career related jobs
Y10	Unifrog implementation	July 2025	2,3,48	Supports personal profiling, strengths, skills and interest in a career related platform with activities and tasks

Useful links / Resources

The Careers Enterprise Company	https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/
Gatsby Foundation	http://www.gatsbybenchmarks.org.uk/uploads/024/11/good-career-guidance-the-next-10-years-report.pdf
Department of Education Careers Strategy	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672418/_Careers_guidance_and_access_for_education_and_training_providers.pdf
Government Careers Strategy December 2017	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664319/Careers_strategy.pdf
National Careers Service	https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/
UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service)	https://www.ucas.com/
Birmingham Newman University	https://www.newman.ac.uk
Worcester University	https://www.worcester.ac.uk
Wolverhampton University	https://www.wlv.ac.uk
Birmingham University	https://www.birmingham.ac.uk
Dudley College	https://dudleycol.ac.uk
Halesowen College	https://www.halesowen.ac.uk
King Edwards Sixth Form	https://kes.org.uk/sixth-form
OSH Sixth Form	https://www.oshsch.com/sixthform
CAT Centre Dudley (Construction Apprenticeship training)	https://dudleycol.ac.uk/our-college/find-us/cat-centre
Juniper Training	https://www.junipertraining.co.uk
Nova Training	https://novatraining.co.uk/training-centres/dudley
APPRENTICE (THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST)	dgft.apprentice@nhs.net
Army Careers Centre	https://jobs.army.mod.uk/army-careers-centre-finder/army-careers-centre-wolverhampton
Royal Air Force	https://recruitment.raf.mod.uk
Navy	https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/Careers

