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# The SEND Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit

Practical information and guidance  
for schools and colleges



# Foreword

**Claudia Harris, CEO,  
The Careers & Enterprise Company**

**At the Careers & Enterprise Company, we want every young person to feel inspired and prepared for the world of work.**

We know that all young people face challenges in finding employment, but for the 14% of young people with special educational needs and disabilities, finding a job is even more complicated. Many of them face unique challenges in progressing from school to further learning and the workplace.

The work of Sir John Holman and The Gatsby Charitable Foundation provides a blueprint of what good careers provision looks like. Our practical guide complements this important work and provides clear advice on how all schools and colleges can help young people with special educational needs and disabilities move into the fast-changing world of work.





**We are so pleased The Careers & Enterprise Company has shared this practical guide of good practice, useful tips and resources to better explain the career landscape for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). At Gatsby, we believe that every young person needs high quality career guidance to make informed decisions about their future, whatever their needs. Following the launch of the ambitious new Careers Strategy from the Department for Education, we look forward to working closely with The Careers & Enterprise Company to set out further good practice in supporting young people with SEND.**

Sir John Holman,  
Senior Adviser, The Gatsby Foundation

# Introduction

## Practical signposting tools for schools and colleges

**This toolkit was created so that schools and colleges can better understand the career landscape for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We worked with experts who support young people with SEND to explore what positive outcomes for young people with SEND look like, and what can be achieved by working in partnership and drawing on best practice from around the country.**

The Department for Education SEND Code of Practice 2015 says it is important that young people start to think about their aspirations as early as possible and that from year 9 at the latest, there is help to start planning for a successful transition to adulthood. This includes setting stretching and ambitious outcomes, exploring further education or training that will enable young people to secure paid work and other opportunities for a positive adult life. For students with more complex needs, a coordinated assessment process or education, health and care plan (EHCP), which can continue up to the age of 25, can help set out goals and support needs in relation to:

- moving into paid employment and higher education
- independent living
- having friends and relationships and being part of the community
- being as healthy as possible

### The Careers & Enterprise Company focus

The Careers & Enterprise Company inspires and prepares young people for the fast-changing world of work. We are the national network that connects schools and colleges, employers and career programme providers to create high-impact careers opportunities for young people. As an employer-led organisation, we seek to ensure the resources and support that is provided by employers has maximum impact to fuel young people's futures.

Our focus is to address the gap between education and employment by bringing together employers, schools, colleges, and careers programme providers to:

- give young people multiple opportunities to get to know the world of work, understand what work is, explore their options and build real confidence about their future
- use the Enterprise Adviser Network to bring the right people together to create strong connections between employers, careers programme providers and schools and colleges in ways that put young people's futures first

The evidence is compelling: a young person who has 4 or more high-quality encounters with an employer is 86% less likely to be unemployed or not in education or training. The Careers & Enterprise Company has set up a SEND working group to look more deeply at what effective employer engagement looks like for young people with SEND. This includes:

- considering young people's developmental ages when preparing appropriate careers activities in schools
- involving parents and carers in transitions between education and employment
- ensuring more employers are aware of the business benefits of offering aspirational work experience, supported internships and apprenticeships for young people with SEND

# Introduction

## Practical signposting tools for schools and colleges

### The Gatsby Benchmarks

This toolkit illustrates what good looks like across the 8 Gatsby benchmarks identified in 2014 by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation in the report 'Good Career Guidance'.

The 8 Gatsby benchmarks help schools deliver high quality careers and enterprise provision:

1. A stable careers 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. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

'Good Career Guidance' and further resources can be downloaded from the **Gatsby website**.

### Why the Gatsby benchmarks are important

The Gatsby benchmarks have a key role in:

- ensuring young people can benefit from and contribute to the success of the government's proposed new Industrial Strategy for the UK
- underpinning the Department for Education guidance to schools and colleges on meeting their statutory responsibility for careers guidance
- raising young people's aspirations and promoting access to all career pathways
- enabling all young people to develop the skills and outlook they need to achieve career wellbeing, including adaptability and resilience

The implementation of these benchmarks has been tested over a two-year period in a pilot with 16 schools and colleges in the north-east of England with very successful results. Input from the Gatsby SEND working group has been integrated into this toolkit.

### The Compass, Tracker and Provider directory tools

To help schools meet the Gatsby benchmarks, we have developed the **Compass evaluation tool**. Compass is a fundamental building block of a stable careers programme which helps schools to:

- evaluate their careers activity in around 30 minutes
- compare their school to the 8 Gatsby benchmarks for good careers guidance
- identify strengths and areas for improvement
- access relevant online resources to help them improve on their score
- share their results easily with their Enterprise Coordinator and Adviser, along with other colleagues and key stakeholders

Once a school has completed a Compass evaluation they can use **Tracker**, an online planning tool designed to help:

- build and manage their annual development plan to improve benchmark scores
- record events, classes and all careers activities in one place
- evaluate completed careers activities
- access, download and share the careers plan in Word or Excel with their Enterprise Coordinator, Enterprise Adviser, colleagues, leadership team, Ofsted and other stakeholders

# Introduction

## Practical signposting tools for schools and colleges

To help schools find relevant career programme providers, and meet the Gatsby benchmarks, we have developed the **Provider Directory**. It has been designed so schools and colleges can quickly and easily search by location and then filter by activity or Gatsby Benchmark.

### Understanding SEND in more depth

The Department for Education SEND Code of Practice 2015 defines special educational needs (SEN) as:

*“A child or young person has SEN 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 educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions”*

Many children and young people who have SEND may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010, which is defined as “a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

Many young people with SEND face multiple challenges and barriers throughout their education experience. Broad SEND groupings can be defined 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 (SEMH) difficulties: behaviour sensory and/or physical needs including visual impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI), multi-sensory impairment and physical disability (PD)

There are 1.5 million young people with special needs in England; 1.3 million in mainstream schools and over 100,000 young people aged 13-18 in special schools.

The narrative is more complex for young people with SEND. According to a Mencap study from 2017:

- just 6% of people with learning disabilities are in employment, despite 60% wanting to and being able to be in work
- a job is an opportunity for independence and to forge friendships

### Academic and career outcomes for young people with SEND

Young people with SEND are less likely to take exams that employers recognise, such as GCSEs. They also have higher rates of unemployment than other students.

Many young people with SEND would benefit from additional career support such as supported internships, apprenticeships and employment, extended workplace interviews, and supported enterprise activities and volunteering. With the right support and encouragement, many of these students can access the broad range of career outcomes available to their peers including apprenticeships, employer training schemes, university or employment.

# Gatsby Benchmark 1

## A stable careers programme

### What good looks like

- Every 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 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 1

## A stable careers programme

- 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 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 has learning difficulties or disabilities. 236,805 pupils have a statement of special educational needs or EHCP and 991,980 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 5 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 1

## A stable careers programme

### Top tips for employers

- Ask the 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 maintain and develop its careers programme.
- Be a critical friend – challenge and support the school 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 and colleges

- Write a careers plan, publish it 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 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.
- Create a vision of what you want to achieve and identify where your careers provision could be developed further, with support from the Enterprise Adviser Network. This vision should be based on best potential careers outcomes for your students and how they will be achieved.
- 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.
- Appoint a careers lead or coordinator with sufficient status and expertise to manage and maintain a stable career programme.

# Gatsby Benchmark 1

## A stable careers programme

### *Examples of a stable careers programme*

#### **Catcote Academy**

Catcote Academy is a special school in Hartlepool in an area with high levels of unemployment. It caters for young people with mild, severe, profound and complex learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has developed a stable careers programme which is rooted in:

- the vision and ethos of the school which has enabled the senior leadership team, with the support of governors, businesses, local authorities, parents and carers to create a strategic approach to young people's career development
- the school's 4 curriculum pathways which are tailored to students' needs and focus on delivering core and foundation learning and relating students' learning to everyday life and living
- a thriving business and enterprise programme which includes a set of enterprise principles, such as problem solving, initiative and communication, and events and activities such as Young Enterprise
- a wide range of enrichment and extension activities including the **Thrive Approach** which trained staff embed across the school's pastoral and personal, social and health education (PSHCE) provision
- the role of the school's own careers adviser who engages with all stakeholders

Students from key stage 4 benefit from classroom-based career coaching using learning materials. The school organises work experience for all students who can access it, or internal work experience for those who can't. Through this programme students gain sustained work experience in an in-school café, hair and beauty salon and reprographics business. The school's external business partners include a café in the local art gallery and a shop in the town's largest shopping centre. As well as setting up their own supported internship provision, the school has a 19-25 facility and lifelong learning provision for over 25s.

For more information visit the school's [website](#) and [Facebook page](#)



# Gatsby Benchmark 1

## A stable careers programme

### *Examples of a stable careers programme*

#### **Glebe School**

Careers education and student support is a well-established part of the curriculum at Glebe School in Bromley. The school is a foundation 11-19 special school for students with complex needs including autistic spectrum disorders, visual impairment, speech and language difficulties and physical difficulties. “We believe we can” is the school motto and a planned and progressive programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education with careers modules ensures students develop aspirational goals and have structured and incremental support to achieve them. The school maps its careers provision to the Career Development Institute’s ‘Framework for careers, employability and enterprise education 7-19’ and is made up of 5 elements:

- careers education within the curriculum
- planning and recording of achievement and work-related activities
- work experience
- access to individual and impartial guidance and support
- access to careers information including all routes and pathways

The school’s careers policy sets out the role and contribution of staff and partners including the governing body. There is strong teamwork within the school - the head of PSHCE works closely with the transition coordinator to plan, provide and evaluate careers and work-related learning including volunteering opportunities, work experience and links with community organisations. The transition coordinator holds a postgraduate Qualification in Careers Guidance. Around the school, there are visual displays of the careers entitlement and what this means for individual students. The school involves and empowers parents whenever it can, and ensures EHCPs align with careers support, with outcomes focusing on 4 pathways:

The whole process has led to improvements in the planning, delivery, management and evaluation of careers, education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) at the school. Summing up Keith Seed, the headteacher, said “The standard puts student support and guidance at the heart of the school at a time when progress and attainment can dominate. It empowers staff to work collaboratively and to reflect on why we do certain things and what impact they have...For me, the Quality in Careers Standard is the gentle pulling together of the threads of the web we call student support.”

# Gatsby Benchmark 1

## A stable careers programme

### Resources

- The government's **careers guidance** and access for education training providers.
- **Compass and Tracker** from The Careers & Enterprise Company are tools for benchmarking and planning a whole-school careers programme.
- **The SEND Review Guide** from the London Leadership Strategy is a school visit/self-evaluation template that includes career outcomes for students as one of its themes.
- Career Companion SEND (annual subscription payable) is an online careers resources manager with some pre-loaded content including 50 On the Spot careers leaflets.
- **Same and Different** is a paper from Talentino on early career development programmes for young people with SEND which makes the case for a stable careers programme supported by a national strategy for careers.
- Guidance on the government's **SEND Code of Practice 2015**.

# Gatsby Benchmark 2

## Learning from career and labour market information

### What good looks like

**Every student and their parents should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. 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 and used information about career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options.
- Parents should be encouraged to access and use information about labour markets and future study options 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

# Gatsby Benchmark 2

## Learning from career and labour market information

### 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 2

## Learning from career and labour market information

### 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.
- 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.
- The SEND Code of Practice 2015 asserts that providing a young person with relevant life and employability skills to enable them to live semi-independently could reduce lifetime support costs to the public purse by approximately £1 million.

# Gatsby Benchmark 2

## Learning from career and labour market information

### 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 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 2

## Learning from career and labour market information

### *Examples of Good Learning from careers and labour market information*

#### **Employment is Everyone's Business**

Employment is Everyone's Business is a project delivered by the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) with the British Association of Supported Employment (BASE), funded by the Department for Education (DfE) with 4 local partner sites: Berkshire, Bath and North-East Somerset, Wolverhampton and Kirklees. All are committed to improving employment outcomes for young people with SEND.

The project is designed to demonstrate best practice and illustrate how:

- vocational profiling can be embedded in the curriculum, education, careers advice and health, care plans and reviews
- 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 SEND or at risk of becoming NEET are at the heart of their employment, economic, housing, personal budget and commissioning strategies

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

#### **Glebe School**

The Glebe School in Bromley is committed to using a range of different ways to ensure students have access to information about careers and LMI. Wall displays show students from the school visiting or taking part in work experience in a range of different employment sectors. Students and parents are encouraged and supported to use the National Careers Service job profiles. Groups of students visit local employers such as Waitrose and Lidl to explore job opportunities and there are also visits to skills fairs.

The scheme of work for PSHCE and careers includes lessons on challenging stereotypes to encourage students to look widely at opportunities. The school uses symbols to help communication with students facing language difficulties. Students have the opportunity to visit the post-16 conference at Bromley College and take part in Impact Factor days which include presentations by local employers including the local firefighting team.

# Gatsby Benchmark 2

## Learning from career and labour market information

### Resources

- Connect with your Enterprise Coordinator to access local information.
- The **National Careers Service** website offers careers advice and lists over 800 job profiles.
- **iCould.com** provides over 1,000 personal career story videos, including young people with SEND.
- **Get in Go Far** is the government portal for information about apprenticeships with a linked website to find live apprenticeship vacancies.
- **United Response** is a national charity set up to provide person-centred support to people with SEND. They have provided a 3-part blog on the **RBS National Careers Week** platform.
- There are a number of job sites that advertise roles with disability confident employers:
- **Prospects** focuses on graduate jobs
- **Glassdoor**
- **TheJobCrowd** focuses on graduate jobs
- **Milkround** focuses on graduate jobs
- **Twinkl Educational Publishing** offers free resources for special schools.
- **BASE** promotes Disability Confident scheme employers, including apprenticeship opportunities.
- UCAS provides helpful information on **supported internship pathways**.
- The Edge Foundation runs **Career Footsteps** in partnership with Inspiring the Future to help understanding and communicating vocational career routes. Schools can sign up for support with events.
- **Prospects Education Resources** produce a catalogue of commercial careers resources tailored for SEND including software, booklets and prompt cards.

- **Barclays LifeSkills** are working with Talentino to ensure their employability resources and materials can provide better access for special schools.
- **The Council for Disabled Children** offers news, resources and events for disabled young people, families and professionals.

### Interagency programme

- **Employment is Everyone's Business**

### Funding support

- The Department for Work & Pensions provides an **Access to Work** factsheet for disabled people which includes information on funding.
- **Disability Rights UK** produces the **Disability Rights Handbook**, an annual guide to welfare benefits and services and **Taking Charge**, a practical guide to living with a health condition or disability. They also produce a range of other guides and factsheets including **Into Apprenticeships**, **Into Further Education**, **Into Higher Education**, **Get back to where we do belong** and **Doing Careers Differently**.

### Advice and support for employers

- Mencap offers **resources and factsheets** for employers.
- The NDTi provides a guide on **engaging with employers**.
- **Engaging with Employers** from The Department for Education provides guidance on criteria for people with learning difficulties and apprenticeships.
- The Learning and Work Institute provide the **Employer Toolkit**, a guide to creating more inclusive and accessible apprenticeships.

# Gatsby Benchmark 3

## Addressing the needs of each pupil

### What good looks like

**Students have different career 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 3 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 "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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 3

## Addressing the needs of each pupil

- 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 3 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 3

## Addressing the needs of each pupil

### 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 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 3

## Addressing the needs of each pupil

### *Examples of schools addressing the needs of each pupil*

#### **Ravenscliffe High School and Sports College**

Ravenscliffe High School and Sports College in Calderdale provides education for students aged 11-19 with special educational needs ranging from moderate to more complex needs. The leadership team is passionate about personalising provision and meeting individual needs. Every opportunity is taken to raise aspirations and support individual students to meet their full potential.

Ravenscliffe provides a Step Up to Springboard programme at key stage 4 and a Springboard programme in the sixth form. This includes the provision of personalised work-based learning and work experience. Students have structured opportunities within the school including helping in the school kitchen, helping the caretaker, recycling, horticulture in the school garden and making food for staff and visitors. These opportunities are tailored to students' interests and vocational goals. More than 50 students access a work placement on a weekly basis with tailored levels of staff support to develop independence in areas including travel. The school also offers personalised sensory boxes with tactile items relating to specific jobs to encourage exploration of work.

#### **Castle School**

At Castle School in Berkshire, students begin their vocational profiles in years 8 and 9. This working document evolves with the young person to capture all information about their aspirations, skills, interests and ability to work. This ensures they are supported on their journey towards employment. A person-centred approach has been adopted to build relationships with employers that provide meaningful work placement opportunities for the students which are based on their individual skills and abilities. It has also resulted in a number of students gaining employment straight from school.

# Gatsby Benchmark 3

## Addressing the needs of each pupil

### Resources

#### Planning

- Education, health and care plans (EHCP).
- The European Union of Supported Employment provides the How to Guide: Vocational Profiling.
- BASE provides useful information on vocational profiling.

#### General resources:

- Ambitious about Autism offers guidance on EHCPs.
- The RNIB supports young people with sight loss and offers information on finding a careers adviser, career planning, UCAS, preparing for employment and starting work.
- Brookfields School has shared a short video on their careers week for young people with learning difficulties.
- The National Deaf Society supports young people with a hearing impairment and offer a range of useful resources.
- Learning Disability Work Week.

# 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 4

## Linking curriculum learning to careers

- 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, work experience or enterprise activities.

### 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 4

## Linking curriculum learning to careers

### 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

# Gatsby Benchmark 4

## Linking curriculum learning to careers

### Top tips for 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 4

## Linking curriculum learning to careers

### *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 4, 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 3 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.

### *Examples of linking curriculum learning to careers*

#### **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.



# Gatsby Benchmark 4

## Linking curriculum learning to careers

### Resources

#### Planning

- Education, health and care plans (EHCP).
- The European Union of Supported Employment provides the How to Guide: Vocational Profiling.
- BASE provides useful information on vocational profiling.

#### General resources:

- Ambitious about Autism offers guidance on EHCPs.
- The RNIB supports young people with sight loss and offers information on finding a careers adviser, career planning, UCAS, preparing for employment and starting work.
- Brookfields School has shared a short video on their careers week for young people with learning difficulties.
- The National Deaf Society supports young people with a hearing impairment and offer a range of useful resources.
- Learning Disability Work Week.

# 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 4 or more encounters with employers for the impact to be effective. Those who experience 4 or more employer encounters are 5 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.
- The CBI/Pearson Education's Education and Skills Survey 2016 reported "a gap between education and the preparation people need for their future, as well as the gap between the skills needed and those people have." Employer encounters help address the skills and knowledge gap.
- Expanding employer encounters broadens young people's horizons for action, builds independence and fosters community cohesion. The government's Improving Lives green paper on disability employment recognises the scale of the challenge in closing the employment gaps between disabled and non-disabled people. In 2015 the rates stood at 46.7% compared with 80.3% for non-disabled people. To halve this gap would require bringing an extra 1.2 million disabled people into work.
- 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 5

## Encounters with employers and employees

### 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 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 5

## Encounters with employers and employees

### 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 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 employers. 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 5

## Encounters with employers and employees

### *Examples of encounters with employers and employees*

#### **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.

#### **Samuel Rhodes School**

Samuel Rhodes School in Islington works hard on enterprise and employability outcomes for all of the school's students. The ASDAN and Workskills units are used to provide a curriculum framework and the basis for accreditation. Students also participate in a personal presentation day. The students find it difficult to ask questions of the employers but enjoy the experience and develop confidence. Samuel Rhodes has set up a tuck shop which is run by year 12-14 students. They have produced a video to demonstrate the work and skills covered. The school has also set up a mentoring programme with Euromonitor which runs for 10 weeks for years 12-14.

#### **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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 5

## Encounters with employers and employees

### *Examples of encounters with employers and employees*

#### **Kennel Lane School**

Kennel Lane School, a special school in Bracknell, held an employer event to talk about their new career development programme and find opportunities for local businesses to get involved with the school's careers provision. The event also provided an opportunity for the students preparing and serving lunch, to network and develop their hospitality skills. Students also hosted exhibition stands to showcase real-world projects to employers. As a result of the initiative, Dell introduced a personalised work experience programme to students.

#### **Catcote Academy**

Samuel Rhodes School in Islington works hard on enterprise and employability outcomes for all of the school's students. The **ASDAN** and Workskills units are used to provide a curriculum framework and the basis for accreditation. Students also participate in a personal presentation day. The students find it difficult to ask questions of the employers but enjoy the experience and develop confidence. Samuel Rhodes has set up a tuck shop which is run by year 12-14 students. They have produced a video to demonstrate the work and skills covered. The school has also set up a mentoring programme with Euromonitor which runs for 10 weeks for years 12-14.

#### **Rosehill School**

Rosehill School, a special school in Nottingham, changed their curriculum for post-16 students and have focused on employability and career development. They have also employed 2 students with autism in their finance office.

#### **Young Enterprise**

Young Enterprise's Team programme inspires students with special educational and support needs to work together as they set up and run their own company, guided every step of the way by a Young Enterprise business adviser.

#### **Pebble Brook School**

Pebble Brook School, a co-educational special school in Aylesbury, has approached local employers and encouraged them to offer supported internships. Six internships started in September 2017.

# Gatsby Benchmark 5

## Encounters with employers and employees

### Resources

- The Voice of Learning Disability from Mencap is a handbook designed to help teachers raise the aspirations and employment prospects of young people with learning disabilities.
- SEND in England: January 2017 from the Department for Education explains SEND statistics.
- Mencap provide best practice guides on employing people with a learning disability.
- Inspiring the Future have nearly 40,000 business volunteers ready to go into schools to offer careers talks or be part of events. To try to ensure that the service is inclusive and develop more relatable role models, they are asking their volunteers with disabilities to consider talking about how they work with their disabilities.
- Supported Internships from the DfE offers practical guidance and advice on supported internships.
- National Grid's approach to supported internships for other employers.
- BASE offer guidance on involving employers in supported employment.
- BASE provide guidance on supported employment provision and job coaching.
- Brookfields School's Pathway to Employment whole career programme and film on employers.
- Leonard Cheshire Disability charity and Howdens Joinery have partnered to create volunteering opportunities for young people with disabilities.
- Disability Confident employer scheme and guidance from the Department of Work & Pensions.
- Young Enterprise's Team programme is aimed at young people with SEND aged 15-19. Participants are offered a structured enterprise learning opportunity and run their own business and are mentored by a local business professional.
- Good for Business from Mencap explains why businesses should employ people with learning difficulties.
- Guide to employer engagement to support the SEND reforms.
- Remploy provides resources to help staff and organisations.

# 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 4 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 6

## Experiences of workplaces

### 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.
- Work experience 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 6

## Experiences of workplaces

### 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 work experience 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, 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 work experience models and get accredited with the Fair Train work experience quality standard for employers.

# Gatsby Benchmark 6

## Experiences of workplaces

### Top tips for 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 6

## Experiences of workplaces

### *Other Examples of facilitating experiences of workplaces*

#### **Westminster School**

In 2016/17 the Westminster School in the West Midlands began working with Interserve and Sandwell Leisure Trust to provide real-world work experience and skills to students. Learners spend 3 days a week at their internship placement provider for between 6 - 12 months. The young person also studies qualifications to support their employment after the internship to enable them to gain successful employment or further work-related traineeships at the end of the academic year.

The school provides one or more dedicated job coaches, paid for by the school, to support the student throughout their placement. There has been a significant increase in student confidence and independence in the workplace as a result of the programme. Two pupils were able to take on roles in facilities services in education and are undertaking supported apprenticeships with Interserve as part of a national DfE Pacesetter pilot scheme. Scott, one of apprentice students with Interserve said "In year 7 I never thought anything like this would happen to me. I look forward to learning new skills and working with others. I am proud of what I have achieved. I would like to thank the school and Interserve for all their help."

Recent changes to the English and maths criteria for young people with SEND have made it possible

for applicants like Scott to be accepted onto apprenticeships. Patricia Murphy, Apprenticeship Manager for Interserve, said "The new changes will allow these young people the opportunity to develop key employment skills and experience and provide them with a solid foundation to start working life."

Oliver Flowers, Deputy Headteacher said "It is fabulous news with regards to the adjustment of the English and maths entry requirements for apprenticeships. This will inevitably open many more doors for young people with a learning disability who are able to complement the world of work. The school has a proven supported internship model where our young people have been able to demonstrate their keen ability to be successful in the world of work. In the past, the barriers associated with the English and maths entry requirements would have meant this wasn't an option for them. Now many more young talented individuals will have a chance to better themselves through the world of work on an apprenticeship with private sector organisations such as Interserve. This will change many lives and provide rich opportunities for people with a learning disability."

The school hopes to build on this pilot and provide more opportunities for young people with learning disabilities.

# Gatsby Benchmark 6

## Experiences of workplaces

### *Other Examples of facilitating experiences of workplaces*

#### **Glebe School**

Glebe School in Bromley is a school for students with complex needs including autistic spectrum disorders, visual impairment, speech and language difficulties and physical difficulties which offers two-week work experience placements to students in year 11 and 12.

Placements have included offices, supermarkets, farms and other organisations and businesses. The school works hard to maintain good links with the employer community and is grateful for their support in the students' preparation for life outside school. The school is also very proud of the great success that students have made of this opportunity and includes a wide range of photos on the website of students in different work experience settings.

#### **Meadow High School**

For older students with learning difficulties, extended work experience and placements can be valuable. For example, Meadow High School organised work placements for year 14 students in the 6 months leading up to their school leaving date. The experiences were part of their transition activities and included making connections with local hotel and horticulture businesses.

#### **Avenue School**

The Avenue School set up an internal enterprise work experience programme for young people with severe learning difficulties. From the first day, they showed more confidence and a real pride in their work. They also created a fully inclusive team to make and sell products at their first Christmas market for parents and made £1,200 profit.

#### **Next**

The retailer Next has started to provide work experience for local students with SEND at one of its distribution centres. Staff felt they had "become better people" having worked with the young people with SEND.

# Gatsby Benchmark 6

## Experiences of workplaces

### Resources

#### Schools working with employers

- Brookfields School's Pathway to Employment whole career programme and film on employers.
- Change 100, from Leonard Cheshire, brings together employers, disabled students and graduates to offer work experience.
- ChangeNow, from Leonard Cheshire, supports young people with SEND into work placements.
- ChangeLondon is a bursary fund from Leonard Cheshire to support London based SMEs to recruit and retain disabled people.

#### General resources:

- Preparing for Adulthood offer supported employment providers self-evaluation guidance and tool.
- Supported employment providers list from BASE.
- Mencap offer guidance on work experience placements.

#### Structured learning and working training schemes

- Government information on supported internships.
- EmployAbility Let's Work Together supported internship programme from National Grid.
- Into Apprenticeships from Disability Rights UK is a guide to applying for apprenticeships in the UK.
- Disability Equality Training from Leonard Cheshire Disability, is a one-day workshop to support employers to become more inclusive of disabled staff and customers.

#### Skills day

- Whizz-Kidz is a charity which organises work placement and work skills days for disabled young people between 14-25 years old.

# 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.**

- 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 2 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, 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.
- 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 7

## Encounters with further and higher education

### 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 2 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.

### 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.

### Tips for colleges and schools

- 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.
- 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 7

## Encounters with further and higher education

### *Examples of facilitating encounters with further and higher education*

#### Gloucestershire College

Gloucestershire College helps reduce students' and parents' anxiety around transition by putting support in place before they arrive and ensuring students are warmly welcomed. Students are:

- sent pictures of their tutors and staff well in advance of their start
- provided with their timetables so they can start to plan their time and routine
- invited to open days and taster events where they can meet staff and look around the college

The transition team has produced a virtual tour of the college, with a special focus on the areas of the college that students will need to become familiar with such as their curriculum areas, the learning support centre and communal spaces.

The college has made this video into a virtual reality tour which students experience through a headset (as if the student is really walking around the college).

The college has also produced videos of current students with SEND talking about how they get on at college and the support they receive.

These innovative tools are particularly useful for students with anxiety who may not want to visit or attend college in person, and for school refusers.

This case study was adapted from SEN support: research evidence on effective approaches and examples of current practice in good and outstanding schools and colleges.

#### Brookfields School

Brookfields School is a specialist SEN school in Reading. As part of their further and higher education programme, most students in years 11, 12, 13 and 14 spend half a day each week at local colleges. The school has links with Reading College, Berkshire College of Agriculture and Newbury College. Students have the chance to participate in life at college, take courses and be part of these larger educational establishments. Courses include IT, cookery, metalwork, motor vehicles, horticulture, drama and photography.

The school's employer engagement manager and work experience coordinator have built a network of over 60 local businesses who support the school's Pathway to Employment programme and provide work experience for students. The programme, developed with the support of the Talentino, a careers provider, consists of 5 interrelated strands:

- Way2Work - careers at every level education lesson
- work-related learning
- business enterprise programmes
- work-based experience
- supported internships

As well as running a careers week with personalised programmes for students to follow, the school presents gold, silver or bronze awards to the companies that support their Pathways to Employment programme.

Brookfield's Pathways to Employment film (2016) is available on the school website.

# Gatsby Benchmark 7

## Encounters with further and higher education

### Resources

- Mencap guide to further education.
- Looked-after Children and Care Leavers guide from UCAS.
- Buttle UK provide information about the Quality Mark for care leavers.
- Leonard Cheshire Disability charity's Change 100 programme.
- UCAS provide guidance for disabled students.
- Sutton Trust summer schools for disadvantaged and disabled young people.
- Guidance on Disabled Students' Allowances for students with a learning difficulty, health problem or disability.
- Independent Parental Special Education Advice (IPSEA).
- The National Deaf Children's Society publishes a range of supporting achievement resources to ensure effective inclusion including supporting deaf young people in further education, apprenticeships and higher education.
- National Autistic Society provides advice on supporting autistic students in college or university.

# 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.

# Gatsby Benchmark 8

## Personal guidance

### 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 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.
- 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

# Gatsby Benchmark 8

## Personal guidance

### *Examples of personal guidance*

#### **Braidwood Trust**

Braidwood Trust is a school for the deaf in the Birmingham. They are committed to providing careers education, information, advice and guidance through the curriculum and organised activities as well as through a dedicated programme of independent careers advice.

They work with students to gain transferable lifelong skills in applied knowledge, critical thinking and communication, and students work towards an ASDAN Employability qualification. The school has excellent links with many local and national businesses providing outstanding learning opportunities as well as strong contacts with local colleges and training providers.

All students receive independent one-to-one careers interviews and follow-up meetings to advise and track progress. An independent careers adviser also works with the school to maintain careers information in the centre and on the school website. The careers adviser provides training and briefing sessions for staff on careers, education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG). The school and the adviser work with students to maintain a CEIAG progress record, recording their self-development through careers and work-related education, how they find out about careers and the world of work, and their developing skills for career management and employability. Braidwood holds the Quality in Careers Standard.

#### **Worcester special schools**

Four special schools as part of a trust in Worcester benefit from 2 careers advisers. Both advisers cover a wide range of special needs, including:

- learning difficulties
- behavioural needs
- autism
- communication and interaction
- social, emotional and mental health

The schools come together with Talentino, an external careers provider, to form a career development strategy. Together, they deliver careers learning, employer engagement and enterprise activities. Students and their families all know their careers advisers and attend all review and transition meetings. The local Enterprise Adviser is working with them to create more employer engagement opportunities.

# Gatsby Benchmark 8

## Personal guidance

### *Examples of personal guidance*

#### **Dales School**

The Dales School is a co-educational special school for students aged 2-19 with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties. The post-16 provision also caters for young people with moderate learning difficulties. The school has a contract with the local authority, North Yorkshire County Council, to provide access for all students to a specialist careers adviser who works with the school, students and their families. A multi-professional team contributes to supporting preparation for key aspects of every student's adult life. This includes independence, health and vocational matters such as enterprise and employment. The Dales School holds the Quality in Careers Standard.

#### **Ravenscliffe High School and Sports College**

Ravenscliffe High School in Halifax is a secondary special school for students with a wide range of special education needs from moderate to complex learning difficulties. Close attention is given to all aspects of transition and there is focused and individualised support given to students and their parents. The school has a contract with Calderdale Council to provide access for all students to a specialist careers adviser who works with the school, students and their families.



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- Dales School, North Yorkshire
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- Gloucestershire College, Gloucester
- Kennel Lane School, Bracknell
- Meadow High School, Middlesex
- Michael Tippett College, Herne Hill
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# 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 need 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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