

Ash Lea School Careers Strategy

Our vision for Ash Lea's Career Strategy

At the core of our school vision at Ash Lea is that every person is able to achieve their full potential and feel valued for the contribution they can make to everyday life and society.

The National Careers strategy as applied to young people with special needs puts a renewed national focus on the very low levels of inclusion of people with special needs in the workplace and wishes to address this; we welcome this and wish to actively prepare our students in the best way possible for future careers where appropriate, increasing aspirations, building links with local employers, and building employability within a high quality and innovative structured programme.

We also recognise that our students have a wide range of abilities and needs, ambitions and plans for their lives after Ash Lea, and we are here to prepare them best for what is appropriate and realistic. Our careers programme is developed to be appropriate for all of our students and includes the development of 'employability skills', which include many 'soft skills' useful for effective communications, healthy relationships, and a higher level of independence; these are goals for all our students even if these skills will not be carried through to paid employment or independent work. By including a new focus on 'employability skills' we will enrich high quality academic learning and fulfil Ash Lea's vision for all of our students.

Overview of Ash Lea Career Strategy

Ash Lea Careers Strategy will be conceptualised as a **Careers, Employability Skills & Transition Strategy**, fulfilling the 'Gatsby Principles' as laid out by the National Careers strategy but in a way appropriate to SEND pupils of Ash Lea School. The Programme will include strategic consideration and activities for pupils from Year 7 upwards.

Ash Lea's Careers Strategy has been developed ensuring the fulfilment of the '8 Gatsby Principles' identified and tested as an effective structure for a successful careers programme against which OFSTED will begin assessing schools in 2018/19:

- A Stable Careers Programme
- The Provision of Quality Career Information
- Addressing the Needs of Each Pupil (tailored to each individual)
- Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers (and employability skills)
- Meaningful encounters with employers (which give students a clearer idea of the workplace and any opportunities open to them)
- Experiences of Workplaces

In order to address the needs of each pupil in our particularly diverse school community we will run our programme along differentiated 'pathways' reflecting the different longer-term realistic future work status and lifestyles of different cohorts of pupils. Some career programme activities will be delivered to students specifically in their Pathways, whilst other activities can be differentiated within the classroom or the whole school environment

across two or more Pathways. However, learning outcome and evaluation strategies will be clearly differentiated and planned along the pathways structure, as will the work experience element of the careers programme. Pathway will be decided at the year 9 transition review and a transition plan drawn up at this meeting. This will be reviewed at subsequent EHC meetings as the student proceeds through the school.

Pathways:

- A. **Career-ready development programme;** this is for students moving towards paid independent working and independent or confident semi-independent living and are able to undertake independent work experience.
- B. **Workplace participation programme;** this is for students who are not expected to achieve independent living but can enhance their skills and community participation through some short supervised work experiences, and are able to develop work-related soft-skills within controlled environments.
- C. **Community Workplace inclusion programme;** this is for high-needs students who will experience work environments in the community with one-to-one carers, and whose primary development needs are communication. These students would also be supported to build up their tolerance levels to new environments and unfamiliar people.

Which Pathway?

It is usually clear which appropriate pathway a student will travel from as early as year 7, however regular reviews mean students can move between pathways. Pathway indicators are summarized below.

Identification of the appropriate pathway will be made in conjunction with teachers, parents, social workers, medical professionals, and pupils themselves, where possible, at the year 9 transition review. Yearly pathway progress reviews will be undertaken with major career and transition planning reviews annually to reassess the appropriate pathways for pupils.

At the year 9 pupil centred review a transitions pathway for the student will be produced. This will involve the writing of a transition plan that will map out routes and activities the student will undertake in the coming years at Ash Lea School to prepare them for adulthood.

Pathway indicators:

Pathway A:

- Independence to work separately from familiar adults
- Good communication skills
- Ability to take responsibility
- Emotional coping mechanism when events deviate from the norm, or do not go to plan
- Ability to ask for assistance
- Problem-solving abilities within sphere of activity
- Ability to travel with a high degree of independence
- Likelihood of gaining nationally accredited qualifications that will assist in future aspirations

It is important to note students in this band A are likely to have higher numeracy and literacy skills, or be on a trajectory to achieve functional numeracy and literacy, however the level of their numeracy and literacy skills does not dictate whether they are following Pathway A; level of numeracy and literacy dictates rather what **type** of career they are likely to pursue. It is the generic employability skills listed above, rather than academic attainment, that indicate appropriate Pathway.

Pathway B:

- Social literacy: understanding of appropriate and inappropriate behaviours
- Good communication skills with familiar adults and in environments
- Ability to take directions and perform a task which is broken into smaller steps
- Ability to adjust to an unfamiliar environment and unfamiliar people with support
- Likelihood of gaining nationally accredited qualifications that will assist in future aspirations

Pathway C:

- Students with very high cognitive and behavioural needs which would prohibit them entering the workplace even with a very high level of support. This group are our students with the highest cognitive, behavioural or medical needs.

Student Careers Learning Programme structure - overview

Pathway A: Career-ready development programme

AIM: to prepare students for independent working and careers

Work experience complemented by work in the community and activities within school will be targeted at developing the range of skills needed in any workplace; this will be on an individualised basis, responding to specific challenges a student is learning to overcome, or to the boundaries within which they must operate, and in later years in particular focused on areas of particular student interest in relation to the career they wish to pursue.

Workplace experience: The nature of work experience itself will not differ greatly from children in the mainstream schooling system, except that students will be given greater support in settling into the new environment and employers will be supported and fully briefed to allow them to support students and create a successful work placement. Extensive job coaching will not be directly available on the Programme for 2018/19. However links with colleges, agencies and charities who can provide this will be developed to extend this facility at KS5 on a 'per student where possible and appropriate' basis. Group school outings to workplaces will include meaningful contact with employees/employers and be accompanied by reflective classroom teaching.

In-school enterprise experience: The school is very experienced in delivering high quality 'enterprise experiences' and events within school, such as Dragon's Den, enterprise day, school mini-businesses, and will continue this programme with a focus on involving local employers to provide meaningful contacts for students, an opportunity for students to demonstrate employability skills, and create closer links between the school and the local

business community opening up future opportunities. Learning from such experiences will also be included in reflective teaching and be used to build students' CVs.

In-school learning: The curriculum has been updated to include careers and employability skills throughout the curriculum. Additionally, specific careers lessons have been introduced. Speakers from business will come into the school to inform, raise aspiration, and challenge gender stereotyping. This will include at least one inspirational speaker with special needs to share their experience of the workplace and stories of success, and one speaker on a variety of popular career choices or lesser-understood areas of work which may hold good opportunities for students. Each student will receive CV writing and interviewing skills coaching. Each student will experience a practice interview with an adult who isn't familiar

Careers and transition information and guidance: There is already good quality transition guidance in place provided by the transition lead in the school who works closely with further education colleges. She is now also the lead on workplace experience at KS5, and will provide an holistic view of the opportunities appropriate to each student (and be developing many of these opportunities), and sharing this information with parents and students. There will be a new 'meet local employers' and further education colleges fair to which students and parents of years 10,11, and 12 will be invited. This should raise aspirations and inform students and parents of work and volunteering opportunities, further education opportunities and on work experience and how this enables and supports future careers opportunities. Each student will have access to a professional and impartial careers advisor by the end of year 11 and year 13. Relevant careers information and links to information will be available at all times on-line and on impactful display in the school.

Pathway B: Workplace participation programme

AIM: To give students who would not fulfil the criteria above to work independently the experience of participating in the workplace to develop confidence and purposeful life-skills. This should build on school learning; understanding of teamwork, as an enrichment opportunity, and providing inclusion whilst broadening horizons beyond school and home. Career skills will be included in their curriculum e.g. problem-solving, team-work, confident communication.

Work experience: Students will initially be closely supported by a staff member and potentially a confident employer member of staff who they have had the opportunity to get to know and trust. The student will have a clear repetitive task to perform working alongside the supporting adult, who would be adequately equipped to help during any actual or emotional difficulties with the task. Completion of the task would not be the main aim- we are looking to develop the skills listed below. However the student will feel they have a role contributing to the success of a broader task or event, from which we hope they would gain self-confidence, some idea of the value of team-work, and practice workplace skills.

In-school enterprise experience: Events and enterprise days are ideal opportunities for students in Pathway B to develop employability skills within a 'safe environment' of adults who understand their needs and where students can feel safe and happy. Such events will remain a core part of our strategy providing an opportunity for students from all Pathways. However there will be a renewed focus on reflective learning in the classroom, linking these experiences to the workplace. We will also use such these occasions as opportunities to

develop strategic links with local employers who may be able to provide supervised workplace participation experiences for students in Pathway B.

In-school learning: The curriculum has been updated to include enhanced workplace understanding and employability skills. Students will have the opportunity to engage in meaningful exchanges with business people coming into the school throughout the school year, linked to their classroom learning or workplace participation experience.

Careers and transition information and guidance: The school transitions lead will work with students and parents to find appropriate further education and transition opportunities for students in Pathway B. This will involve visits to careers fairs, post 16 and post 18 providers of college and day services. These could include developing extensive links with future destinations for our students to aid with transition. Each student will have access to a professional and impartial careers advisor by the end of year 11 and year 13. Relevant careers information and links to information will be available at all times on-line and displayed in prominent places within school.

Pathway C: Community workplace inclusion programme

AIM: To enable all students to be prepared for the next stage of their lives. This will involve experiences of different environments to allow them to build up understanding of their future choices and communicate them effectively.

Experience of work and community environments: The programme consists of one to one staff supported trips and visits. The effects will be evaluated to capture their communication and acceptance of new experiences. Each student will experience a variety of work and community environments. This will be recorded via the IEP process

In-school enterprise experience. The programme will involve contributing to a group activity related to enterprise projects taking place in school. This aims to build on communication skills, tolerating and working with others and participating in different activities. As with all learning opportunities, each student's IEP targets are always reflected on.

In-school learning: Students will have the opportunity to engage in meaningful exchanges with people who support transition coming into the school throughout the school year, linked to their classroom learning or workplace participation experience.

Careers / transition information and guidance: Each student will have access to a professional and impartial careers advisor and transition worker by the end of year 11 and year 13. Relevant transition information and links will be available at all times on-line and on impactful display in the school. The aim is also to support professionals who will be supporting our students in the future to understand their complex needs.

Careers Strategy Leadership & Management

The Careers Strategy has been developed by Dawn Wigley, School Head and Ben Whitmarsh, School Governor with responsibility for Careers provision, supported by Neil Phipp, the School Lead on the Careers Plan and Natasha McCracken, the School Enterprise Advisor.

The Governor with responsibility Careers has the responsibility to monitor progress, ensure the Careers Programme meets OFSTED requirements, and appropriate action is taken where necessary to meet risks to delivery of the strategy.

The whole school lead on the Careers Plan will be responsible for planning, co-ordination, and tracking of all activities to ensure fulfilment of the strategic objectives of the programme. They will also be responsible for evaluating its effectiveness.

The whole school careers lead will be supported by other members of the Careers Team: Andrea Patterson, Transitions & Work-experience Lead, and Secondary teachers, for the delivery of activities as agreed according to the Careers Programme. He will also have the support of the Enterprise Advisor in an advisory capacity.

Finance

Careers Local Grant of £10,000 has been achieved for pupils in year 13, their final year that have been identified as being suitable for a work experience placement which will require 1:1 support (initially).

This support would entail supply personnel being brought into school to either release familiar staff to accompany students to work experience placements, or for more able and confident students, to accompany them in the first few instances.

2. Another intended use of finance is to provide students with the independent travel skills necessary to enable them to get to their work experience placements successfully. We have a member of staff who has travel training but we will be looking to widen the staff base trained, and to use the TITAN travel training programme. This will be financed from the D2N2 grant.

We would be focussing on yr. 9 pupils and above:

- Yr. 9 6 pupils
- Yr. 10 4 pupils
- Yr. 11 1 pupil
- Yr. 12 4 pupils

These pupils are currently in years 10-13 and they will go through the process listed above

Costs

1) TA Support at work experience placement 1:1 ,

5 days for 2 pupils@ £100 per day = £1000

2) TA Support at work experience placements for next year's yr. 13, 12, 11, 10 = £5000

Transport to placements Average cost of £13 2 way trip if using bus (also encourage pupils to get bus passes)

Mini- bus / school car expenses = £ 2000

Staff cost to support 1:1 independence bus programme = £2000.

All the above were in the grant application submitted

3) The school will also be looking to purchase an external advisor to provide independent careers advice for our students in the school. The cost of this will be out of the school budget.

Planning Cycle

The strategy will run September to July. Initially post 16 students will be identified as to which cohort they are best suited to and what activities will be suitable for each student. These activities can then be planned as listed above

In the primary department the strategy will look quite informal. It will be embedded in the primary topic cycle and identified through planning. Skills such as problem solving, teamwork will be taught through play as part of the primary curriculum

As the pupils enter into secondary phase careers, transition and employability skills will be focussed on in a more formal way, through planned activities, visits in to school and off site trips. A rolling programme of careers focused activities will be developed to ensure that pupils have had a range of opportunities to ensure they are able to make appropriate choices at post 16. All pupils in secondary will also have had their year 9 transition plan which would have identified pathways and choices.

Once in post 16 the students pathway would have been clearly identified and they will be working on this to prepare them for life after school. The post 16 curriculum has been written to support all learners to be able to make the most appropriate choices.

The school has identified a common medium term planning format which will state careers focus. This will be monitored and evaluated by the careers lead as well as links to Evidence for Learning to identify pupil progress and breath of opportunities throughout the school. The careers lead will feedback to all teachers on a regular basis.

In 2018 -2019 the programme will be developed with a high focus on evaluating its effectiveness ready for 2019-2020.

Stakeholder Communication

Stakeholder Communication will be critical to ensure effectiveness of the programme. The stakeholders are students, teachers, parents, employers, transition workers and post 18 providers.

There will an initial assessment of barriers to communication, and there will be a structured plan for working in collaboration in a tailored way with each group of stakeholders to build trust, leverage the strategy fully, involve all stakeholders in building upon the most effective strategy, and harness practical input.

The Careers strategy will be evaluated regularly in the light of feedback from all stakeholders. Feedback mechanisms will be part of the careers programme delivery plan. Such a responsive and dynamic programme will also build trust.

All Students on Pathway A will understand the opportunities offered by the Careers Programme and understand how it is relevant to them.

The Careers strategy will be publicly available and be on the school website.

We want the students themselves to be excited about the programme and use it to raise their aspirations. information will be disseminated to students in a variety of formats including wall displays showing how the activities they are participating in work together to build their future.

Staff Development Plan

Senior managers, governors, teachers an identified TAs have had training from external advisors around the careers strategy. These roles have been identified and are attached. They have assisted in both school based activities and external work placements for students in their final year at Ash Lea.

All teachers have had an introduction to what careers means to special schools as a part of their staff meeting. Teachers were able to recognise the career related skills that they were covering already. Developing this further will mean these skills and activities being identified at a planning level.

All staff need an overview of the careers strategy and how this related to their class or phase they are based in

- They will need to understand the roles and responsibilities of individuals as identified in the careers strategy
- Careers, employability and transition is identified on medium term planning and can be recorded in the normal way
- They will need to know how they can support activities where the aim is linked to the careers objectives.
- That the schools aim is to maximise students independence and staff to be aware what this will look like for individual pupils.

Staff working with year 7 and above will need to know

- That they are involved in a continuous rolling programme of careers related activities that will feed into transition planning
- That they are preparing pupils for their year 9 transition meeting where a pathway will be identified and a plan prepared
- That staff will be trained in travel training programme to support students accessing work placements
- Staff will be supporting students in work placements, both internal and external. The level of support will be different dependent on individual students.
- Training around risk assessing work placements and travel training.

School will identify CPD needs for named individuals involved in the careers strategy and support this. There is also links with other schools that named individuals attend.

Partnerships

A strategic relationship will be built with a number of key local employers willing to actively support our strategy in all areas.

We will continue to grow strong links with organisations and schemes such as Mencap and Access to Work. We already have a strong link with Mencap who support us in sourcing work-experience opportunities for our students, and run the Mencap 'EmployMe' post KS5 internship programmes in partnership with major employers who can work with us at transition to provide good career opportunities for our leaving students.

Our Enterprise Advisor will provide knowledge to build links with the local business community and advise on best methods to publicize the school and the opportunities for businesses to become involved with their local community in this way.

Evaluation

An evaluation scheme, measurement variables and documentation has been developed for 2018-19 which measures the effectiveness of delivery of component parts of the programme in relation to each student.

We will evaluate through lesson planning and moderation of this. Evidence will also be available through Evidence for Learning, learning walks, IEPs moderation (linked to EHC outcomes) individual transition plan evaluations and student views on EHC review documentation. It will also include accredited course recording formats, and work experience recording sheets. This will all feed into a report that the careers lead will feedback to the governors on an annual basis. In addition to this evaluation and recording formats are required to prove compliance with the requirements of the D2N2 grant.

Inputs into measurements will include students, teachers, employers, parents, and longitudinal information gathered after the student leaves Ash Lea.

Results will be considered as part of the performance assessment and CPD of staff involved in delivery of the programme.

Baseline measures of career and career-skills attainment for Pathway A students will be developed during 2018/19 to inform clarified target outcomes for year 2019/20.

Baseline measures of career-skills attainment for Pathway B students will be developed during 2018/19 to inform clarified target outcomes for year 2019/20.

Baseline measures of skills and experiences of Pathway C students will be developed during 2018/19 to inform clarified target outcomes for year 2019/20.

The measurable strategy objectives for the year 2018-19 will be:

A fully developed, internal and appropriately resourced careers programme.

Staff and governance structure with new responsibilities for development and implementation of the careers programme fully embedded and staff achieving targets.

A systematic monitoring system in place and working effectively for activities on the careers programme (initially using tracker)

An evaluation system in place with baseline measures and feedback mechanism

Clear communications and consultation strategy in place

The delivery of a revised curriculum clearly linked to careers and the development of careers-skills. NB Re: careers-skills

A new work experience programme will offer the following:

- Students on Pathway A at year 11 will have engaged in one external work experience, and at least one external placement over at least a 3 week period at Key Stage 5.
- Students on Pathway B at year 11 will have engaged in 1 session of supervised workplace participation, and 1 session of supervised workplace participation at Key Stage 5. Where the student is not able to work externally to the school environment they will work within an enterprise environment at a school enterprise / event.
- Every student on Pathway C will have engaged in one one-to-one accompanied visit to a workplace in the community.

Strategic relationships will have been built with at least 3 local employers including 1 local employer for the workplace participation programme pathway B.

Each student will have had access to an independent careers advisor where appropriate.

Every student will have had the opportunity to participate in a career-related project or event such as launch day where they have a meaningful interaction with an employer at school or in the community.

Every student will have undertaken a relevant visit to a workplace where they have a meaningful interaction with employees / employer.

Neil Phipp

To be reviewed September 2019