

## Ashlea School Careers, Employability, and Transition Policy (Life After Ash Lea)

### Introduction

The focus of our Careers, Employability and Transition Policy is to provide informed career and future option choice, raising aspirations and equipping students with knowledge and understanding, skills and attitudes to act as a foundation for their lifelong career and learning, independence and self-agency. The Careers Education, Employability and Transition programme at Ash Lea has been developed to incorporate the aims of the school and recent initiatives in careers and employability education in relation to the Gatsby Benchmarks. The delivery of Careers education against the Gatsby Benchmarks will now be measured by Ofsted inspectors.

### Aims

The broader aim of the Programme is to help pupils be 'the best that they can be', preparing them for the richest and most rewarding adult life after leaving Ash Lea school possible, with as great a level of independence and independent decision-making as appropriate. For some of our pupils an end-goal may be to achieve paid employment, for some it may be to achieve good communication skills and problem-solving to enable them to enjoy semi-independent living, and for others it might be expressing personal choices. We want all pupils as far as possible also to understand the world around them including the world of work and commerce.

### Career Skills in the Curriculum

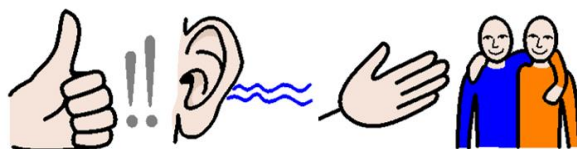
Skills of all pupils will be developed through the Curriculum including Communication, Independence and Cognition. These skills are embedded in the school curriculum and will address the needs of the individual pupils using Transition Plan's (from Year 9) and IEPs throughout their school career. Through our PHSE curriculum pupils will focus on social skills, communication skills and emotional intelligence. Skills covered will include respectful relationships, being safe and good mental well-being.

Between Year 7 and Year 13 pupils will have regular contact with employers and experience of workplaces through employee presentations, offsite visits and appropriate opportunity for work experience; this may be offsite or in school. Topic work will offer the opportunity to explore the world around them and experience different environments and the opportunities they provide. Specific career skills and outcomes are embedded into this work and have been identified by the career lead.

Specific career skills for each pupil will be identified through the transition plan and addressed through the IEP and curriculum. In Post 16 these skills will be developed through specific pathways, experiences and accredited courses offered to each pupil.

#### • Benchmark 1: A stable careers programme

The Careers, Employability and transition programme is the responsibility of the Careers Leader supported by the Transitions Co-ordinator with responsibility for work experience and transition. The Careers and Employability Programme is embedded into the curriculum delivered to each child in the school from Year 7, as per National Policy, running alongside specific career-related enrichment activities. The Head of post-16 is responsible for embedding careers into the post-16 curriculum and will take the lead in supporting subject leads and all teachers to ensure careers, employability skills and awareness of the world of work are embedded in a suitable way across the



curriculum for the pupils for who they are responsible. The school is also supported by an Enterprise Advisor from the local business community who helps with strategy development and links into the local community.

The Careers Strategy and a programme of activities will be planned to run throughout the year and updated yearly alongside the curriculum. Staff meeting time will be allocated to ensure good co-ordination, and continued programme development to ensure the programme is best in class. The school will make good use of and extend its links with local stakeholders to deliver components of the Careers and Employability Programme.

The Careers Leader is supported by an Local Enterprise Co-ordinator from D2N2 who role is to disseminate information from government, help us measure our performance on an on-going basis, provide training and support a Special Schools Working Party of Careers Leaders and local business representatives in the area, who share relevant information and experiences on a regular basis, and work together on new initiatives. We have well-embedded relationships with community stakeholders and the Careers Co-Ordinator will work to develop relationships with community stakeholders to support our programme.

The performance of our careers programme overall is regularly internally measured using Compass and is a new component of the Ofsted grading.

Evidence for Learning is a key tool for measuring outcomes on a child-by-child basis, as evidence is collected from each child during their activities at school. It ensures each child fully benefits from the programme and also builds up an easy-to-use profile of the careers and employability activities and achievements each student has undertaken whilst at Ash Lea. This will inform transition choices and provide evidence to potential employers.

#### • **Benchmark 2: Learning from career and labour market information**

Information regarding the career and labour market and work pathways, will be provided to pupils from Year 9. This will be done through community visits, workplace experiences, college visits and vocational subjects within the curriculum. Individual opportunities and experiences will be identified through the pupil's transition plan.

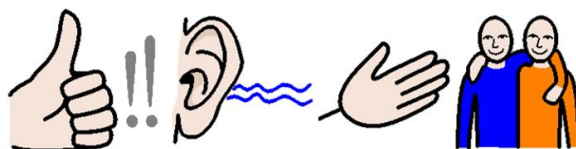
#### • **Benchmark 3: Addressing the needs of each pupil**

As everything we do at Ash Lea, we recognise each pupils needs as individual, and we tailor what they learn and how they learn to them specifically. We will seek to develop the skills that have most value to each pupil in an engaging and appropriate context. Through the transition process, pupils will have experiences which match their aspirations, identified and planned for.

#### • **Benchmark 4: Linking curriculum learning to careers**

The planned programme of study helps students to understand their interests, strengths and weaknesses in relation to the world of work and lifelong education. It incorporates planned activities that use the context of work to develop knowledge, skills and understanding that are useful in work, including learning through the experience of work, about work and working practices and learning the skills for work.

'Soft-skills' such as communication and problem-solving are life-skills as well as employability skills and therefore all pupils will be part of the Careers and Employability Programme, although as with all our activities at Ash Lea, our activities are tailored to the needs and abilities of the individual child.



In the Post 16 department, students are working towards vocational qualifications from the ASDAN awarding body at the appropriate level; these qualifications are very focussed on practical experiences that develop young people's independence and knowledge essential for future aspirations and potentially entering the workplace.

Child Assessment will take place through verbal feedback, observation and written assessment. This is supported by Evidence for Learning, creating a 'personal achievement log'.

- **Benchmark 5: Encounters with employers and employees**

Every child from the age of 11 will have one 'meaningful encounter' every year with an employer in which the student will have an opportunity to learn about what work is like or what it takes to be successful in the workplace. This may take place through a range of enrichment activities including speakers, visits and community activities.

- **Benchmark 6: Experiences of workplaces**

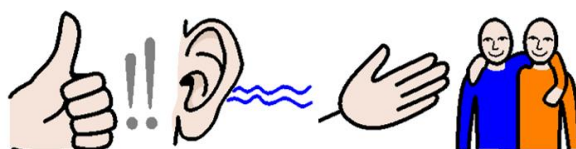
Students will have a broad experience of different workplaces each year from Year 7, whether this be a guided visit or when out in the community. Direct work experience is an important part of the educational entitlement for some pupils at Ash Lea. This is planned, supported, and monitored by the Careers Co-ordinator who also supports the complementary transition programme. When pupils return from work experience, their experience is discussed and evaluated by students, employers, staff, and parents. Students are supported during the placement to a greater or lesser extent by a member of support staff. This is decided on an individual basis. Employers feedback in a structured way. Post 16 students will also gain access to vocational taster sessions to broaden choice and tailor what we can offer to their interests; this will help them make the right choices in transition from school.

- **Benchmark 7: Encounters with further and higher education**

All pupils are given the opportunity to access community opportunities and to visit possible post 18 placements, and taster sessions at local day services and colleges. Firm links have been developed with F.E colleges and other Post 18 day-time providers. We invite further education establishments into school to give talks to pupils and parents. We encourage parents to participate in local transition fairs and facilitate the attendance of pupils together with their parents where needed. We also hold an annual Life After Ash Lea fair in school inviting service providers into school for pupils to engage with.

- **Benchmark 8: Personal guidance**

Students learn about different careers, opportunities for training, volunteering and investigate further education options through our transition programme. Additionally, those pupils who are likely to benefit from it will be offered impartial, confidential and detailed advice regarding choices of destination and appropriate pathways by external specialist Careers advisors. All pupils and their parents/carers are consulted on a transitions plan which is created in Year 9 and updated in Years 11 and 13. This plan will investigate and record the aspirations of each pupil for their 'Life After Ash Lea' and document the steps that will need to be taken to achieve those aspirations. Each pupil will have a record of the activities they have participated in relating to careers and where possible and desirable a CV. This will support the young person to have personalised advice and guidance based on their experiences. Parents/Carers play an integral part in pupils' understanding of career choices and we facilitate and strongly encourage participation in a range of career events including parents' evenings, transition events, work experience events and annual personal reviews.



## Yearly Evaluation and Updating of the Careers Programme

A yearly evaluation of the programme will take place bringing together an appraisal of outcomes collected from Evidence for Learning, Compass, a questionnaire to parents and pupils, and feedback collected throughout the year e.g. from employers, pupils, and parents on work experience placements. In consideration of developments to the National Careers Strategy and Ofsted requirements, the programme will be updated in good time to feed into the usual yearly cycle of curriculum planning.

## Responsibilities

The careers and employability programme is managed by the careers education team which consists of SLT Careers Lead, Careers Lead, the Transition Co-ordinator, with responsibility for transition and work placements, the EHCP Co-ordinator and an external Enterprise Advisor. All teaching and teaching support staff are responsible for the development, application and delivery of individual elements of the programme in such a way as is most appropriate for their individual pupils.

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**Reviewed by:** Luke Skillington (AHT) and Phil Lovett (Transitions Co-ordinator)  
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**Next Review Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> May 2025

