

Careers & Futures

POLICY STATEMENT

- At Oakwood Specialist College we place significant importance on ensuring that all Learners are fully supported to achieve their optimum career/life outcomes and provide early career development and support that is aligned to their additional needs.
- Young people with SEND can face additional barriers to academic achievement, higher education and sustained employment, and are at greater risk of exclusion from education or becoming NEET. They are also more likely to experience mental health challenges and to be over-represented in interactions with the criminal justice system. This policy sets out our commitment to delivering high -quality, personalised information, advice and guidance, and to supporting every Learner, through paid or unpaid opportunities, so that they enjoy the same career and life outcomes as their peers. At Oakwood Specialist College, we strive to maximise the life chances of our Learners by preparing them for fulfilling, productive roles in their communities beyond college.
- The governing body have therefore adopted this policy to provide a clear commitment to, and framework for, Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance.

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1. Scope

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This policy covers Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance given to all Learners on roll at Oakwood Specialist College. The policy has been reviewed in line with the DfE guidance document 'Careers guidance and access for education and training providers – "Statutory guidance for governing bodies, college leaders and college staff'. (DfE, May 2025)".
- 1.1.2 This policy accepts the 8 Gatsby Charitable Foundation's benchmarks as set out in the DfE guidance. <https://www.gatsbybenchmarks.org.uk/app/uploads/2024/11/gatsby-summary-for-leaders-colleges.pdf>
- 1.1.3 This policy covers the legal duty of college to ensure that a range of education and training providers can access Learners for the purpose of informing them about approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships (the Baker clause).
- 1.1.4 All Team Members at Oakwood Specialist College are expected to be aware of this policy and the importance of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) in the education of Learners.
- 1.1.5 It is important that Learners leave college aware of themselves as individuals, aware of the opportunities available to them and can make decisions about their own lives. They should be prepared for the transition from education to the world beyond. It is to these aspects of personal and social development that this policy will contribute.

1.2 Aims

- 1.2.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure that all Learners are supported to achieve their potential through:
- Empowering them to make choices about their futures.
 - Providing comprehensive information on the options available to them
 - Raising their aspirations
 - Promoting equality and diversity
 - Challenging stereotypes
 - Enabling sustained employment after college
 - Supporting personal and economic wellbeing throughout their lives after college
 - Providing opportunities to link learning to the future.
- 1.2.2 Careers education, information, advice, and guidance (CEIAG) is crucial to meet the skills, knowledge and understanding needed by each Learner. We fully subscribe to the 'Careers Guidance and access for education and training providers. Statutory guidance for governing bodies, college leaders and college staff.' (2025)

- 1.2.3 In line with the statutory career guidance and access for education and training providers (DfE, May 2025), Oakwood Specialist College embraces the core principles of the December 2017 Careers Strategy, facilitating inspiring encounters with further and higher education, employers and workplaces; providing impartial, tailored advice and guidance; and leveraging data and technology to support informed Learner choices. Furthermore, under the Skills and Post16 Education Act 2022, we guarantee that approved technical education and apprenticeship providers enjoy open, regular access to all our Learners, where deemed appropriate.
- 1.2.4 Governors and Team Members recognise that career planning is not limited to just one stage in life. For this reason, careers education and guidance aim to develop career management skills which young people can draw on at each stage in their career planning. The CEIAG programme is continually evaluated to improve its effectiveness.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 College

- 2.1.1 The college has a series of statutory duties. All registered Learners at the college must receive independent careers advice.
- 2.1.2 This careers advice must be represented in an impartial manner, showing no bias towards a particular institution, education, or work option.
- 2.1.3 This advice must cover a range of education or training options and must be in the best interests of the Learner.
- 2.1.4 There must be an opportunity for education and training providers to access Learners to inform them about approved technical qualifications or apprenticeships.
- 2.1.5 The college must have a clear policy setting out the way providers will be given access to Learners. This policy and these arrangements must be published.
- 2.1.6 The college will base its careers provision around the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- 2.1.7 Oakwood Specialist College believes that good CEIAG connects learning to the future. It motivates young people by giving them a clearer idea of the routes to jobs and careers that they will find engaging and rewarding. Good CEIAG widens Learners' horizons, challenges stereotypes, and raises aspirations. It provides Learners with the knowledge and skills necessary to make successful transitions to the next stage of their life. This supports social mobility by improving opportunities for all young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 2.1.8 The college will continuously monitor its CEIAG offer and seek further improvement. This will be done by the Team Members involved in the design and delivery of the programme as well as by external stakeholders who assess the work of the college (e.g., College Improvement Partner or Ofsted).

2.2 Governance

- 2.2.1 The governing body will ensure that the College has a clear policy on Careers Education, Information and Guidance (CEIAG) and that this is clearly communicated to all stakeholders. They should ensure that this policy:
 - is based on the eight Gatsby Benchmarks
 - meets the college's legal requirements.
- 2.2.2 The governing body will ensure that arrangements are in place to allow a range of educational and training providers to access Learners.
- 2.2.3 There will be a member of the governing body who takes a strategic interest in CEIAG and encourages employer engagement.

2.3 Monitoring and Review

- 2.3.1 The Principal will ensure that:
 - The work of the Careers Advisor and CEIAG events are supported and monitored.

- a member of the Senior Leadership Team has responsibility for CEIAG work and reports regularly back to the team.

2.3.2 The effectiveness of this policy will be measured in a variety of ways:

- Feedback from stakeholders through mechanisms such as Learner, Parent/Carer, and employer surveys
- Feedback from external visitors to the college and/or Ofsted
- Review activities from Governors
- Monitoring the number of Learners who are NEET in October having left the college in the previous summer. This figure can be compared to national figures as well as against the equivalent figure from similar schools both nationally and within the county.

3. Provider Access

- 3.1.1 This section sets out the college's arrangements for managing the access of providers to Learners at the college for the purpose of giving them information about the provider's education or training offer. This complies with the college's legal obligations under Section 42B of the Education Act 1997.

3.2 Learner Entitlement

- 3.2.1 All Learners at Oakwood Specialist College are entitled to:
- Find out about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships opportunities, as part of a careers programme which provides information on the full range of education and training options available at each transition point.
 - Hear from a range of local providers about the opportunities they offer, including technical education and apprenticeships – through options events, assemblies and group discussions and taster events.
 - Understand how to make applications for the full range of academic and technical courses.

3.3 Provider Encounters

- 3.3.1 To support informed decision-making, Learners at Oakwood Specialist College will be able to access at least two meaningful encounters with organisations offering training, employment, or social care provision to our leavers.
- 3.3.2 These provider encounters will be scheduled during college hours and the provider will be given a reasonable amount of time to, as a minimum:
- Share information about both the provider and the approved technical education qualification and apprenticeships that the provider offers.
 - Explain what career routes those options could lead to.
 - Provide insights into what it might be like to learn or train with that provider (including the opportunity to meet Team Members and Learners from the provider).
 - Answer questions from Learners

3.4 Managing Provider Access

- 3.4.1 The college offers a comprehensive Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance programme and an overview of this programme can be seen in the College's Careers programme on the college website.
- 3.4.2 Providers should speak to the College's Head of Careers and Futures to identify the most suitable opportunity to arrange a visit.

- 3.4.3 The college will make a suitable space available for discussions between the provider and Learners, as appropriate to the activity. The college will also make available ICT and other specialist equipment to support provider presentations. This will all be discussed and agreed in advance of the visit with the Head of Careers and Futures or a member of their team.
- 3.4.4 Providers are welcome to leave a copy of their prospectus or other relevant course literature with the Head of Careers and Futures so that they can be displayed in the college careers Hub.

3.5 Complaints

- 3.5.1 Complaints regarding provider access can be raised following the college complaints procedure which can be found on our website or you are able to contact The Careers & Enterprise Company directly via provideraccess@careersandenterprise.co.uk