

Careers Policy

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School



*Excellence for All
Service to Others
Inspired by Christ*

Date of last review:	September 2025	Date of next review:	September 2026
Author:	Careers Lead	Owner:	Assistant Headteacher – KS5 Leader
Approval:	Full Governing Body Panel		

Careers Education Vision Statement

At St John's, we aim to educate our young people about the world of work, providing them with the very best information and guidance that they need, and inspiring them to make a positive contribution to a better society throughout their adult life. We focus on developing the whole person, nurturing our students to ultimately pursue a career in order to serve and lead others in their world of work, fulfilling their God-given potential, and being 'Inspired by Christ' in all that they do.

1. Context

St John's puts the needs of each student at the centre of all learning and social experiences and has a commitment to a high standard approach to careers' education. We utilise a nurturing approach to raise aspirations, promote equality of opportunity, celebrate diversity and challenges stereotypes to ensure every student gains the confidence, self-belief, as well as the skills, knowledge and experience required to manage their own career progress.

The Gatsby Benchmarks

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

Please see the [Appendix](#) for a full breakdown of these Benchmarks and how we meet them.

Careers website: <https://www.stjohnscs.com/page/?title=Careers+Education&pid=261>

Careers email: stjcareers@stj.kent.sch.uk

Senior member of staff overseeing Careers: Mr Rowlinson

Careers Leader: Mr Self

Careers Advisor: Lily Thomas

Careers Link Governor: J Davies Mullan

Statutory requirements

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) Statutory guidance: [Careers guidance and access for education and training providers](#) updated 8th May 2025

This guidance refers to:

- The Education Act 1997, Sections 42A, 42B, 45 and 45A
- The Education and Skills Act 2008, section 72
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2008, schedule 4 (15)

This policy is also in line with the [Skills and Post-16 Act 2022](#), which came into force on 1 January 2023.

It explains that our school must provide a minimum of 6 encounters with technical education

and apprenticeships to all learners in years 8 to 13, acting impartially and not showing bias towards any route. For more detail on these encounters, see our Provider Access Legislation Policy (available via the Attachments section of our [Careers webpage](#)).

This policy accepts the 8 Gatsby Charitable Foundation's benchmarks (updated and published Nov 2024) as set out in the DfE guidance. They are detailed in the [Appendix](#) of this policy.

2. Aim

The school aims to support students to make realistic and informed decisions about their future by raising aspirations and providing impartial and independent information and guidance. Our programme encourages learners to consider their career options at all stages of their education through curriculum-embedded learning, guidance at key transition points, and meaningful exposure to a range of employers, educators and training providers.

3. Objectives

To ensure that students:

- develop the skills and attitudes necessary for success in adult and working life
- are aware of the range of opportunities/options which are realistically available to them in continued education and training at 14+, 16+ and 18+, and of education, training and careers opportunities both locally and nationally
- are equipped with the necessary decision-making skills to manage those same transitions
- develop an awareness of the wide variety of education, training and careers opportunities both locally and nationally
- use effectively the paper-based, virtual and staff resources available so they can make informed and appropriate choices throughout their school journey
- benefit from links fostered between the school, local businesses and further education establishments
- experience the world of work and develop transferable skills
- wherever possible leave the school to enter employment, further education or training
- experience a culture of high aspirations, equality of opportunity, in which diversity is celebrated and stereotypes are challenged
- receive extra assistance and guidance to reach their potential, where this is necessary

4. Learner outcome

Students will be able to:

- Try out different work opportunities
- Gain an insight into the Labour Market
- Gain an understanding of skill sets and how skills are transferrable
- Understand soft skills, hard skills and how to sell themselves using CVs/application forms/interviews, including virtual application processes
- Develop the skills employers look for e.g. resilience, team work, problem solving (following issued guidance from CDI Careers Guidance in Schools and Colleges, & Gatsby Benchmarks.)
- Have access to both paper based and online resources to assist in their career exploration
- Access to impartial information on options Post 16 and Post 18 and beyond
- Start to independently make action plans for the future
- Feel better about managing their transitions, using coping strategies
- Know how to look for opportunities and who to ask for assistance if support is required
- Be able to complete application forms, University forms, and update CVs

Students will develop the above skills and access these opportunities through:

- Careers input through PSHE lessons

- In school career talks by employers
- Work experience during year 10 and 12
- Voluntary work
- Enterprise activities
- Part time work
- Industry/Career visits
- College and University visits
- Careers guidance interviews

5. Provision

Our careers programme raises aspirations, challenges stereotypes, and develops essential skills critical for the workplace. Pupils are supported in identifying and applying for the most appropriate post-16 and post-18 educational or career pathway for them.

(See Careers Programme on the school website for specific details)

All pupils in every year group, every year:

- learn from dedicated careers modules embedded into PSHE lessons
- receive careers learning in every subject
- participate in meaningful employer and educator assemblies
- receive careers assemblies from the careers team
- receive parent/student information evenings, & option/pathway evenings from Year 8
- have access to digital learning platforms such as Unifrog and Springpod
- access dedicated careers workshops and events such as the careers fair

Additionally:

At Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) students will gain one-week's worth of workplace-related experiences through a range of employer-led workshops and employer visits.

At Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11) students will:

- complete a one-week work experience placement in Year 10
- have opportunities to access university and company led outreach programmes
- receive an impartial careers advice meeting with a fully trained Careers Advisor (Level 6 or 7) for a minimum of 40 minutes in Year 11
- receive one-to-one Year 11 interviews with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, careers team, or a member of the KS4/5 team.
- have access to post-16 pathways support and advice from the careers team

At Key Stage 5 (Years 12-13) students will:

- complete a one-week work experience placement in Year 12
- receive opportunities in university access programmes (including summer residential schemes) that typically lead to reduced UCAS offers (e.g. Kent's Aspire programme, QMU's Access Programme)
- receive opportunities to work with external agencies on prolonged support programmes for specific pathways (e.g. with Gravesend Medical Centre, Construction Youth Trust)
- have opportunities to participate in voluntary community and charity work
- benefit from a wide range of careers trips
- receive an impartial careers advice meeting with a fully trained Careers Advisor (Level 6 or 7) for a minimum of 40 minutes in Year 12
- have access to post-18 pathways support and advice from the careers team

6. Student Entitlement

- Receive a stable careers programme from Year 7 that continues until they leave school
- Receive relevant careers guidance and have access to independent careers information and guidance
- Receive personal advice that helps students to achieve their individual careers goal – whether this is Higher Education, an apprenticeship or employment
- Be equipped with the necessary career management skills to prosper in HE and employment
- Have the relevant knowledge to make realistic and achievable goals based on their own interests and skills, whilst taking into account local job market information and relevant entry requirements
- Receive up-to-date information about careers and skill-development opportunities
- Understand how different subjects help keep different pathway options open
- Have access to additional help, whether this need is generated from a change of decision, personal circumstances or additional needs
- Have meaningful and helpful encounters with employers and other education providers (trips out and visiting speakers)
- Have a minimum of one week's work experience in Years 10 and 12, with the opportunity for a second

Students are expected to:

- Fully engage with careers activities
- Utilise the available careers resources
- Record careers-related skills, participation and research, reflect upon what has been learnt
- Identify and set goals for the future
- Actively participate in workshops, presentations and visits from external employers or providers
- Attend informative events such as Options Evenings and Careers Fayre
- Use study and research spaces such as the careers office appropriately and with respect for other users
- Take advantage of opportunities offered outside school, such as school trips and projects.

Parents are entitled to have:

- Access to links to the National Careers Service information and other independent websites and resources via the school website
- The opportunity to contact the independent careers advisor, careers lead and careers coordinator
- Access to information and guidance through parent information evenings including choosing options, UCAS, work experience and pupil finance

7. Measuring & assessing impact, monitoring and evaluation

Our school systematically measures and assesses the impact and quality of our provision as part of the whole school annual review in line with the development of the School Development Plan through:

- **Recording:** The school systematically records careers activities and events using Compass+. Up-to-date information from recording systems and related data on all learners is used by the Careers Leader to measure impact of the Careers programme and to inform continuous improvement and planning of careers activities.
- **Feedback:** All relevant stakeholder voices are systematically evaluated by the Careers Leader to inform impact evaluation, strategic development planning of careers and whole school or special

school development planning, impact evaluation and reporting. Learners' perception of their career readiness is measured through the Future Skills Questionnaire (conducted in September each year) and considered by the Careers Leader and senior leaders to inform whole school or special school development planning, impact evaluation and reporting.

- **Evaluation against Learning Objectives:** The school conducts an annual evaluation of the careers programme against defined learning objectives for each year group. These objectives guide assessment of learners' progress in acquiring key knowledge, skills, and behaviours, and inform the ongoing review and refinement of activities to align with programme intent and enhance impact on career readiness.

This process includes Student Voice, where random students across all year groups are invited to share their experiences of careers education and provide detailed feedback, a teacher survey, and a parent survey – all conducted at the end of the academic year.

- **Destination data:** Destination data (including intended and actual destinations) is collected, analysed and reported on. This includes outcomes for specific cohorts, breadth of destinations, aspiration, alignment to labour market, NEET, etc. Data is used to inform future careers provision.
- **Monitoring and Quality Assurance:** The school annually completes the Careers Impact System-Internal Leadership Review to continuously measure and develop the quality of the Careers Programme. The provision is structured with reference to relevant frameworks, policies, and statutory guidance (e.g. Gatsby Benchmarks, CDI Framework, Careers Strategy, Provider Access Legislation, etc.). The provision and compliance is reviewed within internal and external quality assurance processes such as learning walks led by the Careers Leader or SLT.
- **Sharing evaluation data:** provide information to parents and other relevant stakeholders on the strengths and development areas of the Careers Provision highlighted from the monitoring, reviewing and evaluation processes.

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually (June/July)

Appendix - The Gatsby Benchmarks

<p>1. <u>A stable careers programme:</u> Every school and college should have an embedded programme of careers education and guidance that is known and understood by pupils, parents and carers, staff, governors, employers and other agencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Every school should have a stable, structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of governors, the headteacher and the senior management team, and has an identified and appropriately trained careers leader responsible for it. - The careers programme should be tailored to the needs of pupils, sequenced appropriately, underpinned by learning outcomes and linked to the whole-school development plan. It should also set out how parents and carers will be engaged throughout. - The careers programme should be published on the school's website and communicated in ways that enable pupils, parents and carers, staff and employers to access, and understand it. - The programme should be regularly evaluated using feedback from pupils, parents and carers, teachers and other staff who support pupils, careers advisers and employers, to increase its impact. 	<p><u>How we meet this Benchmark</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers Leader trained to Level 6 in Careers Leadership • Careers programme is regularly evaluated and adapted in line with policy updates and stakeholder feedback • Careers learning features in the whole-school development plan • The careers team meet with our school governor link and CEC coordinator to review our provision regularly
<p>2. <u>Learning from career and labour market information:</u> All pupils, parents and carers, teachers and staff who support pupils should have access to good-quality, up-to-date information about future pathways, study options and labour market opportunities. Young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their parents and carers may require different or additional information. All pupils will need the support of an informed adviser to make the best use of available information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During each Key Stage, all pupils should access and use information about careers, pathways and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options or next steps. - Parents and carers should be encouraged and supported to access and use information about careers, pathways and the labour market to inform their support for pupils in their care. 	<p><u>How we meet this Benchmark</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LMI is intergrated into PSHE and taught curriculums • Staff CPD includes LMI review, and the careers leader shares relevant LMI information with departments and staff • LMI is integrated into the Unifrog platform, which all students access and use

<p>3. <u>Addressing the needs of each young person:</u> Pupils have different careers guidance needs at different stages. Careers programmes should help pupils navigate their concerns about any barriers to career progression. In addition, opportunities should be tailored to the needs of each pupil, including any additional needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils, young people with SEND and those who are absent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A school's careers programme should actively seek to challenge misconceptions and stereotypical thinking, showcase a diverse range of role models and raise aspirations. - Schools should keep systematic records of the participation of pupils in all aspects of their careers programme, including the individual advice given to each pupil, and any subsequent agreed decisions. - For pupils who change schools during the secondary phase, information about participation and the advice given previously should be integrated into a pupil's records, where this information is made available. Records should begin to be kept from the first point of contact or from the point of transition. - All pupils should have access to these records and use them ahead of any key transition points to support their next steps and career development. - Schools should collect, maintain and use accurate data for each pupil on their aspirations, intended and immediate education, and training or employment destinations, to inform personalised support. - Schools should use sustained and longer-term destination data as part of their evaluation process and use alumni to support their careers programme. 	<p><u>How we meet this Benchmark</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic records of participation are kept on Compass+ and reviewed regularly • Destination (intended & actual) data is collected yearly • Use of the FSQ which provides a wealth of individual data • All form tutors gather pathway information from students and upload to Unifrog; all staff can utilise this data • The careers leader liaises regularly with the SENCO, welfare and LSA teams to ascertain individual needs and tailor support • Activities are targeted based on gathered data
<p>4. <u>Linking curriculum learning to careers:</u> As part of the school's programme of careers education, all teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. Subject teachers should highlight the progression routes for their subject and the relevance of the knowledge and skills developed in their subject for a wide range of career pathways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Every year, in every subject, every pupil should have opportunities to learn how the knowledge and skills developed in that subject helps people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers. - Careers should form part of the school's ongoing staff development programme for teachers and all staff who support pupils. 	<p><u>How we meet this Benchmark</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant careers modules embedded into every year group's PSHE curriculum • All subject areas areas are required to include careers links throughout their curriculums for all students

		<p>each year. This is reviewed via Learning Walks by SLT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff development workshops are regularly provided during staff inset and twilight sessions
<p>5. <u>Encounters with employers and employees:</u></p> <p>Every pupil 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 opportunities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes, and could include pupils' own part-time employment where it exists.</p>	<p>- Every year, from the age of 11, pupils should participate in at least one meaningful encounter with an employer.</p> <p>A meaningful encounter will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have a clear purpose, which is shared with the employer and the young person - be underpinned by learning outcomes that are appropriate to the needs of the young person - have opportunities for two-way interactions between the young person and the employer - be followed by time for the young person to reflect on the insights, knowledge or skills gained through the encounter 	<p><u>How we meet this Benchmark</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every year group has a meaningful employer-led assembly; students will learn from a variety of employers from Year 7 to 13 • All students are able to meet a range of employers across multiple sectors through the yearly Careers Fair • The Careers Leader maintains an extensive network of connections to support with this provision
<p>6. <u>Experiences of workplaces:</u></p> <p>Every learner should have first-hand experiences of workplaces to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks.</p>	<p>- By the age of 16, every pupil should have had meaningful experiences of workplaces.</p> <p>- By the age of 18, every pupil should have had at least one further meaningful experience.</p> <p>A meaningful experience will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have a clear purpose, which is shared with the employer and the young person 	<p><u>How we meet this Benchmark</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throughout Key Stage 3, students have experiences led by employers at school covering workplace tasks • In Year 10 and 12 there is a compulsory one-week work experience week to learn from employers. This should be in-

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - be underpinned by learning outcomes that are appropriate to the needs of the young person - involve extensive two-way interactions between the young person and employees - include opportunities for young people to meet a range of different people from the workplace - include opportunities for young people to perform a task set by the employer or to produce a piece of work relevant to that workplace - include the employer providing feedback to the young person about their work - be followed by opportunities for the young person to reflect on the insights, knowledge or skills gained through their experience 	<p>person and at the workplace (not remote).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional support is provided to Year 10 and 12 students in securing a work placement • Years 10 to 13 are encouraged to engage in additional experiences during their own time; some of these experiences are offered through school connections
<p>7. <u>Encounters with further and higher education:</u> All pupils should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them, including academic, technical and vocational routes. This should incorporate learning in schools, colleges, independent training providers (ITPs), universities and in the workplace.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By the age of 16, every pupil should have had meaningful encounters with providers of the full range of learning opportunities, including sixth forms, colleges, universities and ITPs. - By the age of 18, all pupils who are considering applying to higher education should have had at least two visits to higher education providers to meet staff and learners. <p>A meaningful encounter will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have a clear purpose, which is shared with the provider and the young person - be underpinned by learning outcomes that are appropriate to the needs of the young person - involve a two-way interaction between the young person and the provider - include information about the provider, such as their recruitment and selection processes, the qualifications that provider offers and the careers these could lead to 	<p><u>How we meet this Benchmark</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner relationships with local universities ensure all students have a range of HE assembly talks and workshops from Year 7. • Sixth form have an ongoing series of university encounters and taster programmes to engage with • FE encounters are built into Key Stage 4 provision, and includes opportunities for taster days and workshops • Dedicated apprenticeship assemblies and trips are built into Key Stage 4 & 5 provision

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describe what learning or training with the provider is like - be followed by opportunities for the young person to reflect on the insights, knowledge or skills gained through the encounter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Careers Leader maintains an extensive network of connections to support with this provision
<p>8. Personal guidance: Every pupil should have opportunities for guidance meetings with a careers adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These meetings should be available for all pupils whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all pupils but should be scheduled to meet their individual needs. The careers leader should work closely with the careers adviser, SEND coordinator and other key staff to ensure personal guidance is effective and embedded in the careers programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Every pupil should have at least one personal guidance meeting with a careers adviser by the age of 16, and a further meeting by the age of 18. Meetings should be scheduled in the careers programme to meet the needs of pupils. - Information about personal guidance support, and how to access it, should be communicated to pupils and parents and carers, including through the school website. 	<p><u>How we meet this Benchmark</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Year 11 students have a small group meeting with an external Careers Advisor (trained to level 6 or 7) at a time relevant to decision making • All Year 12 students have a 1:1 meeting with an external careers advisor (trained to level 6 or 7) at a time relevant to decision making regarding post-18 pathways • Students at risk of NEET, those with EHCPs, and students of concern are identified by Year Teams early and have additional support in place such as extra meetings and application support • All students are able to access additional support from the Careers Leader