

Best Foot Forward – Careers Policy

Author: Andrew Russell

Approved By: Bethany Russell

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1. Introduction and Context

We aim to improve the life opportunities of our young people, to offer them a nurturing, safe and supportive environment and a personalised learning experience. This aim extends to our approach to careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG).

This policy sets out what stakeholders can expect from our Careers Programme.

At Best Foot Forward, we recognise that each student has their own strengths and talents, and we aim to provide a personalised approach to learning wherever possible.

Through a broad curriculum, highly skilled staff and child-centred values, we provide a positive learning environment which promotes independence and achievement.

We hope to provide the structure and support needed to allow each student to be successful and realise their full potential.

2. Careers Programme

At Best Foot Forward, students are taught the skills and attitudes required to enable them to become as independent as they can be. Careers Programme activities support this purpose and provide a bridge via which students move to a post-16 destination of choice and then further into employment and adulthood as responsible members of society.

We are committed to providing a planned Careers Programme. High aspirations are central. As options for young people become more varied and complex, it is vital that we support our students to develop the knowledge and skills they need to make realistic, informed choices for their future.

Our Careers Programme has many aspects. While CEIAG is a part of the support we offer to all students, the Programme is differentiated to suit the needs of each student. To achieve this, we work with internal and external stakeholders to build a Programme that combines integrated delivery with more overt CEIAG activities.

Internally, it is incumbent on all members of staff to take opportunities, when they arise, to support the delivery of CEIAG provision both within and beyond the taught curriculum.

Our Careers Programme aims to:

- Encourage students to be ambitious, broaden their horizons and explore their own career aspirations.
- Ensure students have the attitudes, skills, and qualities to take the next steps in their learning or career.
- Help students to understand and engage with the changing world of work, including changing labour market information.
- Develop students' research skills to find out about career opportunities.
- Encourage participation in continued learning.
- Provide support at the individual level.
- Support inclusion, challenge stereotyping, and promote equality of opportunity.
- Contribute to strategies for raising achievement.

3. Statutory Requirements and Expectations

We are committed to fulfilling the statutory duties in relation to CEIAG. This policy provides a framework for meeting the national requirements and expectations.

The Department for Education (DfE) updated its statutory guidance for schools on providing careers guidance in September 2022 and requires governing bodies to ensure that all registered students at school are provided with a careers programme from Y7-Y11.

Best Foot Forward endeavours to follow:

- Careers guidance and access for education and training providers (DfE, January 2023).
- The Gatsby Benchmarks (Gatsby Charitable Foundation, 2018).
- Any other relevant guidance from DfE, QCA, CDI and Ofsted as appropriate.

The governing body must ensure that the careers programme and independent careers guidance are provided:

- is presented impartially, showing no bias or favouritism towards a particular institution, education or work option.
- includes information on the range of education or training options, including apprenticeships and technical education routes.
- is guidance that the person giving it considers will promote the best interests of the students to whom it is given.

The Education Act (2002) requires educational establishments to provide a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students and prepares them for later life.

The Equality Act (2010) places a public sector duty on schools and colleges to promote equality of opportunity, foster good relations, eliminate harassment and discriminatory practices and support children with protected characteristics.

The Education Act (2011 and subsequently extended) requires schools to ensure that all students are provided with independent careers guidance from Y8 to Y11, which is impartial, covers a range of options, and promotes students' best interests.

Statutory guidance also requires every school to publish information about its careers programme (including the Careers Leader) and to provide opportunities for a range of education and training providers to access students from Y7 to Y11.

We will use the Gatsby Benchmarks to develop, assess and improve our careers provision:

- Benchmark 1: A Stable Careers Programme
- Benchmark 2: Learning from Career and Labour Market Information
- Benchmark 3: Addressing the Needs of Each Student
- Benchmark 4: Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers
- Benchmark 5: Encounters with Employers and Employees
- Benchmark 6: Experiences of Workplaces
- Benchmark 7: Encounters with Further and Higher Education
- Benchmark 8: Personal Guidance

4. Student Entitlement

All students are entitled to be fully involved in an effective CEIAG programme. Learning may occur through dedicated CEIAG topics (e.g., PSHE and Personal Growth & Wellbeing), within subject sessions, via external visits, and internal presentations.

Whether on a longer-term or short-term provision, all students are encouraged to take an active role in their own career planning and development. The programme emphasises participation and responsibility through personal and social development, learning about careers and the world of work, and developing employability skills.

During their time at Best Foot Forward, all students can expect:

- Support to make the right choices at key transition points.
- Access to up-to-date, unbiased information on learning, training, careers and labour market information.
- Support to develop self-awareness and career management skills.
- Formal CEIAG sessions covering employability skills, post-16 options, the world of work and future skills.
- Access to tailored CEIAG activities within National Careers Week.
- A meaningful encounter with a representative from the world of work in each school year.
- Information on a range of education or training options, including apprenticeships, vocational pathways, colleges and universities.
- Opportunities to relate learning to life and career beyond Best Foot Forward.
- Opportunities to talk through choices with staff.
- Access to individual guidance with a trained, impartial, independent careers adviser.
- Tutors/mentors to keep parents/carers informed of progress and provide information to support career planning.

- To be asked their views.
- For some students, access to experience of work or a work placement.

Due to the nature of our student roll, additional CEIAG support is available in the following circumstances:

- EHCP Annual Reviews.
- Transition Reviews.
- If a student is identified as at risk of becoming NEET.

5. Parent/Carer Involvement

Parents/carers play a significant role in career decision-making. We encourage their involvement throughout CEIAG activities.

Engagement may include: end-of-session handovers, weekly reporting cycle discussions focusing on next steps and aspirations, and ongoing communication via our standard channels.

- Parents/carers are invited to discuss progress via end-of-session handovers with a member of staff.
- Career aspirations are discussed regularly, particularly within weekly reporting cycles.
- Parents/carers are kept up to date with career-related events and activities via normal communication channels.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to join individual IAG meetings (in person, by phone, or online).
- With student consent, Action Plans from IAG meetings are sent home; parents/carers can contact the Careers Advisor/Leader with questions.
- The Careers Programme is published on the website with useful links for home support.
- Parents/carers may contact the Careers Leader with any questions about pathways.

6. Responsibilities

CEIAG is integral to teaching and learning and relevant across all subject areas. All staff contribute through their roles as tutors and mentors.

Additional responsibility for the Careers Programme development lies with:

- Careers Leader: Bethany Russell
- Transition Leader: Bethany Russell
- Independent Careers Advisor: Bethany Russell

7. Partnership Work

We work with a range of partners to support CEIAG and LMI delivery, including the Careers & Enterprise Company, an Enterprise Adviser, local employers, post-16 providers and professional bodies.

When we work with the local authority and local schools, we ensure policies and procedures align and meet student needs.

8. Equal Opportunities

We promote equal opportunities, challenge stereotypes and address limiting beliefs throughout CEIAG.

Our provision is needs-based: all students can access tailored advice and guidance with support to explore options that match their preferences, skills and strengths.

While KS4 students are prioritised annually, referrals for IAG can be made at any time via the Careers Leader. There is no limit to the number of adviser meetings where additional support is required.

9. Monitoring, Review & Evaluation

The Best Foot Forward CEOs have overall responsibility for CEIAG provision.

The Careers Programme is monitored, reviewed and evaluated using formal and informal measures, qualitative and quantitative data, and hard and soft outcomes.

- Students' intended destinations are monitored.
- The Careers Leader and Careers Advisor meet regularly to review actions, student interventions and next steps.
- Individual Action Plans produced in IAG meetings are provided to students and, with permission, shared with parents/carers; they are centrally filed for staff access.
- Student, parent/carer and staff voices are gathered for whole-programme evaluation and after specific events.
- CEIAG events are reviewed against intended outcomes; external partner feedback is sought.
- Key staff participate in local CEIAG networks to share good practice.
- Destination Measures data is used to track post-16 routes; the Local Authority tracks longer-term sustained destinations.
- Compass is updated to evaluate provision against Gatsby Benchmarks and best practices.
- The Careers Programme is audited annually.
- CEIAG development is a continuous priority, and actions are included in the Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan.

10. Further Relevant Information

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Best Foot Forward Careers Programme

And other relevant policies, including:

- Curriculum Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality Information

For questions about this Policy or CEIAG activities, please contact the Careers Leader:
Bethany Russell – beth@bestfootforward.org.uk.