



Fir Vale Academy

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE (CEIAG) POLICY

Document Owner	Miss D Gautry
Last Review	September 2025
Next Review	September 2027
Approved By	SIB Members

Introduction

Careers guidance is a vital element of the support provided to students at Fir Vale Academy. High-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) helps young people prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It enables students to make informed decisions, develop ambitious aspirations and successfully navigate key educational and career transitions.

As pathways into further education, training and employment continue to evolve, it is essential that students are equipped with the knowledge, skills and experiences needed to make well-informed choices about their futures. Through a comprehensive and inclusive careers programme, Fir Vale Academy is committed to supporting all students in understanding the full range of opportunities available to them and achieving their individual aspirations.

Careers education is embedded throughout the Academy and forms an integral part of the wider curriculum, supporting students' personal development and preparation for adulthood. The programme is designed to complement academic learning while developing employability skills, resilience and awareness of future pathways.

This policy outlines the Academy's approach to careers education, information, advice and guidance. It explains how careers activities are delivered and sets out what students, parents/carers, staff, governors and external partners can expect from the Academy's careers programme.

Aims and objectives

The Fir Vale Academy Careers Programme aims to:

- Prepare students for successful transitions into further education, training, employment and adult life.
- Develop students' awareness and understanding of a wide range of career pathways and opportunities, while challenging stereotypes and broadening aspirations.
- Enable students to understand the skills, behaviours and expectations required in the workplace and the differences between education and employment.
- Raise aspirations by inspiring students to pursue and achieve their personal, educational and career goals.
- Ensure that students have access to impartial, up-to-date information about the full range of post-16 and post-18 education, training and employment opportunities, including apprenticeships.
- Support students in making informed decisions at key transition points throughout their education.
- Provide targeted careers guidance and tailored support for vulnerable, disadvantaged and SEND students to ensure equitable access to opportunities.
- Promote positive attitudes towards learning, work and lifelong career development.
- Develop students' employability skills, including communication, teamwork, resilience, problem-solving and adaptability.
- Support students beyond their time at the Academy through effective transition planning and destination tracking where appropriate.
- Engage with employers, further and higher education providers, training organisations and other external partners to enhance students' understanding of future pathways.
- Equip students with the confidence, knowledge and skills needed to manage their future careers and contribute positively to society.

Statutory Requirements

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, *Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers*, and supports the Academy's responsibilities under:

- The Education Act 1997
- The Education and Skills Act 2008
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2008
- The Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022

Fir Vale Academy's careers programme is structured around the **Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance**, which provide a nationally recognised framework for developing excellent careers provision and ensuring that all students receive high-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance. The Academy is committed to embedding the eight Gatsby Benchmarks throughout its careers programme:

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

Student entitlement

We are working to meet United Learning's Careers Entitlements:

- **CE1** – Have access to impartial Careers guidance that enables them to make informed choices about their future
- **CE2** – Have access to a personalised plan that helps them to take responsibility for their future that is matched to their academic ability and aspirations
- **CE3** – Attend at least one visit to a University by the end of Key Stage 4
- **CE4** – Engage in meaningful experiences of the workplace during Key Stage 4
- **CE5** – Have access to a wide range of providers that enable them to effectively determine the most suitable pathway for their studies post-16 and post-18
- **CE6** – Be provided with opportunities to hear from engaging speakers on a wide range of topics, across varied and diverse sectors and industries to challenge stereotypes and broaden aspirations
- **CE7** – Be provided with the appropriate resources and oracy skills to support them in undertaking interviews at key transition points

- **CE8** – Be provided with the appropriate resources and literacy skills to support them in undertaking written tasks (i.e., application forms, CVs) at key transition points
- **CE9** – Be provided with information in relation to the wider world of work such as finance, budgeting and employability skills
- **CE10** – Study a curriculum, across all subjects, that has tangible links to Careers and aspirations

Provider Access

Fir Vale Academy is committed to ensuring that students are aware of the full range of education, training and employment opportunities available to them. The Academy publishes a separate Provider Access Policy Statement that sets out the circumstances in which providers of technical education, apprenticeships and post-16 pathways may access students. This policy is available on the Academy website and supports the Academy's commitment to meeting its statutory duties regarding provider access.

Parent and Carer involvement

Young people do not make career decisions in isolation. Parents and carers play a significant role in shaping aspirations, influencing decision-making and supporting successful transitions into further education, training and employment. Fir Vale Academy recognises the important contribution that parents and carers make to students' career development and is committed to working in partnership with families to ensure that students can make informed choices about their future pathways.

Parents and carers are invited to attend **Progress Evenings**, where they can discuss their child's academic progress, personal development and future aspirations with Academy staff. Parents and carers may also contact the Academy at any time to request a meeting or telephone conversation with relevant members of staff.

Parents and carers are kept informed of careers-related opportunities, events and activities through the Academy website, social media channels, text messages and other forms of communication. Information about the Academy's careers programme, key contacts and relevant resources is also made available to support families in helping students plan for their future.

Delivery of the Careers Programme

Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)

Careers education is delivered through a range of planned activities, including:

- **PSHE lessons**, where students explore career pathways, employability skills, decision-making and future aspirations.
- **Form Time activities**, which provide regular opportunities to engage with careers information, labour market trends and personal development topics.
- **Drop Down Days**, allowing students to participate in focused careers education and employer encounter opportunities.
- A bespoke annual **Careers Week**, during which students engage with employers, further education providers, apprenticeships and vocational pathways through workshops, assemblies and interactive activities.

Year 7

Students focus on developing self-awareness, exploring aspirations and understanding the links between education, skills and future careers. Careers education is introduced through the curriculum, tutor programme and personal development activities.

Year 8

Students build their understanding of career pathways, employment sectors and the labour market. They participate in careers-related activities, employer encounters and experiences that broaden their awareness of future opportunities.

Year 9

Students receive targeted support to help them make informed Key Stage 4 option choices. Careers activities focus on future pathways, decision-making skills, goal setting and understanding how subject choices may influence future education, training and employment opportunities.

Throughout Key Stage 3, careers learning is embedded across the curriculum and supports the Academy's commitment to meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks, ensuring that students are well prepared for the next stage of their education and future career journey.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11)

At Key Stage 4, the careers programme builds on students' previous learning and focuses on preparing them for their next steps in education, training or employment. The programme supports students to make informed decisions about their future pathways, develop employability skills and raise aspirations.

Careers education is delivered through:

- **PSHE lessons**, which cover career planning, employability skills, post-16 pathways, apprenticeships, further education and labour market information.
- **Form Time** activities, providing regular opportunities to explore careers information, local opportunities and personal development themes.
- **Drop Down Days and enrichment activities**, including focused careers workshops, employer encounters and enterprise activities.
- A bespoke annual **Careers Week**, featuring employer talks, careers workshops, further and higher education providers, apprenticeship information and skills development activities.
- **One-to-one careers guidance interviews**, ensuring that students receive impartial advice and guidance to support their future decisions.

Year 10

Students focus on broadening their understanding of post-16 opportunities, developing employability skills and engaging with employers and external providers. Careers education helps students connect their studies to future career pathways and begin planning for life beyond school.

Year 11

Students receive intensive support to prepare for their next steps. This includes individual careers guidance interviews, attendance at post-16 transition events, application support and guidance on education, employment and training opportunities. Students are supported throughout the application process to ensure they progress to a suitable destination that matches their aspirations, abilities and interests.

Fir Vale Academy tracks destinations and provides additional support for vulnerable students, disadvantaged students and those with SEND to ensure that all learners are successfully prepared for their transition into further education, training or employment.

Career guidance interviews

Fir Vale Academy has its own qualified Careers Adviser who provides independent and impartial careers guidance to students. The Academy is committed to ensuring that all students receive appropriate guidance and support to help them make informed decisions about their future education, training and career pathways.

All students are entitled to careers guidance that meets their individual needs and circumstances. While any student may request an appointment with the Careers Adviser, the service is primarily targeted towards students in Key Stage 4 as they prepare for important post-16 decisions.

Students may access careers guidance through a range of routes, including:

- Referral by Academy staff.
- Self-referral.
- Identification through monitoring, assessment and destination planning processes.
- Targeted support for vulnerable, disadvantaged and SEND students.

Formal one-to-one careers guidance interviews begin in the **summer term of Year 10**, following the completion of an individual careers questionnaire, and continue throughout Year 11. The questionnaire enables the Careers Adviser to gain an understanding of each student's aspirations, interests, strengths and support needs, allowing students to be prioritised appropriately and ensuring that all learners can access the guidance and support they require.

Students identified through the questionnaire, staff referrals or Academy monitoring processes as being at risk of becoming **Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)** will receive additional targeted support. This may include further careers interviews, personalised action planning, referrals to external agencies and enhanced transition support to help secure a sustained post-16 destination.

Careers guidance interviews provide students with the opportunity to discuss their aspirations, strengths, interests and future plans, while exploring the full range of post-16 education, training and employment opportunities available to them. Guidance is impartial, personalised and tailored to individual needs, enabling students to make informed decisions and develop realistic yet ambitious progression pathways.

Management and Staffing

The delivery of careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) at Fir Vale Academy is a whole-school responsibility. Effective careers provision relies on the contribution of a range of staff, working together to ensure that all students are supported to make informed decisions about their future education, training and employment pathways.

The **Careers Lead** has overall responsibility for the strategic development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Academy's careers programme. Working under the direction of the Vice Principal and in collaboration with Assistant Headteachers and Heads of Year, the Careers Lead ensures that careers education is embedded throughout the curriculum and that the Academy meets its statutory duties and the Gatsby Benchmarks.

The **Careers Adviser** is responsible for providing independent and impartial careers guidance to students. This includes conducting one-to-one guidance interviews, coordinating work experience opportunities, organising careers-related visits, events and employer encounters, supporting students with post-16 applications, maintaining records on Sheffield Progress and monitoring students' post-16 destinations.

Given the whole-school nature of careers education, a wide range of staff contribute to the delivery of the careers programme. These include Form Tutors, PSHE teachers, curriculum leaders, subject teachers, pastoral staff and colleagues involved in drop-down days, enrichment activities and careers events. Staff are encouraged to promote career learning within their areas of responsibility and help students understand the links between their education and future opportunities.

The Academy also works closely with external partners, including employers, further and higher education providers, training organisations, apprenticeship providers, Sheffield Futures and other specialist agencies, to ensure that students have access to high-quality careers information, advice and experiences.

Staff Development

The successful delivery of careers education relies on all staff understanding their role in supporting students' aspirations, career planning and progression. Fir Vale Academy is committed to ensuring that staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and resources required to contribute effectively to the careers programme.

Form Tutors, PSHE teachers and other relevant staff are introduced to the aims, principles and delivery of careers education through induction, training days and regular staff meetings. Ongoing professional development is provided through year team meetings, curriculum development sessions and updates on careers-related initiatives, opportunities and statutory requirements.

To ensure that the Academy's careers provision reflects current best practice and national developments, the Careers Lead regularly attends professional networks, conferences, training events and provider briefings. Information gained through these opportunities is shared with colleagues to support the continuous development of the Academy's careers programme and to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and guidance.

Resources

Fir Vale Academy is committed to providing the resources necessary to deliver a high-quality and effective careers programme. This includes appropriate staffing, professional development opportunities, access to high-quality careers information and sufficient time and resources to support the successful implementation of careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG).

The Academy ensures that careers resources are accessible to staff and are regularly reviewed to maintain their relevance and effectiveness. Curriculum materials, lesson resources and careers-related information are centrally stored and shared through the Academy's internal systems to support consistent delivery across all year groups and subject areas.

As part of **United Learning**, the Academy also benefits from access to a wide range of centrally developed careers resources, guidance materials, planning tools and best practice documentation. These resources support the delivery of careers education across the Trust and help ensure consistency, quality and alignment with national guidance and the Gatsby Benchmarks.

Employer links

Links with employers, businesses and other external agencies continue to grow through the development of strong local community partnerships, engagement with education and training providers, and collaborative

working with organisations across Sheffield and the wider region. These partnerships provide students with valuable opportunities to participate in employer encounters, workplace experiences, careers events, mentoring programmes, workshops and enterprise activities.

Equal opportunities

Fir Vale Academy is committed to promoting equal opportunities, challenging stereotypes and addressing limiting beliefs. All students can access advice and guidance tailored to their needs with support to explore options that suit their preferences, skills and strengths. The team work on early-identification of students requiring additional support, with no limit placed on how many times a student might see a Careers Adviser.

The Careers Adviser works closely with the SENDCo, pastoral teams and external agencies to ensure appropriate support is available for students with additional needs. Careers guidance contributes to Education, Health and Care Plan reviews and transition planning where appropriate.

The Academy monitors participation in careers activities to ensure equitable access and uses destination data to identify trends and inform future provision.

Quality Assurance, Monitoring and Support

Fir Vale Academy is committed to providing a high-quality careers programme that is regularly reviewed, evaluated and developed to ensure it meets the needs of students and aligns with best practice. As part of **United Learning**, the Academy participates in a range of quality assurance and improvement processes designed to support effective careers provision and continuous development.

Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) Compass Evaluation

The Academy completes the Careers & Enterprise Company Compass Evaluation on a termly basis. This self-assessment tool measures careers provision against the Gatsby Benchmarks and helps identify strengths and areas for development. Where possible, the evaluation is completed collaboratively with the Academy's Enterprise Adviser and relevant senior leaders.

Careers and Enterprise Company Internal Leadership Review

The Academy undertakes the CEC Internal Leadership Review annually. This process supports strategic evaluation of careers provision and helps ensure that careers education remains an integral part of whole-school improvement planning. The review involves the Careers Lead, line manager and senior leadership team.

United Learning Careers Audit and Review

In addition to national quality assurance processes, the Academy participates in United Learning's Careers Audit and Review process. This annual review supports reflection, evaluation and forward planning, ensuring that careers provision continues to meet both Trust expectations and the needs of students.

Support from United Learning

The Academy benefits from a range of support provided through the United Learning network, enabling careers provision to be informed by current best practice and strengthened through collaboration.

Careers Networks

Fir Vale Academy has opportunities to participate in regional and cluster careers networks, bringing together careers professionals from across United Learning schools. These networks support the sharing of best practice, labour market information, resources and employer engagement opportunities, while encouraging collaboration between schools.

Through these networks, Careers Leads have access to regular meetings, updates and professional discussions that support the continued development of careers education and guidance.

Partnerships with Employers and Providers

The Trust actively supports schools in developing meaningful partnerships with employers, apprenticeship providers, colleges, universities and other organisations. These partnerships enhance the opportunities available to students and provide valuable encounters with the world of work, further education and training providers.

Through rigorous monitoring, regular evaluation and support from United Learning, Fir Vale Academy strives to ensure that all students receive a high-quality careers programme that raises aspirations, develops employability skills and supports successful progression into education, training and employment.

Evaluation

Fir Vale Academy is committed to continuously reviewing and improving the quality and impact of its careers programme. Evaluation is used to ensure that careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) meets the needs of students, supports positive outcomes and remains aligned with the Gatsby Benchmarks and statutory guidance.

The careers programme is evaluated through:

- Student feedback on careers activities, guidance interviews, employer encounters, careers events and the overall careers programme.
- Staff feedback on the delivery and impact of careers education through tutor time and PSHE lessons.
- Monitoring participation rates in careers activities and guidance interviews.
- Analysis of Compass evaluations and other quality assurance activities undertaken through United Learning support.
- Monitoring and analysis of post-16 destination data, including sustained education, employment and training outcomes.
- Feedback from employers, further and higher education providers, parents/carers and other external partners who contribute to the careers programme.

References

The Gatsby Benchmarks

<https://www.goodcareerguidance.org.uk>

The Career Development Institute

<https://www.thecdi.net>

Careers guidance and access for education and training providers

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672418/_Careers_guidance_and_access_for_education_and_training_providers.pdf

Careers & Enterprise Company

<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk>

**For questions on Fir Vale Academy's Careers programme, please contact the Academy's Careers Lead:
Natasha Walker: nwalker@firvale.com**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Careers Lead in conjunction with the Vice Principal responsible for Personal Development and approved in accordance with the Academy's policy review schedule.