Leigh Academy Tonbridge Careers Policy 26/27

Date of Issue	**September 2026**
Date to be Revised	**August 2027**

Rationale

Leigh Academy Tonbridge careers education programme provides pupils with the opportunity to plan and manage their careers effectively, ensuring progression which is ambitious and aspirational. It promotes equality of opportunity, celebrates diversity, and challenges stereotypes. It is designed to meet the Gatsby benchmarks and conforms to statutory requirements. In addition, as the number of apprenticeships rises every year, it is increasingly important that all young people have a full understanding of the options available to them in Post-16 and Post-18.

Statutory Requirements

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory "Careers guidance and access for education and training providers". This guidance refers to:

- The Education Act 1997.
- The Education and Skills Act 2008.
- The School Information (*England) Regulations 2008.

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 the academy must provide a minimum of 6 encounters with technical education or training providers to all pupils in years 8 to 13.

This policy is also in line with the Education (Careers Guidance in Schools) Act 2022. This came into force on 1 September 2022, and amended the existing duty in The Education Act 1997, so that:

- Our academy must now secure independent careers guidance from year 7 (instead of from year 8, previously).
- As an academy in England, it is now required to provide and publish careers guidance.

The above guidance requires that schools/academies publish information about their careers programme on their website, which this policy includes. The academy also acts in line with its statutory duty under the 'Baker Clause', to be impartial and not show bias towards any route, be that academic or technical. This policy should be read in conjunction with the provider access policy statement which is on the academy website.

In addition to this, new statutory guidance requires one week of work experience activities in Year 7, Year 8, and Year 9, and one week of work experience placement in Year 10 and 11.

Commitment

Leigh Academy Tonbridge is committed to providing all pupils in Years 7-13 with a careers programme which is embedded into the curriculum and includes a variety of enrichment activities. The programme has been developed in line with the eight Gatsby benchmarks for ensuring best practice and to meet the requirements of the Department for Education's statutory guidance last updated January 2023.

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.

Aim We aim to support pupils to make realistic and informed decisions about their future, by raising aspirations and providing impartial and independent information and guidance. The academy is fully aware of the responsibility to set pupils on the path that will secure them their best outcome, without showing bias towards any route, be that academic or technical.

Objectives

To ensure that pupils:

- Develop the skills and attitudes necessary for success in adult and working life.
- Are aware of the range of opportunities which are realistically available to them in continued education and training at 14+, 16+, and 18+, including technical qualifications and apprenticeships.
- 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, nationally, and globally.
- Use effectively the paper-based, virtual, and staff resources available so they can make informed and appropriate choices throughout their academy journey.
- Benefit from links fostered between the academy, local businesses, and further education establishments.
- Experience the world of work and develop transferable skills.
- Wherever possible leave the academy to enter employment, further education, or training to avoid the risk of pupils becoming NEET.
- 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.

Provision

Careers provision is mapped against the Gatsby benchmarks. The current careers programme is delivered through a combination of methods, including explicit lessons provided within the taught during tutor time. Careers information is available in digital format via Unifrog, a platform which provides access to information on apprenticeships, universities, the labour market, career pathways, and UCAS applications.

Key Stage 3: This includes careers library research, aiming to raise pupil aspirations, exploring stereotypes in the workplace, researching the history of the workplace, and developing personal, social, and employability skills. Assemblies and a parent and pupil information evening on choosing options are also provided. Activities in Key Stage 3 consist of multiple, varied, and meaningful employer-led activities, for example, visits involving employer-set tasks, work-shadowing, or talks in workplaces.

Key Stage 4: Pupils continue research into careers and pathways into the sixth form and higher education. They develop skills in CV, letter writing, presentations, and interviews. This includes a week's work experience at a self-arranged placement, supported by a parent information evening; assemblies on apprenticeships and A-level options, and an A-level options evening for parents and pupils. Individual interviews are held with an independent careers practitioner, who also provides guidance on apprenticeships.

Key Stage 5: A series of careers lectures are delivered from universities and employers. Some of these lectures, together with form time, are devoted to the topic of UCAS applications and interview skills. In addition, Year 12 has a week of work experience; pupils are involved in voluntary community and charity work.

Several special events are held, for example, the careers fair, involving University, apprenticeship, and careers representatives, to which Year 7 through to Year 13 pupils are invited. Pupils in Key Stage 4 & 5 are also provided with one-to-one meetings with a careers advisor to discuss their next steps and destinations.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff contribute to the implementation of this policy through their role as tutors and as subject specialists. Subject specialists embed careers into their subject area. A range of connections between Higher education providers and employers are exploited to support the curriculum through Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 5.

Careers Lead

- Mr Hickey - Assistant Principal and Personal Development Lead

Careers and SEND Provision

Every pupil with SEND follows the same programme of careers as their peers, with adoption and support from the SEND team where appropriate. If current provision cannot fully address a pupil's additional need, advice will be sought from the National Careers Service.

Monitoring, Recording and Evaluation

Built into the careers programme are opportunities for pupils to self-evaluate and reflect on their learning at key points, such as following work experience during Year 10. Pupils develop a profile on Unifrog through which their activities and skills development can be recorded and monitored by staff including form tutors and the careers coordinator. All participants in the programme complete surveys following key events including pupils, parents, and employers. Leavers' destination information is also analysed.

Partnerships

The CEIAG (Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance) programme is greatly enhanced through links which help to ensure that pupils' learning is current and relevant. We work closely with local employers and employees including previous pupils. The careers and enterprise people are on hand for advice and guidance. A number of events, integrated into the academy careers programme, offer providers an opportunity to come into the academy to speak to pupils and/or their parents. This involvement enhances the provision of work experience placements, careers talks, the careers fair, and workplace visits. In addition, we work closely with universities and the local FE College. We always strive to expand and improve our contacts. Governors are regularly updated on the careers programme.

Careers Entitlement

Pupils are entitled to:

- Receive a stable careers programme from Year 7 that continues until they leave the academy (or attend University, if taking a gap year).
- Receive relevant careers guidance and have access to independent careers information and guidance, including labour market data where relevant.
- Receive personal advice that helps pupils to achieve their individual careers goal - whether this is Higher Education, an apprenticeship, or employment.
- Be equipped with the necessary 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 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.
- Have a minimum of one week's work experience, with the opportunity for a second.

Pupils are expected to:

- Fully engage with careers lessons and activities.
- Utilise the available careers resources, including the on-line Unifrog platform.
- Record careers-related skills, participation, and research, and 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 Evening and the Careers fair.
- Use study and research spaces such as the careers and sixth form library appropriately and with respect for other users.
- Take advantage of opportunities offered outside of the academy, such as 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 academy website.
- The opportunity to contact the careers lead.
- Access to information and guidance through parent information evenings including choosing options, UCAS, work experience, and pupil finance.