



Careers Policy

This version printed: 22/09/202622/09/2026 20:17	Next review due: September 2027
Approved by the Governors:	September 2026

The Acorn School Educational Trust Ltd.
Church Street, Nailsworth,
Gloucestershire GL6 0BP

T: 01453 836 508

W: www.theacornschoo.com

Table of Contents

Overview	3
Objectives	3
Provision	3
Class 11 and 12	4
Annual Careers Week	5
Charitable and support work	5
<i>Upper school students are encouraged to contribute to the local community through fund-raising, collecting for the local food bank, donations, and visiting those less privileged members of our society.....</i>	5
Roles and responsibilities	6
Appendix 1 – The Gatsby Benchmarks	7

Overview

The Acorn School's careers education programme provides our pupils with the opportunity to plan and manage their careers effectively, ensuring progression which is ambitious and aspirational whilst promoting equality of opportunity, celebrating diversity and challenging stereotypes.

We are committed to providing all pupils in our Upper School with a careers programme which is embedded into the curriculum and includes a variety of different activities. We aim to support pupils to make realistic and informed decisions about their future by raising aspirations, providing impartial and independent information and guidance at each stage of their Upper School career. When students transition away from the school, either when they graduate at the end of Class 12 and leave to pursue university education, further education, apprenticeships or enter employment, or if they transition to another school at different stages, we ensure that appropriate advice and guidance is available to help make them a success.

The programme has been developed in line with the school's ethos and uses the 8 The Gatsby Benchmarks (see Appendix 1) and is delivered throughout the curriculum including social education lessons and individual student/mentor 1:1 career exploration and guidance support sessions.

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 the end of Class 8 (14+ -Class teacher led), Class 9 (15+), Class 10 (16+), Class 11 (17+) Class 12 (18+)
- Are equipped with the necessary decision-making skills to manage their transition
- Develop an awareness of the wide variety of education, training, and careers opportunities both locally and nationally and internationally.
- Experience the world of work and develop transferable skills through work experience placements.
- Wherever possible leave the school to enter employment, further education, or training.
- Experience a culture of high aspirations and equality of opportunity, in which diversity is celebrated, and stereotypes are challenged.

Provision

Careers education is embedded into the Upper School programme, with students receiving insight and guidance through explicit careers presentations, skill-development sessions and thematic focus sessions within other subject lessons and main lessons.

Throughout the academic year, students receive a rich and diverse programme which, in addition to the skills and knowledge being developed in the academic curriculum, includes an exploration into the career paths associated with the subject or theme being taught. These career focus sessions often include external professionals being invited to attend the school to discuss aspects of their career and industry with the students, provide advice and guidance and answer students' questions. Where possible, subject teachers arrange trips to different places of work. Delivering careers insight sessions within the context of the main lesson themes provides a rich and inspiring learning experience that:

- Raises pupil aspirations
- Contextualises career pathways

- Provides the opportunity to explore stereotypes in the workplace
- Allows students to explore the history and changing nature of the workplace
- Develops pupil's personal, social and employability skills

This is supported by specific skill development sessions which are embedded into the school's curriculum, aimed at increasing employability and professional development by fostering skills in CV, letter writing, personal statements, presentations, self-reflection, interview technique, and IT.

An example of how careers insights are woven into the curriculum can be seen in our Upper School Embryology and parenting lesson, where in addition to the biological content being taught, students are given several additional activities, aimed at broadening their understanding of both the role of different healthcare professionals and the environment they work in as well as giving an insight into the interactions between becoming a parent and the working world. These activities include:

- Presentations from medical professionals on their role supporting parents and children from pregnancy through childhood. This includes an insight into the role of doctors, nurses, midwives, and health visitors.
- A visit to the local maternity unit to meet the midwives, view the facilities and experience day-to-day life as a midwife.
- A visit from recent parents, where in addition to hearing about life with a new-born baby, students are given an insight into the practicalities of pregnancy, maternity and paternity leave and balancing working with having children.
- Linked to Social Education lessons and PSHE curriculum in tandem with this ML.

As the students approach their transition from Class 9 into Class 10, and Class 10 into Class 11, they are given a series of presentations on life in Class 10, 11, 12 and after school. There are options for specialisation and one-to-one tutorials, where they work with the school's Careers Lead to begin developing and discussing their educational and career interests and ambitions. These sessions are supported by parent information evenings and 1-2-1 meetings to discuss the final two years at Acorn. At this point, students begin to explore which subjects they wish to specialise in and identify key areas for development or support.

Class 11 and 12

As students enter Class 11, their penultimate year of school, there are a number of specific careers activities in place to prepare the students for their transition to the workplace or higher education and maximise their opportunities. These activities include:

- Pathways after Acorn – visiting speakers and presentations during careers week
- Provision of resources and guidance on possible career choices, including visiting the UCAS fairs etc., visiting speakers.
- Discussions on various careers in social education lessons
- One-to-one tutorials with the class sponsor, NZCSE Coordinator, and external mentors (where available) to explore career aspirations.
- Attendance at a local college careers fairs and open days (involving University, apprenticeship and careers representatives)
- One week work experience during Class 10 and 11.
- UCAS and College Application advice and guidance:
 - CV and personal statement writing
 - An introduction to UCAS and subsequent support and guidance through university applications
 - University and employer interview skills and mock interviews

- Preparation for university entrance examinations, where applicable.
- Careers lead supports with Admissions teams at alternative College settings to support transition points.
- Support and guidance on pursuing external qualifications.
- Provision of resources and guidance on possible career choices, visiting UCAS fairs etc., visiting speakers.

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, visiting speakers, and mock interviews during Class 11 and 12.

Annual Careers Week

During the last week of the academic year, students in Classes 9-12 attend a series of careers lectures and workshops hosted by the school, with external speakers attending to speak to the students about their respective professions, career pathways and advice and guidance.

These career sessions are always a huge success with a diverse group of individuals, from a broad range of industries and backgrounds, providing unique insight and inspiration to our students. Ex-Acorn students are often invited to be part of these career lectures, offering our students a wealth of advice and guidance.

The careers week is carefully planned to offer the students key speakers who align to their personal interests and ambitions whilst also ensuring a broad range of experiences, with the aim of broadening their knowledge of the different vocations there are.

In the past, speakers have included:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| • Business Leaders from some of the country's largest companies | • Finance professionals |
| • Entrepreneurs | • Teachers |
| • Actors | • Architects |
| • Musicians | • Current undergraduate students |
| • Therapists/Counsellors | • Academics |
| • Psychotherapists | • Artists |
| • Artists | • Professional athletes |
| • Art specialists | • IT experts |
| • Fashion industry | • Medical health professionals |
| • Law professional | • Outdoor education experts |
| • Directors of Photography | • Film Industry professionals |
| • Healthcare professionals | • Journalists |
| • Commercial Sales professionals | • Local politicians |
| | • NGO directors |

Charitable and support work

Upper school students are encouraged to contribute to the local community through fund-raising, collecting for the local food bank, donations, and visiting those less privileged members of our society.

Roles and responsibilities

The Leadership Team oversees careers in the school, and all staff contribute to the implementation of this policy through their role as tutors, class sponsors and as subject specialists, embedding careers insight and guidance into their subject area.

Appendix 1 – The Gatsby Benchmarks

The 8 Gatsby Benchmarks covered through our school programme are:

Benchmark 1. A stable careers programme

Benchmark 2. Learning from careers and labour market information

Benchmark 3. Addressing the needs of each young person

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

