RYECROFT

School

Ryecroft School

Careers Education and Guidance Policy

JULY 2026 – SEPTEMBER 2027

Adopted by the Governing Body on:	July 2026
To be reviewed:	Annually

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1. Introduction:

Ryecroft School is a specialist, independent day school offering places to pupils aged 5 to 19. Places are offered to pupils who have complex needs including ASC, ADHD. A high number of our pupils may also have experienced early childhood trauma and may present with attachment difficulties.

Ryecroft School seeks to maximise the life chances of all our students and believes it is crucial to prepare them for life beyond school. The school's Careers Education and Guidance Programme is an important means of motivating students to raise aspirations and attainment. Students have an entitlement to independent careers guidance throughout their time at Ryecroft School.

The Independent and impartial careers guidance provided:

- It is presented in an impartial manner, showing no bias towards a particular institution, education or work option
- Includes information on the range of education or training options
- Is guidance that will promote the best interested of the student to whom it is given

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance makes a major contribution in preparing young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. A planned progressive programme of activities supports students in choosing pathways that suit their interests and abilities to help them follow a realistic and well-informed career path and sustain employability, ensuring they gain a better understanding of learning new skills and experiences to make progress and succeed in their futures.

Every student will have the opportunity to meet with their appointed advisor each year. This can take place with an advocate. Students will be able to discuss or share their aspirations and goals, working with their careers advisor to put steps in place to work towards these. Discussions can also take place around life skills, achievements and the best interests of the student.

2. OUR CORE VALUES

This policy is underpinned by our core values:

- Everyone should be listened to (DEMOCRACY)
- Keep everyone safe by following the rules and making the right choices (RULE OF LAW)
- Be Proud of who you are (INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY)
- Value each other and your surroundings (MUTUAL RESPECT)
- Be Patient, kind and understanding to everyone (TOLERANCE)

3. The Gatsby Benchmarks

We use the Gatsby Charitable Foundation's Benchmarks to develop and improve our careers provision and to ensure we fulfil our legal duties. For further information please refer to our action plan.

In addition to the whole school action plan, each pupil has a personalised Gatsby Action Plan. This supports their careers education programme and details their individual careers journey and their personal targets.

The Gatsby Benchmarks are:

1. A stable careers programme	Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, governors and employers.	Every school should have a stable, structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of the senior management team, and has an identified and appropriately trained person responsible for it. The careers programme should be published on the school's website in a way that enables pupils, parents, teachers and employers to access and understand it. The programme should be regularly evaluated with feedback from pupils, parents, teachers and employers as part of the evaluation process.
2.Learning from career and labour market information	Every student, and their parents, should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the	By the age of 14, all pupils should have accessed and used information about career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options.

	support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.	Parents should be encouraged to access and use information about labour markets and future study options to inform their support to their children.
3.Addressing the needs of each student	Students have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each student. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.	A school's careers programme should actively seek to challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations. Schools should keep systematic records of the individual advice given to each pupil, and subsequent agreed decisions. All pupils should have access to these records to support their career development. Schools should collect and maintain accurate data for each pupil on their education, training or employment destinations.
4.Linking curriculum learning to careers	All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. STEM subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.	By the age of 14, every pupil should have had the opportunity to learn how the different STEM subjects help people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers.
5.Encounters with employers and employees	Every student 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 activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.	Every year, from the age of 11, pupils should participate in at least one meaningful encounter* with an employer. *A 'meaningful encounter' is one in which the student has an opportunity to learn about what work is like or what it takes to be successful in the workplace.
6.Experiences of workplaces	Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks.	By the age of 16, every pupil should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have. By the age of 18, every pupil should have had one further such experience, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.

7.Encounters with further and higher education	All students should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.	By the age of 16, every pupil should have had a meaningful encounter* with providers of the full range of learning opportunities, including Sixth Forms, colleges, universities and apprenticeship providers. This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and pupils. By the age of 18, all pupils who are considering applying for university should have had at least two visits to universities to meet staff and pupils. *A 'meaningful encounter' is one in which the student has an opportunity to explore what it is like to learn in that environment.
8.Personal guidance	Every student should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a career adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made.	Every pupil should have at least one such interview by the age of 16, and the opportunity for a further interview by the age of 18

Ryecroft School offers a broad and balanced curriculum and aims to provide Careers Guidance which is:

- Accurate and up to date
- Presented in an impartial manner
- Enables them to make informed choices about broad range of career options
- Helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential

At Ryecroft School we recognise and celebrate that all our young people are different and as a result their education and career pathways will be planned on an individualised basis. Careers education for pupils at Ryecroft School will be relevant and specific and planned and delivered carefully to meet their individual needs. All pupils will have the opportunity to receive personalised guidance from a trained internal or external careers adviser.

All pupils at Ryecroft have personalised targets related to each area of the Gatsby benchmarks which are shared with pupils and then worked towards throughout the academic year.

Looked After Children

A high proportion of our pupils are likely to be looked after children. We recognise that they will need particularly strong support to ensure high levels of ambition and successful transition into post-16 education or training. Our provision for post-16 students is personalised and considers the individual needs of each pupil. For this reason, we offer a variety of routes and opportunities which are further detailed in our curriculum policy. Post-16 students can access:

- A Level programmes where appropriate and relevant
- Further opportunities to study BTEC programmes
- Opportunities to re-sit GCSEs/Functional Skills or take additional GCSEs
- Local colleges
- Work experience opportunities

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator is fully involved with every pupil to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils, what additional support they may require and ensuring their Person-Centred Plans are regularly reviewed to reflect their career aspirations. Learning opportunities for all pupils are differentiated based on individual needs. The aim is for them to fulfil their potential. All staff are responsible for helping pupils to develop their skills and experience and achieve the qualifications they need to enable them to be successful in their chosen careers.

4. The Curriculum

Ryecroft school is committed to carrying out career related education to all students, providing them with opportunities to expand their knowledge and gain new skills and qualifications.

Ryecroft school is following a curriculum set out by Outcomes First Group which is tailored to suit the needs of the students we support.

Career and work-related education in the curriculum will provide contexts, resources and opportunities for:

- spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- personal and social development
- health education
- academic and vocational learning
- functional skills
- sustainable living, personal finance, enterprise and employability skills

5. Aims and Objectives

Ryecroft School Careers Education and Guidance policy has the following aims to:

- Support inclusion, challenge stereotyping and promote equality of opportunity
- Encourage participation in continued learning including higher and further education
- Develop enterprise and employability skills with a progressive and engagement careers curriculum by providing access to accreditation pathways
- Meet the meet the need of our students by providing targeted and meaningful encounters and experiences
- Promote the importance of future aspirations and employability within our pupils
- Involve external stakeholders such s employers, parents and carers within our careers provision

The objectives of the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance policy are as follows:

- To ensure that all students at the school receive a stable careers programme
- Enable students to learn from information provided by the career and labour market
- The CEIAG programme should be individual and address the needs of each student
- Provide students with experiences of workplace(s)
- Ensure that students have a series of encounters with further and high education
- Provide students with the opportunity and entitlement to receive personal guidance

Equality and Diversity:

Careers education is provided to all students, and provision is made to allow all students to access the curriculum. Students are encouraged to follow career paths that suit their skills, interest and strengths without the absence of stereotypes.

Students are provided with the same opportunities and diversity is celebrated.

Ryecroft School has an on-site Careers Lead which provides knowledge of individual student needs and tailors this approach to the individual students EHC needs.

6. Definitions

Careers education, for individuals and groups, focuses on career learning, teaching and assessment. It enables learners to understand themselves, get information, explore opportunities and develop the skills they need to manage their careers/futures.

Career(s) guidance, for individuals and small groups, focuses on careers information, advice and support. It may include counselling and coaching. It enables individuals to accomplish the unique tasks and issues they face in making progress and achieving their aspirations.

Careers education and guidance rely heavily on collaborative and partnership activities and interventions between a range of 'careers influencers' including learners themselves, parents and carers, other learning providers, and business and community organisations. Ryecroft School is fully supported by a dedicated impartial Regional Futures Advisor who provide a bespoke service, tailored to the needs of the individual, periodically throughout the school year.

Work-related education enables children and young people to learn the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to understand and succeed in the world of work. It makes extensive use of employer engagement to deliver active and experiential learning activities in and beyond the classroom. Ryecroft School is committed to forging strong links with our local community across a variety of sectors, allowing pupils to benefit from rich experiences and make informed choices about their next steps.

7. Learning about Safe Working Practices and Environments

Learning how to keep themselves and others safe in whatever working environment they are in helps individuals to always maintain health and safety standards.

Making the most of career's information, advice and guidance (CIAG) - Individuals need to learn how to recognise trusted sources of information, advice and guidance and how to make effective use of all the sources of help and support available to them.

Preparing for employability - Showing initiative and enterprise - A priority for children and young people is to gain the skills and experience that will enable them to get jobs and sustain themselves in employment.

Showing initiative and enterprise - This area of learning encompasses everything from becoming a top entrepreneur to showing initiative and enterprise in everyday life. It helps individuals to learn about risk, effort and making the most of opportunities.

Developing personal financial capability - The increasing cost of training and further and higher education makes it essential for individuals to know about managing their money. They need to know how to make decisions about spending, saving and investing to ensure their economic wellbeing now and in the future.

Identifying choices and opportunities - Using networking, negotiation, information and evaluation skills enables individuals to maximise their choices and opportunities, including those that are unforeseen or unplanned. Individuals need to be able to recognise suitable progression pathways and qualifications.

Planning and deciding

Decision-making involves getting information, clarifying values and preferences, identifying options, weighing up influences and advice, solving problems, anticipating future decisions and having a 'back-up' plan. It also involves being able to cope with chance events and unforeseen consequences.

Handling applications and interviews

Promoting themselves in a way that attracts the attention of selectors and recruiters as well as managing the applications process involves developing a range of self-presentation and marketing skills that individuals will need throughout their lives.

Managing changes and transitions

Plans and decisions can break down if individuals fail to prepare for the career moves, they need to make. Awareness of how to cope with life changes and transitions, partly gained from reflecting on previous moves, can support lifelong career development and employability.

8. School responsibilities:

- All registered students at Ryecroft School are entitled to receive independent careers advice in Years 7 to 13
- This careers advice must be represented in an impartial manner, showing no bias towards a particular institution, education or work option
- This advice will cover a range of education or training options, where appropriate
- This guidance must be in the best interest of the students
- There must be an opportunity for education and training providers to access students in Year 7 to 13 to inform them about approved technical qualifications or apprenticeships
- The school must have a clear policy setting out the way providers will be given access to pupils. This policy and these arrangements must be published on the Careers Area of the school website
- The school will base its careers provision around the Gatsby Benchmarks
- The school will continuously monitor, offer and seek further improvement. This will be done by the personnel involved in the design and delivery of the programme as well as by external stakeholders who assess the work of the school

9. Provider Access Arrangements

The provider access legislation (occasionally referred to as the 'Baker Clause') requires all schools and academies to provide opportunities for a range of education and training providers to access all year 8 to 13 pupils to inform them about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. Through the Skills and Post-16 Act 2022, the government has strengthened this legislation by introducing a minimum number of six provider encounters that every school must provide.

These encounters are carefully planned through careers sessions, discussions with form tutor and supported with impartial careers advice and guidance through. These experiences will look different for each pupil and are outlined in their own personal Gatsby Action Plan.

Rationale

High quality careers education and guidance in Ryecroft school is critical to young people's futures. It helps to prepare them for the workplace by providing a clear understanding of the world of work including the routes to jobs and careers that they might find engaging and rewarding. It supports them to acquire the self-development and career management skills they need to achieve positive employment destinations. This helps students to choose their pathways, improve their life opportunities and contribute to a productive and successful economy.

As the number of apprenticeships rises every year, it becomes increasingly important that all young people have a full understanding of all the options available to them post-16 and post-18 including wider technical education options such as T-Levels and Higher Technical Qualifications.

Commitment

The school is committed to ensuring there is an opportunity for a range of education and training providers to access students, for the purpose of informing them about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. The school is fully aware of the responsibility to set students on the path that will secure the best outcome which will enable them to progress in education and work and give employers the highly skilled people they need. That means acting impartially, in line with the statutory duty, and not showing bias towards any route, be that academic or technical.

The school endeavours to ensure that all students are aware of all routes to higher skills and are able to access information on technical options and apprenticeships (The Department of Education, July 2021: "Baker Clause": supporting students to understand the full range of education and training options, and the Provider Access Legislation, January 2023).

Aims

The school policy for Access to other education and training providers has the following aims:

- To develop the knowledge and awareness of our students of all career pathways available to them, including technical qualifications and apprenticeships.
- To support young people to be able to learn more about opportunities for education and training outside of school before making crucial choices about their future options.
- To reduce drop out from courses and avoid the risk of students becoming NEET (Young people not in education, employment or training).

Student Entitlement

The school fully supports the statutory requirement for students to have direct access to other providers of further education training, technical training and apprenticeships. The school will comply with the new legal requirement to put on at least six encounters with providers of approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships. This may be done in assemblies in National

Apprenticeship Week and National Careers Week, in addition to providers attending careers events at school

Development
This policy has been developed and is reviewed annually by the Careers Leader and Headmaster based on current good practice guidelines by the Department for Education.

Links with other policies
It supports and is underpinned by key school policies including those for Careers, Child Protection, Equality and Diversity, and SEND.

Equality and Diversity
Access to other providers is available and promoted to allow all students to access information about other providers of further education and apprenticeships. The school is committed to encouraging all students to make decisions about their future based on impartial information.

Live/Virtual encounters
The school will consider live online encounters with providers where requested, and these may be broadcast into classrooms or the school assembly hall. Technology checks in advance will be required to ensure compatibility of systems.

Parents and Carers
Parental involvement is encouraged, and parents may be invited to attend the events to meet the providers.

Management
The Careers Leader coordinates all provider requests and is responsible to their senior management line manager.

10. Accreditation Opportunities

Careers Education and Work-Related Learning is well promoted throughout the curriculum and accredited through a number of areas if appropriate: These can include: Asdan Awards, AQA Unit Awards, B-Tech qualifications, NCFE qualifications and Certificate in Personal Effectiveness (CoPE).

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis