

Sawtry Village Academy

Careers Strategy

2025-26



Sawtry Village
Academy

Introduction

Careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) is an essential part of the support we offer to students at Sawtry Village academy. Effective careers support can help to prepare young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life; it can help them to make decisions and manage transitions as learners and workers. As options for young people become more varied and complex, it is vital that we support them to develop the knowledge and skills they need to make informed choices for their future. We recognise the importance of this, and it underpins our vision for CEIAG at Sawtry Village Academy.

This strategy sets out a clear plan on how we intend to work towards meeting this vision in the short and longer term and should be read in conjunction with the Meridian 'Careers Education, Information and Guidance' procedures document that can be found at: <https://www.meridiantrust.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Meridian-Trust-CareersEducation-Information-Advice-and-Guidance-procedures-2023.pdf>

Objectives

- To deliver high quality careers education that meets and often exceeds, the provision required for the 8 benchmarks for good career guidance as identified by the Gatsby Foundation
- To maintain 'The Quality in Careers Standard' accreditation, the nationally recognised award for CEIAG in English Secondary Schools. This was achieved in 2023 and is due for re-accreditation in September 2026.

Careers Guidance

Careers guidance must include information on all 16-18 education or training options, including Apprenticeships and T-Levels. Most people spend many years of their life in a working environment, and it is important to equip our students with the necessary skills for them to career plan and know how and where to access impartial and unbiased information.

Sawtry Village Academy has built strong links with outside agencies and is working to foster further links with universities and colleges and local businesses which contribute to:

- Raising aspirations and increasing motivation – helping young people to identify educational and occupational goals
- Demonstrating the relevance of the knowledge and the skills learnt in subjects to future opportunities in learning and working
- Developing the skills for effective learning – reviewing achievements, setting targets, planning and taking action
- Demonstrating the links between living, learning and earning
- Improving literacy – developing information and communication skills
- Improving progression
- Reducing NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training)
- Careers work also supports strategies for student's personal and social development by:
 - ✓ Building self-confidence and self-reliance
 - ✓ Promoting positive and informed attitudes to learning
 - ✓ Promoting leadership, organisation, resilience and initiative
 - ✓ Developing good communication skills

We have a well-developed and effective work experience program for year 10 students and 99% of students make progress into further education, employment or training.

Our work experience program

Work experience takes place at the end of year 10, and students are encouraged to find their own work placements for a week, with guidance from the CEIAG team. The opportunity for students to have a meaningful experience of the workplace is hugely important, raising their aspirations and giving them greater insight into what life is like after school. This work experience is vital in:

- Students spending an extended period in a setting unfamiliar to them
- Students gaining and developing skills such as team working, independence, using their initiative and improving their communication skills
- Helping clarify their choices for their Post 16 destinations.

Unifrog

“We bring all the available information into one comprehensive, user-friendly platform that helps students make the best choices, and submit the strongest applications”. (Unifrog website)

Students are introduced to Unifrog in Year 7, where they start to explore potential career ideas based on their interests, strengths and aspirations. Unifrog will document the journey a student takes throughout their time at SVA and will help them make the best applications for University or explore apprenticeships at the end of their school journey.

The number of encounters our students have with employers and Universities

In KS3 students have access to a number of CEIAG events including events run by ‘Skills Service’ and ‘Speakers4Schools’. Significant time is spent looking at Guided Pathways, ensuring students access the best route through KS4 in order to access careers of choice.

In KS4 students have access to a dedicated careers advisor for advice and guidance and often access visits to off-site careers events. We explore opportunities for sixth form study at SVA by holding taster days, and signpost opportunities to attend open days at local colleges.

We have been proud to work with local business eg attending a day event championing women in construction through Urban & Civic, and bringing employers into school to inspire students wishing to pursue potential careers.

At KS5 we take students to visit Universities across the region and beyond and assist with UCAS applications to ensure students get the best chance with their options. We work with The AIM Group who specialise in training, employment and apprenticeship opportunities and have a work shadowing week in Year 12.

Gatsby Foundation 8 Benchmarks

The Gatsby Foundation was set up to work in areas that the trustees of the foundation are passionate about. One of these is Education and as part of that good careers guidance in schools. In 2013 the foundation commissioned Sir John Holman, a Professor of Chemistry at the University of York, senior education adviser and former headteacher, with setting out what career guidance in England would be like were it good by international standards. His report identified 8 benchmarks that schools should work towards to improve and deliver high quality CEIAG provision.

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.
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 support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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. They should be expected for all students but should be timed to meet their individual needs.

Current analysis against the Gatsby Foundation benchmarks

The Gatsby Foundation provide a tool that allows us to see how the provision of CEIAG at Sawtry Village Academy compares against these benchmarks. Over the last few years our progress against meeting the benchmarks has been rapid.

	All schools Nationally	Sawtry Village Academy 2023
Benchmark 1	66%	100%
Benchmark 2	81%	100%
Benchmark 3	54%	100%
Benchmark 4	76%	100%
Benchmark 5	80%	100%
Benchmark 6	64%	100%
Benchmark 7	52%	100%
Benchmark 8	75%	100%

Areas for further development

- Develop further the knowledge of the wider staff in the College around the Gatsby Benchmarks
- Consider how parental engagement with careers could be developed further, by working closely with the Meridian trust CEIAG committee
- Enhance further the links with other education providers and the Local Authority
- Develop the use of Unifrog to track interactions.
- Develop further the Sawtry alumni network so they, and their expertise, can form part of the careers provision and 'give back' to the college