

# Swavesey Village College

## Careers strategy

2025-26



## Our Vision

High quality careers education, information and guidance (CEIAG) is of huge importance to students, in all years, as they are prepared for the world outside of the college walls. We recognise the importance of this and it underpins our vision for CEIAG at Swavesey Village College:

*“Swavesey Village College will be recognised as a leading school nationally in the field of enterprise and work related learning. This will result in outstanding opportunities for students, a curriculum that better reflects the needs of the local economy, and an enhanced range of pathways to employment and training.”* 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:

<http://www.swaveseyvc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Meridian-Trust-Careers-Education-Information-Advice-and-Guidance-procedures-2025.pdf>

## Objectives

- To deliver high quality careers education that exceeds the provision required for the 8 benchmarks for good career guidance as identified by the Gatsby Foundation
- To work towards submitting a successful application for the ‘Quality in Careers Standard’ accreditation, the nationally recognised award for CEIAG in English Secondary Schools
- To become recognised as the leading school in CEIAG in the South Cambridgeshire area

## Introduction

Swavesey Village College has a statutory responsibility for securing access to CEIAG for all pupils in years 8-11. We feel strongly that this should be extended to year 7. The purpose of the CEIAG is intended to assist pupils to make and implement education, training and occupation choices and to learn how to prepare for the workplace and their careers.

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.

Swavesey Village College has 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. However, we are aware that there are areas where we can improve and that it is our moral imperative to do so.

### ***Our strengths***

We have an expanding careers team who are passionate about delivering an outstanding CEIAG programme. The PLEDGES programme is well established and compliments many of the transferable skills needed in the workplace. Our academic mentoring programme enables every student to be well known and 1:1 guidance given regularly. Each tutor has the responsibility to support their tutees with the career journey.

We have numerous strengths in our provision that we are proud of.

### **Our work experience programme**

We have a very strong database of employers and a member of the careers team focussing on building these networks and placing students into high quality experiences. As working practices have evolved post Covid, we have enabled a flexible approach and also introduced virtual work experience opportunities for students.

We view the opportunity for students to have a meaningful experience of the workplace of paramount importance in raising their aspirations and giving them greater insight into what life is like after school. To this end we are proud that we are one of the few schools in the area where we arrange work experience for the whole of our Year 10 over a week during their Summer term and will continue to do so. This work experience is vital in:

- Students spending an extended period of time 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.

### **The number of encounters our students have with employers and Universities**

"There are a range of external partners who work with Swavesey Village College, including Webtec, ARM, MACE, Girton College, Army Careers, Form the Future, Beam group, Speakers for Schools, SpringPod and Unifrog. The school's careers strategy identifies that working with external providers is an important aspect of the programme."

In 2023 our students averaged 10 encounters at KS3 and 10 encounters at KS4. This gives our students insight into businesses and Further and Higher education establishments.

Cambridge LaunchPad STEM events encourage all year groups to participate in activities within the curriculum.

And we have been proud to work with [Form the Future](#) since it was first established in 2015. Through their year group events bringing employers into school, to targeted business mentoring for

our pupil premium cohort, to enabling us to contract a Level 6 careers advisor, they have been instrumental in enhancing our careers programme and supporting us to meet the Gatsby Benchmarks.

## 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 Swavesey Village College compares against these benchmarks. Over the last few years our progress against meeting the benchmarks has been rapid.

|             | All schools nationally | Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough LEP | SVC Summer 2025 |
|-------------|------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Benchmark 1 | 59.8%                  | 54.9%  | 100%            |
| Benchmark 2 | 77.0%                  | 70.4%  | 100%            |
| Benchmark 3 | 50.4%                  | 53.5%  | 100%            |
| Benchmark 4 | 72.6%                  | 60.6%  | 100%            |
| Benchmark 5 | 77.3%                  | 76.1%  | 100%            |
| Benchmark 6 | 59.6%                  | 59.2%  | 100%            |
| Benchmark 7 | 49.0%                  | 42.3%  | 100%            |
| Benchmark 8 | 72.7%                  | 64.8%  | 100%            |

Our work now is focussed on developing the provision for each benchmark ensuring that our provision exceeds what is required.

### **Areas for further development**

- Develop further the knowledge of the wider staff in the College around the Gatsby Benchmarks
- Develop Gatsby 4 further so that careers information is embedded in all subject areas over the college with a focus in lessons every half term
- Consider how parental engagement with careers could be developed further, using the 'Talking futures' toolkit and engagement with the Meridian pathways website
- Enhance further the links with other education providers and the Local Authority
- Develop the use of Unifrog to track interactions and regularly upload these to Compass+ to track activities for all students
- Reintroduce careers breakfasts for employers to come and directly talk to students
- More explicit promotion of post-16 options to students in Year 9 onwards, to include T-levels and apprenticeships
- Continue to develop the Brighter Futures project and evaluate the impact of targeted careers support for the most vulnerable students.