

**Outcomes
First
Group.**

Acorn Education

Options Autism

Careers Policy



**The
Tower**
SCHOOL

The Tower School
Updated September 2024

Headteacher: Lauren Gibbs

Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION	2
2.0 POLICY & STATUTORY REQUIRMENTS	3
3.0 THE GATSBY BENCHMARKS	4
1. A stable careers programme	4
2.Learning from career and labour market information	5
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil	5
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers	6
5. Encounters with employers and employees	6
6. Experiences of workplaces	6
7. Encounters with further and higher education	7
8.Personal guidance	7
4.0 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	7
5.0 CURRICULUM	9
6.0 DEFINITIONS	9
7.0 PROVISION AT KEY STAGE 3 & 4	10
8.0 MONITORING	11

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Tower School is operated by Options Autism and is owned by Acorn Care and Education Ltd, a subsidiary company of Outcomes First Group (proprietary body). The Chairperson of the proprietary body is Richard Power (COO). The Tower School is an independent day school providing specialist education for pupils and young people aged 11 – 18 with a primary diagnosed need of Autism. Many will also have other diagnosed needs that may impact on their communication skills and relationships.

The Tower School has its own dedicated management team, under the leadership of Lauren Gibbs. Oversight of school management is provided by the Regional Director, Richard Adams-Murgatroyd for Options Autism, responsible to the Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer.

Key decisions are referred to the Outcomes First Group’s Board of Directors, in addition, the group extends its robust governance through local governing committees, a national education performance board and an independent Safeguarding and Quality Committee with three independent members.

2.0 POLICY & STATUTORY REQUIRMENTS

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 more recent Skills and Post-16 Act 2022, which came into force on 1 January 2023. It explains that our school 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 school must now secure independent careers guidance from year 7 (instead of from year 8, previously)
- As a School in England, we're now required to provide and publish careers guidance.

The above guidance requires that schools publish information about their careers programme on their website. This policy includes this information and shows how our school complies with this requirement.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

We also act in line with our statutory duty under the 'Baker Clause', to be impartial and not show bias towards any route, be that academic or technical. This policy sets out how our school meets this duty.

The Tower 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 a broad range of career options
- Helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential

At The Tower School we recognise and celebrate that all of 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 The Tower School will be relevant, specific, planned, and delivered carefully to meet their individual needs.

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:

- Further opportunities to study BTEC programmes, GCSEs and Functional Skills
- Opportunities to re-sit GCSEs/Functional Skills or take additional GCSEs
- Local colleges with the support of The Tower School staff
- Internal and external work experience opportunities

3.0 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.

The Gatsby Benchmarks are:

<p>1. A stable careers programme</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, governors, employers and other agencies.</p> <p>Every school and college 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.</p> <p>The careers programme should be published on the school’s or college’s website in a way that enables students, parents, school/college staff and employers to access and understand it.</p> <p>The programme should be regularly evaluated with feedback from students, parents, school/college staff and employers as part of the evaluation process.</p> <p>Providers of technical (including higher technical) education, vocational education and apprenticeships should be given the opportunity to engage with students and their parents so that all routes at 16 and 18 are fully understood and so that students can make informed decisions at key transition points.</p>
---	--	---

<p>2.Learning from career and labour market information</p>	<p>Every pupil, 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.</p>	<p>By the age of 14, all pupils should have accessed and used information about all career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options.</p> <p>During their study programme all students should access and use information about all career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions about study options.</p> <p>Parents should be encouraged to access and use information about labour markets and future study options to inform their support to their children.</p>
<p>3. Addressing the needs of each pupil</p>	<p>Pupils have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each pupil. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.</p>	<p>A school's or college's careers programme should actively seek to challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations.</p> <p>Schools and colleges should keep systematic records of the individual advice given to each student, and subsequent agreed decisions. All students should have access to these records to support their career development.</p> <p>The records of advice given should be integrated with those given at the previous stage of the student's education (including their secondary school) where these are made available. Records should begin to be kept from the first point of contact or from the point of transition.</p> <p>Schools should collect and maintain accurate data for each pupil on their education, training or employment destinations for at least three years after they leave school. This data should be used to review a school or college's careers provision and inform development and continuous improvement.</p> <p>Colleges should collect and maintain accurate data for each student on their education, training or employment destinations. This data should be used to review a school or college's careers provision and inform development and continuous improvement.</p>

<p>4. Linking curriculum learning to careers</p>	<p>All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. For example, STEM subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Throughout their programme of study (and by the end of their course) every student should have had the opportunity to experience how their subjects help people gain entry to (and be more effective workers within) a wide range of occupations.</p>
<p>5. Encounters with employers and employees</p>	<p>Every pupil 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.</p>	<p>Every year, from the age of 11, pupils should participate in at least one meaningful encounter* with an employer.</p> <p>Every year, alongside their study programme, students in colleges should participate in at least two meaningful encounters with an employer. At least one encounter should be delivered through their curriculum area.</p> <p>Colleges should record and take account of students' own part time employment and the influence this has had on their development.</p> <p>*A 'meaningful encounter' is one in which the student has the opportunity to learn about what work is like or what it takes to be successful in the workplace.</p>
<p>6. Experiences of workplaces</p>	<p>Every pupil 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.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>By the age of 18, or before the end of their study programme, every student should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have</p>

<p>7. Encounters with further and higher education</p>	<p>All pupils 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.</p>	<p>By the age of 16, every student should have had a meaningful encounter* with providers of the full range of educational opportunities, including sixth forms, colleges, universities and apprenticeship providers. This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and students.</p> <p>By the age of 18, all students who are considering applying for university should have had at least two visits to universities to meet staff and students.</p> <p>By the age of 18, or before the end of their programme of study, every student should have had a meaningful encounter with a range of providers of learning and training that may form the next stage of their career. This should include, as appropriate, further education colleges, higher education and apprenticeship and training providers. This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and students.</p>
<p>8. Personal guidance</p>	<p>Every pupil should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a careers adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level.</p>	<p>Every student should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a Careers Adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level.</p> <p>These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all pupils but should be timed to meet their individual needs.</p> <p>Every student should have at least one such interview by the age of 16, and the opportunity for a further interview by the age of 18.</p>

4.0 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Careers leader

Our careers leader is Ellen Leber, and they can be contacted by phoning 01992 926020 or emailing ellen.leber@thetowerschool.co.uk. Our careers leader is a member of the senior leadership team (SLT) and will:

- Take responsibility for developing, running and reporting on the school’s career programme
- Plan and manage careers activities
- Manage the budget for the careers programme
- Support teachers to build careers education and guidance into subjects across the curriculum

- Establish and develop links with employers, education and training providers, and careers organisations
- Work closely with relevant staff, including our special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and careers adviser, to identify the guidance needs of all of our pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and put in place personalised support and transition plans
- Work with our school's designated teacher for looked-after children (LAC) and previously LAC to:
 - Make sure they know which pupils are in care or are care leavers
 - Understand their additional support needs
 - Make sure that, for LAC, their personal education plan can help inform careers advice
- Review our school's provider access policy statement at least annually, in agreement with our governing board

4.2 Senior leadership team (SLT)

Our SLT will:

- Support the careers programme
- Support the careers leader in developing their strategic careers plan
- Make sure our school's careers leader is allocated sufficient time, and has the appropriate training, to perform their duties to a high standard
- Allow training providers access to talk to pupils in years 8 to 13 about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships, and set out arrangements for this in our school's provider access policy statement
- Network with employers, education and training providers, and other careers organisations
- Make sure that details of our school's careers programme and the name of the careers leader are published on the school's website

4.3 The governing board

The governing board will:

- Provide clear advice and guidance on which the school can base a strategic careers plan which meets legal and contractual requirements
- Appoint a member of the governing board who will take a strategic interest in careers education and encourage employer engagement
- Make sure independent careers guidance is provided to all pupils throughout their secondary education (11 to 18 year-olds) and that the information is presented impartially, includes a range of educational or training options and promotes the best interests of pupils
- Make sure that a range of education and training providers can access pupils in years 8 to 13 to inform them of approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships
- Make sure that arrangements are in place for the school to meet the legal requirements of the 'Baker Clause', including that the school has published a provider access policy statement

5.0 CURRICULUM

Careers and work-related education in the curriculum 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, through PSHE and ASDAN

6.0 DEFINITIONS

Careers education, for individual 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.

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.

Work-related education enables pupils 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. The Tower School has forged 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.

Making the most of careers 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 pupils 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.

7.0 PROVISION AT KEY STAGE 3 & 4

Key Stage 3

We recognise that pupils are making good progress if they can explain the requirements of a particular job that appeals to them and if they can mention an interest or skills that they possess to justify this as a choice for them. It also focuses on helping pupils to understand different viewpoints about careers and work besides their own and to open their minds to new possibilities. Pupils at Key Stage 3 benefit from activities that support personal reflection and help them to focus on what they have to offer in career terms and not just what they want to take, i.e. to see themselves as providers of skills and expertise that employers want and not just as consumers of careers that take their fancy.

This is a great time to help pupils become connected with their communities and to understand the work that needs to be done to sustain the community in which they live and identify readily with former pupils alumni networking. Exploring the world of work is a valuable way of enlarging their vocabulary and understanding of publicly-held concepts about careers and work as well as developing their literacy and numeracy skills.

Key Stage 4 & 5

At Key Stage 4 & 5, pupils can develop their capacity for self-reflection and realistic appraisal of their choices and opportunities. The formation of relatively stable, long-term occupational interests is also a feature of their development that can be accelerated by well-designed careers and work-related education programmes.

Careers and work-related programmes can help to develop their reasoning about career progression. Students have developed their self-reflection and have formed some occupational

interest, this can be enhanced by a well thought through careers programme and from the qualified careers adviser, educational visits, and internal and external work experience.

Accreditation Opportunities

Careers Education and Work-Related Learning is well promoted throughout the curriculum and also accredited through a number of courses offered in school. Some of which is specified below. More can be found in the Curriculum Policy.

The Tower School also offers BTEC qualifications and Preparation for Adulthood lessons which have been developed to give learners the opportunity to:

- Experience more than one vocational sector where they have not yet decided on a specific sector to follow
- Develop knowledge, understanding and skills of different vocational sectors to motivate them to progress to higher level qualifications or employment in a specific sector.
- Develop cross-cutting employability skills through carrying out practical activities in a vocational context
- Engage in learning which is relevant to them and provide opportunities to develop a range of skills and techniques, personal skills and attributes essential for successful performance in working life
- Achieve a nationally recognised Entry, Level 1 or Level 2 vocationally related qualification
- Progress to employment
- Progress to related general and/or vocational qualifications

8.0 MONITORING

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Board of Directors for further discussion and endorsement.

9.0 ACCESS/OUTSIDE CAREERS SUPPORT

Employability skills and career exploration are needed for the confident growth of our students, to safely make the transition. Outside careers support comes in many forms and delivers CEIAG careers, education, information, advice and guidance needed for the students at this stage. Schools are required to ensure that there is an opportunity for a range of education and training providers accessing the students from years 7 and above by informing them about technical Skills qualifications, apprenticeships and training available. The careers programme offers many events, whereby speakers from different organisations come into school and speak to the students and parents.

This is outlined in section 42B of the Education Act 1997.
This policy shows how our school complies with these requirements.

All students in years 9 to 14 at The Tower school are entitled to:

- Find out about technical education qualifications and apprenticeship opportunities as part of our careers programme, which provides information on the full range of education and training options available at each transition point.
- Hear from a range of local providers about the opportunities they offer, including technical education and apprenticeships
- Understand how to make applications for the full range of academic and technical courses
- A meeting with an qualified OFG Careers advisor
- A meeting with a Local Authority Careers Advisor
- Take part in work experience

A provider wishing to request access should contact:

Email: ellen.leber@thetowerschool.co.uk

A number of events, integrated into our careers programme, will offer providers an opportunity to come into school to speak to students and/or their parents/carers:

Opportunities for access:

- Year 7 - Career related activities & whole school Careers Day & Enterprise Day
- Year 8 - Career related activities & whole school Careers Day & Enterprise Day
- Year 9 - Career related activities & whole school Careers Day & Enterprise Day & External Careers Advisor interviews
- Year 10 - Career related learning & whole school Careers Day & Enterprise Day & External Careers Advisor interviews & work experience
- Year 11 - Career related learning & whole school Careers Day & Enterprise Day & External Careers Advisor interviews & tours of local LSEC college & work experience
- Year 12 - Career related learning & whole school Careers Day & Enterprise Day & External Careers Advisor interviews & tours of local LSEC college & work experience & Visit to local job fair & national Career events
- Year 13 & 14- Career related learning & whole school Careers Day & Enterprise Day & External Careers Advisor interviews & tours of local LSEC college & work experience & Visit to local job fair & national career events

Please see, The Tower school Safeguarding and Visitor policies:

Our safeguarding and visitor policies outline the school's procedure for checking the identity and suitability of visitors.

Education and training providers will be expected to adhere to this policy.

The Tower school will advise of procedures to be adhered to and introduction of management and teaching staff involved. They will advise on facilities and movement of the school.

The school's arrangements for managing the access of education and training providers for students will be from the Careers Leader – Ellen Leber

