

Careers, Economic Wellbeing and Aspirations Policy

Policy Owner:	Head of Careers Education
Last Reviewed:	[September 2025]
Next Review Due:	[September 2026]
Approved by:	Governing Committee

1. Policy Statement

NCS plays a critical role in shaping the academic and personal development of young people and has a unique opportunity to equip students with the tools necessary for success beyond the classroom. One of these areas where NCS focuses is careers education. Integrating career education into the curriculum not only helps students gain a clearer understanding of potential career paths but also prepares them to make informed decisions about their futures. In a rapidly changing world where the job market is constantly evolving, it's vital that students are exposed to various industries, skill sets, and reflect personally on themselves and their interest in various employment sectors.

Moreover, providing career education at the prep school level helps bridge the gap between academic learning and real-world application. It allows students to develop crucial skills such as networking, decision-making, and goal setting—skills that will serve them well throughout their lives. By introducing students to a wide array of professions and encouraging them to explore different interests, prep schools can foster a more holistic and practical education. This kind of guidance enables students to understand not just what they are learning, but how that learning applies to their future careers, ultimately giving them the confidence and direction to pursue their aspirations.

New College School recognises the value of early aspirational education in fostering curiosity, broadening horizons, and nurturing future readiness in all pupils aged. New College School is committed to embedding high-quality, age-appropriate careers and aspirations education through the adoption of the **Gatsby Benchmarks (2025)**. This is delivered as part of our broader **Wellbeing Programme**.

We believe that even our youngest pupils benefit from exposure to the world beyond school — developing an understanding of work, roles, skills, and pathways in a way that complements their developmental stage.

Careers guidance should:

- be impartial, showing no bias or favouritism towards a particular institution, education or work option
- include information on the range of education or training options, including apprenticeships and technical education routes
- consider the best interests of the students to whom it is given

Provider access legislation

In schools, the governing body must make sure that learners in Years 8 to 13 receive at least 6 encounters with a provider of technical education or apprenticeships.

As a minimum, schools must offer:

- **2 encounters that are mandatory for all pupils to attend that take place any time during year 8 or between 1 September and 28 February during Year 9.** As a Prep School we are responsible for ensuring that all Year 8 pupils receive at least 2 mandatory provider encounters before the end of Year 8
- *2 encounters that are mandatory for all pupils to attend that take place any time during year 10 or between 1 September and 28 February during year 11*
- *2 encounters that are mandatory for the school to put on, but optional for pupils to attend, to take place any time during year 12 or between 1 September and 28 February during year 13*

2. Aims and Objectives

The Careers, Economic Wellbeing and Aspirations Policy aims to:

- Develop pupils' early understanding of the world of work and the variety of careers available
- Support pupils in identifying their interests, strengths, and values
- Introduce key concepts such as aspiration, achievement, teamwork, and enterprise
- Enable pupils to make informed choices as they move into senior school education
- Encourage ambition and resilience as life-long learners and contributors to society

3. Leadership and Accountability

The **Careers Coordinator**, supported by the Senior Leadership Team, is responsible for:

- Planning and coordinating age-appropriate careers and aspirations learning
- Integrating the policy with the school's **Wellbeing Programme**
- Liaising with external contributors, including alumni, parents, and professional visitors
- Monitoring the impact of provision and ensuring alignment with the **Gatsby Benchmarks**

The **Governing Committee** reviews this policy annually as part of its oversight of the school's personal development provision.

Helping young people to understand their feelings about money, financial decisions, careers and the economy is a vital part of preparing them for adult life, with clear links to health outcomes and relationships.

4. Curriculum Delivery

Careers and aspirations education is delivered through:

- The **Wellbeing Programme**, which includes units on identity, personal strengths, teamwork, and future goals
- Classroom-based projects in the Pre-Prep (e.g. “Jobs Around Us” & “What I Want to Be”)
- Cross-curricular links in English, Science, Humanities, and Art
- Assemblies and enrichment weeks (e.g. SHTEAM festival)
- Visits and virtual events with professionals across industries which link closely with the wider curriculum (STEM, arts, healthcare, business, etc.)

Careers Education

Gatsby Benchmarks

The Gatsby Benchmarks, which are a set of guidelines designed to improve career guidance in schools, should ideally be introduced and worked through from the age of 11, typically around Year 7. This is the point when students traditionally begin to transition from primary to secondary education, and it marks an important phase in their development where career awareness and planning can begin. Early exposure to career education at this stage helps students understand the world of work, explore different industries, and start considering how their interests and skills may align with future career options.

While it is beneficial for career education to start at a young age, the Gatsby Benchmarks should continue to be worked through progressively as students move through their secondary education. By the time students are in Year 9 (ages 13-14), they are making more concrete decisions about their subject choices and should have a more developed understanding of their career options. Throughout Key Stage 4 (ages 14-16) and Key Stage 5 (ages 16-18), the focus should shift to more detailed career exploration, planning, and the development of skills required for post-school transitions, whether that be further education, apprenticeships, or entering the workforce.

Good career guidance is important for social mobility because it helps open pupils' eyes to the careers they may have not considered – Good career guidance Gatsby

The 8 Gatsby Benchmarks (September 2025) outlined below are requirements that pupils should meet before completing Key Stage 5, but best practice dictates that all of these elements should be covered regularly at an age-appropriate level from Year 7. As a prep school, we recognise this as an area we want to teach effectively to ensure pupils receive the best possible start in their career's education. Although some of these benchmarks will not be fully met until a pupil is in Key Stages 4 & 5 we believe NCS plays a key role in Careers Education.

<p><i>Gatsby Benchmark</i> (Full descriptors found here)</p>	<p><i>How this benchmark is being addressed in an NCS context</i></p>
<p>1. A stable careers programme Every school, college and ITP should have an embedded programme of careers education and guidance that is known and understood by learners, parents and carers, staff, those in governance roles, employers and other agencies.</p>	<p>Careers education begins in greater formality from Year 5, where pupils have assigned curriculum lessons throughout the Wellbeing programme. Prior to Year 5 it is important to note that many cross-curricular aspects of NCS pupils' education have them engaging with numerous sectors in employment. Visiting guests will often be asked about their career and these interactions are encouraged by staff to open and expand pupils' interests and developing ideas around the world of work. Form tutor teams lead formal sessions in wellbeing (summary included below) Careers Education is discussed with parents in start of year parent meetings and many of our parents aid the careers programme by holding careers talks in their professions. <i>Discussions with the NCSPA help to hear the parental voice and understanding in this area and allow us to work in partnership with our community.</i> <i>Pupils are surveyed (both on skills sets and potential well-matched careers and the lessons in this area of the school) to allow us to evaluate our teaching methods and adapt where needed.</i></p>
<p>2. Learning from career and labour market information All learners, parents and carers, teachers and staff who support learners should have access to good-quality, up-to-date information about future pathways, study options and labour market opportunities. Young people with SEND and their parents and carers may require different or additional information. All learners will need the support of an informed adviser to make the best use of available information.</p>	<p>Resources (some examples below) in this area are available to pupils and following careers lessons some will seek further information in these areas. VLE and staffshare hold further information and links which are provided as needed and requested by pupils, parents and staff. All members of the staff are encouraged to engage pupils and parents in conversations around careers and allow follow up with more resources as needed. These will be supplied by Careers Coordinator.</p>
<p>3. Addressing the needs of each pupil Learners have different careers guidance needs at different stages. Careers programmes should help learners navigate their concerns about any barriers to career progression. In addition, opportunities should be tailored to the needs of each learner, including any additional needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners,</p>	<p>The curriculum lessons held in wellbeing carry the same expectations of other subjects from a teaching standpoint and therefore all pupils are catered for in ensuring they can access the content knowledge as deeply as possible. This includes SEND which is discussed on a regular basis with the Inclusion Coordinator. DHP coordinates information with staff and stays abreast of developments in this space to make sure that the programme is as in-depth, accurate and engaging as possible.</p>

<p>young people with SEND and those who are absent.</p>	
<p>4. Linking curriculum learning to careers</p> <p>As part of the institution's programme of careers education, all teachers and subject staff should link curriculum learning with careers, even on courses which are not specifically occupation led.</p> <p>Subject teachers and staff should highlight the progression routes for their subject and the relevance of the knowledge and skills developed in their subject for a wide range of career pathways and future career paths.</p>	<p>Prior to Year 5 it is important to note that many cross-curricular aspects of NCS pupils' education have pupils engaging with numerous sectors in employment. Visiting guests will often be asked about their career and these interactions are encouraged by staff to open and expand pupils interests and developing ideas around the world of work.</p> <p>Every pupil in Year 7 & 8 in every subject have at least one bespoke learning engagement in each subject looking at skills specific to that subject and career opportunities in that related field. See Careers map on Staffshare for lesson details. The majority of these lessons take place in the Trinity Term</p> <p>DfE guidance point</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For schools: every year, in every subject, every pupil should have opportunities to learn how the knowledge and skills developed in that subject helps people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers.</i> <p>Careers are linked to the curriculum throughout an NCS education. From visits from the Fire Department in the Pre-Prep to talks in SHTEAM Week and some of the visiting speakers who will come in to run workshops on areas of their specialism. NCS is blessed to share a close link with our families and also the University and we use these resources to have frequent experts in their field. Everything in the last year from train drivers to medical professionals, to toy makers to town planners and archaeologists to mention a few. As part of visiting staff foster conversations with pupils to have them understand the role this person may hold and start to build a picture of areas they see and possible careers paths in the future.</p> <p>At a Key Stage 3 level: Pupils have a week's worth of careers education this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Careers talks from 4 different industries (annually) - 2 online careers survey tools used and reflected upon in conversations with form tutor and Careers Education Leader (annually) - An annual careers interview task where pupils interview a person in a field they have an interest in. This task is reflected upon with peers through presentations in wellbeing and form sessions - Each pupil in Key stage 3 in every subject has a specialised careers lesson <p>In Year 8 pupils attend an in person encounter with a major employer which looks at job opportunities in</p>

	<p>Oxford. This engagement links with the two of the Government's 8 priority sectors for economic growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advanced manufacturing • digital and technologies <p>For further information please see the appendix Careers Education Map</p>
<p>5. Encounters with employers and employees</p> <p>Every learner 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 opportunities, including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes, and could include learners' own part-time employment where it exists (part-time work can contribute to benchmark 5 but should not replace the need for other meaningful employer encounters).</p>	<p>Aim for "multiple, varied, meaningful employer-led activities". Year 7 & 8 Pupils attend a careers encounter with a major local employer BMW-Mini. This engagement seeks to educate pupils around how robots and people work together and learn about lean manufacturing. Pupils also have the opportunity to find out more about different career opportunities in Oxford. This engagement links with the two of the Government's 8 priority sectors for economic growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advanced manufacturing • digital and technologies <p>In addition, workshops at local employers The Bodleian libraries looking at careers in research and the sciences are and other cross-curricular activities.</p> <p>'Part-time employment' at this age is difficult. Though many NCS pupils take an active role in charities and service within both the school and wider community. In the last 3 years we have had career talks from people working in the following careers/industries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Executive Recruitment specialist - Solicitor - CFO of Vaxx - Train driver - Journalist - Children's author - Toy maker - Scientist working in a Bio-tech lab - Children's literary editor - Property developer (and carpenter) - Owner of a luxury food hamper company (self employed) - GP and other medical specialists <p>This year we have scheduled 2 careers talk sessions late Hilary Term and late Trinity term and currently have an owner of a software company, executive recruitment specialist, former school teacher, financial industry analyst and an electrician.</p>
<p>6. Experiences of workplaces</p> <p>Every learner should have first-hand experiences of workplaces to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks.</p> <p>For schools:</p>	<p>Year 8 pupils have a meaningful engagement with a major employer in Oxford which we feel helps their exploration of career opportunities.</p> <p>Pupils at this age will for a variety of reasons have limited experience and opportunities in the workplace.</p> <p>To help counter this pupils undertake a career interview with an adult that they trust and who's career they are interested in. This is planned when they do not have prep</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by the age of 16, every pupil should have had meaningful experiences of workplaces • by the age of 18, every pupil should have had at least one further meaningful experience 	<p>to allow them to engage with this task fully as opposed at a time of the year where it might add to workload and not allow for a pupil to fully embrace the learning element of the task.</p> <p><i>This element falls below expectations in the benchmarks but we feel can be reasonably expected to be addressed through formal careers experience programme as outlined in governmental guidance for Year 9 and Key Stage 4.</i></p>
<p>7. Encounters with further and higher education</p> <p>All learners should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them, including academic, technical and vocational routes. This should incorporate learning in schools, colleges, ITPs, universities and in the workplace</p>	<p>NCS is impartial, showing no bias or favouritism towards a particular institution, education or work option</p> <p>Aim to include information on the range of education or training options, including apprenticeships and technical education routes which is supported by the invitations of guest speakers and the Year 8 trip to a major Oxford employer along with the Personal Career Interview task.</p> <p>Through the diverse range of careers discussed with pupils, we believe it is important that they recognise there are multiple pathways into a successful career. Pupils should not feel that, simply by living in Oxford, university study is their only option.</p> <p>Many pupils show strong enthusiasm and aptitude for practical subjects such as Design Technology, cookery, and gardening clubs. During these activities, staff actively highlight routes into employment through trades and apprenticeships, as well as the current demand in the labour market for these valuable skills.</p>
<p>8. Personal guidance</p> <p>Every learner should have opportunities for guidance meetings with a careers adviser, who could be internal (a member of school or college staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These meetings should be available for all learners whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all learners but should be scheduled to meet their individual needs. The careers leader should work closely with the careers adviser, SEND coordinator and other key staff to ensure personal guidance is effective and embedded in the careers programme.</p>	<p>Guidance around careers will involve discussions with tutor teams after their careers surveys in Year 7 & 8 and look at the skillsets pupils have identified as being most suited and which current industries these skills are most valued within. This will also use a meeting between pupils and the Careers Coordinator to discuss aspects of interest of pupils and offer guidance for realistic next steps pupils can take if they have an interest in certain industries. <i>This element falls below expectations in the benchmarks, but we feel can be reasonably expected to be addressed through formal careers experience programme as outline in governmental guidance for Year 9 and Key Stage 4.</i></p>

6. Partnerships and External Engagement

New College School values the role of partnerships in bringing careers learning to life. We maintain links with:

- Parents and alumni who volunteer to speak about their professions
- Local employers and charitable organisations
- Senior schools, to support transition and preparation for future learning pathways

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

Provision is evaluated through:

- Feedback from pupils and staff following events and lessons through formal surveys
- Oversight by the **Careers Coordinator** including the recording of aspirations, tracking of immediate next step destinations to senior school. This is reflected upon to refine our provision of careers education.
- Annual review by the **Governing Committee**, which includes monitoring of provision quality and alignment with the school's aims

8. Review Cycle

This policy is reviewed annually by the **Governing Committee** and updated as needed to reflect good practice, pupil needs, and changes in national guidance or benchmarking frameworks

Appendix 1. Careers Education for Key stage 3 content map

Formal careers lessons at NCS (please see staffshare for lessons)			
Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
<p>Year 5 Hilary Term ‘The Head Chef’ This lesson explores the skills, interests and experiences relevant to future career paths. <u>Key Learning Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying a range of jobs - assessing skillsets relevant to different professions - evaluating teamwork through the hospitality industry - demonstrating the role of 	<p>Hilary term ‘the boxer’ also helps pupils reflect on setting goals and focussing on the steps they need to take to accomplish goals. This lesson includes a video interview with boxer Anthony Ogogo Olympic gold medallist. <u>Key Learning Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identify their personal qualities and strengths - practise effective goal setting 	<p>Affluenza lesson (Hilary term) It is not a medically recognised disease, but a term used by critics of excessive consumerism, which draws our attention to its negative effects. This lesson forms part of the wellbeing curriculum and aims to have pupils identify the <i>difference in needs and wants</i>. Furthermore, it strives to bring consumerism into the forefront of their minds and look at some of the desires</p>	<p>Purpose lesson (Hilary term) This lesson looks to highlight research around amount of money and happiness (an area which has previously been debated again Kahneman vs Deaton research). The lesson also introduces themes that will have come up in their work on social media. Influencers and themes such as ‘keeping up with the Jones’ and the ‘Hedonistic treadmill’. We believe</p>

decision-making in the workforce	- describe the steps and challenges to achieving a goal	they may have financially and whether these are the key to choosing a rewarding career in years to come.	this plays a role in pupils' careers educations with the goal for pupils to look at fulfilment and purpose alongside simply the earning potential of certain careers.
<p><i>From HT2026 Money and Emotional Wellbeing lesson</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain how the decisions someone makes about their money might affect their feelings • explain how and why money worries can have an impact on emotional wellbeing • identify sources of information and support 	<p><i>From HT2026 Money and Emotional Wellbeing lesson</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain how the decisions someone makes about their money might affect their feelings • explain how and why money worries can have an impact on emotional wellbeing • identify sources of information and support 	<p><i>Individual careers Survey</i></p> <p>In Year 7 & 8 pupils undertake two different career surveys (in each year). These tools are designed to help identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interests • motivations • preferences <p>The tools also link their answers with industries which are high, medium and low match to their results. The follow up tasks allow pupils to investigate these areas further and look at the common career path/journey to attain a position in the industry.</p>	<p><i>Individual careers Survey</i></p> <p>In Year 7 & 8 pupils undertake two different career surveys (in each year). These tools are designed to help identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interests • motivations • preferences <p>The tools also link their answers with industries which are high, medium and low match to their results. The follow up tasks allow pupils to investigate these areas further and look at the common career path/journey to attain a position in the industry.</p>
		<p>During Key stage 3 in Trinity Term, pupils attend a careers encounter with a major local employer, BMW-Mini. This engagement seeks to educate pupils around how robots and people work together and learn about lean manufacturing. They have the opportunity to find out more about different career opportunities in</p>	<p>During Key stage 3 in Trinity Term, pupils attend a careers encounter with a major local employer, BMW-Mini. This engagement seeks to educate pupils around how robots and people work together and learn about lean manufacturing. They have the opportunity to find out more about different career opportunities in</p>

		<p>Oxford. This engagement links with the two of the Government's 8 priority sectors for economic growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advanced manufacturing digital and technologies 	<p>Oxford. This engagement links with the two of the Government's 8 priority sectors for economic growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advanced manufacturing digital and technologies
		<p>Every pupil in Year 7 & 8 in every subject has at least one bespoke learning engagement in each subject looking at skills specific to that subject and career opportunities in that related field. See Careers map on Staffshare for lesson details. The majority of these lessons take place in the Trinity Term</p> <p>DfE guidance point <i>For schools: every year, in every subject, every pupil should have opportunities to learn how the knowledge and skills developed in that subject helps people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers.</i></p>	<p>Every pupil in Year 7 & 8 in every subject has at least one bespoke learning engagement in each subject looking at skills specific to that subject and career opportunities in that related field. See Careers map on Staffshare for lesson details. The majority of these lessons take place in the Trinity Term</p> <p>DfE guidance point <i>For schools: every year, in every subject, every pupil should have opportunities to learn how the knowledge and skills developed in that subject helps people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers.</i></p>
<p>Careers interview task to be completed throughout the year. The timing will be determined by tutor teams but should be scheduled during a period when pupils have a reduced workload, ensuring</p>	<p>Careers interview task to be completed throughout the year. The timing will be determined by tutor teams but should be scheduled during a period when pupils have a reduced workload, ensuring</p>	<p>Careers interview Ahead of career talks pupils interview an adult in a field (that matches (their highest match from recently completed careers surveys) Pupils should ask 10 questions of their</p>	<p>Careers interview Ahead of career talks pupils interview an adult in a field (that matches (their highest match from recently completed careers surveys) Pupils should ask 10 questions of their</p>

they can engage fully with the task. At Year 5 and 6 level, pupils should consider two of their own individual questions and discuss with their tutor and parents the person they have chosen to speak to	they can engage fully with the task. At Year 5 and 6 level, pupils should consider two of their own individual questions and discuss with their tutor and parents the person they have chosen to speak to	own or from a selection (on staffshare/VLE) and should report back findings to class. Pupils must discuss suitability of the individual with tutor teams and parents prior to seeking an interview.	own or from a selection (on staffshare/VLE) and should report back findings to class. Pupils must discuss suitability of the individual with tutor teams and parents prior to seeking an interview.
	Pupils attend the careers talks sessions with Year 7 & 8	Pupils attend careers talks throughout the year and take notes. Pupils encouraged to have questions ready for Q & A session at the end.	Pupils attend careers talks throughout the year and take notes. Pupils encouraged to have questions ready for Q & A session at the end.

Appendix 2. Key Stage 3 curriculum Map detailed version available on staffshare Careers Education

Year group	Careers talk 4 speakers across the year (Michaelmas and Trinity)	Employer-Led & Career-Oriented Activities	Wellbeing lessons on careers	Career Survey tools and reflection follow up session	Personal interview project (and sharing session)	Subject specific careers lesson (post exams Trinity)	Total time
Year 7	6 lessons	New College outreach enrichments debating workshop, tour and Q & A session with undergrads 3 lessons	Purpose 1 lesson	2 lessons	3 lessons (2 lessons)	15 lessons (Games 3 lessons)	37 lessons
Year 8	6 lessons	Mini/BMW Plant talk on careers and activities 3 lessons	Interests and goals 1 lesson	2 lessons	3 lessons (2 lessons)	15 lessons (Games 3 lessons)	37 lessons

Further resources

For staff

National Careers Week 2025 takes place from 3-8 March and aims to provide a focus for careers guidance activity at an important stage in the academic calendar.

My Future is a suite of Benchmark 4 resources to support subject teaching staff, from 27 subjects at KS3, KS4 & Post 16, to engage students in curriculum learning by highlighting the relevance of their subjects to future careers, opportunities and pathways.

[My Learning My Future | CEC Resource Directory](#)

[The Careers & Enterprise Academy | The Careers and Enterprise Company](#)

[Careerpilot : Jobs](#)

Subject specific lessons guide for staff

<https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/my-learning-my-future>

For Pupils

As experts on apprenticeships and technical education, we influence the way that apprenticeships are perceived and drive forward innovative and creative work in England and internationally, to ensure that more individuals and businesses can access the benefits of apprenticeships.

[Amazing Apprenticeships Resources | CEC Resource Directory](#)

Resources located on staffshare, there are plenty of interactive activities such as quizzes and subject specific apprenticeship advice should you have a favourite subject you're interested in.

[Secondary Careers](#)

If you are interested in learning more about certain careers including: Healthcare and Science, Sports, Music and the Arts, Media and Journalism, and Technology; please follow the below link the BBC careers panel as part of Careers Week

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z94bg7h>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/careers>