

# Careers at Parklands High School

Careers Education, Advice and Guidance is a vital part of the overall education provided to pupils at Parklands. Careers education begins in Year 7 and continues through to Year 11, when pupils receive the most input.

In 2013, The Gatsby Charitable Foundation commissioned Sir John Holman – Emeritus 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.

## Good Career Guidance

Through six international visits, analysis of good practice in English schools and a comprehensive review of current literature, a set of eight benchmarks covering different dimensions of good career guidance was identified. After surveying a sample of English schools and commissioning PwC to identify the costs of implementation, Sir John Holman made ten recommendations on how to improve the career guidance system. Below are the eight benchmarks he identified.

## The Benchmarks

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

### A stable careers programme

Every school and college should have an embedded programme of careers education and guidance that is known and understood by pupils, parents, teachers, governors and employers.

### Learning from career and labour market information

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.

### **Addressing the needs of each pupil**

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.

### **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.

### **Encounters with employers and employees**

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.

### **Experiences of workplaces**

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.

### **Encounters with further and higher education**

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.

### **Personal guidance**

Every pupil 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 pupils but should be timed to meet their individual needs.

These benchmarks provide the backbone for our careers education provision.

Although 'Careers Education' does not exist as a separate subject, it is covered extensively throughout the curriculum and throughout the year.

Each year group has a series of 'Respect' days, which replace the previous weekly PSCE lessons. There are three per year (one per term) for each year group and one of these is careers and enterprise based. In Years 7 and 8 last year, pupils logged on to our careers program 'Launchpad' from Cascaid and worked their way through the introductory section – answering questions about their likes/dislikes, future aspirations and so on. This is an age-appropriate program that introduces careers in a fun exploratory way.

Years 9, 10 and 11 were given log ins to New Kudos and many have completed the questionnaires and created action plans and 'favourited' areas of interest. This program, which we buy into each year, is available to pupils both at school and home, meaning parents can also be involved in their child's careers journey.

This year the programme was extended: as well as Mock Interviews, we also held a 'Meet the Employer' session for Year 9s, where a number of local employers came into school to talk about their particular industry and answer questions from pupils. Pupils were asked previously to select an area they were most interested in, in order to channel them to the correct employer session.

Year 11s were interviewed by employers and a number of staff from local colleges. Prior to this they were given a 'Jobs' magazine to select a job they would like to apply for, along with an application form in order to give them experience of completing an application form. They were given verbal feedback from their interviewer immediately afterwards.

During the same Respect day, Year 11 also attended a motivational session on future aspirations, life at college or work and how to achieve success. Each pupil also completed, in conjunction with college staff, an online application to Runshaw College, to ensure that everyone has a back up option in place.

Years 9 and 10 Respect Days cover CVs, references, people skills, employment laws and various other related topics. All teaching staff are involved in delivering sessions on Respect Days, alongside industry professionals and other educational specialists and external agencies.

As well as Respect Days, many subject areas include reference to careers within lessons or as extra curricular options. Attendance at STEM events and competitions, visits to industries and facilities, trips to sporting and theatrical events - the list is extensive. Many of these events are covered in the termly newsletter which is sent to all parents and is featured on the school website.

The school employs a qualified careers advisor, who is also involved with mentoring and counselling of pupils. This member of staff is in school every day and does not have a teaching timetable, meaning she is available to speak to pupils at any time. Mentoring and counselling sessions often make reference to future aspirations and careers as they are closely linked. Every pupil is invited to book a one to one appointment – but the careers office is open to all year groups for drop ins at any time. Prospectuses for all the local colleges and training providers are freely available, alongside careers publications, leaflets, booklets, adverts and university prospectuses. The displays are constantly updated both inside and outside the careers office and on the various careers noticeboards positioned around school.

Pupils and parents are regularly emailed with details of open events at colleges, apprenticeship positions, dates of interviews or taster days, as well as general careers information. Each pupil has a school email and parents are contacted via RS Connect. Use is also made of the 'splash' facility on the homepage of the school website, as well as leaflets and flyers in form tutor pigeonholes.

In the final term of Year 10, every pupil is taken to three college taster days: Runshaw College, Cardinal Newman College and Wigan & Leigh College. They choose lessons to sample beforehand and are given a personalised timetable for each college, meaning they get a taste of college life – visiting the canteens/cafeterias, meeting staff and student ambassadors, seeing student work and experiencing an actual lesson, usually alongside students from other schools.

These taster days are introduced via whole year assemblies. Year 11 have a dedicated assembly slot every other Monday afternoon, when colleges, training providers and employers are invited in to

present to the year group. Last year saw six local colleges present assemblies, as well as NCS – The Challenge, Hays Recruitment and Fairpoint (debt and lifestyle advice). There was also a presentation from a local employer, One Stop Hire, who talked about the benefits of apprenticeships. So far this academic year, we have had six colleges (with three more to come), plus NCS introducing the National Citizenship Scheme and LLS, talking about raising aspirations. Last year, 14 of our pupils took part in the National Citizenship Scheme, taking part in community projects, learning life skills such as budgeting, cooking and cleaning and gaining confidence through challenges.

The careers adviser also presented to a full school (Yrs7 – 9) assembly setting out the careers plan for the future.

There are numerous lunchtime drop in sessions throughout the year from all the local colleges, apprenticeship providers, the Armed Forces, NCS – many of these will also interview in school to ensure that everyone is able to attend their interview. All of these are facilitated by the Careers Advisor.

There are a number of visits to universities and other establishments throughout the year, ranging from summer school revision residentials at Lancaster University to visits to the Magistrates' Courts. A number of colleges offer masterclasses in various subjects (in the past we have had Health & Social Care, Catering and Forensic Science, amongst others, as well as ex-pupils helping with maths revision classes).

Pupils who are classed as Gifted and Talented are offered the opportunity to take part in sessions at various local colleges, both during the school day and after school.

The Careers Advisor attends Parents' Evenings and Year 8 Options Evening at the school in order to answer any queries from parents and pupils regarding future career paths and the best routes/courses/subjects. Many of the local colleges also attend these evenings.

Last year saw a number of new contacts set up: One Stop Hire presented a talk on apprenticeships and ultimately employed four of our pupils as apprentice plant engineers/sales and administration. Utiligroup are a local company working with utility companies and have been in to school for Mock Interviews and Meet the Employer days. Chorley Group (Nissan) have also become involved in various initiatives and have now offered to take groups of pupils on half day tours/work placement visits. Our contact at the Job Centre emails us a filtered list of available apprenticeship positions on a weekly basis. This is in addition to our longstanding contacts who are always happy to help with mentoring, interview tips and workplace visits (such as NIS Ltd).

Work experience is not offered to all pupils, but last year, 45 pupils undertook a week's work experience placement in either an early years or elderly care setting, as part of their BTEC Health & Social Care qualification. This meant contacting nurseries, primary schools and day care settings to organise this. Pupils had to telephone the setting to introduce themselves, ask basic questions about start and finish times, what to wear and a brief outline of what they might be doing. The Careers Advisor rang each setting twice during the week to check on progress/problems and along with the Curriculum Leader, visited a number of the placements to talk to staff and pupils. Each establishment was emailed at the end of the placement to thank them and ask for feedback on the pupil. Overall, these were very positive. Pupils also have to complete a work experience diary which

is verified by staff at the work placement. One or two pupils also asked for assistance in organising a work placement during their holidays (Busy Bees).

We also offer a workplace visit to Busy Bees Nursery, where we take 8-9 pupils for an afternoon to see how the nursery operates. They will rotate around different classes/age groups and spend time with staff, before a Q & A session with the Manager. This normally runs once a week over 4-5 weeks and is very successful.

One of the biggest events of the year is the annual Careers Fair, which is held in our Sports Hall and is very popular. Last year saw over 50 exhibitors – from colleges and universities to training and apprenticeship providers and employers from all types of industry. All of our Year 10 and 11 pupils attend the fair, spending about an hour talking to the exhibitors and visiting the various stands. They have a booklet in advance of the fair, detailing who to see and why.

Throughout the year, pupils are provided with various leaflets and booklets. There is a dedicated Careers newsletter, with different versions for KS3 and KS4, which is distributed termly (with an electronic version on the school website) – this features interview dates, open events, adverts, advice and useful articles. There is a guide to CV Writing, a leaflet on the importance of ‘soft skills’, a Careers Calendar showing dates of all the college open events, taster days, interview dates, deadlines and parents’ evenings, a booklet on the benefits of apprenticeships – as well as various other publications each term.

The Careers Advisor attends a number of events during the year – the Careers Conference in Leeds, networking events at Lancashire College and Southlands High School, seminars at Myerscough College, Runshaw College, Newman College and Wigan & Leigh College and the Chorley Jobs Fair. She subscribes to a number of publications: Guardian Careers, Plotr, Cascaid – in order to remain up to date.

All interventions with pupils, whether mentoring or careers-related, are recorded on Sims. Destination data is provided in the form of a spreadsheet, showing where each pupil has applied to and where they have actually attended. This is supplemented by a spreadsheet showing where our school leavers, now college leavers, have moved on to, whether that is university or employment. This is sent to the Headteacher. A letter is sent to parents of potential NEETs and we request support from YPS to fill in any gaps in our destination data, should parents fail to respond.

The Careers Advisor works closely with the House Achievement staff, SENCO and Intervention Manager, attending weekly meetings to update on careers/mentoring interventions. Termly update reports are also sent to the Line Manager and Deputy Head.

Miss P Berry, Careers Adviser

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