SOHAM VILLAGE COLLEGE

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Strategy

Strategy owner	Miss Mary Wilcox – SLT Link
Responsibility for review	Careers Manager
Approved on	Autumn 2026
Date of Next Review	Autumn 2027

Introduction and Vision

Our vision for Careers Guidance at Soham Village College is to provide a comprehensive and progressive programme that provides effective careers information, advice and guidance for all students. Students' aspirations must be raised and focus must be given to widening their perspective on the world of work and enabling them to make informed, realistic decisions at all key transition points throughout their life. We are a fully inclusive school and believe that support and encouragement is a necessity for all students to ensure that they make the best decisions for their future but also build resilience and a deeper understanding for the ever-changing world that we live in.

This strategy sets out a clear plan on how we intend to work towards meeting this vision and includes the statutory responsibilities for securing access to independent and impartial careers guidance for all pupils in year 7-11. The Department for Education's statutory guidance: "Careers Guidance and Access for Education and training providers" – published in 2014 with the latest update in 2025 sets out how careers guidance must be secured under the new duty to include information on all 16-18 education or training providers, including apprenticeships. The Careers Strategy is to be read in conjunction with our Careers Policy that can be found via the link on our website under Student Experience, Curriculum, Post 16 Careers.

Our Objectives

- **To ensure** that Soham Village College has a concise plan of engagement in Careers Guidance for all students to ensure that they work hard and strive to be the best they can be.
- **To meet** the eight Gatsby Benchmarks for good career guidance as recommended by the Department of Education Careers Strategy 2023.
- **To regularly gain** reaccreditation of the 'Quality in Careers Standard', the nationally recognised award for Careers Guidance in English Secondary Schools.
- **To provide** effective and impartial information, advice and guidance to prepare students for life in the wider world, making them aware of roles and responsibilities.
- **To raise** aspirations by ensuring all students have knowledge of routes into further education, higher education and apprenticeships (of all levels).
- **To ensure** every student is offered careers personal guidance to meet their needs at the different stages through their school journey. This will reflect the school's equality and diversity policy to ensure that every student is treated fairly.
- **To ensure** students are introduced to the concept of stereotypical thinking and the challenges it brings, and have the opportunity to discuss its impact on career decisions and choices.
- **To engage** with local employers and training providers in order to provide multiple learning opportunities about the world of work and skills required. Both academic and vocational routes are explored and are available to students regardless of career choices.
- **To make available** Labour Market Information and Intelligence to ensure students and parents are aware of local and national opportunities as well as trends, to ensure they are informed to make the best decisions.
- **To ensure** all staff at the school have an awareness of linking curriculum learning to careers and are able to demonstrate the relevance of subjects to students when considering a future career. Particularly relevant is that STEM subject staff should highlight the increasing need for STEM subjects to access a wide range of future career paths, making sure the information does not stereotype in any way.

- **To ensure** all students are aware that the attainment of English and Maths GCSEs are crucial elements of any future study programme they may undertake and an expectation from all employers.
- **To approve** work experience opportunities for KS4 students as required, either in accordance with their studies or on an individual basis as deemed appropriate to the student.
- **To continuously strive** to improve NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training) figures by providing an effective careers programme, with the minimum expectation to not exceed 2% in any one academic year.
- **To actively** track the progress of Pupil Premium and students from disadvantaged backgrounds to ensure that they access all of the careers information, advice and guidance to enable them to make the relevant decisions to their career goals.
- **To tailor** information, advice and guidance as necessary to meet the needs of any vulnerable students and offer appropriate alternatives as deemed necessary.

Vulnerable Groups

NEET – students identified as at risk of NEET are provided with early support. We will ensure these students have at least one personal guidance meeting with our Careers Advisor, and are prioritised when opportunities such as college taster days and personal statement workshops arise. We will liaise closely with the Cambs County Council Transition Team to refer any at-risk students once they leave Year 11.

SEND (Special Education Needs or Disability) - SEND students are supported through a range of provisions depending on need. They will be included in whole year events and given extra help including 1:1 careers interviews to help them progress to post 16.

FLT (Foundation Learning Tier) – FLT students embark on a complete programme of careers education including work experience, mentoring, interview practice, help with transitions, personal statement workshops and individual 1:1 careers guidance meetings. Where possible, they are included in the careers programme activities

EAL (English as Additional Language) – Where appropriate**,** EAL students are offered 1:1 advice on their post 16 options and support throughout their education to engage with careers information. Students are supported in The Hub

ISLE (Alternative Provision) - the ISLE provides a safety net for students unable to cope with mainstream lessons. Through this students have opportunities to engage with work experience and various alternative provision plans.

Our Offer

Our careers strategy enables students to be:

- engaged in understanding the world of work and be motivated to pursue a job or career
- aware of options in the labour market, locally, nationally and internationally
- aware of their current strengths and interests and what is needed to support their goals and aspirations
- aligned to labour market opportunities and able to acquire skills and behaviours necessary to attain their desired employment
- motivated to engage in all opportunities that are offered to them to ensure their success
- develop confidence and resilience to engage proactively in the world of work
- able to see the importance of gaining the best qualifications they can to ensure they have a wider choice of career options

We have a planned approach to careers information, advice and guidance in each year as follows with each activity mapped against the Gatsby Benchmarks, as listed below. Benchmark 1 sits as the overriding 'aim' of our careers provision, with the other seven providing the specific focus areas:

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**

Employer Engagement

Research has shown that those students ***who had at least 4 meaningful employer engagements between Years 7-11 were 86% less likely to become NEET than those that had no such encounters.***

(Mann, A. et al. (2017) Contemporary Transitions: Young people reflect on life after secondary school and college)

Our absolute minimum aim is for each student to encounter one employer per year. In reality, our programme provides students with multiple opportunities to engage with employers whilst at school. We will achieve this by utilising our ever-growing and enthusiastic Alumni wherever possible. Existing well-developed contacts, current student's parents, and support from our Enterprise Advisor and Enterprise Coordinator will all help us call upon employers from a wide range of industries and sectors. Great care must be taken to ensure employers not only represent those sectors we know students are interested in but also to broaden their horizons by introducing them to new and less well-known careers.

Working with employers aims to understand the challenges faced by organisations employing young people through collaborative sharing of skills, knowledge and vision. We want our school to be recognised as one that works closely with local businesses to

understand the employers' approach to human resources so that we can proactively boost the employability competencies and job prospects of our students.

Alumni

Our Alumni is providing us with a very valuable resource in the way that it supports our programme and our strategy. Working initially with Future First, our Alumni started in September 2018 and continues to grow each year. Members from a wide range of sectors are more than willing to support activities and events, and the impact on current students of a former student talking about their career path is invaluable. Many more Year 11 students are now signing up just before they leave which helps to improve the degree of support they gained from meeting former students, and the value they can see in providing the same support at some stage in the future. We actively promote our Alumni through newsletters, our website and our social media.

Staffing

All staff have a part to play in contributing to careers guidance through their own roles as tutors and subject teachers. Careers is embedded into the curriculum wherever possible, with this area continually reviewed with close interaction with Head of Faculties and tutors. CPD training and availability of easy to understand resources are critical to ensure staff have the ability and confidence to support the careers programme in many varied ways, such as leading employability skill sessions, direct mentoring to help raise aspirations and define careers goals, and supporting students during their college application process.

Resources and Information

Students can access relevant information and resources in the Resource Centre (prospectuses, magazines, careers noticeboard, updated information screen etc), on-line via our website, and through the weekly student bulletin and termly Careers Newsletter. The school actively promotes the National Careers website/helpline and the government apprenticeship website, together with other specific websites. Posters are put up around the school promoting specific careers-related events and general careers topics, plus many of the Faculty areas around the school maintain career boards and associated material.

Evaluation of the Careers Programme and Data

It is important that we measure the impact of our strategy through student, employer and parent feedback. We access this information in several ways by obtaining verbal and written feedback or accessing the results of a dedicated on-line survey. The results and responses then inform how we reflect on and enhance the programme for future use. We also track and analyse the destinations of our students Post 16 and Post 18 by information received from Post 16/18 providers and also the County Council Destination Data. We use the Careers and Enterprise Company's Compass Tool to self-assess our strategy against the Gatsby Benchmarks at regular intervals through the academic year. These results are then shared with our Enterprise Coordinator to inform progress travelled.

Roles and Responsibilities

Careers guidance is the responsibility of all relevant staff at Soham Village College. Listed below are key members of staff who have responsibility for careers education, information, advice and guidance.

Name	Title	Main responsibilities
Mary Wilcox	Assistant Head	To oversee all student destinations and careers engagement, and ensure that SLT are fully informed of all opportunities and experiences.
Nick Oakhill	Careers Manager	To develop the careers guidance strategy, ensuring the careers programme offers all students opportunities and enrichment. This will ensure that when they leave SVC they have had a comprehensive careers experience to prepare them when they enter the world of work.
Nicki Howe	Guidance Advisor	To offer 1:1 interviews to all students at a time within their school life when it is the most pertinent to their development.
Lorna Sparrow	SENCo	To co-ordinate EHCP paperwork and advise Guidance Advisor of students who require interviews. Ensuring that all SEN students engage fully with the careers guidance programme.
Lisa Gledson	Enterprise Co-ordinator	To support employer engagement and liaise with Careers Manager to ensure that all opportunities are available and offered to SVC from the local area and beyond.
Rebecca Foster	Enterprise Adviser	To liaise with Careers Managers to ensure that the business community provides experiences for students of the world of work.
Eva Pentova	Link Advisory Body Member	To ensure that SVC fulfils its statutory requirements in respect of careers guidance. Offer support as required.
Gary Heaney	PSHE Lead	Responsibility for organising PSHE programme. To ensure that careers guidance is integral to the process and that relevant time is made available to accommodate the logistics.