

Local Procedure/Protocol

School/Home Name:	Sandwell Learning Centre
Local Procedure/Protocol Title:	Futures: Careers and Work-Related Learning
Linked to Group Policy Title & Code:	OPSP15 Futures: Careers and Work-Related Learning
Date Reviewed:	SEPT 2025
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Procedure/Protocol Lead:	Wayne Bown
Responsible Signatory:	Matthew Boyle, Projects Director
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT	
Witherslack Group is committed to the fair treatment of all in line with the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment has been completed on this policy to ensure that it can be implemented consistently regardless of any protected characteristics and all will be treated with dignity and respect.	
ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL, GOVERNANCE (ESG) STATEMENT	
Witherslack Group is committed to responsible business practices in the areas of: Environmental Stewardship, Social Responsibility, Governance, Ethics & Compliance. An ESG impact assessment has been completed on this procedure/protocol to ensure it can be implemented successfully without adverse implications on our Group goals.	
To ensure that this procedure/protocol is relevant and up to date, comments and suggestions for additions or amendments are sought from users of this document. To contribute towards the process of review, please email the named policy lead.	

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1 INTRODUCTION

We are passionate about helping pupils to identify and realise their ambitions, aspirations and secure futures that are right for them as individuals. Whether pupils want to be an astronaut, an artist, or just aren't sure what they want to be today, we will support them to understand their skills and talents, their interests and any areas of development. This will help them on their next steps, either from Primary school, harnessing early curiosity and ambitions, to beyond Secondary school, whether through further or higher education or training, to secure their career of choice and prepare them ready to enter employment.

Being realistic, we understand that pupils might change their minds at any point. We are all human: situations and interests can change. We are committed to equipping pupils with the confidence, life and transferable skills to be able to adapt to whatever the future presents, equipping them with a range of options and career pathways.

We embrace our responsibility to ensure all pupils leave school and continue with their education, employment or training. It is our responsibility to ensure that they can enter the next phase of their lives in something which is sustainable and will support them in their careers and future lives.

Our careers and work-related learning programmes have always been personalised, and compliant with the DfE guidance, Independent School Standards, and best practice. We have been keen to ensure the pathways available to all pupils, from the earliest age, are broad, relevant, well planned and secure successful long-term outcomes.

2 PUPIL ENTITLEMENT

2.1 Primary Pupils

Within our primary settings our pupils' journey towards understanding the options and opportunities around their future career begins via:

- Embedding career-related learning in the school's curriculum
- Conducting career-related activities and experiences within both the classroom and wider school environment
- Engaging wider stakeholders, including parents and carers, in supporting the pupils in learning about career opportunities and relevant skills

Our primary settings aim to broaden the aspirations of each pupil and present them with a continued range of experiences and opportunities to positively challenge stereotypes and extend their understanding of the careers and futures they could create for themselves.

The focus at this stage is all around continually presenting pupils with career-related learning and experiences that broaden their horizons and raise their level of aspiration and engagement with their future. The aim is to ensure our pupils understand that there are many options open and available to them.

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This ongoing careers-related activity and experience acts as a precursor for the careers and employability programmes delivered from Year 7 onwards, alongside the dedicated WG Futures programme, that now operates across both primary and secondary year groups.

2.2 Secondary Pupils

The minimum required expectations are that all pupils in Years 7 to 13 are entitled to:

- find out about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships opportunities, as part of a 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 – through options events, assemblies and group discussions and taster events;
- understand how to make applications for the full range of academic and technical courses;
- have access to an impartial independent careers advisor from the age of 12 upwards (ISS 2(2)e).

2.3 We exceed these expectations by ensuring that the curriculum provides many opportunities to encourage pupils to develop ambition and interest in their futures.

We embrace our duty, and it is our overarching aim to ensure pupils are well equipped to succeed and cope with the ever-changing needs of society and the modern world. With this in mind, Witherslack Group has developed the provision even further, by developing a programme called WG Futures. This offers a network of employers to facilitate direct engagement across our schools in the provision of employer speakers, workplace visits, mentoring, and work placements. In addition to this, support will be provided through dedicated staff to support pupils stepping into actual employment pathways, both directly upon leaving and also as part of a comprehensive alumni support programme.

3 GATSBY BENCHMARKS

3.1 We use the Gatsby Benchmarks to ensure best practice. All Witherslack Group schools are committed to meeting the eight Gatsby Benchmarks, which support us to deliver best practice in ensuring readiness for the world of work and securing successful careers and future lives:

- 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 The Workplace.
- 7) Encounters with Further and Higher Education.
- 8) Personal Guidance.

Schools will be supported in the attainment of compliance through the guidance of the Group's dedicated Employability Lead, who will provide support to Careers Leads and through the development of a central resource hub for all aspects around the Gatsby Framework.

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School leaders will be asked to report directly to their respective School Board meeting on progress of Gatsby compliance, general careers and employability activity, and engagement with the WG Futures programme in general. This reporting will be structured to align with the respective Gatsby Benchmarks, thus ensuring an ongoing focus on compliance and continued improvement with regard to the delivery of careers and employability programmes. An example of some of the key reporting metrics are detailed below:

No. of careers appointments attended (GBM8, GBM3)
No. of employer encounter sessions (GBM5, GBM2)
No. of experiences of the workplace (GBM6, GBM2, GBM3)
No. of visits to college (GBM7)
No. of experiences of university (GBM7)
Technical pathway sessions Yr 8/9 (GBM7)
Technical pathway sessions Yr 10/11 (GBM7)
Technical pathway sessions Yr 12/13 (GBM7)
No of Careers in the Curriculum Sessions (GBM4)

Additionally, schools will report to School Board meetings on a termly basis on the individualised career aspirations and intended destinations of students from the start of Year 10 onwards, thus allowing prioritised support and personalised pathways to be put in place, supported by the WG Futures programme and personnel. There is also monthly reporting by Careers Leads to the central Employability Lead on careers delivery and engagement with the WG Futures programme.

4 CURRICULUM & WG FUTURES PROVISION

4.1 Careers provision is mapped against the Gatsby Benchmarks and the careers programme is delivered through a combination of methods, with schemes of work and a calendar of events for each Key Stage.

The DfE provide a recommended framework for the curriculum at each stage and each School has an individualised careers programme personalised to their School based on this framework. **See Appendix 1**

4.2 To further enhance the level of resource available and the richness of the career and employability offer, an additional third-party platform is also available for schools to embed within their curriculum. This provides a breadth of both teaching resources and employer engagement experiences that can be incorporated within careers and employability learning for all year groups.

4.3 All schools will produce and work to a WG Futures delivery plan, that aims to accommodate increasing levels of employer engagement and experience. At the same time, greater priority and resource will be provided, over time, to personalising employability skills and preparation to each young person's individual needs and future employment pathway.

4.4 The WG Futures Curriculum sits alongside the traditional curriculum and provides pupils with a dynamic and aspirational additional programme of learning, designed to prepare them for future pathways through meaningful engagement with highly skilled employer partners.

4.5 The WG Futures Curriculum offers a rich breadth of experiences that extend beyond the classroom. By combining academic study with practical, employer-led insight, the WG Futures Curriculum equips pupils with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to pursue ambitious career goals and make informed choices about their next steps in education, training, or employment.

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5 OUR WG FUTURES PRINCIPLES

1. The development of our young people's futures is a Group-wide priority driven by all educational teams, careers support staff, and the dedicated Futures personnel.
2. We place future employability at the heart of the learning experience, both within and outside the curriculum, and provide our young people with the opportunities and support they need to develop into employable and highly sought-after candidates to employers.
3. We utilise direct employer insight, experience and expertise as part of the development of employability programmes and practices that will achieve significant and measurable outcomes for every young person.
4. We offer a portfolio of career opportunities and work placements that enables all young people to be encouraged to broaden their interests, knowledge and experiences in whatever field they choose to pursue.
5. Young people will be supported to acquire real understanding of what personal attributes they have to offer employers and the skills they possess. They should in turn be able to demonstrate these to employers in a quantifiable way. Through this they will gain confidence, resilience and ambition, which will present them as 'ready to work' to employers.
6. We will provide our young people with actual and ongoing expert-led recruitment support, connection with job opportunities, and unrivalled levels of ongoing alumni support to ensure that their steps beyond education are successful ones.

6 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDED READING

Witherslack Group uses and follows the statutory guidance provided from Gov.uk. References are provided as a link to this guidance in the references section of this policy.

7 REFERENCES

7.1 [Careers guidance and access for education and training providers - GOV.UK](#)

7.2 [Independent School Standards, Part 1, Section 2.\(2\)\(e\)](#)

7.3 [The Independent School Standards, Guidance for independent schools](#)

8 ASSOCIATED FORMS

8.1 N/A

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9 APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1 – Career Programme Map

Appendix 1 – Career Programme Map

	Autumn Term 1	Autumn Term 2	Spring Term 1	Spring Term 2	Summer Term 1	Summer Term 2
Key Stage Two: Focus: Self-awareness, career exploration, and basic employability skills.						
Enrichment Opportunities: <i>Careers/apprenticeship week</i> <i>Independent careers adviser meetings</i> <i>Futures Curriculum sessions and events</i> <i>Futures Friday Focus Days</i> <i>Guest Speakers from various industries.</i> <i>Career Fairs with local businesses and universities.</i> <i>Job Shadowing opportunities.</i> <i>Employer Visits to schools, including hands-on workshops or skills clinics.</i>	Understanding Myself Introduction to Careers Students will: 1 Investigate the variety of careers available, exploring different job roles through videos, guest speakers, and discussions. 2 Create a "Career Tree" showing various jobs and how they might connect to their interests and skills. 3 Understand the difference between a job and a career. 4 Identify careers that align with personal values. 5 Recognise the importance of skills, experience, training and education in shaping a career. 6 Explore how interests, values, and goals contribute to career choices, development and changes. 7 Explore the relationship between personal values and career choices. 8 Explore the Role of Careers in Society and the impact of technology. 9 Explore the value of internships, apprenticeships, and continuing education for career development. 10 Know what a career transition is and what helps individuals adapt to different careers.	My Skills and Strengths Students will: 1 Complete a "Skills Inventory" to identify strengths. 2 Self-reflect and assess personal strengths and weaknesses. 3 Learn how to maintain an open mind during self-assessment to uncover hidden talents. 4 Understand the difference between skills and strengths, including both technical and personal skills. 5 Use self-assessment tools, careers and personality questionnaires and interpret these. 6. Carry out peer assessments of strengths and skills. 7 Understand the difference between praise, feedback and criticism. Practise giving constructive feedback. 8 Reflect on past successes and challenges to identify recurring patterns of strengths and skills. 9 Investigate the importance of Growth Mindset. 10 Identify careers where their strengths would be suitable.	Exploring the World of Work Different Types of Work Students will: 1 Understand that there are different work sectors 2 Understand the difference between part-time, full-time and voluntary work. 3 Investigate and compare different work environments 4 Visit a workplace(s) including virtual tours 5 Investigate which skills are required in different work environments 6 Carry out a workplace study 7 Create a presentation, covering different aspects of a chosen work environment and the specific/related skills required 8 Design their ideal workplace based on a preferred career	Job Roles and Responsibilities Students will: 1 Investigate specific jobs 2 Create a "Day in the Life" profile for a chosen profession 3 Understand the concept of job roles and why they are important in the workplace. 4 Understand the difference between roles and responsibilities 5 Analyse different job descriptions. 6 Write a job description for a hypothetical position. 7 Match skills with job specifications in a role. 8 Understand the importance of Time Management and Prioritisation of Responsibilities 9 Interview an employee about their roles and responsibilities Additional objectives: Performance Management 10 Understand that the performance of employees is managed/rated against roles and responsibilities	Aspirations and Decision-Making Setting Future Goals Students will: 1 Understand how skills and interests relate to career choices. 2 Create a "Vision Board" of their potential career interests and aspirations. 3 Understand the importance of setting career goals, reflecting on current situation and creating career/life goals. 4 Complete a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) and a values assessment. Reflect on how these factors align with your ideal career. 5 Identify potential career paths and describe the qualities of their "ideal job" in 5-10 years. 6 Learn how to create specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound goals (SMART goals). 7 Choose their career goals and rewrite them using the SMART framework. 8 Create an action plan for their chosen career/career goal. 9 Reflect on a past setback and how it was overcome. 10 Create a career vision map.	Decision Making and Goal Setting Students will: 1 Understand the difference between short-term, medium term and long-term goals. 2 Discuss the importance of setting achievable goals and how to work towards them. 3. Explore examples of different types of goals (personal, academic, and extracurricular). 4. Revisit the SMART criteria for goal setting and evaluate goals from previous term. 5 Analyse examples of poorly written goals and improve them using the SMART criteria. 6 Students choose one of their previous goals (or a new goal) and rewrite it using the SMART framework. 7 Understand the importance of each SMART component and how it makes the goal more effective. Action Plans for Achieving Goals. 8 Create or re-visit an action plan with a peer and improve them using the SMART framework. 9 Understand how to track progress toward a goal. Create a class/group goal. 10 Research examples of famous people or characters who overcame challenges to achieve their goals.
Key Stage Three: Focus: In-depth exploration of career options, skills development, and beginning to link subjects to career pathways.						
Enrichment Opportunities: <i>Careers/apprenticeship week</i> <i>Independent careers adviser meetings</i> <i>Futures Curriculum sessions and events</i> <i>Futures Friday Focus Days</i> <i>Guest Speakers from various industries.</i> <i>Work Experience placements or internships (for Key Stage 3 and 4).</i> <i>Career Fairs with local businesses and universities.</i> <i>Job Shadowing opportunities.</i> <i>Employer Visits to schools, including hands-on workshops or skills clinics.</i>	Exploring Career Pathways Introduction to Career Pathways Students will: 1 Investigate the importance of choosing subjects that align with future career interests. 2 Research different career sectors. 3 Understand the concept of careers, the world of work, and different career pathways. 4 Understand what a career is and how career pathways evolve over time. 5 Research a chosen career and create a presentation. 6 Understand the importance of personal skills and interests in choosing a career. 7 Begin to identify personal strengths and learn to reflect on personal hobbies and extracurricular	How do my school subjects prepare me for the world of work? (Step 1 Lightbulb Online) Students will: 1 Be able to explain the difference between a job and a career. 2 Challenge different stereotypes & misconceptions related to specific jobs or careers. 3 Recognise how the skills developed in their core lessons relate to those used by professionals in the workplace. 4 Start to recognise a range of careers, employers and employment sectors within their local area. Additional objectives: Linking Subjects to Careers 5 Explore how different school subjects can support	What are employability skills and how can I develop them? (Step 2 Lightbulb Online) Students will: 1 Recognise the transferable soft skills that employers are looking for. 2 Hear directly from a range of local and national employers. 3 Explain why these skills are desirable to prospective employers. 4 Evaluate their own skills to identify areas of strength and areas for development. 5 Identify practical ways in which they can develop and improve these skills whilst at school. 6 Explain what it means to be entrepreneurial.	Work Experience and Volunteering Students will: 1 Understand the benefits of work experience and volunteering. 2 Research opportunities for work experience or voluntary work. 3 Create a "Work Experience Action Plan" – How to approach local businesses or volunteer organisations. 4 Understand the difference between work experience and volunteering and explore why both are important for personal and professional development. 5 Research websites, local organisations and businesses where they can find work experience or volunteering opportunities.	Career Research Project Students will: 1 understand what a career is and the difference between jobs and careers 2 Research careers they are interested in, focusing on qualifications, career paths, job outlook, and potential salary. 3 Prepare a report or presentation on their chosen career 4 Investigate different career clusters and types of industries. 5 Conduct research on specific careers. 6 Explore future career Pathways 7 Investigate the connection between education and career progression. 8 Reflect on their career research and develop a clearer sense of future goals.	Preparation for Options – Making the right choices for my future (Step 3 Lightbulb Online) Students will: 1 Identify the different pathways into employment including university, apprenticeships and self-employment. 2 Challenge commonly held stereotypes & misconceptions about HE and apprenticeships. 3 Develop transferable soft skills through the completion of the My Perfect University Challenge. 4 Develop a concept for their own perfect university linked to local labour market growth sectors. 5 Complete their own Destinations Roadmap which identifies the steps that they will take to realise their future career goal. 6 Be aware of the channels through which

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	activities as potential career interests. 8 Understand the Importance of Education and Qualifications To explain how education and qualifications impact career choices and pathways. 9 Understand the importance of job satisfaction and personal fulfilment in choosing a career. 10 Understanding the Labour Market and Future Trends, emerging industries and how the economy and new technologies affect job opportunities.	different career pathways 6 Create mind maps showing how subjects are related to career options. 7 Investigate where lessons they have been taught in school will be used in careers 8 Investigate wider personal skills which are taught in school which will be necessary to succeed in the workplace.	Additional objectives: Key Employability Skills 7 Identify core employability skills Design a "Perfect Employee" 8 Identify the qualities employees need to be successful at work.	6 Carry out a volunteering or work experience task 7 Reflect on and Evaluate their Work Experience or Volunteering experience 8 Create a short presentation or poster about their volunteering or work experience.		they can seek additional careers IAG if required Additional objectives: Decision Making and the Role of Work in Life 7 Investigate the decision-making process for choosing future education options. 8. Explore how work-life balance and career satisfaction influence career choices. 9. Complete a self-assessment on values (e.g., job security, creative work, salary).
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Key Stage Four: Focus: Deepening understanding of career paths, higher education, and further training options, and preparing for employment.

Enrichment Opportunities: <i>Careers/apprenticeship week</i> <i>Independent careers adviser meetings</i> <i>Talent Manager – Interview support</i> <i>Futures Curriculum sessions and events</i> <i>Futures Friday Focus Days</i> <i>Guest Speakers from various industries.</i> <i>Work Experience placements or internships (for Key Stage 3 and 4).</i> <i>Career Fairs with local businesses and universities.</i> <i>Job Shadowing opportunities.</i> <i>Employer Visits to schools, including hands-on workshops or skills clinics.</i>	Learning from local labour market information (Step 4 Lightbulb Online) Students will: 1 Identify current trends within their local labour market. 2 Learn more about employment and training opportunities within four key growth sectors. 3 Identify the skills that local employers are looking for across each industry sector. 4 Demonstrate these skills through the completion of an industry-linked task. 5 Complete / re-visit their Destinations Roadmaps to consider what specific steps they could take to develop the sector specific skills to work in their chosen industry. Additional objectives: Local Labour Market Information 6 Research the RAF Brize Norton base as an employer. 7 Investigate local market data for West Oxfordshire. 8 Visit a small local business in Carterton and investigate jobs/careers they offer.	Pathways After GCSEs Students will: 1 Explore the main pathways after GCSEs: Further Education (Sixth Form or College), Apprenticeships, Employment, and Vocational Training. 2 Research and compare different post-16 options, including apprenticeships and college courses. Understanding Apprenticeships and Vocational Training 3 Explain the benefits of apprenticeships, including on-the-job training and earning while learning. 4 Invite an apprenticeship provider to give a talk or video interview about apprenticeship opportunities. 5 Compare and contrast apprenticeships with and Vocational Training 6 Identify the key benefits of apprenticeships and vocational training for both individuals and society. 7 Understand the Key Components of Apprenticeship Programs 8 Explore the structure and key components of effective apprenticeship programs. 9 Compare Vocational Training vs. Academic Education 10 Understand the Challenges and Opportunities in Apprenticeships and Vocational Training.	Preparation for Employment (Step 5 Lightbulb Online) Students will: 1 Identify their own personal skills and qualities. 2 Recognise the key characteristics of an effective CV, letter of application and application form. 3 Complete their own CV. 4 Understand how social media can be an effective tool when seeking employment in the future. 5 Be able to explain what employers expect to see in an effective interview. 6 Participate in a virtual mock-interview process. Additional objectives: Preparing for the World of Work 7 Complete a job application form. 8 Create an action plan for experiences or qualifications they would like on their CV – this can be related to a career of their choice.	Networking and Workplaces Students will: 1 Understand what professional networking is, why it's important, and how it can impact their careers. 2 Understand the importance of professional networks and workplace relationships. 3 Explore online platforms like LinkedIn and how they can help with career progression. 4 Practise writing professional letters, emails or LinkedIn messages. 5 Create a presentation identifying professional Etiquette in a chosen workplace. 6 Understand workplace behaviour, including how to present themselves and interact with colleagues. 7 Practise networking skills in a structured setting. 8 Understand the variety of career pathways available and how networking can help them advance in their chosen fields. 9 Create an advert about themselves for potential employers.	Career Planning and Decision-Making for the Future Students will: 1 Identify and reflect on their strengths, interests, and career aspirations. 2 Understand how to make informed decisions about what to study after GCSEs and how to set realistic career goals. 3 Research chosen careers, networking, and setting goals. 4 Create a career plan, taking into account the changing nature of the job market. 6 Identify their interests, strengths, and skills to guide career choices and research. 7 Investigate different career pathways and explore various career options. 8. Investigate Post-16 Options available and how they relate to their career aspirations. 9 Understand the value of networking and gaining work experience to advance their careers. 10. Create a career plan incorporating SMART targets and steps towards career goals.	Personal Finance and Salary Expectations Students will: 1 Develop basic financial literacy skills, including budgeting, salary expectations, and taxes. 2 Research the average salary for different careers and discuss how personal finance fits into career decisions. 3 Understand the concept of personal finance and its importance in daily life. 4 Understand Income and Salary, how income is earned, the different types of income, and how salary is structured. 5 Learn how to create a personal budget and manage monthly expenses. 6 Understand the importance of saving money and planning for future financial goals. 7 Learn about borrowing money, types of debt, and how to manage and avoid debt. 8 Understand different financial products and how to choose the right ones. 9 Introduce the concept of investing and how it works. 10 Understand the role of taxes and National Insurance in personal finance, consumer Rights and how to protect yourself financially.
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