



CAREERS GUIDANCE POLICY

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1 Introduction

'Every young person needs high-quality career guidance to make informed decisions about their future. Good career guidance is a necessity for social mobility: those young people without significant social capital or home support to draw upon have the most to gain from high-quality career guidance.'

- Gatsb.org.uk

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide details about our careers guidance programme.

1.2 The Department for Education (DFE) makes statutory guidance available on careers guidance. This does not apply to independent schools. However, this policy incorporates many elements of the statutory guidance in order to benchmark against the most effective practice.

1.3 This guidance applies to all pupils from Year 7.

2 Regulations

2.1 The statutory regulations relating to independent schools, states that pupils receiving secondary education should have access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance which:

- (i) is presented in an impartial manner;
- (ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
- (iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.

3 Overview and oversight

Sophia High School is committed to providing its students with a varied programme of Careers Guidance activities to equip and enable them to make informed decisions and choices at key transition points both during school and at post-16 and post-18.

We recognise our duty to provide all students with impartial careers guidance through an independent careers advisor, to ensure all students have been provided with comprehensive information on all options and pathways available to them. We have adopted a multi-faceted approach of careers education which includes careers advice, careers events on drop down days, work experience, and guided learning during Holistic Horizon sessions which aims to not only raise the student's aspirations and achievement but also empower them to plan and manage their own futures.

Our programme consists of a mix of teacher-led activities, online resources and engagement with external employers and professionals.

Career Guidance starts with what a child loves to do, where they see their passions, and how they communicate their desire to be a part of the future workforce. The guidance that we offer is implicit in all that we offer the pupils - from the texts that we read promoting gender neutral roles, images we share showing mixed ability workers, and language that we use to ensure that all pupils see themselves as capable of fulfilling any role.

This starts in the Early Years, where we support each child by developing the confidence to express themselves and their vision for their future, and guide them towards developing skills that will be needed for that future role. This continues with the Primary and Secondary pupils, who are encouraged to read and explore further on subjects related to their passions, join voluntary activities to gain knowledge and insight into their chosen world of work, and also guide towards academic subjects which are necessary for university entrance leading to professional qualifications.

3.1 Effective careers guidance enables pupils to be well informed, well supported, know where to find information and choose a career or next step which is right for them.

3.2 We view careers guidance as connecting learning to the future for our pupils. We aim to motivate our pupils by giving them a clearer idea of the routes to jobs and future careers that they will find engaging and rewarding. We believe that good career guidance widens pupils' horizons, challenges stereotypes and raises aspirations. It provides pupils with the knowledge and skills necessary to make successful transitions to the next stage of their life.

3.3 Responsibility for oversight of careers guidance is the Executive Principal, along with the Senior Leadership Team, with specific reference to the Head of Secondary.

3.4 The delivery of the career's education programme is a shared responsibility of all teachers working with KS4 and KS5 students. This is in anticipation of University studies to lead to employment, or preparation for the world of work.

4 Elements of our programme

4.1 Our careers guidance programme is carefully planned and can be found in annex 1. Our guidance is intended to be woven into the educational programme and provide inspiration so that our pupils are empowered to make their own evidence-based decisions.

4.2 Details of external resources for staff, pupils and parents can be found in annex 2.

5 Evaluation and review

5.1 It is the responsibility of the Executive Principal and Senior Leadership Team, focusing on

oversight to keep the programme under review.

Annex 1: Careers Programme

Years 7-12

The Careers programme at Sophia High is based upon key qualities that any future employee would be looking for. These include and form part of the ESD Personal Learning Goals, as well as our Project Based Learning opportunities. They are both intertwined.

During the Entrepreneurship unit, older students take part in a Venture Program. They have the opportunity to develop their ideas, research, plan, prepare and present a pitch in a VR setting to real life investors. The program allows the students to develop and apply many skills they will require in their futures, such as critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration etc.

The **ESD Personal Learning Goals** underpin the individual qualities and learning dispositions that the responsible citizens of the future will need in order to thrive in a demanding global society. The development of these goals will lead to the motivation and inclination to positively contribute to their local and global communities.

As well as opportunities for learners to be these kinds of people, our curriculum provides opportunities to promote learning about the Personal Learning Goals e.g. through the study of significant people in history. Each of the Personal Learning Goals will manifest itself differently across the academic subjects. Learners should take the opportunity to self-reflect, celebrate and set aims to improve their demonstration of the Personal Learning Goals.

The Personal Learning Goals aim to develop character and attitudes, rather than Knowledge, Skills and Understanding; it is the responsibility of all teachers and members of the community to support the development of these goals. Each Personal Learning Goal is constructed as follows: 'To be (insert goal here), I aim to...'.

Our curriculum ensures the Personal Learning Goals are embedded into subject tasks and we encourage schools to articulate the use of the Personal Learning Goals beyond the curriculum, considering their role in the school community.

These Personal learning Goals include:

- Adaptability: Flexibility and Metacognition
- Collaborating: Teamwork and Leadership
- Communication: Thoughtful communication, Social Media, Multilingualism, Integrity, Clarity, Environmental Communication.
- Learning Empathy: Learning, Emotions, Compassion,
- Being Ethical: Ethics in the local environment, Ethics in the world, ethical decision making
- Resilience: Tenacity, Metacognition

- Being Respectful: Respecting others, Respecting the environment,
- Thinking: Critical thinking Skills, Metacognitive thinking, Creative thinking, Curious thinking.

These Personal learning Goals are then embedded into our curriculum and Project Based Learning experiences e.g.:

Leadership: looking at the key qualities that make a good leader: making goals, honesty, perseverance, hard-working, service to others, listening, communicating, decision-making, encouraging, positive thinking, responsibility.

Challenge: Facing up to or overcoming problems and barriers increases possibilities in our lives.

Identity: Our sense of self, and that of others, is continually developing through our different interactions and impacts on how we exist in the world.

Responsibility: Each of us is in charge of the actions we choose

Entrepreneurship: The ability to make money through the development of products and situations appropriate to different markets requires the application of certain skills.

Community: A shared sense of belonging occurs when people are able to negotiate and appreciate their complex, often messy, differences.

Development: Long-lasting changes take place slowly over time.

Renewal: The end of a process is often the preparation for the beginning of something new.

Interpretation: Only a very few things are true for all people.

Brainwave: How they are working towards skills that students will need in the future. They discuss making decisions about their futures and how to make the right decisions. Therefore, there is a potential mismatch between our emotions and our judgement arises just as our emotional and social worlds are becoming more complex, making an increase in social anxiety quite normal at this time. There has been lots of research into the teenage brain in recent years and in this unit, we will be learning about this research and the implications it has for us as learners.

Education for Sustainable Development

Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESD) runs through all we do. Access to the Sustainable Development Goals for all children at an appropriate level is important as we see our students as leaders of the future.

ESD supports SDG 4.7 that “by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.” This is based around development of knowledge,

competencies, values and skills.

The ESD Competencies that we focus on are:

- Systems competency - thinking about how systems interact with each other
- Anticipatory competency - anticipating the future by understanding and evaluating current information
- Normative competency - reflecting on themselves, their values and norms
- Strategic competency - being able to think strategically and develop strategies for action
- Collaboration competency - collaborate with others and develop engagement strategies
- Critical Thinking competency - the ability to question the norms associated with daily life practices and develop actions for the future
- Integrative Problem Solving competency - connecting information and developing strategies to inform daily life in the context of ESD
- Self Awareness competency - reflecting on self, actions, beliefs, values in the context of ESD

The Delors Report (Delors Commission, 1996) highlights the four Pillars of Education:

- Learning to know
- Learning to do
- Learning to be
- Learning to live

Together ESD adds a further Pillar to this to: Learning to transform oneself and society

By using active learning techniques, our students become increasingly aware of the world around them, its wonders and complexities, and how to begin their journey as sustainably responsible global citizens.

By embedding ESD into our curriculum, we enable our pupils to develop the competencies needed to work effectively in a modern world with a forward-thinking vision and skill set to support their aspirations as leaders of tomorrow.

Introduction of the Pearson Functional Skills courses for selected students support them to achieve qualifications that enable them to move into post-16 education and training.

Enrichment

At Sophia High School, we believe in a future of education in which children are given the chance to be creative thinkers and to explore career possibilities for the future.

This involves offering them an array of opportunities to explore beyond the curriculum, led by our fully-qualified teachers who are dedicated to providing high-quality online schooling in a way that makes sense for the 21st century.

Students are given the opportunity to take part in Enrichment activities, workshops, lectures and hear from guest speakers (all external speakers and work experience providers are subject to the school's safeguarding policies. Risk assessments are carried out for all activities involving external engagement). from the Performing Arts, STEM & Computing, Business leaders, Mindfulness, and Sports. These enriching experiences not only provide our students with opportunities to learn outside of the curriculum, but also strive to introduce students to career paths and opportunities they may wish to pursue later in life.

From September 2024, a diverse and engaging program of enrichment activities will be offered on Fridays. These will be planned and delivered by our teachers, in line with their interests and talents. These courses will be age appropriate, and for the older students will directly link to a range of career pathways.

Sophia Impact Innovators Project

Project Overview

Impact Innovators is a high-impact, cross-curricular project for Key Stage 2 and 3 students in which learners develop their own enterprise ideas designed to make a positive difference to society and/or the environment. Students research global and local challenges, identify a meaningful problem, and design a business, product, or campaign that creates sustainable impact. Their enterprise is underpinned by a strong social or environmental mission, linking directly to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Educational Purpose

This project responds to the growing need for education to cultivate innovation, ethical leadership, and 21st-century skills. It places students in the role of *young social entrepreneurs*—problem-solvers who use creativity, empathy, and enterprise to improve the world around them.

It integrates elements of **design thinking**, **business education**, and **global citizenship** in a practical, student-led format that builds confidence, critical thinking, and collaboration. It also encourages *real-world communication* and *audience awareness* through a strong focus on **marketing and social media strategy**.

Entrepreneurial Skills Developed

Throughout the project, students develop core entrepreneurial competencies, including:

- **Problem Solving** – Identifying real-world challenges and needs
- **Innovation** – Developing unique, feasible solutions
- **Financial Literacy** – Understanding costs, budgeting, pricing, and value
- **Teamwork & Leadership** – Taking ownership, collaborating effectively, and managing roles
- **Pitching & Presentation** – Articulating ideas clearly and persuasively to a real or simulated audience
- **Resilience** – Learning from feedback and iterating ideas

Marketing & Social Media Skills

A key feature of *Impact Innovators* is learning how to bring ideas to life through **strategic marketing**. Students gain essential knowledge in:

- **Branding** – Designing a logo, slogan, and visual identity for their enterprise
- **Audience Targeting** – Identifying key audiences and tailoring messages
- **Campaign Planning** – Creating posters, flyers, and digital content to promote their enterprise
- **Social Media Strategy** – Using platforms like Instagram, YouTube (mock accounts), or school-approved tools to promote their message, including:
 - Writing short, engaging posts
 - Using hashtags effectively (e.g., #ClimateAction, #YouthForChange)
 - Creating reels, stories, or short videos to increase impact
 - Understanding ethical digital citizenship and responsible online communication

These skills give students valuable exposure to modern communication methods, preparing them for future entrepreneurial and digital careers.

Links to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Students are encouraged to choose one or more SDGs as the foundation of their project. For example:

- **SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being** – An app promoting healthy habits
- **SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation** – A campaign to raise water-saving awareness
- **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities** – A tutoring platform for underserved students
- **SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production** – A zero-waste packaging business
- **SDG 13: Climate Action** – A green product or carbon footprint reduction idea

Cross-Curricular Links

This project naturally supports a wide range of subjects:

- **English:** Persuasive writing, campaign content, pitch scripts
- **Maths:** Pricing, profit/loss, and budget forecasting
- **Science & Geography:** Environmental problem-solving, systems thinking
- **Design & Technology:** Product design, prototyping, visual identity
- **Computing:** Digital design, video editing, and basic web or app mock-ups
- **PSHE & Citizenship:** Social justice, community involvement, global responsibility

Career's Advice

For students in Year 9-12 we make pupils and parents aware of the following sources of information:

National Careers Service

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

Tel: 0800 100 900

The Career's Hub Classroom - includes information on different fields of work, career quizzes, university links and academic and vocational post-16 courses.

<https://classroom.google.com/c/Nzg0NjI3OTk3Mjk1>

Labour Market Information

We actively encourage our pupils to access labour market information as this can help each pupil and their parents understand the salaries and promotion opportunities for different jobs.

Labour market information (LMI) can be accessed from different sources. We signpost our pupils to the National Careers Service via our [Careers Classroom](#) <https://www.lmiforall.org.uk/>

Annex 2: Useful resources

Statutory guidance from DFE: Note that this is statutory for maintained schools and not for independent schools. It can be used as a useful source of information.

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

Gatsby Good Career Guidance: A report on improving career guidance in secondary schools which includes the Gatsby Benchmarks.

[Good Career Guidance | Education | Gatsby](#)

Gatsby Good Practice: A website which shares good practice from the North East pilot of the Gatsby Benchmarks, and other information and support for schools.

[Gatsby Charitable Foundation](#)

Compass: A self-evaluation tool to help schools to evaluate their careers and enterprise provision and benchmark against the Gatsby Benchmarks and compare it with other schools.

<https://auth.careersandenterprise.co.uk/schoolshub>

State of the Nation 2017: A report on the careers and enterprise provision in secondary schools in England in 2016/17. It examines how schools are performing in relation to the Gatsby Benchmarks, based on data from responses to the Compass tool.

[State of the Nation 2017: Social Mobility in Great Britain - GOV.UK](#)

Careers & Enterprise Company: The Careers & Enterprise Company brokers links between employers, schools and colleges in order to ensure that young people aged 12-18 get the inspiration and guidance they need for success in working life.

[The Careers & Enterprise Company](#)

National Careers Service: The National Careers Service provides information, advice and guidance to help people make decisions on learning, training and work opportunities. The service offers confidential and impartial advice. This is supported by qualified careers advisers.

[National Careers Service](#)

Baker Dearing Educational Trust: Information on University Technical Colleges.

[University Technical Colleges](#)

Career Development Institute: The Career Development Institute is the single UK-wide professional body for everyone working in the fields of careers education, career information, advice and guidance, career coaching, career consultancy and career management. It offers affiliate and individual membership to schools which includes free CPD webinars, regular digital newsletters, a quarterly magazine, online networking groups and training at a preferential rate.

[Career Development Institute](#)

Career Development Institute Framework for careers, employability and enterprise Education: A framework of learning outcomes to support the planning, delivery and evaluation of careers, employability and enterprise education for children and young people.

[Framework for careers, employability and enterprise education](#)

UK Register of Career Development Professionals: The single national point of reference for ensuring and promoting the professional status of career practitioners.

[UK Register of Career Development Professionals](#)

Quality in Careers Standard: The Quality in Careers Standard in the national quality award for careers education, information, advice and guidance.

[Quality in Careers Standard](#)

Find an Apprenticeship: Search and apply for an apprenticeship in England.

[Find an apprenticeship](#)

STEM Ambassadors: A nationwide network of over 30,000 volunteers from a wide range of employers, who engage with young people to provide stimulating and inspirational informal learning activities in both school and non-school settings

[STEM Ambassadors](#)

Studio Schools Trust: The organisation that unites all Studio Schools, acting as a linking point between Studio Schools, enabling the sharing of best practice as well as providing advice and curriculum support.

[Studio Schools Trust](#)

Unistats: The official website for comparing UK higher education undergraduate course data. The site includes information on university and college courses, Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) ratings, student satisfaction scores from the National Student Survey, employment outcomes and salaries after study and other key information for prospective students.

[Discover Uni](#)

Your Daughter's Future: A careers toolkit for parents.

[Your Daughter's Future - GOV.UK](#)