BALLARD

BESPOKE EDUCATION

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy (CEIAG Policy)	
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1. Ballard School's Vision

1.1 Ballard School seeks to maximise the life chances of all pupils and to prepare them for successful, fulfilling and adaptable lives beyond school. Careers education is an integral part of this commitment. It helps pupils to understand themselves, explore opportunities, develop employability skills and make informed decisions about education, training and employment.

1.2 The School aims to develop the knowledge, skills, attributes and confidence pupils need to make successful transitions and to manage their career development throughout life.

1.3 Ballard School is committed to providing an inclusive, ambitious and progressive careers programme. It will broaden pupils' horizons, raise aspirations, challenge stereotypes and ensure that pupils understand the full range of academic, technical, vocational and employment pathways available to them.

2. Policy scope and principles

2.1 This policy applies to careers education, information, advice and guidance across Ballard School, from the early years and primary phases through Key Stages 3 and 4. The programme is developed progressively and is appropriate to pupils' age, needs and stage of development.

2.2 The policy also covers support for Year 11 pupils following their examinations and before they enter their next destination, including education, training or employment. The School seeks to identify pupils who may be at risk of becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET) and to support successful transitions.

2.3 As an independent school, Ballard School must meet the Independent School Standards, including the requirement that pupils receiving secondary education have access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance which is presented impartially, enables informed choices about a broad range of career options and encourages pupils to fulfil their potential. The School has regard to the relevant Independent School Standards guidance.

2.4 The School uses the eight updated Gatsby Benchmarks as its framework for planning, reviewing and improving careers provision. The Benchmarks are a quality framework; this policy distinguishes them from the specific legal requirements applying to independent schools.

2.5 The School also draws on the Career Development Institute (CDI) Career Development Framework and relevant Department for Education and Careers & Enterprise Company resources.

2.6 Careers education is a whole-school responsibility. It is delivered through the curriculum, PSHE, form time, assemblies, employer encounters, workshops, work experience, guidance and support for transitions.

2.7 Ballard School does not have an in-house sixth form. Its programme therefore places particular emphasis on helping pupils and families understand and access a broad range of external post-16 destinations, including school sixth forms, further education colleges, apprenticeships, technical and vocational education, employment with training and other progression routes.

2.8 Careers guidance will be impartial and will not promote one provider, institution, pathway or occupation over another. It will challenge gender, social, cultural and other stereotypes and promote equality of opportunity.

2.9 The School will make reasonable efforts to ensure that careers provision is accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those who may be disadvantaged or vulnerable, and pupils who need additional or different support.

2.10 Unifrog is used as the School's digital careers platform. It supports career exploration, research into pathways, recording and reflection on careers activities, work experience administration and the development of pupils' progression planning.

3. Aims and objectives

3.1 Ballard School aims to provide a stable, progressive and inclusive careers programme which:

- helps pupils to understand their strengths, interests, values and skills and how these relate to future opportunities;
- provides access to accurate and current information about occupations, sectors, local and national labour markets, qualifications and progression routes;
- enables pupils to explore academic, technical, vocational and apprenticeship pathways on an equitable basis;
- links curriculum learning to the world of work and helps pupils understand the relevance of subjects and transferable skills;
- provides meaningful encounters with employers, employees and people from a range of occupations and sectors;
- provides first-hand experiences of workplaces, including the Year 10 work experience programme;
- enables pupils to meet representatives of further and higher education, sixth forms, colleges and apprenticeship and training providers;
- provides access to appropriate personal careers guidance at key decision points;
- supports pupils and parents/carers with options, applications and transitions, particularly the move from Year 11 to post-16 education or training;

- provides Year 11 pupils with opportunities to develop their interview skills and confidence through mock college interviews, helping them prepare for post-16 applications, interviews and progression into further education, training or employment;
- uses pupil voice, participation, feedback and destination information to evaluate and improve provision.

3.2 These objectives are aligned with the eight Gatsby Benchmarks, set out in Appendix 1.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The School and Senior Leadership

- Provide visible and sustained support for careers education as a whole-school priority, linked to the School's vision and development priorities.
- Ensure that the Careers Lead has appropriate authority, time, resources, professional development and administrative support to coordinate and evaluate the programme.
- Ensure that careers provision is planned across the curriculum and that staff understand their contribution.
- Support access to employers, education and training providers and other external partners, subject to safeguarding and suitability checks.
- Ensure that careers provision is inclusive, impartial and responsive to pupils' needs.

4.2 Careers Lead

The Careers Lead has responsibility for the strategic coordination, development, delivery oversight and evaluation of the School's careers programme. This includes:

- maintaining the careers policy, annual programme and whole-school careers map;
- coordinating delivery against the Gatsby Benchmarks and using appropriate evaluation tools and evidence;
- working with SLT, the Head of PSHE, Heads of Section, subject leaders, tutors, pupils, parents/carers and external partners;
- coordinating the use of Unifrog, including pupil engagement, work experience processes and the recording of relevant careers activity;
- organising and developing employer encounters, workshops, the annual post-16 careers exhibition and other careers events;
- coordinating Year 10 work experience arrangements and monitoring participation, preparation, placement completion and pupil reflection;
- liaising with external careers advisers and supporting access to personal guidance at key transition points;
- supporting destination data collection and using findings to identify trends, gaps and priorities for improvement;
- reporting on the programme, its impact and development priorities to the relevant senior leader and governors.

4.3 Teachers, Subject Leaders and Form Tutors

All teaching staff contribute to careers education. Subject leaders and teachers should identify and make explicit relevant links between curriculum learning, skills and careers. STEM teachers should highlight the relevance of science, technology, engineering and mathematics to a wide range of occupations. Form tutors support the delivery of planned careers activities, reinforce key messages and signpost pupils to further support.

4.4 Pupils and Parents/Carers

Pupils are encouraged to engage actively with careers learning, use Unifrog and other reliable sources, reflect on their experiences and seek guidance when needed. Parents and carers are

recognised as important influences on career decision-making and are provided with information about events, pathways, options and opportunities to participate in the careers programme.

4.5 **External partners**
External careers advisers, employers, alumni, further and higher education providers, apprenticeship and training providers and other organisations contribute specialist knowledge and authentic encounters. Their involvement complements, but does not replace, the School's responsibility for a coherent and impartial programme.

5. Governor Responsibilities

5.1 The governing body provides strategic oversight of careers education and ensures that the School has a clear policy and a planned programme which supports pupils' progression and preparation for adult life.

5.2 A nominated governor should take a strategic interest in careers education, support employer engagement and receive appropriate information about the programme, its impact and improvement priorities.

5.3 Governors should:

- review whether careers provision is aligned with the School's vision and development priorities;
- hold senior leaders to account for the implementation and impact of the careers programme;
- consider evidence on pupil participation, access, feedback, guidance, work experience and destinations;
- ensure that the programme is inclusive and that pupils can explore a broad range of pathways impartially.

6. Provider access

6.1 Ballard School welcomes appropriate providers of further education, technical education, apprenticeships and training to share information with pupils and parents/carers. This supports the School's commitment to impartial guidance and to ensuring that pupils understand the full range of progression opportunities.

6.2 Provider encounters may take place through assemblies, PSHE, form time, the annual post-16 careers exhibition, options events, workshops, presentations, discussions, visits and taster activities. Opportunities are planned to be appropriate to pupils' age and stage.

6.3 The School will seek to provide a balanced range of provider encounters, including academic, technical, vocational and apprenticeship routes. Providers will be given a fair opportunity to request access, subject to the School's programme, safeguarding requirements, suitability and practical arrangements.

6.4 A provider wishing to request access should contact the Careers Lead. Requests should explain the intended audience, purpose, format, proposed dates, duration, staffing and any resources or equipment required.

6.5 The School will agree the most suitable format and timing with the provider. A suitable space and reasonable access to ICT or other equipment may be made available where agreed in advance.

6.6 All external visitors must comply with the School's safeguarding and visitor procedures. The School may decline or amend a request where it is unsuitable, duplicative, inconsistent with the needs of pupils or cannot be accommodated.

6.7 Ballard School is an independent school. This section describes the School's provider-access arrangements and commitment to broad, impartial encounters; it does not claim that the statutory provider-access provisions applying to maintained schools and academies automatically apply to the School.

7. Monitoring, evaluation and review

7.1 The Careers Lead, supported by the relevant senior leader, will monitor the careers programme throughout the year and undertake a formal annual review.

7.2 Evaluation will draw on a range of evidence, including:

- progress against the eight Gatsby Benchmarks and the School's annual careers plan;
- pupil participation in careers lessons, workshops, employer encounters, provider encounters and work experience;
- Unifrog engagement and records, including work experience activity where relevant;
- pupil voice and feedback before and after significant activities, including preparation and reflection;
- feedback from parents/carers, staff, employers, providers and external careers advisers;
- the accessibility and impact of provision for pupils with SEND or other additional needs;
- records of personal guidance and key decisions, handled in accordance with data protection requirements;
- Year 11 intended destinations and confirmed post-16 destinations, with follow-up where practicable, including analysis of pupils who are NEET;
- evidence of curriculum links and staff engagement.

7.3 Findings will inform an annual careers development plan, identifying strengths, gaps, priorities, responsibilities and resources. The Careers Lead will report relevant findings and recommendations to senior leadership and governors.

7.4 The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where there are significant changes to legislation, government guidance, the Gatsby Benchmarks or the School's provision.

7.5 Pupil information will be collected, stored and shared in accordance with the School's data protection and safeguarding policies.

Laura Rothwell
Careers Lead
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Policy Log

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November 2022	1	Matthew Higgins & Nichole Hewison	August 2023
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Appendix 1 – Gatsby Benchmarks and Ballard School provision

Ballard School uses the eight updated Gatsby Benchmarks as a framework for designing and evaluating a progressive careers programme. The descriptions below summarise the focus of each benchmark and identify how the School's provision contributes. The programme is reviewed annually; activities and evidence should be recorded so that provision can be evaluated for reach, quality and impact.

Gatsby Benchmark	Updated focus	Ballard School provision	Suggested evidence
1. A stable careers programme	An embedded, progressive programme which is understood by pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors and employers; has clear leadership and is evaluated and improved.	Careers provision is mapped across the School and delivered through PSHE, form time, assemblies, curriculum learning, workshops, events and guidance. The programme is published and communicated to families. The Careers Lead coordinates the programme with SLT support. Unifrog supports access to careers resources and the recording of activity. National Careers Week is marked across the School. The annual programme and its impact are reviewed using feedback, participation and destination evidence.	Published careers programme; careers map and annual plan; policy; governor/SLT reports; Unifrog participation and activity records; pupil, parent, staff and employer feedback; annual evaluation and action plan.
2. Learning from career and labour market information	Every pupil and their parents/carers can access and use good-quality information about occupations, sectors, skills needs, future study and labour market opportunities.	PSHE and form-time activities introduce careers and labour market information. Pupils use Unifrog to explore careers, pathways, qualifications and opportunities. Employer encounters, the annual post-16 careers exhibition and the lecture/speaker programme provide insight into sectors and changing workforce needs. Information is shared with parents/carers through school communications and events. Pupils are supported to use information when considering GCSE options and post-16 choices.	Unifrog records and activities; lesson resources; examples of pupil research; employer and provider event records; parent communications; pupil feedback demonstrating use of information in decisions.
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil	Careers provision is tailored to individual needs, promotes equality and challenges stereotypes. Information about pupils' aspirations, needs and intended destinations informs support.	Year 9 pupils receive individual careers guidance ahead of GCSE options. Pupils can access further support from the Careers Lead. The Year 9 options programme includes information about academic, technical, vocational and apprenticeship routes. Year 11 pupils receive support with post-16 planning and mock interviews. The School considers individual needs, including SEND and other barriers,	Records of guidance and agreed actions; options materials; pupil aspiration and destination information; SEND/access arrangements where appropriate; participation and feedback disaggregated where

		and uses pupil aspirations and intended destinations to identify where additional support may be required.	appropriate and lawful.
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers	All teachers help pupils understand how curriculum learning connects to careers, skills and future pathways; staff are supported to develop their confidence in making these links.	Departments identify careers links within schemes of work and medium-term plans. Teachers make explicit links between subject knowledge, transferable skills and occupations. STEM subjects highlight the wide range of careers supported by science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Curriculum events, trips, competitions, enrichment and subject-specific activities provide further opportunities to explore applications of learning.	Department curriculum maps and schemes of work; examples of lessons; staff development and communications; pupil voice; records of curriculum-linked visits and activities.
5. Encounters with employers and employees	Pupils have multiple meaningful opportunities to learn from employers and employees about work, workplaces, occupations and the skills valued by employers. Encounters include preparation, interaction and reflection.	Years 7 and 8 take part in National Careers Challenge workshops, developing enterprise and workplace skills through practical projects. The programme includes activities such as branding, marketing, pitching, teamwork and problem-solving; the planned 2027 eco-vehicle challenge is an example. Pupils also meet employers and employees through assemblies, talks, the annual post-16 careers exhibition, the lecture programme, workshops and other events. Year 10 work experience provides direct engagement with a workplace and employer.	Workshop plans and attendance; employer and speaker records; pupil preparation and reflection; feedback from pupils and employers; evidence of interaction and learning outcomes.
6. Experiences of workplaces	Every pupil has meaningful first-hand experience of workplaces, including work experience, work visits, job shadowing or other suitable activities. Experiences should be prepared for and reflected upon.	All Year 10 pupils undertake a designated work experience programme. Pupils are supported to identify and secure a suitable placement, prepare for the experience and reflect afterwards. Unifrog is used to support and manage the work experience process and record relevant information. Preparation includes understanding expectations, workplace conduct, communication and employability skills. The School works with pupils, parents/carers and placement providers to support safe and meaningful experiences.	Unifrog work experience records; placement details and completion; risk/safeguarding checks as applicable; pupil preparation and reflection; employer feedback; participation and evaluation data.
7. Encounters with further and higher education	Pupils encounter a range of education and training providers	Ballard School's annual post-16 careers exhibition gives pupils and parents/carers access to a range of	Exhibitor and provider lists; attendance records; event

	and understand the differences between academic, technical and vocational routes, including learning in colleges, universities and workplaces.	external sixth forms, colleges, apprenticeship and training providers and employers. Assemblies, talks, alumni, workshops and external events broaden understanding of post-16 and higher education pathways. Year 11 pupils are encouraged and supported to attend relevant open days and taster events. As Ballard does not have an in-house sixth form, external encounters are particularly important to informed progression decisions.	feedback; pupil reflections; open day/ taster information; evidence that pupils have encountered a range of academic, technical, vocational and apprenticeship routes.
8. Personal guidance	Every pupil has access to personal careers guidance from a suitably qualified or appropriately trained adviser, at points when significant decisions are being made. Guidance is impartial and recorded appropriately.	Year 9 pupils receive individual careers guidance ahead of GCSE options. Pupils can request further support from the Careers Lead. Year 11 pupils receive support with post-16 plans, applications and mock interviews. Guidance is intended to help pupils understand their options, consider their individual circumstances and agree appropriate next steps. External specialist advice is used where appropriate.	Guidance arrangements and adviser credentials; records of interviews and agreed actions; pupil feedback; evidence of follow-up and support at key transition points.

Appendix 2 – Provider access arrangements

Introduction

Ballard School welcomes requests from further education colleges, sixth forms, apprenticeship and training providers, universities and other organisations offering relevant education and training opportunities. Provider encounters help pupils make informed decisions and understand the breadth of progression routes available.

Pupil entitlement

As part of the School's careers programme, pupils will have age-appropriate opportunities to:

- learn about a broad range of academic, technical, vocational and apprenticeship opportunities;
- hear from a range of local and national providers about the courses, qualifications and training they offer;
- ask questions and explore what learning and training with a provider may involve;
- receive support to understand application processes and make informed progression decisions.

Management of provider requests

Providers wishing to request access should contact the Careers Lead. Requests should be made in advance and include the purpose, intended year group, proposed activity, duration, dates and any practical requirements. The Careers Lead will liaise with relevant colleagues to identify an appropriate opportunity within the School's programme.

The School may provide a suitable room and access to presentation equipment where agreed. All visits are subject to safeguarding, visitor and health and safety procedures. Providers should supply any requested information in advance and follow the School's instructions.

Opportunities for access

Potential opportunities include the annual post-16 careers exhibition, Year 9 options activities, PSHE and form-time sessions, assemblies, workshops, employer and provider events and other activities identified in the annual careers programme. The School will seek to ensure that pupils encounter a range of providers and pathways over time.

Contact

Please contact the Ballard School Careers Lead through the School's published contact details to discuss a provider access request.

Key legislation and guidance

- Department for Education (2026), Independent School Standards: Guidance for Independent Schools (April 2026), particularly the guidance on paragraph 2(2)(e) concerning careers guidance for pupils receiving secondary education.
- Department for Education (2026), Careers guidance and access for education and training providers (updated 23 June 2026). This statutory guidance is directed to the institutions specified within it; Ballard uses it as a relevant source of good practice where applicable to its independent-school context.
- Gatsby Charitable Foundation (2024/2025), Good Career Guidance: The Next Ten Years and the updated eight Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Career Development Institute, Career Development Framework.

- Ballard School policies: Safeguarding and Child Protection; Educational Visits; SEND; PSHE and RSE; Curriculum; Data Protection.

References and linked documents

The following legislation, statutory guidance and professional frameworks inform this policy. Online sources were checked on 6 November 2026. The School should use the latest version of each document when reviewing its careers provision.

Legislation and Department for Education guidance

1. **Department for Education (2026).** Careers guidance and access for education and training providers. Updated 23 June 2026. Statutory guidance for the institutions listed on the GOV.UK page; used by Ballard as relevant guidance and good practice alongside the independent-school requirements.
2. **Department for Education (2026).** Independent school standards guidance (April 2026). See paragraph 2(2)(e), and guidance paragraphs 1.24–1.25 on impartial careers guidance, broad career options, challenging stereotypes and work experience.
3. **The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.** Schedule, paragraph 2(2)(e). The relevant independent-school requirement for secondary pupils' access to impartial, accurate and up-to-date careers guidance.

Gatsby and careers development frameworks

4. **Gatsby Charitable Foundation (2024).** Good Career Guidance: The Next Ten Years – updated Gatsby Benchmarks. Includes the updated benchmark summaries, measurable criteria and supporting report.
5. **Gatsby Charitable Foundation.** Gatsby Benchmarks – overview and eight benchmarks. Overview of the framework and its implementation.
6. **Career Development Institute.** Career Development Framework. The six learning areas which can be used to map careers learning outcomes across the curriculum.

Careers programme planning and evaluation

7. **The Careers & Enterprise Company.** Compass+ – careers programme evaluation and management. Digital tool and guidance for evaluating, managing and reporting careers provision against the Gatsby Benchmarks.
8. **The Careers & Enterprise Company.** Compass Evaluation – guidance for schools. Current evaluation guidance, including termly self-evaluation recommendations.
9. **Unifrog.** Unifrog – careers and destinations platform. Ballard School's platform for careers exploration, progression planning and the administration and recording of work experience. Access to the School account is through the School's Unifrog provision.

Ballard School linked policies and working documents

The following internal documents should be read alongside this policy. These are controlled School documents; staff should access the current approved versions through the School's usual policy/document system.

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Educational Visits Policy and relevant risk assessment procedures.
- SEND Policy and accessibility arrangements.
- PSHE Policy, curriculum map and published PSHE programme.
- Curriculum Policy and departmental schemes of work/medium-term plans.
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy, including arrangements for pupil records and destination data.
- Annual Careers Programme and whole-school Careers Map.

- Year 10 Work Experience procedures, Unifrog guidance and placement approval/risk assessment documentation.
- Provider Access arrangements and visitor procedures.