



# **Aston Fields Middle School**

## **SCHOOL CAREERS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

**SEPTEMBER 2025**  
**to**  
**AUGUST 2026**

# Our Vision

*To consistently support and engage every individual pupil to understand and develop their own future pathway, and to confidently raise and achieve their aspirations in an increasingly competitive and ever-changing world.*

**Aston Fields Middle School is  
an active member of the  
Worcestershire Careers Hub  
and supports the development  
of Worcestershire's Future  
Workforce through the  
Worcestershire  
Enterprise Adviser Network**



# ASTON FIELDS MIDDLE SCHOOL'S CAREERS STRATEGY

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## INTRODUCTION

There has never been a time when careers guidance has been as important for young people as it is today. At Aston Fields Middle School, we have a vital role to play in preparing our pupils for the next stage of their education or training and beyond. Our pupils will be embarking upon a career pathway, which is more challenging and complex than that faced by previous generations. Global opportunities and increasing technological advances will result in young people having several careers during their working life and potentially working in a career that does not currently exist.

With the greater choices of education, training and employment, our aim is to prepare pupils for these ever-changing opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences and to equip them with the skills to manage the choices, changes, and transitions ahead of them.

We have a whole school approach to careers education. This allows pupils to access the necessary information to help them make informed decisions about their futures. Our careers programme throughout the year supports our careers education curriculum and in line with the most recent careers guidance strategy (Last updated May 25). Careers Education at Aston Fields Middle School is not just a stand-alone strand; it is thoroughly integrated into every area of the school and woven into the school curriculum.

# Aston Fields Middle School CAREERS STRATEGY

## Purpose and aims

Aston Fields Middle School is fully committed to ensuring that all of our pupils acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to manage their learning and career progression.

Aston Fields Middle School has already established a range of effective careers guidance activities which we hope will guide support our pupils to achieve positive destinations such as A 'levels, Higher Education, Apprenticeships, Technical routes or Employment.

This careers strategy sets out Aston Fields Middle School's key approaches internally and externally to enhance the current careers guidance activities and participation opportunities already available to our pupils. The aim is to ensure that pupils are fully prepared for and informed effectively about their next steps and can therefore aspire to achieve their full potential. We want to ensure that our pupils have both the aptitude and interpersonal skills to effectively communicate and add value within the workplace.

The school will collaborate throughout this strategy with a range of external agencies to help us ensure we will meet all the mandatory requirements contained within the Department for Education's careers strategy (last updated May 25). These partnerships will include working alongside The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC), The Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP), Worcestershire County Council (WCC), Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) providers, Worcestershire Apprenticeships (WA) and a wide range of local employers.

High quality careers guidance is a crucial part of improving social mobility. Young people make choices based on what they know and what they think is available to them. If our young people are made fully aware of the career pathways and opportunities available to them, they will be more able to make informed choices about which qualifications and career pathways which will enable them to achieve their goals.

This strategy outlines our whole school approach to delivering careers guidance to all of our pupils throughout their journey through education. Careers activity will therefore take place across Years 5 through to Year 8 as part of the mandatory requirements set by the Department for Education and contained within the Gatsby Benchmarks.

## Aston Fields Middle School

### Strategic Careers Leader

As set out within the Department for Education's Careers Strategy Aston Fields Middle School is required to have a designated member of our Senior Leadership Team named as our schools Strategic Careers Lead.

The Strategic Careers Lead will have the responsibility to make sure that we as a school meet our mandatory requirements and continue to work towards achieving all eight of the Gatsby Benchmark.

Mr G Hall has agreed to undertake this role.

Mr G Hall will provide both the Headteacher and the Board of Governors with regular updates on our progress and will work closely with the Worcestershire LEP delivery team, our assigned Enterprise Adviser and local employers to ensure we deliver this strategy.

### Our Careers Team

Mrs K Jasper (Lead Teacher for Careers, Information, Education, Advice & Guidance)  
Mr G Hall – Deputy Headteacher

### Our Enterprise Adviser/s

Through the Worcestershire LEPs Enterprise Adviser Network Aston Fields Middle School are delighted to have been assigned our own designated enterprise adviser.

Alex King will be supporting our careers team to assist us to facilitate careers related activity which will help us achieve Gatsby Benchmarks 5 and 6.

May we introduce our assigned Enterprise Adviser...

	<p>Mr Darren Shipman, DPIX Creative Photography Proprietor</p>
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### **Current position at Aston Fields Middle School**

Pupils are currently receiving the following careers related support or participating within the activities listed below during their journey through school:

#### **KS2**

Science and Technology STEM workshops – STEMettes project  
Water Day – Learning about water, how it is cleaned and prepared for consumption  
Theatre Trips – acting skills. Lighting, sound production, back stage  
Enterprise activities – Cash Scrambles afternoon  
Kitchen Chemistry Workshop  
PGL – team building, resilience – skills needed for the world of work  
Black Country Museum – Historic employment and jobs  
Worcestershire Primary Science Challenge

#### **Year 7**

Science and Technology – STEM Workshops  
Apprenticeship Talk  
Engineering Workshops  
International Women’s Day – Guest Speaker day  
Enterprise activities – Cash Scrambles afternoon  
Army STEM workshops  
Severn Trent visit on careers with Severn Trent

#### **Year 8**

Year 8 curriculum – Learning for Life Rotation; includes careers, engineering, first aid and healthy lifestyles, mental health & wellbeing and politics and government lessons  
Worcestershire Skills Show (March)  
Harper Adams University visit (May/June)  
Enterprise activities – Cash Scrambles afternoon  
Future Careers Focus Day – Guest speakers talking about a variety of careers  
Force Fitness – Building Character at start of Year – Army visit Year 8  
STEM – Faraday Challenge  
Gloucestershire University Trip (May)  
Drop Down Days

#### **Teaching staff contribute to the delivery of careers guidance through:**

Weekly lessons dedicated to learning for life which includes aspects of CIEAG, government, mental health and wellbeing  
Organising visits to higher education establishments – eg, Birmingham University, Harper Adams/Gloucestershire/Birmingham University  
Employer visits during classroom lessons  
Organising STEM workshops for pupils in KS3  
Organising visits to career fairs and Science/Technology fairs

#### **Local Employers contribute to the delivery of careers guidance through:**

Assemblies and Workshops including drop down days and IWD.

#### **Parents contribute to the delivery of careers guidance through:**

Being signposted via the school website to [www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk](http://www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk)

## **Partnership Arrangements and Employer Contacts**

Aston Fields Middle School has strong links with:

- Worcestershire Careers Hub.
- Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Further Education providers
- The local business community, including a local photographer and power up mentoring
- Alumni and Parents

## **Objectives for 2025 to 2026**

### **Gatsby Benchmarks**

In line with the Department for Education's careers strategy, Aston Fields Middle School aims to fulfil the recently updated (Summer 2025) eight expectations set out within the 'Gatsby Benchmarks' which provide a framework to ensure that the school has formed a careers programme which falls in line with legal requirements. The following eight benchmarks are at the core of good careers and enterprise provision:

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

### **1. A Stable Careers Programme**

- To ensure the careers programme is delivered by individuals with the right skills and experience. The school will, wherever possible, use qualified careers professionals to offer advice and guidance to all or the overwhelming majority of pupils.
- To enable pupils to understand the full range of opportunities available to them, the skills that are valued within the workplace and to have first-hand experience of a work environment.
- To develop and publish a careers programme that will raise the aspirations of all pupils regardless of academic ability and is tailored to meet their individual needs wherever possible.
- To ensure our Careers Strategy is fully supported by the Senior Leadership team within school and is approved by the board of governors
- To ensure there is a clear focus on the activities which support enterprise, employability skills, workplace experiences and qualifications which employers' value.

- To regularly evaluate our careers strategy to determine the impact of our careers related activity based on the feedback provided to us by pupils, teachers, employers, and where appropriate parents.
- To maintain high quality careers provision endorsed by the Careers and Enterprise Company and to review the improvement of our programme by using the Compass evaluation and Compass Careers Dashboard tools.

## **2. Learning from Career and Labour Market Information**

- To encourage and increase the use of online careers tools and packages across all year groups. Working with our own careers team, key partners, stakeholders, local and national professional bodies.
- To utilise and then support the development of labour market information to ensure staff and pupils are informed in their decisions and the advice being given. Work with the Worcestershire LEP and the Careers and Enterprise Company to help establish key priority areas which need to be developed.
- To promote the values of labour market information to parents /carers (where appropriate) to access and understand this information. To investigate careers and opportunities in learning, work and apprenticeships and how these meet the local and national priorities.

## **3. Addressing the Needs of the Pupil**

- To develop mechanisms to report, track and monitor compliance in relation to the Careers Strategy objectives.
- To develop accurate tracking systems to ensure pupils are able to keep track of their own journey, record and access the advice they have received and monitor the agreed actions and next steps
- To ensure that a programme of activity takes place which raises the aspirations of all pupils and challenges stereotypical thinking in terms of equality and gender.
- To ensure that pupils with particular vulnerabilities and those who are at risk are appropriately supported and identified through close working relationships with the full range of educational and support agencies.
- To ensure that careers guidance for learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is differentiated, where appropriate, and based on high aspirations and a personalised approach. Careers guidance for learners with SEND should be based on the pupils' own aspirations, abilities and needs.

## **4. Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers**

- To ensure that subject teachers across the whole school support the delivery of careers education and guidance and are able to link the content of curriculum with careers, even in lessons which are not specifically occupation led. Subject specialist staff can be powerful role models to attract pupils towards their field and the careers that flow from it.
- To integrate national initiatives and project opportunities within the curriculum to enhance that range of careers related activity taking place within school. e.g. Young Enterprise.

- To ensure that careers related activities are built in throughout the school year and not just towards the end of any given topic / subject being delivered.
- Specific focus will initially be placed on linking curriculum to careers in English, Maths, Sciences and PHSE lessons.

### **5. Encounters with Employers and Employees**

- To ensure that pupils receive at least ONE meaningful encounter with an employer during every year they are at school.
- To increase the number of activities which are conducted within school with the support of local employers.
- To ensure that pupils have the opportunity to improve employability skills and their understanding of and awareness of entrepreneurship
- To enable learners to gain the confidence to compete in the labour market by providing opportunities to gain the practical know-how and attributes that are relevant to gaining employment.
- To develop marketing materials for employers which will help them easily understand the impact of their involvement, the breadth of options available to them and the ways in which they can show they meet their corporate social responsibility.
- To create mechanisms where parents and alumni can express their interest to actively support employer related activity taking place within the school.
- The school will also encourage pupils and parents to attend careers events such as the Worcestershire Skills Show held annually in March.

### **6. Experiences of the Workplace**

- To increase the number of employer workplace visits which will take place to enable pupils to gain more of an understanding of the wide range of employment opportunities available within specific industry sectors based in Worcestershire.
- To strengthen our links with local employers and support our Enterprise Adviser to facilitate careers related activity within school
- To ensure that pupils receive at least ONE meaningful experience of the workplace by the end of year 11
- To ensure that pupils receive at least ONE further meaningful experience of the workplace during years 12 and 13.
- Working with our main high school to deliver workplace experiences.

### **7. Encounters with Further and Higher Education**

- To ensure all / overwhelming majority of pupils receives at least ONE meaningful encounter with Sixth Form Colleges and FE Colleges.
- To ensure all / overwhelming majority of pupils has been provided with information about the full range of apprenticeships including higher level apprenticeships through the Worcestershire Apprenticeships activity offer.
- To ensure all / overwhelming majority of pupils have experienced meaningful encounters with universities.

## **8. Personal Guidance**

- Not applicable for Middle Schools

### **Promotion of Careers related activities**

Aston Fields Middle School will encourage the promotion of ALL careers related activity which takes place within the school through the creation of case studies and will share this activity through our school website.

This careers strategy document along with any case studies documents that are created will be placed on the school's website. These will also be shared with the Worcestershire LEP to be used to promote best practice across ALL career's hub member schools.

This promotion will enable us, and our partner organisations, to be able to capture the evidence we are required to provide both OFSTED and the Careers and Enterprise Company (and demonstrate that the activity taking place within our school) meets the requirements set out within the Department of Education's Careers strategy.

Aston Fields Middle School

**Autumn Term 2025  
Action Plan 2025/26**

<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Activity Description</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Covering Benchmark</b>
8	Forces Fitness - Army	Sept	1,2,3,4,
8	Learning for Life Lessons	Ongoing	1 and 4
7	Worcestershire Apprentices	Oct	1,2,4,5 & 7
7	The role of the Geologist – field work and Lickey hills	Oct	4,5&6
5	G&T Stem Workshops	Nov	3,4&5
7	Tomorrows Climate Scientists Workshop	Dec	1,2,3&4
5,6,7,8	Drop Down Days on Character Education and employability skills	ongoing	1,3,4
8	Magistrates' Court Competition	ongoing	1,2,4,5,6
7,8	Green Skills week – greenest town possible competition	Dec	1,2,4
5,6,7,8	Cash Scrambles	Nov	1,2,4,5 & 7

Aston Fields Middle School

**Action Plan 2025/26  
Spring Term 2026**

<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Activity Description</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Covering Benchmark</b>
7,8	STEM workshop/assembly on climate change	Feb	1,2,4,5
7,8	Eco Club	Ongoing	1,2,4,5,6,7
8	Apprenticeship Week	Feb	1,2,3,4,5
7	International Women's Day – successful local women in the workplace – 10 speakers/day	March	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
7,8	University and past careers assemblies	ongoing	1,4,5,7

**Action Plan 2025/26  
Summer Term 2026**

<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Activity Description</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Covering Benchmark</b>
8	Visit to Harper Adams University – Food and Science related plus campus life	May	7
8	Gloucestershire University	May	7
8	Blackwell Outdoor Adventure	July	1,2,3,4,5
8	Careers Focus Day DDD	May	7
8	Farm Trip	May	3,4,5

**Career related opportunities in KS2**

<b>KS2</b>	<b>Activity Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
Water day	Learning about water, how it is cleaned and prepared for consumption	Summer
Kitchen Chemistry Workshop	How Chemistry is used in the kitchen	Spring/Summer
STEM Workshops	STEMettes Project	Spring/Summer
Theatre Trips	Acting skills, back stage, lighting, sound production and amplification	Autumn/Spring
Primary STEM challenge	Challenges through STEM	Spring
Chemistry	Chemistry workshops	Spring
Leadership Opportunities	PGL residential learning various skills, team building and leading – all of which are crucial for the world of work	Autumn
Black Country Museum	Learning about historic employment and jobs	Spring

## **Careers Programme and Provider Access Policy**

### **Introduction**

This policy statement sets out the arrangements for managing the access of providers to pupils at the school for the purpose of giving them information about the provider's education or training offer. This complies with the school's legal obligations under Section 42B of the Education Act 1997.

**Aston Fields Middle School** is committed to providing a personalised education package for all our pupils, and this is reflected by our careers programme. Pupils will access different elements of the programme at different stages of their education whilst the focus will always be on preparing them for their future pathways, considering their own preferences. Our Careers Action Plan outlines our generic careers offer from **Years 5 to 8**. For some pupils, a more personalised offer will be in place.

Our focus links directly to the requirements of the '*Gatsby Good Career Guidance*' report (2014) which became the basis for the statutory '*Career's guidance and access for education and training providers*' (2023).

### **Pupil entitlement**

The statutory guidance is relevant to 'all pupils in years 7-13' and we will also consider young people's developmental ages when preparing appropriate careers activities at **Aston Fields Middle School** ensuring that our pupils receive a careers programme which offers them opportunities to:

- find out about technical education qualifications and apprenticeship 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.
- understand how to make applications for the full range of academic and technical courses.

### **School's Careers Leader**

Parents, teachers, and employers may gain further information about our careers programme by contacting:

**Ms K Jasper**  
**Lead Teacher for CIEAG**  
**Or**  
**Mr G Hall,**  
**Deputy Headteacher,**  
**01527 876026 or office@astonfields.worcs.sch.uk,**

### **Measuring and Assessment of the impact of the careers programme on pupils.**

Evaluation of our careers programme is designed to enable us to examine what we do; consider how we can improve it and provide stakeholders with a summary of this. This will include gathering information from the pupils about how they feel about their experiences in relation to the careers programme.

Pupil progress in Careers lessons will be evaluated each term as part of our ongoing Pupil Tracking process.

It is our aim to provide pupils with both experiences of the workplace and / or encounters with employers. These encounters and experiences will take place as part of curriculum lessons / workplace visits / assemblies / attending Careers Fairs and Events.

### **Application for Provider Access**

#### **Introduction**

This document sets out the school's arrangements for managing the access of providers to pupils at the school for the purpose of giving them information about the provider's education or training offer. This complies with the school's legal obligations under Section 42B of the Education Act 1997.

#### **Pupil entitlement**

All pupils in years 7-13 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.
- to 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.
- to understand how to make applications for the full range of academic and technical courses.

## **Management of provider access requests**

### **Procedure**

A provider wishing to request access should contact

Telephone: 01527 876026

Email: [office@astonfields.worcs.sch.uk](mailto:office@astonfields.worcs.sch.uk) (FAO Ms K Jasper or Mr G Hall)

### **Opportunities for access**

The school offers a comprehensive Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance programme and an overview of this programme can be seen in the School's Careers Charter which can be seen on the school website.

Please speak to Ms K Jasper or Mr G Hall to identify the most suitable opportunity for you.

The school will make a suitable space available for discussions between the provider and students, as appropriate to the activity. The school will also make available ICT and other specialist equipment to support provider presentations. This will all be discussed and agreed in advance of the visit with Ms K Jasper or Mr G Hall.

All requests will be given due consideration by Aston Fields Middle School and Senior Leadership link and requests will be refused if:

- They impinge on pupils' preparation for public or internal exams
- They clash with other school events such as visits, other speakers, drop-down days, school photographs, sports days, public or internal exams, parents' communication events etc.
- The school is unable to provide staff to support the presentation or talk due to previous commitments
- Rooming for the talk or event is unable to be found due to timetabling clashes

Providers are welcome to leave a copy of their prospectus or other relevant course literature with the Careers Advisor so that they can be displayed in the Careers Section of the school library.

### **Provider Access Legislation**

The provider access legislation is new guidance that came into force from January 2023. It is a key mechanism to further help learners understand and take-up, not just apprenticeships, but wider technical education options such as T-Levels and Higher Technical Qualifications.

The updated provider access legislation (PAL) specifies schools must provide at least six encounters for all their students:

- Two encounters for pupils during the 'first key phase' (year 8 or 9) that are mandatory for all pupils to attend
- Two encounters for pupils during the 'second key phase' (year 10 or 11) that are mandatory for all pupils to attend
- Two encounters for pupils during the 'third key phase' (year 12 or 13) that are mandatory for the school to put on but optional for pupils to attend.

In the context of the provider access legislation, a provider is an organisation that offers approved technical education qualifications or their representative, for example an FE college or training provider.

A provider, to whom access is given, must deliver an encounter that includes the following:

- Information about the provider and the approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships that the provider offers
- Information about the careers to which those technical education qualifications or apprenticeships might lead
- A description of what learning or training with the provider is like
- Responses to questions from the pupils about the provider or approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The full statutory guidance from DfE can be found here [Careers guidance and access for education and training providers – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/careers-guidance-and-access-for-education-and-training-providers).

### **Feedback**

Aston Fields Middle School welcomes parental and employer participation within our careers related activities. Should you wish to support our activity or provide feedback on our Careers Strategy then please contact our Strategic Careers Lead directly.

**Useful links / Resources**

The Careers Enterprise Company	<a href="https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/">https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/</a>
The Careers and Enterprise Company Resource Directory	<a href="https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/">https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/</a>
Gatsby Foundation	<a href="http://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance">http://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance</a>
Post 16 Skills Plan	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-skills-plan-and-independent-report-on-technical-education">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-skills-plan-and-independent-report-on-technical-education</a>
Skills For Worcestershire	<a href="http://www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk/">http://www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk/</a>
Government Careers Strategy December 2017	<a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664319/Careers_strategy.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664319/Careers_strategy.pdf</a>
Government Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers (May 2025 update)	<a href="#">Careers guidance and access for education and training providers - GOV.UK</a>
National Careers Service	<a href="https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/">https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/</a>
UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service)	<a href="https://www.ucas.com/">https://www.ucas.com/</a>
Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership	<a href="http://www.wlep.co.uk/">http://www.wlep.co.uk/</a>
Worcestershire Apprenticeships	<a href="http://worcestershireapprenticeships.org.uk/">http://worcestershireapprenticeships.org.uk/</a>
HOW College	<a href="http://www.howcollege.ac.uk/">http://www.howcollege.ac.uk/</a>
Kidderminster College	<a href="http://kidderminster.ac.uk/">http://kidderminster.ac.uk/</a>
Warwickshire College Group	<a href="https://wcg.ac.uk/page/1/home">https://wcg.ac.uk/page/1/home</a>
Worcester University	<a href="https://www.worcester.ac.uk/">https://www.worcester.ac.uk/</a>

