

BIRCHENSALE MIDDLE SCHOOL

SCHOOL CAREERS STRATEGY AND TIMETABLE OF PLANNED CAREERS RELATED EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2025 to AUGUST 2026

Our Vision

Every student leaves Birchensale with the skills, motivation and personal qualities to enable lifelong success.

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The vision of our school is embodied in the words Belong, Motivate, Succeed and Resilient. We strive to ensure that everyone feels they belong in our school community; happy, valued and respected. We recognise that every Birchensale pupil deserves the best and we aim to motivate them to succeed by reaching their potential in every area of school life – academic, social, personal, physical and spiritual. We do this by ensuring that each child has access to an inclusive curriculum, which allows individuals the scope to explore their talents, challenges and supports them when needed.

Birchensale 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

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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 Birchensale 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 2025).

Purpose and aims

Birchensale 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.

Birchensale 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 Birchensale Middle School 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 2025). 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.

Strategic Careers Leader

As set out within the Department for Education's Careers Guidance, Birchensale 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.

Mrs A Evans has agreed to undertake this role.

Mrs A Evans will provide both the Head Teacher and the board of governors with regular updates on our progress and will work closely with the Worcestershire LEP delivery team and local employers to ensure we deliver this strategy.

Our Careers Team

Mrs A Evans will lead our team which will include the following staff members:

Dr K Austin
Mrs A Howard

Objectives for 2025 to 2026

- To further raise the profile of careers across the whole school.
- To continue to strive towards meeting the updated Gatsby Benchmarks for good career guidance as recommended by the Department of Education Careers Strategy 2025.
- To raise aspirations by ensuring students have knowledge of routes into further education, higher education and apprenticeships.
- To ensure staff at the school have an awareness of linking curriculum learning to careers and are able to demonstrate the relevance of subjects to students when considering a future career.

Gatsby Benchmarks

In line with the Department for Education's careers strategy, Birchensale Middle School aims to fulfil the 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 young person
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

- Every school should have a stable, structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of governors, the headteacher and the senior management team, and has an identified and appropriately trained careers leader responsible for it.
- The careers programme should be tailored to the needs of pupils, sequenced appropriately, underpinned by learning outcomes and linked to the whole-school development plan. It should also set out how parents and carers will be engaged throughout.
- The careers programme should be published on the school's website and communicated in a ways that enables pupils, parents and carers, staff and employers to access and understand it.
- The programme should be regularly evaluated using feedback from pupils, parents and carers, teachers and other staff who support pupils, careers advisers and employers to increase its impact

2. Learning from Career and Labour Market Information

- During each Key Stage, all pupils should access and use information about careers, pathways and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options or next steps.
- Parents and carers should be encouraged, and supported to access and use information about careers, pathways and the labour markets to inform their support for pupils in their care

3. Addressing the Needs of the Young Person

- A school's careers programme should actively seek to challenge misconceptions and stereotypical thinking, showcase a diverse range of role models and raise aspirations.

- Schools should keep systematic records of the participation of pupils in all aspects of their careers programme, including the individual advice given to each pupil, and any subsequent agreed decisions.
- For pupils who change schools during the secondary phase, information about participation and the advice given previously should be integrated into a pupil's records,
- where this information is made available. Records should begin to be kept from the first point of contact or from the point of transition.
- All pupils should have access to these records and use them ahead of any key transition points to support their next steps and career development.
- Schools should collect, and maintain, and use accurate data for each pupil on their aspirations, intended and immediate education, and training or employment destinations to inform personalised support.
- Schools should use sustained and longer term destination data as part of their evaluation process and use alumni to support their careers programme.

4. Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers

- Every year, in every subject, every pupil should have opportunities to learn how the knowledge and skills developed in that subject helps people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers.
- Careers should form part of the school's ongoing staff development programme for teachers and all staff who support pupils

5. Encounters with Employers and Employees

- Every year, from the age of 11, pupils should participate in at least one meaningful encounter* with an employer.

6. Experiences of the Workplace

- By the age of 16, every pupil should have had meaningful experiences of a workplaces.
- By the age of 18, every pupil should have had at least one further meaningful experience.

7. Encounters with Further and Higher Education

- By the age of 16, every pupil should have had a meaningful encounters* with providers of the full range of learning opportunities, including sixth forms, colleges, universities and ITPs.
- By the age of 18, all pupils who are considering applying to higher education should have had at least two visits to higher education providers to meet staff and learners.

8. Personal Guidance

- Every pupil should have at least one personal guidance meeting with a careers adviser by the age of 16, and a further meeting by the age of 18. Meetings should be scheduled in the careers programme to meet the needs of pupils.

- Information about personal guidance support and how to access it should be communicated to pupils and parents and carers, including through the school website

Timetable of planned careers related activities 2025/26

KS3 Careers

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 7	<u>PSHE Lessons</u> Personal development and target setting Importance of respect Wants, needs and priorities Self-esteem through life GB 4		Worcestershire Apprenticeship Assembly GB 7	<u>PSHE Lessons</u> Careers, skills and qualities Worcestershire Skills Show GB 3, 5, 7	Parent careers talks (TBC) GB 5	Financial Education/Money Matters workshop GB 4
Year 8	<u>PSHE Lessons</u> Attendance and Punctuality Ambitious realistic careers Employability Skills Entrepreneurs Saving and investing money Teamwork GB 4 Talent Foundry (Barclays Life Skills - Resilience) GB 1, 2	Talent Foundry (Barclays Life Skills – Communication and Strategies for improving your skills) GB 1, 2	Worcestershire Apprenticeship Assembly GB 7 Talent Foundry (Barclays Life Skills – Exploring money attitudes, needs and wants) GB 1, 2	<u>PSHE Lessons</u> Communication Skills Mental health at work and the wider world GB 4	Mock Interviews (TBC) GB 5	Mock Interviews (TBC) GB 5 STEM Big Bang Fair GB 4, 5, 7

Promotion of Careers related activities

Birchensale 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 Twitter account and other social media channels.

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.

Feedback

Birchensale 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	https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/
The Careers and Enterprise Company Resource Directory	https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/
Gatsby Foundation	http://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance
Post 16 Skills Plan	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-skills-plan-and-independent-report-on-technical-education
Skills For Worcestershire	http://www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk/
Government Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers (May 2025)	Careers guidance and access for education and training providers - GOV.UK
National Careers Service	https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/
UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service)	https://www.ucas.com/
Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership	http://www.wlep.co.uk/
Worcestershire Apprenticeships	http://worcsapprenticeships.org.uk/
HOW College	http://www.howcollege.ac.uk/
Kidderminster College	http://kidderminster.ac.uk/
Warwickshire College Group	https://wcg.ac.uk/page/1/home
Worcester University	https://www.worcester.ac.uk/

