

Employer education outreach

A starter pack for businesses



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Welcome

Thank you for downloading this guide. If you're looking to work with schools, colleges and other education settings in your area, this document will get you started.

All secondary schools, special schools and colleges have a responsibility to provide careers education to young people from 11-18 years old.






Although primary schools are not required to provide career-related learning, the benefits of starting early are clear. Research shows that children begin to fix their attitudes to work from as early as six.

The benefits of engaging in careers education

For employers:

-  It empowers employees to contribute towards improving young people's life chances; volunteering has also been shown to improve wellbeing and retention
-  It increases the range of professional development opportunities available within the business
-  It develops, broadens and diversifies talent pipelines
-  It supports the development of the skills needed in the workplace
-  It can demonstrate social value which can help when bidding for work
-  It helps to boost brand loyalty and profitability.

For young people:

-  It helps them understand the range of options, pathways and transitions available
-  It raises aspirations, challenges stereotypes and helps them to realise their potential
-  It helps to increase career readiness by allowing them to understand their aptitudes and motivations and develop their skills
-  Young people who have four or more encounters with employers are 86% less likely to end up NEET and can earn up to 18% more during their career
-  It has double the impact for disadvantaged / under-resourced groups of children and young people.

This resource will help you to:

- Identify simple practical ways to engage with schools, special schools and colleges.
- Feel empowered to get started.
- Reflect upon and refine the outreach activities you provide.

The Careers and Enterprise Company has been supporting employers to connect with the education sector since 2015. We know what works. On the next pages we'll explore seven issues that will help you create meaningful engagement with education which will help young people in your area understand the opportunities for employment in your workplace.

Thank you

Oli de Botton
CEO, Careers & Enterprise Company

Be clear on why you are engaging

What does my organisation want from a school, special school or college partnership?

Identifying what motivates your organisation to work with schools, special schools and/or colleges is a great first step in understanding how you can benefit. By identifying your motivators, you can look to deliver activities which help achieve your aims.

Here are some common reasons why employers want to engage with schools, special schools and colleges. Select 3-5 which you feel are most relevant for your organisation.

We would like to engage with schools/colleges because we want to:	Select up to 5	Add notes
give back to our community / we are happy to be led by the school(s), special school(s) or college(s) needs		
ensure that young people and teachers know more about our business or sector, what we have to offer and how to access entry to it – particularly given that we have skills shortages		
build a talent pipeline into entry-level roles in our business, recognising that our competitors are already doing this		
challenge or break down stereotypes and encourage more young people into our sector – for example, into STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) careers		
ensure young people are gaining the essential skills needed in business		
support young people without networks/less well resourced/care experienced/under-represented in my sector/or have other barriers to careers education and employment routes.		
provide opportunities for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to build skills and confidence and to find out more about our organisation and our inclusive recruitment		
provide a volunteering opportunity for colleagues to boost professional development		
build our brand presence in schools, special schools or colleges		
gain a better youth perspective on issues that we are tackling as an organisation		
give young people the experience, skills and inspiration that I wish I received as a child		

What is your vision for careers education outreach?

Use the ideas you selected above to create your careers education mission statement.

For example: We aim to provide / create / deliver

_____ for _____ to allow them to know, understand,

do _____

Revisit this mission statement during your planning, delivery and evaluation. It will help maintain your focus and motivation, and therefore maximise your impact.

Decide where to start - which age/stage

There are more than 40 Careers Hubs in England who can help match your organisation's motivations and skills to the needs of schools, special schools and colleges in your area.

Before you meet with a Careers Hub, it's useful to have a sense of how each stage of education approaches careers. You can find more about the different roles and responsibilities within a school later in this guide (page 8). Be aware that primary schools are not part of the Careers Hubs network, although a few Careers Hubs are running pilot activities.

Primary education (5-11)

Career-related learning for primary school pupils is about inspiration and should introduce children to a range of exciting roles, careers and industries, including both technical and academic routes to employment. Interactions should also aim to address stereotypes and preconceptions that surround careers and sectors.

Secondary education (11-16)

Secondary students are developing their subject interests and will benefit from multiple activities and sessions with employers that involve two-way interaction. This can be in the form of careers talks, careers fairs, mock interviews, mock assessment centres, skills workshops or career choices events.

Students should have opportunities to experience the workplace, this could be through visits, engaging in projects set by employers, or short placements.

Employers can help support students develop their academic and technical interests through highlighting different post-16 and post-18 career pathways.

Post 16 education (16-18)

Students from the age of 16 upwards (including up to age 24 for those young people with a special educational need) are likely to benefit from more bespoke careers education. This group of students are making key decisions about their post-18 pathways, whether that is continuing into apprenticeship or technical education, supported apprenticeships, Higher Education or into the world of work. They can benefit from practical information about which sectors and roles are currently recruiting in the local economy and how these align with current and future qualifications. They will also value understanding and practicing applications and interview processes.

Alternative settings including special schools, alternative provisions and home educated

Young people from these settings can be some of our most vulnerable young people in society for whom encounters and experiences with employers can be a huge turning point in supporting them to be more positive about their future options. Consider whether you can offer them exposure to the workplace through virtual visits and in person visits (usually in small groups), or mentoring to grow self-esteem, motivation and aspiration. They will also benefit from learning about local opportunities with employers who may offer supported placements or have targeted programmes.

Know what you have to offer

Some Careers Leaders might be looking for you to simply join an existing activity such as a careers fair or multi-employer talk, some may have a preconceived idea about what an employer of your size, location; sector could bring to their careers programme. The best impact comes when you work together understand the value that you can bring to each other and build this out over time.

Here are some of the unique contributions you might be able to bring:

- Specialist knowledge about technical skills needed in the local labour market.
- A focus on the value of essential skills within the workplace.
- Knowledge about enterprise, start-up/scale-up skills.
- Explaining existing/emerging labour market needs.
- Highlighting real life vacancies in the local labour market.

Combining your unique strengths with the insight from your local careers hub about local needs, will ensure that your activities have most impact.

“It’s good for businesses to work with diverse young people. It’s has made me a better customer, and a better supplier. I am more aware of people I deal with in my business life, I have much better engagement from the people who work for me, including higher retention rates. The way we recruit and the way I run my business has changed. Business of any size should use inclusive language and stay open, that includes considering working with other institutions outside of the mainstream. You never know who you can inspire and who can inspire you!”

Richard Osborne, Founder & CEO,
Business Data Group

“Schools don’t always know what an employer can offer, so they may only ask what they think you’re going to say yes to. Our big learning was asking “What are the breakthroughs you’re trying to make for your students? What are the things that you want to be able to do that you can’t do alone”. We learnt about the different things they wanted and we built our experiences in tandem with them.”

Ian Browne, Early Careers Lead,
Lloyds Banking Group

Understand the basics about how schools work

Schools, special schools and colleges are busy communities with significant educational and pastoral responsibilities. It can take time and effort to understand each other's perspectives as you look to plan activities and the logistics can require patience and persistence. It will help to have an appreciation for the necessary prioritisation of student welfare needs (which may arise unexpectedly and take precedence over pre-existing arrangements) and to understand the annual planning cycles.

You can read more about the different roles in a school in the additional information at the end of this guide but useful to know that, apart from primary schools, all institutions have a Careers Leader - a leadership role overseeing their careers education provision. Careers Leaders implement and quality assure a careers strategy, network with employers and providers and coordinate the contributions of Careers Advisers and subject teachers.

Top Tips

1. Identify the education institute you want to work with
2. Make connection yourself or via your [local Careers Hub](#)
3. Work with the school, special school or college to plan best activity
4. Reach out at least one half-term before you want to deliver
5. Note that schools are very busy in September and are unlikely to engage from April to June due to exams

Schools, special schools and colleges generally run on a 3-term cycle. In secondary schools, special schools and colleges, established careers education programmes will run throughout the year, however there will often be clusters of activities around [National Apprenticeship Week](#) in February and [National Careers Week](#) in March. In secondary schools and special schools, the traditional work experience placements peak in July, whilst in colleges these placements take place throughout the year depending on the course of study. (We encourage employers to consider the range of models of placement which can provide 'experiences of the workplace' in addition to the traditional 1-2 week placement. See [here](#) for more ideas. Updated resources coming soon.)

See more at the end of this guide about Who's Who at schools and colleges, and some FAQs about working with schools and colleges.







Know the types of activities you can get involved with





















Now it's time to decide on your first activity. Find out if the school, special school or college already run activities you could join in with (i.e. you just have to take part), or decide if you want to plan your own (e.g. to target a specific skills or knowledge gap, or focus support on a particular group of young people who face more barriers). You may also want to consider working with a [specialist activity provider](#), noting that many will charge a fee for participating in their programmes.

Remember you don't have to do this alone. Impactful work can be done via collaborations with local or sectoral partnerships or through your supply chain. It's a good idea to begin small and build on successes.

Below is an example list of activities that are suited to different educational settings.

Which of the following outreach activities do you think your organisation would be well placed to run?

Outreach activities	Primary	Secondary	Post 16
<p>Careers events: careers choices events</p> <p>Running a workshop that explores which subjects students need to consider at GCSE to access different career destinations in your organisation or sector. This is most relevant for years 7 and 8 (ages 11-12).</p>			
<p>Preparing for application processes workshop</p> <p>Running a workshop or session focussed on application processes this could include how to write a CV, fill in application questions, develop a portfolio, respond to a pre-set task like a presentation, prepare for an assessment centre or psychometric assessment, how to approach your first interview. This could include 'top tips', as well as providing practice and feedback.</p>			
<p>Engaging with parents and carers.</p> <p>These can be vital partners in supporting informed careers decision-making. They are often cited as being the main influence on young people's thinking and decision making, and are often underutilised. There are many ways to engage parents and carers, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers talk: with wider audiences e.g. parents, carers and guardians • Delivering an in-person session or webinar about potential job roles within your industry. • Careers events: careers choices events • Supporting parents and carers to find out more about your industry by attending a careers evening or day arranged by the education institute. • Contributing to an education newsletter or a school/college newsletter to share any important careers education updates. <p>Consider trialling your activity on parents in your own workforce.</p>			

Outreach activities	Primary	Secondary	Post 16
<p>Careers events: careers/recruitment fairs</p> <p>These are most beneficial when students can plan for the interaction and then build on what they learned in a subsequent careers or curriculum lesson. Discuss with the Careers Leader about how to best help with preparation and follow up for maximum benefit. Ensure you plan something interactive for your stall and have volunteers that are prepared and ready to have lots of conversations and engagement with students.</p>			
<p>Careers talk: with students - virtual or in-person</p> <p>Take part in an 'ask me anything' webinar or talk. Where students can submit questions beforehand or ask live during the webinar. Another common theme is to talk about your career journey, showing the skills and aptitude needed at each stage. Students may also like to hear about what your typical day is like. If you are further along in your career try to bring along a younger member of staff or talk about entry level tasks too.</p> <p>If you are from the local area, return to your old school and discuss your pathway and job role.</p>			
<p>Supporting extra-curricular activities: skills or entrepreneurial competitions</p> <p>Set a school challenge (which ideally would link to a real life challenge for your organisation or sector). For example, create a new logo, a new product, an advert or a marketing campaign.</p> <p>Lead an assembly where you announce the winners and showcase what your business does.</p>			
<p>Careers talk: on Apprenticeships and Technical pathways</p> <p>Careers events: careers choices events</p> <p>Lead a 'how can you do what I do' talk or webinar, which pays close attention to the different career routes available, and the skills and qualities required. Think about bringing along a young person from your workforce, such as an apprentice, who is relatable and able to exemplify a relevant pathway.</p>			
<p>Careers events: essential skills workshops</p> <p>Base a challenge or workshop around a question or big idea. For example, is it always good to succeed or does teamwork matter? You could incorporate essential skills and explain their relevance to the workplace.</p>			
<p>Supporting Teachers/Tutors</p> <p>Run a teacher support workshop to inform them about your sector, the essential skills needed and the routes into work. This is particularly important for more technical pathways, where teachers may not be as confident in their understanding.</p>			
<p>Workplace visits - in person</p> <p>Workplace visits are hugely beneficial for young people. You can have real impact by offering a half day or full day visit. Work with the teacher/tutor to plan the visit and ensure it has interactive activities which include feedback for students.</p>			

Outreach activities	Primary	Secondary	Post 16
<p>Workplace visits - virtual</p> <p>Virtual experience of the workplace - These opportunities have become more common in schools, and can offer you the opportunity to reach education institutions that may be too far away for in person visits. Discuss with the Careers Leader (or teacher at primary) about how to make it interactive and age appropriate and ideally incorporate pre-work or post-work.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p>Employer mentoring</p> <p>Professional mentoring. This is most common for students opting for very specific academic or technical pathways. It might include apprenticeship application mentoring and/or UCAS personal statement application mentoring.</p>		✓	✓

Consider other activities that you may want to run and whether they will have most impact if delivered at the institution, special school or college, or at your workplace. In-person events usually have greatest impact but consider virtual as part of a wider offer.

Some questions to consider when you review each of the activities above:

- How much time do you and your colleagues have to develop or engage with an activity?
- Would this activity feel about right in terms of what you can commit, might it be an overreach on your resources and expertise?
- Do you want to take part in a pre-planned activity by the school, special school/ college or develop your own offer?
- How much preparation time do you need?
- What age group do you want to work with?
- Are there particular times of year that work better for your business?
- Will you deliver the session in-person or online? What are the pros and cons of each format in terms of achieving your desired impacts?

“Working with local schools and colleges on a regular basis can be incredibly beneficial for businesses of all sizes and that includes independent consultants. Without hiring anyone, we can engage with young people, seek their ideas and get the voice of their generation (and shine a bit of a spotlight on our sector or area of business!). At the same time, we can provide them with real life challenges, problems and projects to solve; they can get stuck in, making genuine contributions. It’s a win-win situation.”

Anna Smith, Company Owner, A Logical Ltd

Plan your activity effectively (including evaluation)

How do I plan outreach work?

Before you begin:

- What do I want students to get from this session? What should they have learnt by the end?
- What's the core content needed for this engagement to be successful?
- Ask the Careers Leader about the learners - age, mix of ability, any learning needs
- [Quickstart template links:](#)
 - plan your talk
 - plan your attendance at a careers fair
 - plan for a mock interview workshop
- Who will I need to help me deliver this engagement? Will they be relatable to the young people?
- Who will I be delivering this to? Is the session inclusive, relevant and engaging for all students, regardless of background, ability or learning style? (Be sure to consult the school/college as to adaptations needed e.g. larger font print outs for sight-impaired students, or reducing group activity numbers for students with specific needs).
- What format will help support my aim for this engagement? Is it an hour, half day, or whole day? (discuss with the school, special school or college and adapt to needs of the students)
- Do I want to deliver the activity in a school, special school or college, or to have young people come to my workplace?

Creating a meaningful encounter: a pre and post-visit checklist

Pre / post-visit	Action	
Pre-visit logistics	Confirm the key point of contact within the school, special school or college.	
	Arrange a meeting to discuss your plan and agree the aims for the session.	
	Agree the details in writing – including time, date, location, number of young people and what additional needs you may need to be aware of.	
	Ask if the school or college need you to complete any documents in advance or to share your liability insurance policy or risk assessment.	
	Ask about the venue e.g. equipment, space, layout and room setup. Also ask about practical considerations on the day, such as parking and where to go at break or lunch times.	
Pre-visit content planning	Start with a trigger or a hook. Engage the students from the very start of the session. What fact or story would impress or inspire the students about you, the business or its products or services?	
	How could you make your session interactive? Can you build in the opportunity for students to get practical with your products or services?	
	Consider any specific learner needs and how you can accommodate these. For example, some students might require a slower, more practical demonstration or explanation. Could you or one of your colleagues deliver this separately?	
	Build in time for questions and answers. Invite these from students and teachers.	
	Run through the final session plan with another colleague if possible. Try to put yourself in the young people's shoes. How could you make the session more engaging and informative? Remember, this encounter could potentially change a young person's life outcomes. It could send them on a pathway that they have never considered before – one that helps them realise their potential.	
Post-visit	Seek feedback from teachers, students and, if possible, parents and carers, as well as any volunteers from your organisation who were involved. Will this be done during the session or after? Will it be on paper or completed electronically? You can download our teacher/ Careers Leader and student post-visit feedback documents to help consider the questions you may want to ask.	
	Reflect on the session, including the feedback received. Consider how it met the needs identified in your planning stages (both yours and the young peoples). Consider how you learn from the successes and improvement areas.	
	Speak with the Careers Leader or key point of contact to thank them for the opportunity and discuss ways to strengthen the partnership in the future.	

The experiences you deliver in schools should be as inclusive as possible, so that all students feel involved and engaged. Be sure to ask the school/college about any specific needs so you can tailor your activity for greatest impact.

Review the ideas below and start to plan your own activities.

Your company aims	Accessible activity that your company could participate in	Considerations or questions for the Careers Hub/Careers Leader or classroom teacher (for primary)
Build our brand within the community.	Run a competition for the local school to utilise the talents of young people and promote our products/services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the main point of contact in school? • How can we make the competition accessible for all? (see this case study for ideas). • When would be a good time to run the competition? When would the school have the best chance of engaging and how much notice do they need to plan it in? • How would we launch the competition? (Can we create a flyer for the school to send home to parents and carers? Can we create a video for the school to share on their social media pages to inform parents and carers?) • How could we engage parents and carers to help promote the competition? (could we promote this in a newsletter?) • How will we receive entries? • How can we celebrate the winners and acknowledge the efforts of all entrants? (could we support a celebration assembly and showcase) • How can we share this success across the local community? Could we invite the local press to an award ceremony? • What would a suitable prize be? • Would any other local businesses like to support the competition? • Could the competition link to the curriculum in anyway? For example, English: speaking and listening or persuasive writing; Science: developing a hypothesis and method.
Attract and inspire future talent from the local area.	Deliver a careers talk at the local primary school to inspire young people to consider a career in our sector. The session could be delivered to individual classes, year groups or to the whole school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the main point of contact in school? • Could we link our sector to a particular year group's area of study? For example, if Year 4 students are completing a topic on amazing inventions, our careers talk can explore incredible inventions from our sector, past, present and future. • See if students can prepare for the session, perhaps by conducting some research or thinking of questions? • How can we make the session engaging and memorable? • Are there any specific accommodations we need to make to our content and/or delivery in order to engage all students? • How could we follow-up with the teacher after the session? Could this be opportunity to build a longer-term relationship with the school, or student cohort.

Your company aims	Accessible activity that your company could participate in	Considerations or questions for the Careers Hub/Careers Leader or classroom teacher (for primary)
Diversify and strengthen our talent pipeline.	Hold workplace visits for local secondary school students to highlight and promote our work. These can be half or full-day sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the main point of contact in school? • Have you discussed the aims and outcomes of the visit with the school? Are the students selected going to benefit from the planned session? • What student information do you need before the visit? (Remind teachers to flag any adaptations to support young people with SEND or additional needs). • Will the visit provide an opportunity for students to engage in a task, get feedback and meet a range of people? • Do we have the correct risk assessment, policies and insurances in place? See HSE advice • How can we communicate the practicalities and expectations of the visit? (Can we write a newsletter to parents and carers? Can we record a video for students to let them know what to expect on the day? Can we get a timetable to the students before the visit, so they know exactly what to expect upon arrival?) • Is there a designated briefing room, toilet and lunch space for students to access? • What support will we need from teachers on the day? • How can we follow-up after the session?
Attract and inspire future talent from the local area.	Get involved with mock interviews at the local secondary school to build connections with future talent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the main point of contact in school? • What will our exact role be on the day? And how can we prepare for it? • Can we give an overview of how interviews fit into our recruitment alongside other processes such as assessments or portfolios. • How can we make our presence as purposeful as possible? Could we work with a particular group of students who are considering applying to jobs within our sector, or applying to study relevant subjects at college or university? Could we offer these students support with their portfolios, CVs or letters of application, if applicable? • How can we get feedback from students taking part on the day? Can we share the headlines from the feedback to help highlight our business's impact in the local community? • Can we take pictures on the day and share them on our website and social media channels? How can we check with the school to ensure parent or carer consent is in place? • How can we follow-up with the school to build on this?
Diversify and strengthen our talent pipeline.	Present at the local college's careers fair to inspire young people to consider a role within our sector and highlight entry pathways into the business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the main point of contact in school? • What materials could we send in advance to help students prepare? Could we set a challenge which students can report on when they come to our stall during the fair? • Can we record a video to share with students studying relevant subjects to inform them in advance of our presence at the careers fair and the work we do? • Can we set up an activity that will give students a taste of our work? What materials will we need to refer to or hand out at the fair to both students AND parents or carers? Do we need laptops, brochures or a QR-code card for our website? • Which colleagues would most like to attend the fair? How can we help prepare them to engage with this age group and likely FAQs? • How can we follow-up after the event to gain evidence of impact?

Reflect on these ideas and any of your own. Make a note of any other support (either internal or external* to your organisation) you may need to feel confident in running these outreach activities and how you will get that support.

*Our Careers Hubs offer free matching to local schools, special schools and colleges. For other expert organisations who can support with specialist delivery, visit our [Employer Provider Directory](#) (noting that unlike our [Careers Hubs](#), many will charge a fee for participating in their programmes).



“As a small business, it is essential to us that we spend our time doing what is most impactful and relevant for the young people we have committed to support. A key part of this process is to continually evaluate our approach and its impact, based upon this all parties should be open to change or tweak the approach for maximum effect. Asking for feedback should be part of everyone’s school engagement.”

Vipal Karavadra, Managing Director, Fluid Funding



Evaluation and next steps

Evaluation top tips

- Ask in the room – it is easier to get feedback on the day than afterwards
- Ask the school, special school or college – what had the most impact on students?
- Seek verbal or written feedback (see link/Appendix template feedback forms)
- Best part & one thing to change? – Take note of what landed well and what could be improved for next time
- Building sustainable relationships – implement the changes needed and plan the next session to continue to build on your outreach and impact
- Plan your next opportunity to deliver again

Seek feedback from all stakeholders

Use our [feedback forms](#) to gather insights from all stakeholders:

- student feedback form
- educator feedback form
- volunteer feedback form

How can I learn from our experience at schools, special schools and colleges?

After you have run your first activity with a school, special school or college, spend some time reflecting on the experience. Share your reflections with colleagues, your local Careers Hub and with school or college, to help improve outcomes next time.

Review responses from your student, teacher or business volunteer feedback forms. What are the key learnings or trends? What worked well and why? Consider content, mode, format, location etc

What could you improve upon? Consider communication with school/college, engagement of colleagues, specific activities, timings, format, location, feedback etc

Review your vision for careers education (your 'careers education mission statement' developed on p5). To what extent did the experience help you realise that vision?

What else do you need to incorporate next time to help you move towards your careers education vision?

"I get so much from volunteering with schools. The more employer engagement young people have the better choices they make. I have a real passion for improving the future outcomes of young people. It would be great if all businesses could offer their employees opportunities to take part in long term volunteering opportunities with the same (special) school or college. There are many benefits for all involved and you can see progress of individuals too! Really rewarding experience!"

Nick Baxter, Chief Executive Officer,
Baxter Williams Limited

Further help and support

Ready to find out more about how to improve your careers education outreach activity? Use our [Employer Standards self-assessment tool](#) and receive bespoke, practical feedback.

Working in schools, special schools and colleges – FAQs

Working with schools, special schools and colleges may be new to your organisation, so here are some common FAQs to help you navigate your first steps into careers education. Please reach out to your local Careers Hub for further support and advice. You may also find it useful to review the glossary at the end of this document which includes an outline of who's who within careers at an education institution.

What role do I have to play in safeguarding in schools, special schools and colleges?

Safeguarding refers to the process of protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect or harm. It involves measures to ensure their safety, well-being and development, and it encompasses various actions to prevent, identify and respond to potential risks. It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard children and young people. See [this guide](#) for more information.

In schools, special schools and colleges, safeguarding is a shared responsibility involving all school staff, including teachers, support staff and leadership teams. Designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) are appointed in each school to oversee and coordinate safeguarding efforts.

If you have any concerns about a young person during your time at a school or college, you should report it to the school contact (this may be the Careers Leader or classroom teacher) and they will ensure that correct school/college procedures are followed.

How do I maintain good relationships with schools, special schools and colleges?

Keeping lines of communication open and clear is vital in maintaining good relationships with schools, special schools and colleges. Many classroom teachers and college tutors have full and busy timetables, so they might only respond to emails at the beginning or end of the working day or week.

Schools, special school and colleges are fast-paced, changeable environments, where urgent priorities can emerge unexpectedly, so it is helpful to demonstrate adaptability and flexibility in accommodating to their changing needs or circumstances.

Do all schools, special schools and colleges have a Careers Leader?

Since 2018, secondary schools and colleges have been required by statutory guidance to have a named Careers Leader who oversees their careers programme. In practice, it is a mixed picture across England, with varying levels of resource, especially when it comes to qualified independent careers advisers providing 'personal guidance' (individual advice). Some secondary schools and colleges will have a dedicated Careers Leader role working to improving careers education across the setting/s; others will have limited resources, with the person responsible for careers also having to juggle other roles and responsibilities. Your Careers Hub can help you to find out the best point of contact in a school, special school or college.

It is not part of statutory guidance for primary schools to have a dedicated role for career-related learning and you are unlikely to find Careers Leaders in these schools. Primary schools also have fewer members of staff than at secondary level so you might find a range of staff members are interested in working with you, including Headteachers, curriculum area leads and support staff. Consider the needs and interests of these groups when planning your contact with the school.

Are there any costs associated with outreach work and who is responsible for that?

Employers are generally responsible for costs related to their education outreach, whether that be careers activities taking place at education institutions or workplace visits. In some cases schools may cover travel costs for workplace visits. Some leading employers are beginning to offer to cover costs for staff coverage, particularly if that is likely to be a barrier to uptake. This recognises the challenges on school budgets and also ensures that the activities are not cancelled at short notice, with the inconvenience that causes. However this is not widespread and is not a common expectation, especially for smaller employers.

What can I expect when I visit a school, special school or college?

You will always need to sign in at a reception when you visit a school or college and wait for your point of contact to come and collect you. But after that, there is no uniform practice across schools and colleges when it comes to welcoming visitors. The welcome you receive will depend on the availability of the staff and resources on the day. You may or may not be offered a refreshment or given a room to wait in. Remaining flexible and adaptable during your visit is always useful.

How can I encourage co-workers to engage with careers education?

Talk about the benefits, e.g.:

- for young people: increasing aspiration, attainment and opportunity
- for business: stronger more diverse talent pipeline, purpose, brand awareness

Make it easy to get involved.

Seek feedback from colleagues and share feedback from teachers and students.

When is a good time in the year to work with schools, special schools and colleges?

Each school, special school and college schedules their careers education across the three-term academic year differently. The best thing to do is to ask your point of contact at the school/college or Careers Hub when your proposed careers education activity will be most beneficial. Also share when is a suitable time for your organisational priorities, so you can arrange a time that suits both parties.

Who's who in careers education?

Careers Leader - a leadership role overseeing a secondary school or college's careers education provision. Careers Leaders implement and quality assure a careers strategy, network with employers and providers and coordinate the contributions of Careers Advisers and subject teachers. All secondary schools, special schools and colleges are required to have one, but there is variance in whether they undertake this as a sole role or in addition to another role.

As careers is not currently a statutory part of primary education in the same way as at secondary and college level, primary schools are unlikely to have careers teams or Careers Leaders and won't be part of a Careers Hub. You might find a range of staff members interested in working with you, including Headteachers, curriculum leads and support staff. The CEC is part way through a primary level pilot called [Start Small; Dream Big](#) to test what an approach to infrastructure for career-related learning at primary could look like.

Careers Adviser - an accredited professional who offers individual guidance to students about their next steps, some may be employed by a secondary school or college but many operate across several institutions.

Classroom teacher (or college tutor) – responsible for planning and preparing lesson; monitoring and assessing progress; and pastoral care amongst other roles.

Headteacher – has overall responsibility for managing the school {?? For colleges??}

Curriculum lead – responsible for designing, implementing, and evaluating the learning experiences of students and teachers in line with the curriculum framework. Employers can support them to develop links to careers within the curriculum as an important way of exposing young people to a range of jobs and demonstrating the relevance of the subjects they study.

Careers Link Governor - Statutory guidance on careers says that secondary school boards should have a 'link governor' (on their governance board) who is responsible for "careers education and guidance" and who "encourages employer engagement".

Careers Hub Lead - Each careers hub has a dedicated hub lead. They bring together a group of secondary schools and FE and skills providers with partners in the business, public, education and voluntary sectors.

Enterprise Adviser - An Enterprise Adviser (EA) is a business volunteer from any industry sector or professional background that gives their time help build careers capabilities in a local school, special school, or college.

Enterprise Coordinator - The Enterprise Coordinator (EC) works from the local Careers Hub to help a group of schools, special schools and colleges improve their careers and enterprise programmes and to engage with the world of work.

Glossary

The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) - The national body for careers education in England, supporting schools and colleges to deliver modern, 21st century careers education.

Careers education - A term used in this report to encompass all aspects of secondary and college careers education - underpinned by the Gatsby Benchmark framework. The Gatsby Benchmarks are not applied at primary level.

Careers Hubs - Groups of secondary schools, colleges, employers and providers working together to improve careers education provision in a local area. Hub Leads oversee the work and target support. There are over 40 Careers Hubs across England, coordinated by the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC).

Cornerstone Employers - These are employers who work directly with Careers Hubs to provide the employer voice and support high quality careers education in their local region.

Gatsby Benchmarks - The eight aspects of high-quality secondary and college careers provision based on international evidence. Secondary Schools are responsible for delivering and reporting against them.

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each student
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

Special schools, SEND & AP - Special schools cater for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); Alternative provision schools (AP) settings provide education for students who can't go to a mainstream school.

Further reading:

Keeping children safe in education 2023

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181962/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023_-_part_one.pdf

HSE advice on work experience visits (including risk assessments and insurance):

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/young-workers/employer/work-experience.htm>

The Education Landscape

<https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/resources/education-landscape-guide-employers>

CEC's emerging work on Primary support

You can find out more about best practice at primary level on the [CEC's Primary Platform](#). Currently this is largely aimed at Careers Leaders but this will evolve over time.

