



Careers Programme

2025-2026

~

Preparation for Adulthood

1. Vision and Strategic Intent

The MacIntyre School careers programme is a specialised framework designed to prepare pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Autism (ASD) for meaningful adult lives.

At MacIntyre, careers education is synonymous with Preparation for Adulthood (PfA). We recognize that for our learners, progress is measured through the development of communication, independence, and the ability to participate actively in their communities, prioritizing "work tolerance" and functional life skills over competitive employment alone. The five core aims of the programme are:

- **Independence:** Developing work-related and life skills to support autonomous living and personal agency.
- **Community Participation:** Enabling pupils to understand, navigate, and actively participate in their local environment.
- **Work related skills:** Building routines, stamina, and the ability to follow functional work systems and structures.
- **Individual Strengths:** Identifying and nurturing specific preferences, motivators, and sensory profiles to find appropriate pathways.
- **Transition Preparation:** Equipping both pupils and their families with the tools and knowledge for successful post-school transitions.

2. The Role of the Careers Advisor and Support Network

Formal careers support begins in Year 7, where pupils meet with a Careers Advisor to begin a lifelong process of exploring aspirations. This support is integrated into the annual Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) review process to ensure long-term stability.

Role	Key Responsibility
Senior Leadership Team	Provides strategic oversight, ensuring careers is at the heart of leadership and integrated into school development.
Careers Lead	Coordinates work-related learning, manages employer partnerships, and tracks individual student outcomes.
Teaching Staff	Delivers embedded careers learning in the classroom and maintains the Career Discovery Profiles.
Therapy & Residential Teams	Supports the generalisation of work and life skills across all daily environments and routines.
Local Authorities	Provide external careers advice, aligning educational pathways with specific EHCP outcomes.
Bucks Skills Hub	Provide support and guidance for key responsibilities and resources available across Buckinghamshire.
Transition Support Workers (TSWs)	Facilitates direct contact with families and home environments to support individualised transition plans.
Transitions Facilitator	Working closely with families and professional to collate and share all key information and facilitate transitions with an individualised approach

The Role of the Careers Advisor & Individual Planning

- To address the highly specific needs of our learners, our Careers Advisor takes a deeply holistic, person-centred approach
- Wider Exploration (Year 7 to Year 10): The Careers Advisor meets with pupils to observe and explore what they enjoy and want to try
- She works closely with the wider team around the child to gather relevant information for their futures.
- Focused Transition Planning (Year 10 Onwards): From Year 10, the Advisor works closely with the young people to establish specific work-related opportunities they want to access
- Individual Plans & Career Discovery Profiles: The Advisor creates bespoke individual transition plans that support conversations around their future
- These form the basis of a Career Discovery Profile, which tracks each pupil's communication methods (including AAC), sensory preferences, environmental tolerances, motivators, and adult support needs.

3. Core Employability and Life Skills

Employability and Life Skills priorities are fully individualised to each learner. There are key skills refer to and build on to ensure learners can focus on particular areas of need. These skills include: Receiving Communication, Sharing communication, problem-solving, creativity, work tolerance and Emotional Regulation, Independence and Self-Care, Self-Advocacy and Responsibility, and Shared Participation and Turn taking. For our young people, all these concepts are heavily adapted to focus on Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) to match their individual abilities and their emerging skills.

4. Buckinghamshire Labour Market Information (LMI) 2025-2026

In line with statutory guidance, we ensure that all pupils, parents, and staff have access to good-quality, up-to-date information about future pathways and labour market opportunities

We use this LMI centrally in our strategic planning to identify the key skills local employers need, and embed these into our curriculum.

While traditional Labour Market Information is not always directly applicable to the specific adult pathways of some of our learners with complex needs, this in no way limits our high aspirations for their futures

Our pupils require different or additional information to make sense of the world of work, we adapt local Buckinghamshire LMI into highly accessible formats, using symbols, pictures, and simplified text, we make this information accessible on displays around the school so learners can become familiar with growing local sectors like Health and Social Care, Retail, Construction, and Catering.

In addition to this, our Careers Advisor refers to these LMI insights when exploring opportunities and recommending tailored resources. However, her approach is fundamentally person-centred: she is always guided first and foremost by the individual learner's unique interests, strengths, and skills. By blending local market insights with a deep understanding of each pupil, she ensures that every placement or opportunity she finds is a meaningful and aspirational fit for that young person.

5. Meeting and Evaluating Against the Gatsby Benchmarks

To ensure our provision remains highly effective and responsive to our pupils' needs, we self-assess our practice against the eight Gatsby Benchmarks on a termly basis. This regular evaluation cycle allows us to clearly identify areas of strength and weakness within our current provision. The insights gained from this self-assessment directly feed back into our strategic planning, helping us to continuously adapt, tailor, and improve both our careers programme and our wider school curriculum.

Benchmark 1: A Stable Careers Programme

Our programme is structured developmentally, sequenced carefully from Year 7 to Post-16, and directly linked to EHCP outcomes and PfA principles. It is thoroughly understood by staff, embedded in our curriculum, and shared with parents to ensure consistency between school and home. Driven by our termly self-assessments, the programme is regularly evaluated and updated to increase its impact for every learner.

Benchmark 2: Learning from Career and Labour Market Information (LMI)

We ensure that all pupils, parents, and staff have access to relevant, up-to-date information about future pathways and opportunities. Because young people with SEND often require different or additional information to make sense of the world of work, we adapt local LMI into highly accessible formats using symbols and pictures to display around the school. (Please refer to our dedicated Labour Market Information section for detailed insights). We embed this information into our curriculum at developmentally appropriate levels, and our Careers Advisor uses these insights to help inform "Next Steps" decisions and transition reviews, although our approach remains fundamentally person-centred, guided first and foremost by the individual learner's unique interests, strengths, and skills to maintain our high aspirations for their futures.

Benchmark 3: Addressing the Needs of Each Young Person

No two pathways are the same. We tailor support to the unique sensory and communication needs of every pupil. Through the individual plans created by our Careers Advisor and the maintenance of Career Discovery Profiles, we meticulously track individual participation, preferences, and progress to ensure transitions are seamless and that any barriers to progression are addressed.

Benchmark 4: Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers

Careers education is not an isolated subject. Because we follow a non-subject specific, semi-formal curriculum focused on functional skills, careers education is seamlessly embedded across all learning rather than treated as an isolated topic. Our curricular areas align with the core employability and essential life skills our young people need for their adult pathways. For example, learning within My communication and My problem solving directly builds the ability

to interact, appropriately ask for help, and navigate workplace tasks safely. My independence and My creativity develop essential self-care, routine adherence, and the sensory tolerance needed for community and enterprise activities. Meanwhile, The world about Me, My Wellbeing, and My safety help pupils understand community roles, engage safely with external environments, and build the emotional regulation necessary for work endurance. By explicitly linking these functional curriculum areas to work-related contexts, all staff support learners in applying their skills to the real world. Furthermore, findings from our termly benchmark self-assessments are continuously used to shape these curriculum priorities.

Benchmark 5: Encounters with Employers and Employees

Employer encounters are adapted to focus on sensory experiences, tolerance and key skill building rather than traditional discussions. This includes workplace demonstrations within the school, exploring the "tools of the trade" (such as hands-on construction sessions or pamper days), or having local community professionals visit the classroom in uniform. The opportunities provided are carefully selected and the staff team work closely with employers to support appropriate adaptation in order to make the encounters meaningful for the young people who access it.

Benchmark 6: Experiences of Workplaces

We offer a highly structured, phased approach to workplace experiences:

Internal School-Based WRL: Before leaving the site, pupils practice routines in a safe environment. Jobs include running the school tuck shop, shredding paper, watering plants, sorting laundry, and working in the school café.

External Community-Based WRL: As work stamina and tolerance build, pupils access supported placements in the community. Familiarity is prioritised over variety. Opportunities include local charity shops, animal care, community-run libraries, and local cafés amongst others.

Benchmark 7: Encounters with Further and Higher Education (and Adult Services)

For our pupils, "Further Education" encompasses colleges, supported internships, independent training providers, and adult social care or supported living environments. We host Post-16 evenings, facilitate transition visits to next provisions, and invite alumni (former students) to return and show our current pupils what successful transitions look like.

Benchmark 8: Personal Guidance

Our Careers Advisor drives this benchmark by providing expert, tailored personal guidance. This takes the form of ongoing child-centred sessions, Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) meetings, and annual EHCP reviews. The Advisor works seamlessly with the teaching staff, therapists, and Transition Support Workers to ensure that parents and pupils are fully supported in taking their next steps.

6. Developmental Progression: Year 7 to Year 14

Year 7: Exploration & Awareness

- Focus: Understanding people, places, and routines beyond the classroom.
- Key Experiences: Visiting the school office/kitchen; engage in class based jobs, learning about job roles in the immediate environment and job roles of people who help us, sensory exploration of tools and uniforms.
- Skills Developed: Transition tolerance; making simple choices using AAC or objects; following instructions; sharing materials and turn taking.

Year 8-9: Participation & Routine Building

- Focus: Participating in work-related activities and initiating personalised planning.
- Key Experiences: Regular classroom jobs; Exploring likes and dislikes; initial PfA discussions.
- Skills Developed: Turn-taking; requesting help; understanding work "start/finish" concepts; Following Instructions, Communicating with others; Problem solving

Year 10-11: Work Exploration & Skill Building

- Focus: Developing awareness of different work environments and increasing independence.
- Key Experiences: Access to internal work areas; running the school Tuck Shop (Enterprise Group) or other small enterprises.
- Skills Developed: Following visual work systems; working alongside unfamiliar adults; work stamina.

Year 12-14: Preparation for Adult Pathways & Transition

- Focus: Generalising skills in real-world community environments.
- Key Experiences: Individualised community work placements; travel training; visits to post-16/adult provisions as appropriate.
- Skills Developed: Work endurance; self-advocacy; confidence in diverse community settings; Communicating with less familiar people.

7. Work-Related Learning (WRL) Opportunities

The class teachers work closely with the Senior Leadership Team and the Careers advisor to establish which opportunities are best for each individual pupil. They work together to liaise with employer or professionals on site to build on a suitable work placement. The priorities for learning are planned ahead and reviewed as necessary. All Work-Related Learning Opportunities are tailored to the individual and adapted to the right level to make the experience enriching and meaningful.

There is a range of School-Based and Community-Based Opportunities available for the pupils to explore. The initial encounters in Years 7 to 10 are designed to give a broad experience and enable pupils to learn about different skills necessary for specific job roles, while in Years 10 to 14 the pupils focus on narrowing down to specific interests or specific sectors and building on experience around these.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Personalised Discovery

To ensure our careers provision remains highly effective, inclusive, and responsive to our pupils' complex needs, we have robust systems in place for tracking individual progress and evaluating the programme's overall impact:

- Curriculum Integration and Assessment: Careers education is not standalone; priority learning and key employability skills are explicitly included in our curriculum maps. Progress against these functional, work-related, and life skills is assessed at the end of each academic year to measure development and inform future planning.
- Personalised Careers Plans: Bespoke careers plans (incorporating our Career Discovery Profiles) are created for each pupil with the direct support of the Careers Lead. To ensure these align with the pupil's wider Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) goals, these individual plans are actively discussed, reviewed, and assessed during annual EHCP meetings, as well as at other key progress checkpoints throughout the year
- Leadership Oversight: The Senior Leadership Team maintains strategic oversight of the careers provision. They actively oversee the programme to monitor the access of all learners to work-related opportunities, regularly checking to ensure there is a broad, equitable, and balanced level of access to these vital experiences for all pupils across the school

9. Review and Equality Statement

MacIntyre School is committed to equality of opportunity. All pupils access careers education regardless of the complexity of their needs or communication style. Provision is adapted to ensure meaningful participation for every learner.

Document Owner: Kate Stopa - Careers Lead and Senior Leadership Team

Review Frequency: Annual

Next Review Date: September 2026