



# MARY ELLIOT ACADEMY

## Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy (CEIAG)

Version: 1

Ratified by the Board of Trustees

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To be reviewed every 2 years: December 2025

**Contents**

1. Rationale .....3

2. Our Ethos.....4

3. The Gatsby Benchmarks .....5

4. Careers Framework.....6

5. Careers Skills – Personal Development .....7

6. Pathway Aims .....7

7. Dropdown days .....8

8. Work Experience and Community Participation.....9

9. Other Careers Links ..... 10

10. LMI..... 11

11. Quality Assurance & Measuring Impact..... 12

12. External Links ..... 13

13. Changes ..... 13

## 1. Rationale

- 1.1. At Mary Elliot Academy, our careers vision is 'Preparing for Life'. We acknowledge the importance of building a strong set of transferable skills, to ensure that all of our young people are fully equipped and prepared for both life in the community and within the world of work. We aim to prepare all students for the changing labour market, the demands of career roles that may not even exist at present, and for adapting to life after school when moving on to college, employment, or social care settings. We will do this through encouraging the development six transferable skills through our Skills for Success programme. The embedding of these six key skills during our half-termly dropdown days will further support our young people to feel confident, prepared and empowered to take their next steps towards their future pathways.
- 1.2. We pride ourselves in our mission to provide equity across all differing pathways, and our planned careers activities will hold a golden thread throughout the school, to ensure all learners across all stages are given equal opportunities to develop their skill-sets. We also aim to further develop community participation through external visits, and working with external providers, in order to develop a collaborative approach in which our learners experience careers-based outcomes, and our working partners broaden their awareness of our learners' needs and talents.
- 1.3. The careers strategy aims to broaden student experience and knowledge, and to support young people and their families resulting in:
  - Well informed individuals, confident in making decisions about their future.
  - Self-sufficient citizens able to live healthy, enjoyable and fulfilling lives.
  - Well-prepared individuals, equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to follow their chosen pathway through life.

## 2. Our Ethos

- 2.1. We will continue working on the following key mindset changes as our new whole-school initiatives are rolled out:
- Careers is an integral part of all new curriculum provision, not a bolt-on
  - Careers doesn't just mean 'jobs'. It's about empowering and supporting our learners to make choices and engage in activities that will develop their skills for life after school
  - Transferable 'careers' skills should be embedded throughout the new curriculum – in all curriculum subjects and schemes of work
  - External visits are key for testing the transferable skills developed in school to real-life situations
  - All learners should have equitable access to careers provision and activities should be adapted to suit ranging needs
- 2.2. Further to this, we also aim to work with parents and carers, so that careers-focused approaches are at the forefront of our offer. We aim to improve the following:
- Parent and carer understanding of what 'careers' means for all of our students
  - Developing growth mindset and a 'can do' approach to stretch and challenge our learners to be the best that they can be
  - A greater understanding of what offer is available for life after school
  - Willingness to involve the students in their own pathway-making decisions

### 3. The Gatsby Benchmarks

3.1. The Gatsby Benchmarks define what high quality careers provision in educational settings should look like, and provides a clear framework for which educational settings should follow, and be audited against.

<b>Benchmark 1</b>	<b>A stable careers programme</b>	Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by pupils, parents, teachers and employers.
<b>Benchmark 2</b>	<b>Learning from career and labour market information</b>	Every pupil, and their parents, should have access to good-quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.
<b>Benchmark 3</b>	<b>Addressing the needs of each pupil</b>	Pupils have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each pupil. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.
<b>Benchmark 4</b>	<b>Linking curriculum learning to careers</b>	All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. For example, STEM subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.
<b>Benchmark 5</b>	<b>Encounters with employers and employees</b>	Every pupil should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.
<b>Benchmark 6</b>	<b>Experiences of workplaces</b>	Every pupil should have first-hand experiences* of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.
<b>Benchmark 7</b>	<b>Encounters with further and higher education</b>	All pupils should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.
<b>Benchmark 8</b>	<b>Personal guidance</b>	Every pupil should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a careers adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level.

#### **4. Careers Framework**

4.1. Intent

4.2. We intend to provide a broad and aspirational Careers Programme which:

- Is accessible to every young person regardless of their needs or ability.
- Plans and implements personalised pathways based around individual needs
- Raises aspirations and is ambitious for all learners.
- Provides young people and parents with quality information and guidance around future opportunities
- Adheres to all appropriate statutory guidance

4.3. Implementation

4.4. The careers programme will be threaded through all curriculum activities, alongside our Rights Respecting Schools and student voice activities, which have a strong focus on developing learners' understanding of their own rights as well as global citizenship. This in turn prepares students to think about their futures, develop their thoughts and opinions on possible pathway opportunities, and provides ample activities to explore their own identity, engage in future preparation, and develop essential transferable skills ready for life after school.

4.5. The Careers lead and other key people within school are dedicated to working collaboratively with wider providers, businesses, and agencies such as the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and Talentino Careers, in order to raise the aspirations of our young people and provide them with everything they need to succeed.

4.6. Mary Elliot Academy is committed to sharing careers information and updates with parents and carers through our website, Class Dojo, academy events, and personalised meetings. Students will access exposure to a range of transition events with potential providers and placements to allow them to make informed choices about their future pathway post-Mary Elliot Academy, in order to prepare them for adulthood.

4.7. This provision includes:

- 'Preparing for Adulthood' meetings which parents are involved in, alongside a range of professionals
- CEIAG meetings. Our qualified, impartial, external careers advisor works closely with the academy and careers lead in order to provide the most up to date information on next steps and transition pathways.
- Careers and Curriculum Open Evenings, where a range of external providers attend to continue offering further support, information, and guidance on next steps pathways.

4.8. The result of this process will be empowered learners, who are able to make decisions for themselves (or contribute to decision-making) as a result of the development of their student voice and understanding of their rights (see linked policies: Student Voice and RRSA).

## 5. Careers Skills – Personal Development

5.1. The table below shows how the six transferable skills threaded throughout our curriculum and careers programme feed into our wider vision and values at Mary Elliot Academy.

Mary Elliot Academy – Vision and Values					
Aspiration	Respect	Independence	Community	Resilience	
Mary Elliot Academy – Skills for Success					
Creativity	Teamwork	Communication	Problem-solving	Self-management	Resilience

## 6. Pathway Aims

6.1. Our framework is split into three pathways, reflecting our curriculum areas of ASC, SLD and PMLD, which lead through Key Stages 3, 4 and 5.

### Curriculum Pathway Aims

The PMLD Careers curriculum will support students to:

- Meaningfully participate and belong within their communities
- Develop their understanding of the world, people, and places around them.
- Understand their own daily routines and experiences through appropriate methods of communication.
- Learn to manage their own emotions and regulate their behaviour to cope with new and challenging situations in order to access a wider range of life experiences.
- Make effective life choices and express preferences
- Develop an awareness of who or which provisions may be able to provide them with an enriched future pathway

The ASC Careers curriculum will support students to:

- Become functional members of society, by equipping them with the skills to cope with the challenges that face them in everyday life.
- Develop their understanding of themselves, others and the social expectations in the wider community.
- Develop functional communication skills and tools to make their requests and feelings known.
- Develop and learn social skills to engage with family, peers and the wider community.
- Raise levels of independence, preparing them for adulthood, and life beyond Mary Elliot Academy

The SLD Careers curriculum will support students to:

- Become active members of society.
- Understand their community and the wider world.
- Develop their communication, independence, and confidence levels.
- Become more independent and learn transferable life skills.
- Make meaningful life choices such as healthy living, managing money and expressing their opinion.
- Raise aspirations, and challenge perception and possibility of paid work
- Fully prepare for college, independent living and the world of work

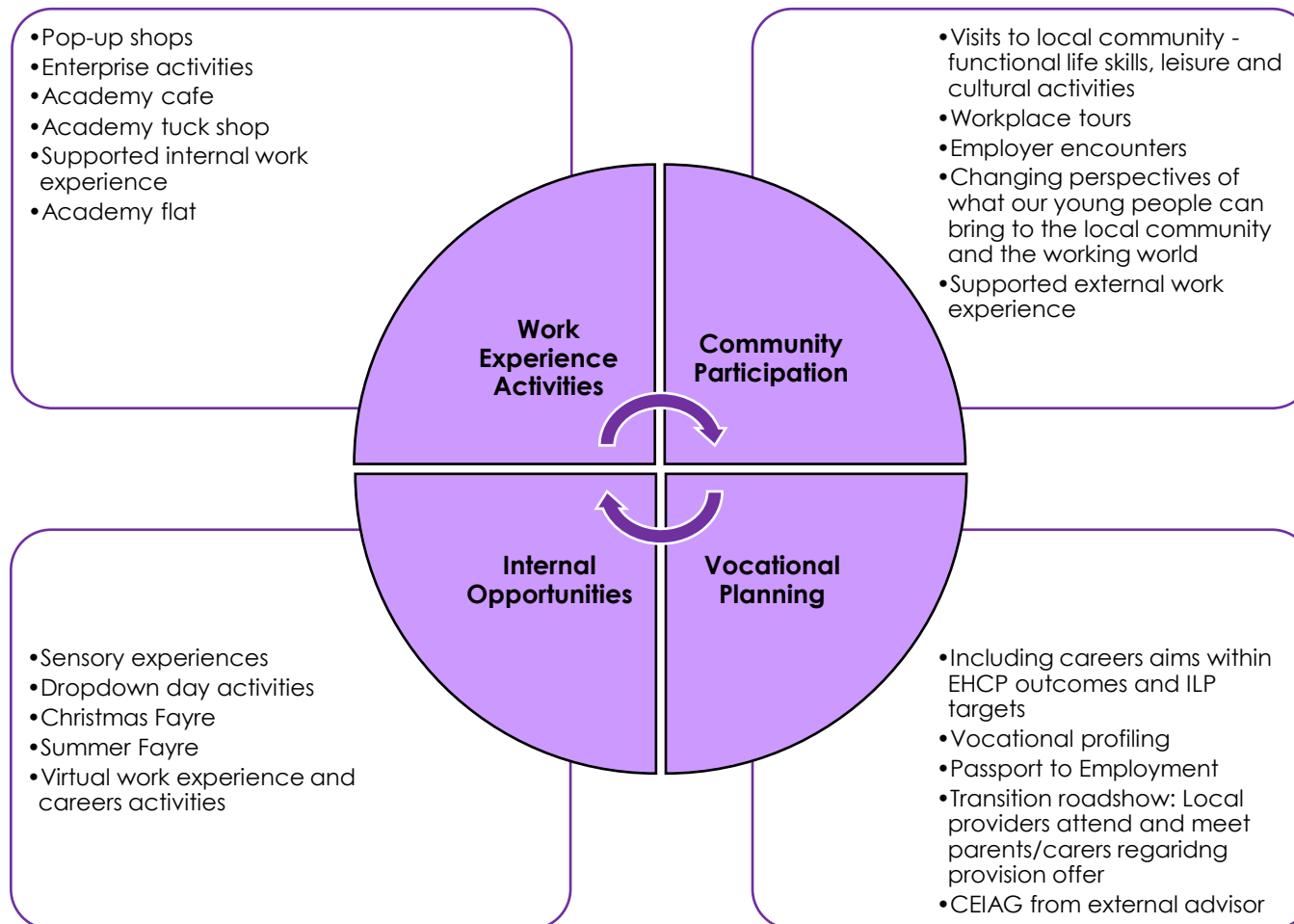
## 7. Dropdown days

- 7.1. Students will engage in a half-termly dropdown day, dedicated to specific learning towards Preparation for Adulthood. Dropdown days will include activities about the world of work, links to current LMI themes and trends, development of the six skills for success, in-house work experience activities, and educational visits. There will be a common LMI-focused theme across the academy during these dropdown days with activities to suit ranging needs, which ensures that all learners have equitable access to personal development experiences.



## 8. Work Experience and Community Participation

8.1. Throughout their time at Mary Elliot Academy, there are a range of work experience and community participation encounters, listed below. These experiences, alongside the skills for success are mapped across each curriculum pathway and the learning objectives within. This provides us with a strong basis to further develop future provision for a wide-ranging programme of careers-related experiences.



## 9. Other Careers Links

9.1. The listed activities are promoted throughout the academy, and across all key stages, and differentiated across diversities.

### Academy-based Activities

- **Careers Week Activities:** Based on current LMI trends.
- **Enrichment Days and Assemblies:** Celebrating National Awareness days including observance days, charity fundraising, religious festivals, customs and traditions, and staying safe.
- **British values & Cultural capital:** Promoting qualities such as personal choice, tolerance, identity, and global citizenship.
- **Mini Enterprise:** Participating in activities throughout the year in-school such as Christmas and Summer Fayres, as well as through the WMCA pop-up shop programme.
- **Community Links:** Students participate in a range of leisure & cultural activities within the community, including shopping trips, and functional educational visits such as to supermarkets, visitor attractions, the horse-riding centre, art gallery, and library.
- **Transition training:** Where appropriate, students will complete travel training and transition visits to 16+ education or social care providers, to help them work towards their next steps pathways.

### Student Rights and Student Voice

- **UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools:** Students develop an understanding of their own rights, improve choice-making skills and advocate for their own needs and wishes.
- **Student Voice:** Students collaborate with less familiar peers and staff, develop skills around teamwork and negotiation, and work towards a common goal. Key themes are based on democracy, voting, sharing opinions, and decision-making.
- **Vocational Profiling:** From year 9 onwards, staff begin build vocational profiles for each student. Learners participate in careers-related discussions, input their views, and prepare for transitioning to life after school
- **Life and Supported Living Skills:** Students develop an understanding of their needs and routines, preferred communication skills, and independence. Students are supported to develop life skills such as food preparation and property management using our academy flat for real-life experience.

### External Agencies

- **Talentino – Careers at every level:** The 'Careers at Every Level' programme has a dedicated framework for the use of young people with profound and multiple needs.
- **Annual Reviews:** Teachers and wider professionals work as an MDT to offer advice and guidance on transition and future destination pathways. From year 9, annual reviews have a greater focus on preparation for adulthood, with a focus on learner voice.
- **Careers Advisor:** Our independent and impartial careers advisor supports students, parents and caregivers as part of the transition process. Student voice is encouraged throughout this process.
- **Multi-agency Working:** We maintain a regular dialogue with SALT, OT, VI, HI, EP, CAMHS, social services, and LD community nurses where appropriate and relevant. Colleges, training providers, and health and social care practitioners may also take part in visits when working towards next steps pathways.



West Midlands  
Combined Authority



Preparing for  
*Adulthood*



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**Walsall Council**

## 10. LMI

10.1. The current Labour Market information for Walsall (2023) shows the following:

Most vacancies in 2022 were within the following sectors:

- healthcare
- education
- administration
- sales
- customer service

Most jobs for 2023 are within the following sectors:

- retail and wholesale
- health and social care
- administration
- education
- manufacturing
- transport and storage

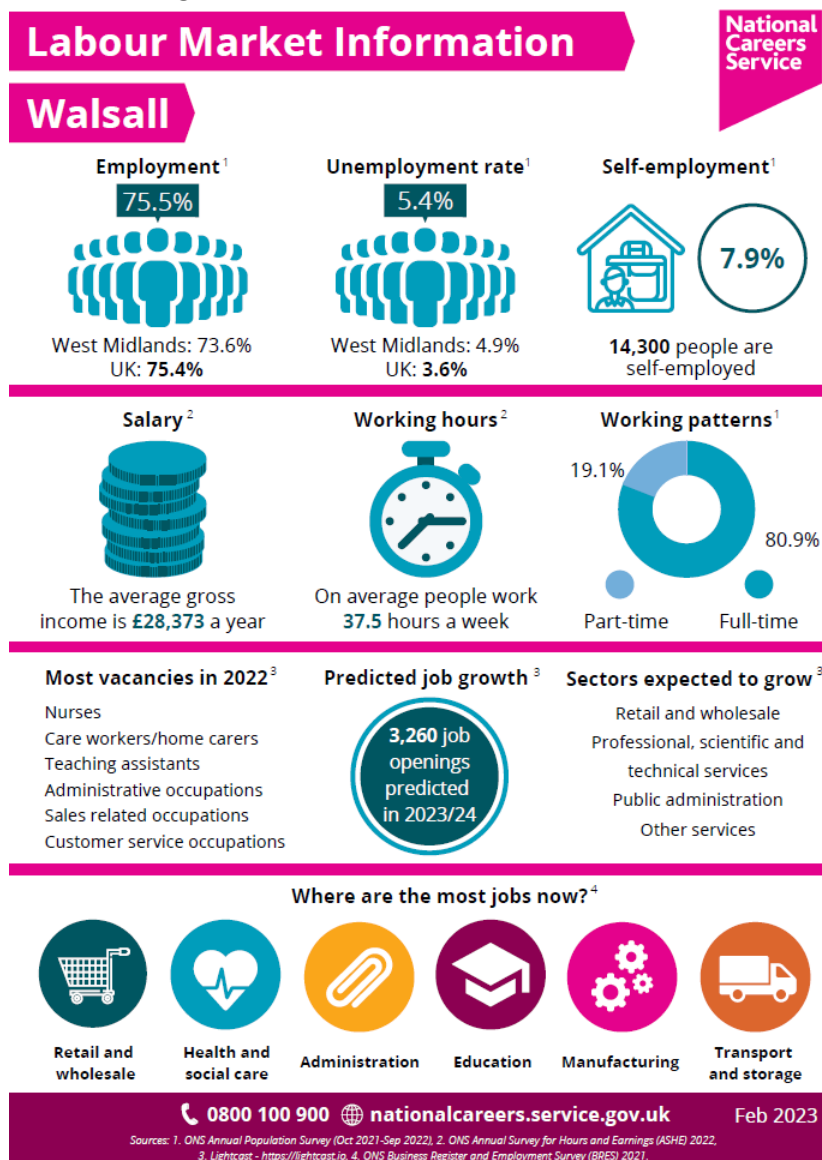
The sectors expected to grow are:

- retail and wholesale
- professional, scientific and technical services
- public administration
- other services

LMI will be spotlighted during our half-termly dropdown days and careers week activities to ensure the skills and knowledge of these careers is developed by students at all levels.

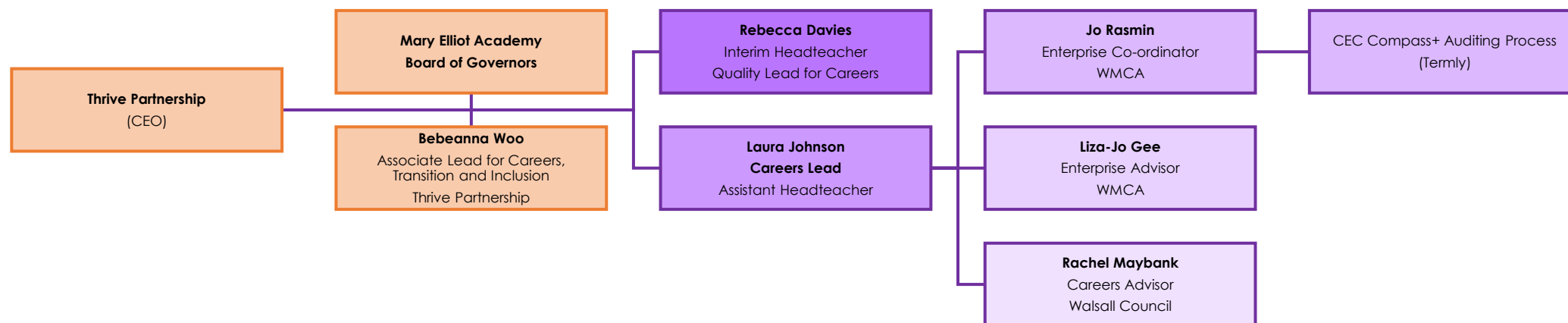
This includes activities such as:

- Experiential activities, through external visits wherever possible but also facilitated in school
- 'Job in a box' activities
- Guest speaker visits or virtual talks
- Sensory experiences



## 11. Quality Assurance & Measuring Impact

- 11.1. The MEA careers lead is held accountable by a range of external stakeholders, which ensures that the Mary Elliot Academy Careers Programme is evaluated and scrutinised on a regular basis throughout the academic year. This allows us to continue to develop a robust provision, and build more opportunities into our regular offer, through continued contact and work with our external providers and the Enterprise partners they are support us to foster links with.
- 11.2. The Careers lead regularly reports to our Academy Governing Body with updates on strategies and initiatives, and progress made.



- 11.3. The CEC Compass+ audit measures how much progress we have made towards each of the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks and is completed on a termly basis, by the MEA careers lead and our WMCA Enterprise Co-ordinator. This will allow us to collaboratively identify strengths and areas for development at key points throughout the academic year and seek further support for areas which require the most development. There are also regular meetings with the other external agencies in the QA flowchart, enabling us to work collaboratively with external partners and agencies to continue building our offer for a wide range of careers-based opportunities for our learners.

11.4. The Compass+ tool allows all activities and experiences to be recorded for individuals, providing a personalised careers journey throughout school. Careers activities are analysed throughout the academic year to gauge their effectiveness and are adapted accordingly for each cohort. Destination data is also analysed to assess the effectiveness of the careers programme, as well as providing us with vital feedback on the availability of provision for future leavers.

## 12. External Links

- <https://www.base-uk.org/knowledge/send-gatsby-benchmark-toolkit>
- <https://www.goodcareerguidance.org.uk/support-and-tools/send>
- <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/schools/send/>
- <https://www.thecdi.net/>
- <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/careers-advice/education-advice-disabled-special-educational-needs>
- <https://send.walsall.gov.uk/preparing-adulthood>
- <https://send.walsall.gov.uk/preparing-adulthood/employment-and-training>
- <https://www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/careers-hub/>
- <https://www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/careers-hub/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send/>
- <https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/preparing-for-adulthood-all-tools-resources>

## 13. Changes

Description	Date	Page	Section