



Careers strategic plan – King James I Academy

Vision

Our vision is to deliver an INSPIRE careers programme that enables all learners to make informed, ambitious, and realistic decisions about their future pathways. Every student will leave education with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to succeed in further education, training, or employment.

Rationale

High-quality CEIAG ensures equitable access to guidance, supports key transition points, and prepares learners for an evolving labour market. Targeted support is provided for SEND, disadvantaged learners, and those at risk of NEET. The programme is structured, progressive, and aligned with statutory guidance and the Gatsby Benchmarks.

Intent

- Equip learners to make informed next-step choices
- Raise aspirations and challenge stereotypes
- Develop career readiness and employability skills
- Align learning with local and national labour market needs
- Fully meet Gatsby Benchmarks 1–8

Implementation (INSPIRE Framework)

I – Inclusive (Gatsby Benchmark 3)

An inclusive and impartial careers programme that meets the needs of all learners. Targeted support ensures that students with SEND, disadvantaged learners, and those at risk of becoming NEET receive appropriate guidance and timely intervention.

N – Next Steps focused (Gatsby Benchmarks 4 & 7)

Learners receive clear, up-to-date information on next steps, including technical qualifications, apprenticeships, and higher education pathways that meet PAL requirements. All students are supported to understand progression routes and entry requirements.

S – Supported Transitions (Gatsby Benchmarks 3 & 8)

Students are supported to make effective and sustained transitions at key points, including post-16 and post-18. Personal guidance is provided to ensure learners are prepared for their next stage of education, training, or employment.

P – Personalised and Progressive (Gatsby Benchmarks 1 & 3)

The careers programme is structured, progressive, and tailored to individual needs. It builds careers knowledge, employability skills, and decision-making over time, supported by accurate tracking and evaluation.

I – Integrated into the Curriculum (Gatsby Benchmark 4)

Careers learning is embedded across the curriculum. Subject leaders and teachers link learning to careers and pathways, enabling students to understand how their education connects to future opportunities.

R – Responsive to the Labour Market (Gatsby Benchmark 2)

The programme is informed by up-to-date local, regional, and national labour market information (LMI). Students develop an understanding of current and future employment trends and skills demands.

E – Employer Engagement (Gatsby Benchmarks 5 & 6)

Students have meaningful encounters with employers and employees and access to high-quality experiences of the workplace. These encounters raise aspirations, challenge stereotypes, and develop employability skills.

Impact

- Learners make informed, ambitious next-step decisions
- Effective and sustained post-16/post-18 transitions
- Improved career readiness and employability skills
- Disadvantaged learners and SEND students well supported
- Positive destination outcomes for all learners

Key Strategic Priorities

1. Strengthen parental and carer engagement by embedding meaningful involvement in learners' career journeys, ensuring families are well-informed and able to actively support their child's career readiness and progression.
2. Design and deliver a high-quality, progressive Work Experience programme that engages all learners, builds essential employability skills, and fully meets the expectations of the new Work Experience Guarantee.
3. Ensure all learners have access to accurate, up-to-date Labour Market Information (LMI) and are supported to interpret and apply this information effectively to make informed choices about learning pathways and career decisions.

Priority 1 – To Strengthen parental and carer engagement by embedding meaningful involvement in learners’ career journeys, ensuring families are well-informed and able to actively support their child’s career readiness and progression.

Objectives	Outcomes	Actions	Responsible	Timescale
<p>Embed parental engagement within the careers programme. (Benchmarks 1 & 3)</p> <p>Parental and carer engagement will be explicitly embedded across the whole-school careers programme for all year groups with families engaging in one or more careers activities, including engagement from priority groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parental engagement is clearly planned and referenced in the published careers programme. - Parents and carers understand how and when they can engage at each stage. - Priority families are supported through targeted and personalised approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update the published careers programme to include parental engagement by year group. - Identify priority families (SEND, disadvantaged, at risk of NEET) and plan targeted support. - Track parental engagement through attendance, digital access, and feedback. 	<p>Careers leader, SENCO, careers advisor and form tutors will be involved.</p>	<p>September 2026</p>
<p>Improve parental understanding of pathways and career information. (Benchmarks 2 & 4)</p> <p>Parents and carers will receive regular, structured careers information covering labour market information, subject choices, and post-16/post-18 pathways, with improved engagement and increased confidence in supporting career decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents demonstrate improved understanding of qualification routes and progression pathways. - Families actively support informed subject and option choices. - Learners receive consistent guidance at school and at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce termly careers communications for parents (newsletters, guides, webinars). - Provide clear subject-to-career pathway information at key decision points. - Gather parent feedback to evaluate understanding and confidence. 	<p>Carers Leader, careers advisor, school office/admin (to record parent feedback) parents focus group.</p>	<p>September 2026</p>
<p>Involve parents in progression planning and key transition points. (Benchmarks 7 & 8)</p> <p>Parents and carers will be actively involved at key transition points (options, post-16 and post-18), with engagement in FE/HE/apprenticeship events or personal guidance processes, contributing to improved positive and sustained destinations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents attend or access FE, HE, and apprenticeship information and events. - Families feel confident supporting applications and next steps. - Learners demonstrate increased career readiness, with reduced NEET risk and improved destinations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite parents to attend or access transition-focused careers events and resources. - Share outcomes of personal guidance interviews with parents where appropriate. - Monitor destinations data and link outcomes to parental engagement levels. 	<p>Careers leader, careers advisor, Head of sixth form, tutors and teachers.</p>	<p>September 2026</p>

Priority 2 – To Design and deliver a high-quality, progressive Work Experience programme that engages all learners, builds essential employability skills, and fully meets the expectations of the new Work Experience Guarantee.

Objectives	Outcomes	Actions	Responsible	Timescale
<p>Establish a structured, progressive Work Experience programme. (Benchmarks 1 & 3)</p> <p>A clearly structured and progressive Work Experience programme will be implemented across all year groups, ensuring all learners complete a minimum of two meaningful work experience encounters aligned to their needs, interests, and future pathways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work Experience is clearly mapped across year groups and published within the careers programme. - All learners, including SEND and disadvantaged pupils, access meaningful placements or equivalent experiences. - The programme meets the full expectations of the Work Experience Guarantee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Map Work Experience opportunities across KS3, KS4, and KS5 to ensure progression. - Develop inclusive alternatives where traditional placements are not appropriate. - Publish the Work Experience programme and expectations for learners, parents, and employers. 	Careers leader, careers advisor, tutors, Head of years, head of key stage	Ongoing as the new work experience guarantee is implemented
<p>Strengthen employability skills through high-quality preparation and reflection. (Benchmarks 4 & 6)</p> <p>All learners undertaking Work Experience will complete structured preparation, reflection, and evaluation activities demonstrating measurable improvement in employability skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners are well-prepared for placements and understand employer expectations. - Reflection activities demonstrate growth in skills such as communication, teamwork, and professionalism. - Employers provide positive feedback on learner readiness and conduct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where appropriate deliver pre-placement employability workshops and employer briefings. - Introduce structured reflection tools (logs, presentations, skills audits). - Collect and analyse employer and learner feedback. 	Careers leader, form tutors, teachers of personal development, employers, parents	Milestones at various points throughout the work experience process
<p>Secure high-quality employer engagement and sustained outcomes (Benchmarks 5 & 6)</p> <p>Develop a diverse and sustainable network of employers to support Work Experience, ensuring placements are aligned to learner interests or career aspirations, contributing to improved career readiness and positive destinations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners access a broad range of high-quality placements across sectors. - Employers report meaningful engagement and clear benefits from participation. - Learners demonstrate increased confidence, motivation, and progression clarity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build and maintain employer partnerships across key local and growth sectors. - Match learners to placements using career interests and guidance outcomes. - Track destination data and evaluate the impact of Work Experience on progression. 	Careers leader, careers advisor, admin staff (recording destinations)	Milestones at various points throughout the work experience process and at the end of each placement/activity

Priority 3 – To Ensure all learners have access to accurate, up-to-date Labour Market Information (LMI) and are supported to interpret and apply this information effectively to make informed choices about learning pathways and career decisions.

Objectives	Outcomes	Actions	Responsible	Timescale
<p>Embed accurate, up-to-date LMI across the careers programme. (Benchmarks 1 & 2)</p> <p>Current and locally relevant LMI will be embedded across the whole-school careers programme and reviewed termly, ensuring all learners can access age-appropriate LMI resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LMI is clearly referenced in the published careers programme and schemes of work. - Learners regularly encounter up-to-date LMI in careers lessons and activities. - Inspectors can see a planned, systematic approach to LMI delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and quality-assure trusted national and local LMI sources. - Schedule reviews to update LMI content and resources. - Publish accessible LMI resources for learners, parents, and staff. 	Careers leader, head of department, all teaching staff	Planning to be in place by September 2026, ongoing
<p>Develop learners' ability to interpret and apply LMI. (Benchmarks 2 & 4)</p> <p>By the end of the academic year, all learners will receive explicit teaching and guidance on how to interpret and apply LMI, students demonstrating increased confidence in using LMI to inform subject, option, and pathway choices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners can explain what LMI is and why it matters. - Pupils make informed links between LMI, curriculum subjects, and future careers. - Improved quality of option and pathway choices based on evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver structured LMI-focused careers lessons and activities. - Embed LMI analysis into option choices, assemblies, and tutor programmes. - Use assessments, surveys, or reflections to measure learner understanding. 	Careers leader, careers advisor, personal development teachers, tutors	September 2026, ongoing reviews
<p>Use LMI to support personalised guidance and progression. (Benchmarks 3 & 8)</p> <p>LMI will be routinely used within personal guidance and transition planning, ensuring learners in key transition years can reference LMI when discussing career plans, contributing to improved positive and sustained destinations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners can articulate how LMI has influenced their decisions. - Personal guidance records evidence the use of LMI. - Reduced inappropriate pathway choices and lower NEET risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train careers staff and advisers to consistently use LMI in guidance sessions. - Integrate LMI prompts into guidance documentation and action plans. - Analyse destinations data to evaluate the impact of LMI-informed decisions. 	Careers advisor, careers leader	September 2026