

St Thomas More Catholic Academy Careers Guidance Policy 2026–27

Aims

This policy sets out the school's provision of impartial, independent and informed careers information, advice and guidance for all pupils. It explains how pupils, parents, staff and employers can access information about the school's careers programme.

High-quality careers guidance is central to pupils' future outcomes, and our provision aims to:

- Support pupils to prepare for the world of work by developing self-awareness, employability and career management skills
- Provide meaningful experiences and a clear understanding of the working world
- Increase pupils' awareness of the full range of education, training and career opportunities available to them
- Enable pupils to understand routes into careers they are interested in and to make well-informed choices about their next steps in education, employment or training
- Promote high aspirations, inclusion and equality of opportunity for all pupils

This policy is written in line with the Department for Education's statutory Careers guidance and access for education and training providers, updated in June 2026. The school has regard to the updated Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance, introduced for implementation from the 2025–26 academic year.

The statutory framework includes:

- The Education Act 1997
- The Education and Skills Act (2008)
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2008

This policy also reflects the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 and associated provider access legislation, which came into force in January 2023. The school provides the required





opportunities for pupils to hear directly from approved technical education and apprenticeship providers at the relevant key stages. The detailed statutory guidance including the timing and number of provider encounters, is set out in the school's Provider Access Policy Statement.



Education and training providers who wish to contribute to the school's careers programme should refer to the Provider Access Policy Statement, which explains how and when opportunities to access pupils are made available during the school year.

The school fulfils its duties under the Education Act 1997, as amended, and has regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers (June 2026), so that:

- The school ensures that independent careers guidance is available to pupils from Year 7 onwards.
- The school publishes details of its careers programme and careers leadership arrangements.

In line with statutory requirements, information about the school's careers programme is published on the school website.

The school complies with its legal duty under the provider access legislation (commonly referred to as the Baker Clause). The school is impartial and does not promote one pathway over another, ensuring that pupils are informed about academic, technical and vocational routes, including apprenticeships and training options. This policy should be read alongside the Provider Access Policy Statement and the annual Careers Programme Overview, which together set out how the school meets these duties in practice.

Roles and responsibilities

Careers leadership

A member of the senior leadership team has strategic oversight of careers provision and statutory compliance. The SLT Careers Lead is Georgia Murphy. She can be contacted on 01782 882900 or via gmurphy@stmca.org.uk.

The operational Careers Leader is Victoria Kerr, who holds a Level 6 Careers Leader qualification and is working towards qualified Careers Adviser Level 6. She can be contacted on 01782 882900 or via vkerr@stmca.org.uk.

James West, a Level 6 qualified Careers Adviser, works in school two days per week.





The careers team is responsible for developing, delivering, monitoring and reviewing the school's careers programme, working with senior leaders, curriculum leaders, pastoral teams and pastoral teams so that careers guidance is a whole-school responsibility. This includes:

- Planning and managing careers education, information, advice and guidance activities
- Managing the careers programme budget
- Supporting staff to embed careers learning within the curriculum
- Establishing and maintaining links with employers, education and training providers and careers organisations
- Working closely with the SENCO and other relevant staff to identify and meet the needs of pupils with SEND through personalised guidance and transition planning
- Working with the designated teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children to ensure careers guidance takes account of additional needs and personal education plans
- Reviewing the Provider Access Policy Statement annually in agreement with the governing board

The allocation of responsibilities across the CEIAG team ensures clear accountability for statutory compliance, Gatsby Benchmark delivery, destination tracking, employer engagement, provider access and targeted support for vulnerable groups, including pupils with SEND and those at risk of becoming NEET.

The diagram below outlines the key responsibilities across the CEIAG team

G Murphy Oversight of the CEIAG provision – Compass+ / Careers Hub Statutory duties - compliance Management of budget Recording of destinations data post 16 and 18 (in liaison with the sixth form and careers team) Parent Partnership / Alumni Website / social media Liaison with governors		
V Kerr (4 days) 8.30-4.30 L6 trained – CEIAG lead Working towards L6 Careers Adviser Core provision – KS3 and 4	J West (2 days) 8.30-4.30 L6 trained – Careers Adviser Y11 pathways – advice and guidance	SSO X3 Y7 University visit Y10 University visit Y12 University visits





L3 A level pathway (post 16)	Oversight of RONI process post-16	Honours CEIAG opportunities
University applications (post 18)	Post 18	
Careers within the curriculum	-Retention concerns	
(KS3-4) including work experience opportunities at KS4	-Employment / apprenticeship applications	SEND
Work Experience Lead (KS4)	Destination data collection and analysis	Oversight of EHCP and students with SEND
Oversight of Unifrog	AP students / Home visits	Additional transition for students with SEND

Senior leadership team (SLT)

The SLT will:

- Support the delivery and development of the careers programme
- Support the Careers Leader in implementing a strategic, progressive and compliant careers programme linked to wider school improvement
- Ensure the Careers Leader has sufficient time, training and resources to fulfil the role effectively
- Ensure education and training providers are able to access pupils in Years 8 to 13 in line with statutory requirements
- Support engagement with employers, education and training providers and external careers organisations

Governing board (Trust Vocations Champion)

The governing board will:

- Provide strategic oversight of the school's careers provision to ensure statutory compliance
- Nominate a governor to take a strategic interest in careers education and employer engagement
- Ensure independent and impartial careers guidance is available to all pupils from Year 7 to Year 13
- Ensure pupils receive information about a full range of post-16 and post-18 pathways
- Ensure the careers programme and Careers Leader details are published on the school website
- Ensure the school meets its legal duties under provider access legislation and that a Provider Access Policy Statement is published and reviewed





Parents and Carers:

Parents and carers are recognised as key partners in careers education. The school provides opportunities for parents and carers to access information, events, guidance resources and progression support throughout students' educational journeys. This includes careers guidance at parents' evenings and open evenings, together with access to the Unifrog Parent Portal from Autumn 2026.

Our careers programme

The school provides a stable, structured and progressive careers programme from Year 7 to Year 13. It supports pupils to explore options, understand pathways and make informed decisions about their future. The programme is sequenced appropriately, underpinned by clear learning outcomes and tailored to the needs of pupils. Independent and impartial careers guidance is provided from Year 7 onwards.

The programme is structured around the updated eight Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance:

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

In-line with this, students are provided with up-to-date local, regional and national labour market information to help them understand growth sectors, skills shortages, salary information and progression opportunities, enabling them to make informed decisions about future pathways.

The programme is impartial and promotes a full range of academic and technical pathways. It is progressive across key stages and designed to build pupils' understanding and confidence over time.

Delivery includes a universal entitlement for all pupils alongside targeted and personalised activities to meet individual needs. This is underpinned by Unifrog, the complete universal destinations platform for all students. Full details of delivery are set out in the annual Careers Programme Overview.

The Key Stage 3 programme supports early awareness and informed GCSE option choices while building resilience

The Key Stage 4 programme supports exploration of post-16 routes and the development of independence





The Key Stage 5 programme supports progression to higher education, apprenticeships, employment or training, preparing pupils for active participation in society.

The school provides a progressive programme of meaningful workplace experiences that enables pupils to explore careers, develop workplace knowledge, skills and behaviours, and build professional networks.

Experiences of workplaces

In line with the updated Gatsby Benchmark 6, pupils should have multiple meaningful and varied experiences of workplaces by the age of 16 and at least one further meaningful experience by the age of 18.

The school will work towards the national expectation that every young person receives two weeks' worth of meaningful work experience by the end of Key Stage 4, including workplace experiences in Years 7-9 and workplace placements in Years 10-11. Work experience placements in KS4 should be meaningful, in-person and immersive; exceptional hybrid or remote approaches may be used where they help remove barriers to access.

Disadvantaged Pupils and Pupils with SEND

The school monitors participation and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, looked-after and previously looked-after children, and other vulnerable groups to ensure equitable access to careers opportunities.

Most pupils with SEND access the same careers programme as their peers, with reasonable adjustments and additional support as required.

The Careers Leader works with staff and external professionals where appropriate to identify needs and provide personalised careers guidance and transition planning. This may include supported internships, transition discussions with families and tailored post-16 or post-18 planning.

Careers information and opportunities are accessible and inclusive, and pupils with SEND are not excluded from any aspect of the careers programme.

Access to careers programme information

Details of the school's careers programme are published on the school website, including a summary of the programme, how pupils, parents and carers, staff and employers can access information, how impact is measured and assessed, and the date by which the published information will be reviewed.

Further information can be requested using the current Careers Leader contact details published on the school website.

Assessing impact





The school monitors and evaluates the impact of its careers programme through stakeholder feedback, participation rates, destination and progression data, and termly surveys against the Gatsby Benchmarks using Compass+. Evaluation findings are used to inform continuous improvement, targeted interventions and the annual review of the Careers Programme Overview. Careers provision is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains aligned with current statutory guidance and Ofsted expectations, while supporting positive outcomes for all students.



Links to other policies

This policy should be read alongside the Provider Access Policy Statement and the annual Careers Programme Overview.

