

Careers' Guidance at Beechwood School

'Being the very best that you can be'

Beechwood School provides impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance for all students. This offer has been designed to enable all students to plan for their future and access the correct pathways for them at Key Stage 4, Key Stage 5 and beyond. We encourage our young people to be highly ambitious and our Careers' Guidance is intended to fully support the realisation of these ambitions.

We recognise that our provision in this area has a statutory duty to secure independent and impartial careers' education in Years 7 - 13; careers' guidance includes all information on options available in respect of 16-18 education and training including apprenticeships (Education Act 2011, DfE's Careers' Strategy 2017 and Statutory Guidance for careers 2018). We endeavour to follow best practice outlined by expert bodies such as Gatsby, DfE, Ofsted and Adviza.

Throughout KS3, KS4 and KS5 careers' education is accessed by all at Beechwood School. Through meetings with Careers' Advisers, visiting speakers, work experience and PSHCE lessons students are helped to explore the possible avenues they may take in the future in order for them to have the best start in their adult and professional life.

Each year every student (Years 7-13) in the school will be introduced to the Careers' Adviser during an assembly, they will be told about the Careers' Service in the school and that they all have access to Kudos and E-clips offering an A-Z search function on job groups, education choices, work and training and labour market information. During years 7- and 13 students will also have assemblies from outside speakers on careers' options, careers' guidance, employability skills and different routes they can take after they have finished at Beechwood.

Access for Education and Training Providers

Beechwood School recognises the important role that external speakers provide and will endeavour to provide access where possible. This access is granted to the school at the discretion of the Headteacher. Before access is granted, external speakers must provide either Mrs Matthews, Head of IAG, Enterprise Learning and Director of Careers or the relevant Director of Studies at KS3, 4 & 5, with information on what they would deliver and the impact it would have on the students.

In addition to this the students in the each year will access the following:

Year 7

- Enterprise and STEM events
- School trips
- PSHCE 'What will I do when I leave BEECHWOOD?'

Year 8

- Enterprise and STEM events
- School trips
- Options'/Pathways' assemblies and information evenings
- Access to an impartial Careers' Adviser during Year 8 Options'/Pathways' Evening
- PSHCE 'Options and career choices'

Year 9

- Enterprise and STEM events
- School trips
- Aspire Careers' event each February
- PSHCE 'Career choices'

Year 10

- Enterprise Day and STEM events
- Interviews with an impartial Careers' Adviser (vulnerable students)
- PSHCE 'What to do after year 11?' including CV writing skills.

Year 11

- All students given at least one interview with an impartial Careers' Adviser
- PSHCE 'What to do after year 11?' including CV, application letter and personal statement writing
- Sixth form Options' Evening in January where the Careers' Adviser is also present
- Access to information about other options post 16
- Have the opportunity to visit other open days and taster days
- Individual apprenticeship help and guidance meetings for all students interested
- Invitation to London Careers' Live show
- Invitation to attend Berkshire Careers' Speed networking event

Years 12 and 13

- Attend numerous in-house sessions on UCAS, careers, applications, CVs and personal statements
- Help with UCAS applications and EPQ
- Help with applications for jobs, apprenticeships further training.
- Meaningful work experience done during year 12 – linked to their future career plans
- Invitation to London Careers Live show
- Invitation to attend Berkshire Careers Speed networking event

Careers' Review and Evaluation

The Gatsby Benchmarks

The Gatsby Benchmarks have been explicitly referenced throughout the DfE's Careers' Strategy (December 2017) and the new Statutory Guidance for Careers (January 2018). The Department for Education in its Careers' Strategy and Statutory guidance states that schools should achieve all 8 benchmarks out lined below by September 2020.

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

Careers at Beechwood School

At present we meet each of these benchmarks through the following provisions:

Impartial Careers' Advice (Benchmark one, two, three and eight)

Our partial, external Careers' Adviser has been working within the school for many years. All Year 11 students have at least one meeting with him or her over the course of Year 10 and 11. These meetings are designed to help students identify the best route for them post-16. Students will be given information on colleges and other sixth forms. Students are helped to fill in application forms and given interview preparation. These interviews also focus on careers and the steps students need to take in order to get there. This interview also forms the start of destinations data collection which Adviza carry out. All students have the opportunity to have an interview in Year 12 and 13 as well. These are available either via pre-arranged appointments or for drop ins during break or lunchtime.

Our Careers' Adviser is also present at three key events at the school. They attend both Year 8 Options'/Pathways' Evening and Sixth form Open Evening. At these events they are able to give advice and guidance to both students and their parents. A Careers' Adviser is also available at The Curve in Slough on A level and GCSE results day. This enables them to talk to students regarding their grades and next steps.

Careers' Assemblies/Employability Workshops (Benchmarks one, two, three, four, five and seven)

The first Monday of each month assemblies can be delivered by visiting speakers. These are delivered to either year eight, nine or ten. All assemblies so far this year have focused on STEM careers or employability skills. These give students an insight into possible routes for them and what different jobs entail. Years 11-13 students at the start of the year were invited to the Careers' Live Show where different employers and universities speak to students about their career options.

Experiences of Workplaces and Higher Education (Benchmark five and seven)

Throughout their time at the school students are given the opportunity to go on trips to different universities, including Brunel University, Bucks New University, Oxford University, Oxford Brooks University and Reading University. In year 12 and 13 students have also had speakers from Cambridge University talking about getting into Russell group universities. These students are

encouraged to view universities and have meetings with possible apprenticeship providers.

Work Experience (Benchmark six) All year 12 students undertake a week of work experience in the summer term. This work experience is required to be in the field they are considering entering after higher education.

Students' Careers and Transitions Information

At the end of Year 11 the main options available to you are:

OPTIONS AFTER YEAR 11

At the end of Year 11 the main options available to you are:

- Sixth Form
- College
- Apprenticeships
- Job

You need to think carefully about which best meets your needs and consider which type of institution and type of study and learning would best suit you. The following information might help with your decision:

Sixth Form

If you decide you would like to study at sixth form, you can choose to study at Beechwood or another Sixth Form. Sixth forms tend to mainly offer A levels , although some also offer BTECs too. You may choose Beechwood because you know the school and the teachers and it will be a familiar environment, as well as probably being easy to get to, but you might choose another Sixth form if Beechwood don't offer the courses you are looking for, or if you would prefer to go somewhere else.

The atmosphere in the Sixth Form could be more relaxed than the one you're used to in school during Years 7 to 11 but it will still be structured. There may be study periods when you have no timetabled lessons. You'll be given more responsibility though, so you'll be expected to get on with homework or do further study in your free study time, without a teacher checking up on you.

Even though you don't have a taught lesson every period, you may still be expected to attend for the full school day. And school uniform may not necessarily be a thing of the past! You will still be asked to follow a dress code. Most sixth forms are also mixed gender just like other colleges. Sixth forms often have strict entry requirements and so you should always check what these are and if you are likely to meet them.

College

It's likely that you'll find the atmosphere at a further education college different from that of school. It will probably be more laid back, you'll be able

to wear your own clothes, be in charge of your own time when you're not in lessons, and maybe even call your tutors by their first names.

You'll still be expected to stick to a timetable and attend lessons, but you might not have to stay in college during your free periods. You'll be given a lot of independence and expected to manage your own time. Everyone is different - would this way of working suit you? Think about that when you decide what kind of environment will inspire you.

Colleges tend to specialize more in vocational and practical courses and not all colleges offer A levels. They also have a much more varied body of students that can include full and part time students, day release students as well as school leavers and adults. There are several colleges around Slough area, Windsor and Reading and you can find out more about them by looking at their websites:

<https://www.windsor-forest.ac.uk/> (Formerly East Berkshire College)

<https://www.activatelearning.ac.uk/reading/> Reading College

<http://www.henleycol.ac.uk/> Henley College

<https://www.uxbridgecollege.ac.uk/> Uxbridge College

<https://www.bca.ac.uk/> BCA College

Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a form of work-based learning and are very practical. You will spend about four days a week with an employer and one day a week at college. You will also receive a training allowance while you train.

Apprenticeships are very good for people who are not keen on classroom study and like to learn by doing. The best way to look for and apply for apprenticeships is to use the apprenticeship website:

<https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch>

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

<https://www.getingofar.gov.uk/>

Local apprenticeship providers

QA for IT apprenticeships

<https://apprenticeships.qa.com/>

HIT for catering and hospitality

www.hittraining.co.uk

Apprenticeships in childcare, H&SC etc

<https://www.thechildcarecompany.com/appVacancies/>

Getting a Job

Fewer and fewer school leavers take this option up straight from school, but if you decide you would like this, any job you apply for will need to include training and qualifications. Often this will include day release. The best way to go about finding a job is:

- To approach employers direct to ask if they have any vacancies.
- Use local papers to look for job adverts
- Use internet job sites to search for vacancies
- Register with employment agencies who can help you find a job (could be good for finding a short term job, but not so great for long term jobs and careers)
- Visit local job centres or use their website (often these jobs are for 18 year olds though)

A levels or BTEC?

If you decide to stay in education after year 11 you will have the choice of studying A levels or BTECS. Often people don't fully understand the difference between the two, but the points below might help you decide which is the best for you.

A levels

- When you do A levels you will need to choose a combination of three or four subjects
- A levels tend to be in more traditional subjects such as history, maths or science etc
- Assessment in A levels tends to be very heavily exam based and your final grade can be determined by your performance in an exam after two years, so you need to be sure that you are good at doing exams.
- A levels are mostly offered in sixth forms, although some but not all colleges offer them.
- You will generally need to have achieved a grade 6 at GCSE in any A level subjects you wish to study, but you should always check with individual colleges or sixth forms

BTEC

- When you study BTECs, you will specialise in one subject and this would take up as much time as doing three A levels
- BTECs tend to be in vocational areas such as Engineering, Business, Catering and Health and Social Care etc.
- BTECs use continuous assessment, and so the work you produce over your course affects your final marks
- There are some exams in BTECs
- BTECs are mostly offered in colleges
- Entry grades for BTECs tend to be lower than A levels
- You can use BTECs to apply to university and they can lead on to degree courses.

OPTIONS AFTER YEAR 13

At the end of Year 13 the main options available to you are:

- University
- Apprenticeships
- Job
- Gap year

You need to think carefully about which best meets your needs and consider which type of institution and type of study and learning would best suit you.

General Careers' Information

The following career websites are good for helping you decide on a career, researching jobs, producing a CV and covering letter and much more.



<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>



<http://www.allaboutcareers.com/careers-advice>



<http://icould.com>



<http://www.careersbox.co.uk>



<http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk>



<https://www.gradcracker.com/>



<https://successatschool.org/careerzones>



<https://www.eclips-online.co.uk/>



<https://kudos.cascaid.co.uk/#/>