

Hillside Specialist School & College
Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance

*“Everybody is different. Everybody has amazing talents to bring.
 Being different is our super power.”*

Lee Chambers, Hillside’s Enterprise Co-Ordinator

All our pupils will follow their own pathway to develop an understanding of skills and knowledge needed for progression opportunities when they leave Hillside. We work closely with pupils and parents to identify bespoke routes that support their interests and broaden their understanding of future careers.

CAREERS DELIVERY MODEL:

Early Years, KS1, KS2	KS3	KS4	KS5
Continuously providing opportunities through the curriculum to develop independence, life skills, communication, social skills, road safety, gross and fine motor skills and self-regulation of behaviour.			
			Lessons to support work understanding
		Internal work experience	External work experience
Food tech/DT – industry led		Enterprise projects	Enterprise projects including external marketing
Forest Schools – practical application			
Annual Reviews, support from Transition Workers			
			Public travel support
		Vocational options	
	Qualifications relevant to Preparation for Adulthood, including Functional Skills, Food Hygiene and vocational training		
	Sessions run at mainstream schools using specialised equipment		
		Visits to Further Educational Establishments	
Visits correspond with the curriculum and reflect the needs of individuals regarding community engagement and vocational aspirations			
		Engagement with vocational industries through visits and talks	

CASE STUDIES:

Accessing mainstream specialised provision



A number of KS2 to KS5 classes working at National Curriculum level or equivalent have attended science lessons at local mainstream high schools, providing them with the opportunity to use specialised resources. The sessions are linked to their current topics such as electricity or chemical reactions. The pupils really enjoy being in a science lab participating in a range of scientific experiments. This consolidates their learning and makes science even more hands on.

One KS4 pupil with aspirations for performing arts was able to access vocational learning during a whole term with a GCSE drama group.

“The drama placement was a fantastic opportunity for him. It gave him a taster of life outside of Hillside and gave him the confidence to mix with mainstream pupils. He really blossomed within this environment and it enabled him to widen his horizons with a view to future ventures. “

Class Teaching Assistant

Enterprise

Teachers use opportunities to incorporate enterprise activities into the curriculum, developing skills in crafts, baking, horticulture, communication, handling money and budgeting. Products have been made to sell at external Christmas markets and fund-raise for specific projects in school.



“I wanted to look at advertising in a real life context in preparation for the Functional Skills exam and as a general life skill. We studied the language of advertising and the methods advertisers use to promote a product and persuade the general public to spend their money on different items. We explored written adverts that you might find in a newspaper, magazine or on a flyer. We also looked at TV advertising and how that differs from paper adverts. The pupils then wrote a script for a TV advert to try and sell our flower arrangements to the parents of Hillside pupils via the school Facebook page. The pupils were aware of our target audience and adapted their language accordingly. The pupils cleverly ad-libbed when we were recording the adverts and brought humour and the persuasive techniques we had studied in to their work. They also designed flyers to go out to parents via the Chat Books and advertise their promotions. We raised nearly £100 due to their fabulous efforts with high praise from parents who saw the adverts on the school Facebook page. I am hoping the pupils will be able to use the skills they learnt from this project and answer questions about advertising in the Functional Skills exam with understanding and knowledge.”

KS5 Teacher

Work experience

Where possible, work placements are found for individuals to develop industry-related knowledge. They support pupils' aspirations and interests.

A Teaching Assistant Level 3 reflects on her own observations of Hillside pupils:



“I believe the opportunity for pupils to access experiences in work is instrumental in supporting them to develop and learn. I have had the pleasure of accompanying many pupils through their work experiences, with each pupil taking away something different.

One pupil I supported was given the opportunity to work within a café, following his ambition and passion for cooking. He not only gained new technical skills, but also developed his communication and social skills as well as gaining accreditation via ASDAN. During school holidays, this pupil was offered a chance to volunteer in a restaurant at a hospice – I believe this pathway opened thanks to his work experience.

Work experience links are unique to each pupil, with staff adapting the experience to suit the needs of each individual. Links can be about preparing our young adults for work or providing them with social links within the community. Whatever way they experience these links, it's great to witness the benefits that come from it.”

Vocational training

“Taking part in a hospital's Work Familiarisation Programme was invaluable in his final year in the college. He tasted different aspects of hospital life for example portering, security and first aid. It gave him the confidence to talk in front of other pupils and provided him with an insight into possible job opportunities after college life.”

Teaching Assistant supporting a KS5 pupil

Careers Aim:

Within our careers provision we aim to inspire our pupils to become curious about the world around them and of work options and possibilities, opening up opportunities for now and their journey beyond Hillside. We believe in promoting equality and diversity, helping pupils to explore and challenge limiting stereotypes so that they can recognise and overcome constraints this may place upon their choices and aspirations. By equipping our pupils with the knowledge, skills and attributes to explore the range of options available, and reflect upon these for them as individuals, we will support them in understanding how to make well-informed and realistic decisions and put these into action. Given the context of a changing world of work, and the recognition that as individuals they will continue to change in terms of their hopes, ambitions and aspirations, our careers provision will provide the foundation to enable them to manage the transition from Hillside and the subsequent transitions that unfold.

The Gatsby Benchmark provides a framework for career guidance for all schools and colleges. By using an online tool called Compass, we are able to evaluate our careers activity against the 8 best practice benchmarks.

Benchmark 1

A stable careers programme

Hillside Specialist School and College works on a very bespoke careers programme, depending on the needs and appropriateness of the individual pupils progression targets.

Skills are addressed throughout the school and college that support the development of independence and relevant life skills and social skills.

There are opportunities across KS3, KS4 and KS5 to broaden the understanding of careers and aspirations, and is addressed through the curriculum.

The Careers Lead finds suitable work experience and vocational contacts.

Some pupils will already show a strong interest in specific sectors or skills. Others will be introduced to open out a greater understanding of pathways.

Benchmark 2

Learning from career and labour market information

At Annual Reviews, parents evenings and other contact, parents are informed of options for their children of progression opportunities once they leave Hillside.

Pupils are taken to visit further education establishments.

Parents are sign-posted to appropriate information, including Apprenticeships, Independent Specialist Provision and mainstream colleges.

Information is sent about FE open evening and specific SEN careers advice conferences.

Teachers are directed to specific qualifications or career opportunities

Benchmark 3

Addressing the needs of each pupil

Each pupil's journey is individual.

The Annual Review, Personal Learning Plans and progress data reflects realistic aspirations in their Preparation for Adulthood.

A qualification model is based around the pupils interests and progression needs.

The Careers Lead will discuss with parents about their own understanding and future thoughts, signposting to relevant information.

We continuously monitor the impact of their curriculum and experiences to determine next steps.

Hillside celebrates achievement which informs future need.

Benchmark 4

Linking curriculum learning to careers

All pupils have access to relevant curriculum focus for their pathways to life long learning.

Those pupils in KS3, KS4 and KS5 work on externally accredited qualifications that focus on vocational understanding and community experiences.

Specific careers lessons increase pupil knowledge of expectations within the workplace, applying for jobs and preparing for the key skills they will need to learn.

Horticulture sessions are accessed both on school grounds and with external providers.

Learners will access community-based settings to develop social skills and independence for life.

Pupils are taught travel awareness including road safety and catching public transport.

Benchmark 5

Encounters with employers and employees

Pupils are provided with opportunities to speak to employers and employees to better understand the workplace and potential career paths open to them.

Speakers have included writers, bee keepers, bankers and those with autism who have engaged and inspired pupils with their own experiences.

Visits to industry environments are encouraged as part of the curriculum.

Hillside engage in the Lancashire Careers Hub and are supported by a Careers Co-Ordinator and an Enterprise Advisor.

Benchmark 6

Experiences of workplaces

Specific experiences are found for those pupils who are able to access some form of work in a vocational setting that is appropriate to their needs and progression routes. This has included cafes, animal welfare, parks and grounds, hair dressers and charity shops.

Some pupils have attended the Work Familiarisation Scheme with a hospital, which leads on to voluntary work experience once they leave Hillside.

Those pupils who attend places or work will do so with a known member of staff to support transition and develop independence.

A work experience diary is completed, which includes Health and Safety, tasks achieved and tasks achieved.

Benchmark 7

Encounters with Further and Higher Education

All pupils where appropriate have meaningful encounters with appropriate courses in colleges, including visits, tasters and communication with course leaders.

Pupils take part in events that are put on linked to transition support.

Apprenticeship routes are identified and information sent to parents.

Other independent training providers are accessed.

Benchmark 8

Personal guidance

All teachers are in contact with the Careers Lead to determine personal support and guidance.

A folder of resources, training and advice is available to all staff to support them through careers interventions.

It is felt that due to the needs of our pupils, that a lot of information would need to be passed on to an impartial careers advisor to make any interviews beneficial. This process is better supported internally, liaising with external links only when appropriate.