**Ashley High School Careers Programme Evaluation 2023-2024**

**1. Overview of Careers Activities**

This year our careers programme has maintained links with a number of local employers who continue to work with us face to face. We have also developed new links with a range of employers who have been able to offer sessions virtually. This has been particularly useful when linking careers to subjects such as science where we made good use of the STEM Ambassadors. We have also been reaccredited for the Quality in Careers Award which demonstrates our commitment to providing high quality careers provision.

Our Enterprise Adviser, Francesca Manca, appointed by the Careers and Enterprise Company, continues to be a great asset to our school and she has helped to organise our 3rd Year 8 Guess the Job Morning.

**Year 11 Careers Day –** This event took place in January 2024 and included all face to face workshops. We were able to welcome back employers such as Keep Moat Construction and D3t Games Design but also had a workshop from Daresbury Labs for the first time. One of our Year 11 students was so impressed by the Daresbury talk that they applied to do work experience with them over the summer and have been successful. Another of our Year 10 students will also be taking up this fantastic opportunity during the summer, too. Other workshops for the Careers Day included Job Centre Plus who gave a good overview of the local labour market information and skills that employers require for the future and John Moores University who gave an inspiring talk about Higher Education.

Y**ear 11 Visit to Riverside College and Cronton Sixth Form College –** Year 11 students were able to visit their local college this year and gain an insight into what a mainstream college could offer them in order to compare this to their own 6th Form. This is an important part of transition and helps students to find out more about what is available to them locally in order to make well informed decisions about their future. We listened to feedback and have now opened up these visits to Year 10 students during the summer term so that they can have a head start with their career decision making.

**6th Form Work Experience** – We were able to offer work experience placements to all of our 6th Form students this year and tried to tailor this to the students’ needs and aspirations. We organised a group work experience placement for those students who needed extra support but would still benefit from getting outside of the classroom and have now built up a good link with the local library to provide this. We also continue to make good use of internal work placements as a first stepping stone to an independent work placement.

**Mock Interviews** – All Year 11 students and Sixth Form Students were given the opportunity to have a mock interview with an employer. The majority of students took part this this activity and received excellent feedback from the employers which boosted their confidence. This year, one of the employers recognised that our Year 11 students needed more work experience and has offered some placements at Halton Housing Supported Living next year.

**Workplace Visits –** Students were able to visit a number of different workplaces including Daresbury Labs to complete a cyber security workshop (Year 11 and Year 12) a visit to a construction site (Year 11 Construction Group and Year 12) and visits to Halton Housing Trust, Halton Stadium, Howdens and The Hillcrest Hotel (Year 12 PfA visits) These workplace visits help the students to compare different working environments and gain a good understanding of what type of working environment might suit them in the future. Although virtual tours are helpful, we have found that actual visits and experiential learning works best for our students.

**National Apprenticeship Show** – we were able to take all of our 6th Form students to the apprenticeship show in Liverpool during the Autumn Term. Although many of the opportunities are not accessible for our students, it is a good way for our students to practice talking to employers and an opportunity to develop future links. This year, we made a good contact at Howdens which we later turned into an employer visit.

**Careers Programme Year 7 - 11**– Careers lessons were included in PfA lessons for all students in Year 7 -8 and PHSCE for Years 9-11. The lesson 4 period was also used during the spring term during National Careers Week and National Apprenticeship Week. We bought in the Careers Program Jed this year to help students with their careers research and will develop this over the next year.

**Overview of Employer/Provider interactions**

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| Year Group | Employer Activity | Provider Access Activity |
| Year 7 | STEM Ambassador and NHS Talk as part of the Careers Module in PfA |  |
| Year 8 | Guess My Job Morning– various employers including an artist, scientist, customer care adviser and business coach. | Halton Housing Trust who attend Guess The Job Event is an employer that offers apprenticeships |
| Year 9 | WATES Construction – Health and Safety in Construction Talk  STEM Ambassador talks in all Year 9 Science lessons | Riverside/Cronton College – Introduction to College |
| Year 10 | WATEs Construction – Job Roles in Construction  Paramount Media – Project with Creative Media Group | WATEs Construction is an employer that offers apprenticeships |
| Year 11 | Careers Day (various employers) Mock Interviews (Job Centre Plus and Halton Housing Trust)  Speakers for Schools – virtual talk on careers in museums  Visit to Daresbury Labs for Cyber Security Talk  Visit to WATES Construction site | ASK Apprenticeship Workshop  Daresbury Labs offers apprenticeships  Riverside and Cronton College Year 11 Talks  HBC Supported Internship Talk |
| 6th Form | Mock Interviews (Job Centre Plus)  Workplace Visits  Work Experience Placements | HBC Supported Internship Talk  National Apprenticeship Show |

**Careers Interviews –** all students from Year 9 upwards were offered a careers interview to help them explore their career aspirations and goals and find out more about the options open to them. Students not attending school are offered a home visit.

**2. Feedback from stakeholders**

**Employers**

We received some wonderful feedback again from employers as follows:

It really was our pleasure to have Ashley Students, it always is!!

The site team said it was some of the best questions they have been asked during a site visit. (Julie Baker, Keep Moat Construction

I am delighted it worked out so well. It has been a real highlight for me working with Ashley school, and something that will stay with me foe a long time. (Wendy Cotterill, Daresbury Labs)

**Students –** students have enjoyed their careers activities overall and most enjoy getting out of school to visit employers and colleges. They find the college visits a useful way to find out about college courses and this helps them to decide if they are ready to move on or need extra time at Ashley. We always have some students who prefer the comfort of school and do not like any changes. Nonetheless, we have found that pushing students out of their comfort zone enables them to get ready for the bigger changes and transitions that they will face in the future. We also found that the Speakers for Schools event which was virtual and involved other schools, was not the preferred way of receiving information for our students. They felt much more comfortable with an engagement that was face to face or if it was just their school only for a virtual event.

Form tutors also commented that most of the Year 8 students enjoyed the Guess My Job Day and the Year 10 and 11 students enjoyed their visit to local colleges. It is important that the feedback is captured quickly as students can soon forget what they have been involved in.

Feedback from the National Apprenticeship Show was mixed, some students enjoyed meeting different employers whereas others found the environment too busy.

**Staff-** we have received good feedback from staff who have participated in employer workshops and staff have often commented on how good the students have been at listening to an employer. The main concern for staff is that some of the employers are talking about jobs at a high level that our students may not be able to enter. This is a difficulty for us as many of the employers who have time to speak to students, tend to focus on certain career areas.

**Parents/carers –** Many discussions about careers takes place as part of the annual review process. I have found that emailing parents and contacting them individually about courses and transition has also been useful and this is something that I would like to continue.

We organised our first Preparing for the Future Event to help parents and carers find out more about the different options available and support for the future. This included representatives from the local college, job centre plus, supported internship programme, social care and travel training. We had 11 parents/carers attend the event and this is something that we could like to build on next year.

**3. Gaps and Trends**

The career aspirations this year shows that ICT related careers has been the most popular career choice followed by animal care and catering. There are also a wide range of other careers aspirations ranging from performing arts, engineering, sport and construction.

The majority of students who are leaving us have chosen our local college but we do have a student who is going to Priestley College this year and one student who is going to a specialist provider, Expanse College. This demonstrates that students and their parents/carers are provided with information and guidance on options that meet their needs and aspirations. We have not had any student who has opted for the supported internship route or apprenticeship route this year. The local supported internship programme has changed their criteria to 18+ which rules out this option for some students.

**4. How the Careers Programme links to Local Labour Market Information**

In order to ensure that our careers programme relates to labour market information, we continue to have good links with STEM Employers such as Keep Moat Construction and have made good use of STEM Ambassadors. The workshop on cyber security also helped students to find out about this growth area, too. This helps our students to widen their career aspirations and find out about the wide range of jobs available locally within STEM. We also have also maintained good relationship with the Schools Adviser at Job Centre Plus who visits our school each year to deliver a session on local labour market information and provide details of the types of jobs available locally. In addition to this, we have a representative from ASK (Apprenticeships Skills and Knowledge) our school to update our students on apprenticeship vacancies. The CEIAG Co-ordinator also attends an employment sub group and is kept up to date with developments locally.

Our Careers Ambassadors were introduced this year and they have helped to produce a display about growth areas in the Liverpool City Region.

**5. Training**

This year staff attended a presentation on the importance of careers in the curriculum and how this relates to Gatsby Benchmarks and were provided with useful resources and links. Staff will continue to develop careers input in their long term plans.

**6. Changes and Recommendations**

* Make use of voluntary activities/social action as a way of recording work related activities eg Wonky Gardens, new links with Halton Housing Trust Supported Living. It is important that we continue to offer meaningful opportunities to for pupils to encounter the world of work.
* Continue to strengthen work with parents/carers to ensure that they have the information they need to support their child with career planning.
* Continue using lesson 4 to deliver some careers sessions and ensure that careers embedded across the curriculum. Use JED Career Program to help with this.
* Plan engaging employer activities with students in Year 7 upwards in order to meet new Ofsted Inspection Guidance. For outstanding we must prove that we go “beyond the expected so that pupils have access to a wide, rich set of experiences”
* Continue to provide opportunities for education and training providers to speak to students in order to meet the requirements set out in the Provider Access Legislation. This is used in Ofsted Inspections to assess if information is provided for pupils in Year 8 upwards eg 2 encounters in Year 8/9, 2 encounters in Year 10/11 and two encounters in Year 12/13 We could open up the Careers Day in the afternoon to include a range of providers and allow other Year Groups to attend.
* Develop school alumni to provide a range of role models for our students.

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Vicki Banks

CEIAG and Work Experience Co-ordinator

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