

24/25

Employer and Education Engagement Offer

THE
CHESHIRE AND
WARRINGTON
PLEDGE

Cheshire &
Warrington
CAREERS HUB



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The Pledge creates a sustainable bond helping bridge the gap between local employers and educators, so that young people develop the right skills for their future careers.



About the Pledge Partnership for Cheshire and Warrington

The Pledge Partnership includes, the Cheshire and Warrington Careers Hub who support schools and colleges with their careers planning, and a delivery arm that fulfils employer engagement activity, connecting local employers with schools and colleges across the region.

This booklet summarises the delivery programme of the Pledge. We also support employers, education and other partners to develop best practice and build capacity, for example through networking meetings and individual support. The partnership consists of;

87

Schools and colleges- we support all state funded mainstream secondary, FE colleges, Special and Alternative Provision across the region,

500+

Employers from SMEs to global corporations.

How we help Educators

- Create an impact and help your young people choose their next best steps for their future.
- Inform your whole-school approach including improved lesson engagement, outcomes and school results.
- Connect with local businesses who want to inspire and inform the next generation about skills and opportunities.
- You're not alone - fully-funded supported delivery to build a sustainable careers education model.
- Share best practice and stay informed through local education and business network.

How we help Employers

- Inspire and inform - we help young people make decisions about local career opportunities and pathways.
- Make a difference - we influence schools and colleges to change the face of education.
- Connect with your future inclusive workforce to ensure they are employment-ready.
- Help bridge the local skills gap and build your talent pipeline.
- Share best practice and stay informed about the local changing business and education landscape.
- Create an impact - deliver social value in your local community.



Our priorities for 2024/2025

- Continue to be employer-led ensuring our local employers support, inform, and inspire the next generation of employees.
- Influence and shape education to help the next generation be more employment ready.
- Collaborate strategically to support local economic growth and address needs including the skills and employment gaps.
- Contribute to a sustainable, long-term skills and talent agenda.
- Support 'levelling up' - ensuring diverse and inclusive workforces.
- Increase community engagement and social value impacts.

About The Cheshire and Warrington Careers Hub

Delivered in partnership with The Cheshire and Warrington Pledge, we ensure employers are at the heart of inspiring young people and provide additional employer engagement support to schools and colleges as part of our local offer.

The Cheshire and Warrington Careers Hub supports educators in all state-funded secondary schools and colleges and independent specialist provision across Cheshire and Warrington to influence, shape and provide world-class, 21st-century career education for their young people. We provide fully-funded access to strategic support, training, resources and opportunities.

We are part of a national network of Careers Hubs funded through The Careers and Enterprise Company- the national body for Careers Education in England- with the mission of helping every young person find their next best step.

Our progress so far:

It is proven that the better a school does with the Gatsby Benchmarks, the more likely a young person is to be in a sustained destination. The effect is twice as strong for those serving the most disadvantaged communities.

On average, our schools have fully achieved 5.7, up from 5.5 from last year of the 8 Gatsby benchmarks. Our disadvantaged schools have even higher averages as we prioritise them in our work.

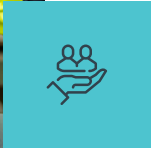
87% (up from 85% last year) of our schools and colleges have fully achieved Gatsby Benchmark 5 (Encounters with employers);

72% of schools (same as last year) and colleges have fully achieved Gatsby Benchmark 6 (experiences of the workplace);

Our local support offer for Schools and Colleges 2024-25 includes

1. Support from a dedicated Enterprise Coordinator to review whole school careers provision against the Gatsby Benchmark framework using the Careers and Enterprise Company's Compass assessment.
2. Ongoing tailored support from an Enterprise Coordinator to support the continuous development of the school's careers strategy and implementation, to ensure it meets the needs of all students.
3. Support to grow your local network and employer connections to enhance your curriculum and careers provision.
4. Access to Teacher Encounter opportunities- for teachers to engage directly with employers to ensure knowledge transfer back into the curriculum.
5. Support from a bank of Enterprise Advisors (volunteer from industry) to help unlock employer insight & expertise and help ensure curriculum's and careers activities are representative of business.

6. Funded training for Careers Leaders, Senior Leaders, Governors and wider teaching staff to equip and empower an effective school-wide approach
7. Facilitated collaboration between schools, colleges, employers and wider stakeholders to connect and share best practice
8. Facilitated sharing of best practice to enable improved outcomes for your students- including regular Careers Leader network meetings, communications and CPD opportunities
9. Support to embed digital tools and evaluation resources such as Compass+ and the Future Skills Questionnaire to enable evidence led review and planning of careers provision
10. Access to up-to-date Local Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) to help inform students, parents/carers, and staff about career opportunities and ensure curriculum alignment to local needs.
11. Access to additional funded activities and projects including those with a focus on tackling disadvantage e.g., Free school meals, additional barriers, SEND and those at risk of NEET



Employer and Education Engagement Offer 2024/25

The Employer and Education Engagement Offer in this booklet is not a wholly comprehensive offer but gives a flavour of the types of activity that can be delivered through our flagship programmes which have been honed over several years collaboratively with our stakeholders. We also have a Health and Social Care NHS offer that interweaves into all our provision but also has a stand-alone employer engagement programme of delivery.

Please note that all our programmes can accommodate adaptations to meet the needs of all young people, including those with special educational needs or disabilities.

All partners request as much notice as possible for events. We ask for at least 2 months notice to enable the best provision.

If you require bespoke provision as a school/college or employer or would like us to deliver out of area, please contact us at info@youthfed.org

Universal Offer

Open to all state-funded secondary and special schools and colleges in Cheshire and Warrington.

Town-Wide Careers Fairs – Multi School/College and General Public

When: September / October

Year Group(s): Year 9 – Year 13

Size: Whole year groups

Duration: Typically 1 hour per school session during the day. Open to the public from 4pm onwards.

Delivery: Face-to-face

Impact: Supports Gatsby Benchmarks 2, 3, 5, 7 and provider access expectations, plus a chance for young people to source work experience, volunteering or enrichment opportunities.

Summary: Working in collaboration with multiple schools/colleges to deliver 'town-wide' careers fairs to capitalise on efficiencies and impact. Implementing best practice models including pre-and post-work, speed networking and booklets on the day, to support engagement and outcomes for both young people and exhibitors. All fairs have a SEND-friendly slot as part of the day.

We encourage employers exhibiting to promote work experience, placements, part-time jobs and invite volunteer organisations to support those seeking volunteering and enrichment opportunities as part of their Duke of Edinburgh awards. We also invite local

Sixth Forms, Independent Training providers, FE and HE to help with Gatsby Benchmark 7.

In 2023, 5898 people attended the 6 careers fairs across the region. Overall, the events were given a Net Promoter Score of 9/10 by 74 of Exhibitors.

Employment Readiness Programmes

When: September – January with launch from June/July

Year Group(s): Year 13

Size: Minimum 15 – Maximum 60 per institution

Duration: 5 sessions (including the Mock Assessment Centre)

Delivery: Face-to-face

Impact: Supports Gatsby 2, 3, 5. Students in Year 13 looking for work and apprenticeships are ultimately successful.

Summary: Our highly successful programme is for all students who are actively seeking employment/ apprenticeships or are undecided/do not want to go to university. There are five one-hour sessions delivered per sixth form/college to the designated cohort alongside an employer or apprentice. A great way for employers to connect with future talent!

Outline:

Session 1. ASK apprentices, what are apprenticeships and meet the apprentices Q&A

Session 2. CV masterclass with employer input

Session 3. CV one-to-ones with employers - virtual delivery recommended

Session 4. How to prepare for an interview/virtual interview and assessment centre

Session 5. Mock assessment for multiple schools/colleges

*This programme can also be adapted to boost existing provision.

Local Mock Assessment Centres – Multi-School/College

When: January / February

Year Group(s): Year 13

Size: Typically, 1 – 20 per institution (Total 150)

Duration: Half-day

Delivery: Face-to-face

Impact: Supports Gatsby 2, 3, 5. Students in Year 13 looking for an apprenticeship are ultimately successful.

Summary: Mock Assessment Centres are the final session of the Employment Readiness Programme or can be accessed as a stand-alone event. This programme has a proven track record that helps young people be more successful and employers recruit early talent. It is the opportunity for up to 150 students within a local geography, who apply with a CV to attend, to have the experience of an assessment centre environment to help them feel more prepared and confident for the 'real thing'. We ensure that our panel of employers

who run and score the sessions are also recruiting apprentices - a great chance to connect and green light future talent.

There are four main elements of the day that make up the half-day event: Group Task, Mock Interview, Group Presentation Preparation and Group Presentation. Students are given immediate feedback after every task and receive written feedback afterwards.

99% of young people taking part in the Mock Assessment Centre felt more confident on what to expect from an assessment centre

100% of employers said the event had given them confidence to recruit a young person into their business.

Apprenticeship and Jobs Fair – Multi School/College and General Public

When: February

Year Group(s): Year 11- Year 13 and above.

Size: Open to all cohort sizes

Duration: Afternoon and after school/college.

Delivery: Face-to-face

Impact: Supports Gatsby 2, 3, 5 and 7. Helping young people to find an apprenticeship, volunteering or part-time job.

Summary: This event is hosted in a central location and organised in conjunction with the Local Authority and/or local colleges. Ensuring that

all exhibitor employers have active or soon-to-be active apprentice / job vacancies and can offer work experience and placement opportunities, internships or volunteering.

Working in collaboration with multiple schools/colleges, fairs will be open during the school day to invite cohorts of Y11, 12 and 13 interested in pursuing apprenticeships to book a time slot during the day. The fair will then be open to the public. These events bring high footfall and a great opportunity for exhibitors to promote opportunities to targeted groups of people seeking opportunities.

End of Year Apprenticeship Vacancy Virtual Event

When: Summer

Year: Year 11-13 leavers.

Size: Students looking for, but who have yet secured an apprenticeship

Duration: 1-hour sessions per sector (throughout the day)

Delivery: Virtual

Impact: Young people to secure an apprenticeship opportunity. Supports Gatsby 2 and 3.

Summary: Targeting Year 13 students who are yet to secure an apprenticeship.

Working with schools/colleges to send out information to students and parents to ensure attendance at the event and reaching out to employers through local colleges who are

struggling to recruit for apprenticeship vacancies. The event would take place virtually and would run events per sector including Finance and Admin, Health and Social Care etc. Employers would introduce themselves and their company and talk through their opportunities. Students then have the chance to ask any questions. We would connect students to employers and vice versa after the event.

Teacher Encounters – Open to all Teaching Staff and SLT

Teacher Encounters are opportunities for teachers to engage directly with employers to explore the different career pathways relevant to their subjects, and how their subject is applied practically in business. This can take many forms, from 1 hour to multiple days, face-to-face, virtual or a mix of both. From just one teacher to multiple colleagues.

Examples include: Workplace visits for teachers. Teacher industry placements. Joint curriculum project development. Employer-educator networking. Employer-led CPD workshops for teachers

Please note, all our flagship programmes in this brochure can deliver a Teacher Encounters experience alongside each event.

We'd like to hear from schools, colleges and employers interested in Teacher Encounter opportunities so we can support a mutually beneficial knowledge exchange between education and business.

Targeted Offer

Eligibility criteria applies, typically based on Free School Meals.

National Citizenship Service (NCS)

*Delivered in Cheshire East and Cheshire West

When: September starts

Year Group(s): Year 11-12 (aged 16/17)

Size: 20 per cohort (Approx. 200 total per Local Authority – Cheshire East and Cheshire West only)

Duration: up to 9 months

Delivery: Face-to-face

Impact: Supports Gatsby 2, 3, 5, 6, 7. Helping build employability and life skills as well as experiences of the workplace.

Summary: This is a new programme for the Pledge designed to bring the best parts of our flagship programmes for a more sustained support for Year 11 and/ or 12 to support transition and to help develop future career ideas over a 9-month period. This could either be targeted at certain students (and can be for SEND/ under-represented groups) or offered to everyone with young people applying for the course. Students will:

Develop a personal progression plan;
Attend careers and apprenticeships fairs;
Visit employers/ FE and HE providers;
Undertake work experience and/or a social action programme;
Develop employability skills and Learn how to articulate the skills that they have to employers.

Pledge Explore Programme

When: Throughout the year

Years: 8/9/10

Size: 15 Targeted cohort (e.g., FSM, SEND, at risk of NEET).

Duration: Typically over 6 months

Delivery: Face-to-face

Impact: Supports Gatsby 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7. A unique opportunity for targeted groups for experiences of multiple workplace and raising aspirations.

Summary: The programme raises aspirations and helps students gain awareness of employment opportunities and education pathways in their area through workplace experience. This includes experiential visits to employers and post-16 pathway options with opportunities to meet different employers and employees to explore future options.

The Pledge Explore programme is targeted at a group of students. For example, those eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), Special Educational Needs (SEND) and those at risk of not being in employment and training (NEET).

The small cohort number allows a minibus to be utilised for site trips hosted by companies and education institutions in their locality, minimising cost and time out of the curriculum whilst helping employers accommodate site visits. Students then work through a booklet on skills completed pre and post site visit to capture reflections and next steps.

Commercial Offer

- For schools/colleges who do not meet any of the criteria offer above
- Employers wishing to develop or need support with outreach or want to deliver out of area
- Schools/ colleges/ employers who are out of the Cheshire and Warrington area
- Bespoke – we can work with you as a school/college or employer to help develop outreach programmes to suit your needs.

We can deliver all the programmes outlined in the booklet so far in addition to some of our other flagship programmes below.

Employability Half-Day

When: Throughout the year

Year Group(s): Open to all year groups

Size: Whole year groups

Duration: Half-Day

Delivery: Face-to-face

Impact: Supports Gatsby 2, 5 and 7. Helping young people develop confidence and understand what skills employers are looking for.

Summary: This scheme was born out of feedback from schools that young people need to build their confidence due to the lasting impact of the pandemic. Young people will learn the key skills and digital skills that employers look for when recruiting. They will undertake assessment centre

style tasks and develop employability skills. They will also meet and hear from several employers who will share their career journeys (including apprentices and graduates). The Pledge will facilitate the half-day and will include employers and education partners including FE/HE partners and Independent Training Providers.

Virtual or Hybrid Work Experience

When: Throughout the year

Year Group(s): Year 10-12.

Size: Groups of 15-20 per employer – whole year allocation

Duration: 1 – 5 days

Delivery: Virtual or hybrid

Impact: Supports Gatsby 2, 3 and 6. Giving experiences of a workplace by set project and employer lead learning.

Summary: Groups of students working remotely on a work-related task set by an employer. Typically, the employer will meet with a group of students at the start of the programme and be set a task. They will work on this as a group and present back at the end of the programme, receiving feedback from the employer with a Q&A mid-programme to get feedback on initial ideas. This is a great way for more young people to work with an employer than traditional work experience allows, and to work with employers unable to offer work experience face-to-face.

*This can also be delivered as a hybrid model with employers coming into schools/ colleges to brief students.

Sector Specific Work Experience

When: Throughout the year

Year Group(s): Years 10-12

Size: Groups of 15-20 per employer – whole year allocation

Duration: 1 – 5 days

Delivery: Face-to-face

Impact: Supports Gatsby 2, 3, 6 and 7. Giving experiences of a workplace through set project and employer lead learning.

Summary: A group of around 15 students spend up to a week exploring a specific sector, e.g., digital or STEM. Ideally, students apply and are interviewed for the programme. Students spend the week visiting employers to find out what careers exist in the sector and develop employability skills undertaking tasks set by employers. They will meet graduates and apprentices and visit higher education institutions, further education, and training providers to understand the progression routes into the sector.



Get Involved

To find out more about the core offer, join events or to book any activities please contact any of the Cheshire and Warrington Pledge Team or contact:

info@youthfed.org

cheshireandwarringtonpledge.com

We want to thank our team and many Pledge Partners for their time, energy and support - we couldn't do it without you!

Funded by:

Bank of America

Careers and Enterprise Company

Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington

HM Government

NHS

Shared Prosperity Fund Cheshire East

Shared Prosperity Fund Cheshire
West and Chester

Shared Prosperity Fund Warrington

Westminster Foundation

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