



Rivers ESC Careers Education and Guidance Policy

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Date created	July 2026
Date of review	July 2027
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Vision and Values

Rivers Education Support Centre is a unique organisation that works with the children in East Herts and Broxbourne who are experiencing difficulties in mainstream school because of their social, emotional, and mental health difficulties.

Our Values - the 4 Rs:

Respect

Having respect for ourselves, other people and our environment.

Relationships

Developing positive relationships and behaviours with peers, staff and family.

Resilience

A never give up attitude which equips pupils with the drive to succeed in even the most challenging of circumstances.

Readiness

To move on to the next stage of life, be it back into mainstream school or on to new opportunities after year 11.

This policy is underpinned by our long-term vision and core values. The Rivers ESC CEIAG programme aims to inspire students to be ambitious for their futures and equip them to make exciting decisions about what their future holds. We want students, and their parents/carers, to be fully aware of the varied career options available, be taught how to be resilient and respectful citizens and be driven to achieve their own goals.

Statutory requirements and expectations

The 2002 Education Act requires schools to provide a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Schools have a public sector duty to promote equality of opportunity, foster good relations across all people, eliminate harassment and discriminatory practices and support children with protected characteristics (2010 Equality Act). The statutory career guidance duty (2011 Education Act, subsequently extended) requires schools to ensure that all students are provided with independent careers guidance from year 8 to year 11 which is presented in an impartial manner, provides information on the range of education or training options, including apprenticeships and other vocational pathways and is guidance that the person giving it considers will promote the best interests of the students to whom it is given. Rivers ESC will have regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance *Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers* (updated June 2026). The school is committed to providing independent and impartial careers guidance, ensuring access to information about the full range of academic and technical pathways and complying with Provider Access Legislation. Careers provision is delivered in accordance with the Education Act 1997, the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, the Education and Skills Act 2008 and the Equality Act 2010.

[Careers guidance and access for education and training providers - GOV.UK](#)

Careers Leadership

The Careers Leader is responsible for:

Strategic leadership of CEIAG

Gatsby Benchmark implementation

Compass+ evaluation

Provider access compliance

Careers programme publication

Employer engagement

Destination tracking

Staff development relating to careers education

The Careers Leader reports annually to Senior Leadership Team and governors regarding programme impact and future priorities.

Gatsby

Rivers ESC uses the Gatsby Benchmarks as the framework for planning, delivering and evaluating careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG). From September 2025, Rivers ESC works towards the updated Gatsby Benchmarks, which strengthen expectations around:

Careers leadership and whole-school commitment

Inclusion and equity for all young people

Meaningful and varied encounters with employers and providers

Use of data and impact measurement

Personalisation of careers programmes

Parental engagement

Careers readiness and employability skills development

The school evaluates provision through Compass+ and uses Gatsby Benchmark outcomes to inform continuous improvement planning.

Benchmark achievement is reviewed annually through Compass+ and reported to senior leaders and governors. Improvement priorities are incorporated into the school development plan.

Careers Guidance for Vulnerable Learners and Learners with SEND

Rivers ESC recognises that many pupils face barriers to education, employment and training.

Careers guidance is tailored to individual need and takes account of:

Social, emotional and mental health needs

SEND and EHCP outcomes

Care-experienced pupils

Pupils at risk of becoming NEET

Disadvantaged pupils

Careers interventions are personalised through individual guidance interviews, transition planning, employer encounters and supported progression activities. Destination data is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the careers programme and identify pupils requiring additional support.

Learner Entitlement

Every student is entitled to high quality careers education and guidance as part of their overall education.

At Rivers ESC pupils access the following as part of their career's education programme:

[Insert Careers Programme overview- \(map\)](#)

Provider Access Policy Statement

Rivers ESC complies with Provider Access Legislation (PAL). All pupils in Years 8-11 are provided with opportunities to learn about:

Apprenticeships

T Levels

Further Education

Higher Technical Qualifications

Independent Training Providers

Employment-based routes

The school publishes a separate Provider Access Policy detailing how providers may request access to students.

Please see the Provider Access Policy ([insert link to it](#)) Any providers wishing to request access should contact the Careers Leader Colleen Osborn.

Stakeholders and Partners

Parents and carers are recognised as key partners in careers education. Rivers ESC provides information, guidance events, transition support and signposting to enable parents and carers to support informed decision-making about post-16 pathways. Parents and Carers play a significant role in helping students to make informed choices about their study options and decisions about their future careers. Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss with their child about options and future aspirations. We welcome parents and carers' input and recommend that you always attend activities at school such as pupil progress day. There is no 'one size fits all' approach and we recognise that all students must be able to make informed decisions avoiding pre-conceived ideas or stereotypes.

Careers and Enterprise company Alicia Loxley supports Rivers ESC with their CEIAG strategy, recruiting and managing the Enterprise Advisers from a local business and facilitating relationships to develop and deliver an impactful careers programme aligned with local skills needs and economic priorities.

Careers and Enterprise Advisor Emma Ward from Volker Wessels UK supports Rivers ESC to provide strategic support in achieving 100% in all eight Gatsby Benchmarks. The Advisor's business experience and professional networks help to develop and implement an effective strategy that puts opportunities with local employers at the heart of our student's education.

Services for Young People adviser Kelly Hill offers impartial Careers Guidance to all Year 10/11 students. Should you wish to discuss your child's future options please the Careers Leader contact Colleen Osborn or the Services for Young People adviser Kelly Hill. kelly.hill@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Useful Careers Websites for Parents/ Carers

Service Provision	Details of provision	Website Address
National Apprenticeship Service	Find an apprenticeship in England	https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship
Amazing Apprenticeships	All you need to know about apprenticeships	https://amazingapprenticeships.com/
Services for Young People	The leading provider of CEIAG provision for young people both inside and outside of school in Hertfordshire	https://www.servicesforyoungpeople.org/
UCAS	All you need to know about applying for university and the courses available for you.	https://www.ucas.com/

Hertfordshire Opportunities portal (HOP)	The premier gateway in Hertfordshire to explore career opportunities	https://www.hopinto.co.uk/
Xello (Cascaid)	Career development online package. Pupils can access the portal through the Rivers ESC website	https://xello.world/en-gb/

Local colleges and Training Providers

Details of colleges in East Herts and Broxbourne and the surrounding areas:

Hertford Regional College. Campuses in Broxbourne and Ware www.hrc.ac.uk

Harlow college www.harlow-college.ac.uk

Capel manor college www.capel.ac.uk specialist college offering land-based studies and animal care courses in Enfield

Stansted airport college – www.stanstedairportcollege.ac.uk part of Harlow college offering specialist courses in aviation, engineering and event management

Oaklands college www.oaklands.ac.uk Campuses in Welwyn Garden city and St Albans

North Herts College www.nhc.ac.uk Campuses in Stevenage and Hitchin

College of Northeast London (CONEL) www.conel.ac.uk Campuses in Enfield and Tottenham

CTP Ltd is a Training Provider based in Harlow <https://www.learn-construction.co.uk/> delivering, Construction, Hair and Beauty and Motor Vehicle courses

Information, Advice and Guidance

We will ensure that all students have access to independent and impartial career guidance and that they have access to information on all pathways post 16.

We do this through our weekly Employability lessons (City and Guilds accredited) and our annual agreement with Services for Young People who offer independent careers guidance to our KS4 students and careers workshops to our KS3 students.

The service is delivered by a Personal Adviser from Services for Young People Kelly Hill who is qualified to Level 6 in Guidance. Her email is: Kelly.hill@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Local labour Market

All pupils and parents will have access to local, regional and national labour market information through HOP, Xello, employer encounters and careers guidance interviews. KS3 will also have a weekly 'World of Work' where they will explore careers, look at the local labour market and beyond

Employers, community partners and learning providers

Work Experience

Rivers ESC recognises the Government's ambition to introduce a two-week work experience entitlement for young people and will continue to develop flexible workplace experiences that meet the needs of pupils within an alternative provision setting. Our work experience programme includes:

- 1 week block work experience in March of each year for all year 10/11
- Bespoke extended work experience placements for year 10/11
- Experience of work visits once a term for our KS3 cohort (workplace visits)
- Weekly 'experience of the workplace' visits for KS3

We have partnerships with Hertford Regional College and CTP training in Harlow where pupils can study Multi-skills in Construction, Motor Mechanics and Hair and Beauty at Level 1.

We work with the Careers and Enterprise company and through them we work with Volker Wessells UK who as our Enterprise Advisor run our interview events for us.

We work with ELSA who deliver employer led workshops in both our KS4 and KS3 centres.

We would love to further increase the opportunities our students have, so if you feel you could welcome one of our students into your workplace or you would like to be part of our Career activities in either our KS3 or 4 centre we'd love to hear from you. Please contact the Careers Leader Colleen Osborn on; email: colleen.osborn@riversesc.herts.sch.uk

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Careers programme is evaluated in several ways. Rivers ESC is a member of the Careers Enterprise Company and three times per year we complete the 'Compass +' Careers Benchmark Tool. 'Compass +' is a tool for schools and colleges in England, that quickly and easily helps us to evaluate our careers activity against the eight benchmarks of best practice – known as the Gatsby Benchmarks. (see Gatsby section) We gather informal feedback from external partners and from parents and we quality assure our careers provision in regular meetings with the Careers Enterprise Company

We monitor student destination figures post-16 by contacting the pupils twice a year and working with Services for Young People and our Transition Adviser for DSPL4 Sandra Mahoney.

Evaluation will include:

- Compass+ assessments
- Gatsby Benchmark progress
- Student voice
- Parent/carer feedback
- Employer feedback
- Destination data
- NEET analysis
- Annual governor review

Findings will be used to inform continuous improvement planning

Review

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by SLT, Management Committee and the Careers Leader.