

# Careers Strategy

## 2021-2025

*Excellence • Valuing Others • Supportiveness*

### **Our Mission**

To inspire learners to recognise and achieve their full potential

### **Our Values**

Excellence, Passion, Team Work, Integrity, Innovation,  
Sustainability, Valuing Others and Supportiveness

### **Sparsholt College Hampshire, incorporating Andover College**

The Sparsholt College Group (the College Group) includes Sparsholt College, Andover College, University Centre Sparsholt, Sparsholt College Services, Westley Enterprises and Andover Town Football Club. College Group policies apply to each part of the group unless specified otherwise.

The Careers Strategy 2021-25 was approved by the Board of Governors in March 2021.

# CAREERS STRATEGY

## 1. Background

- 1.1 Sparsholt College Group (incorporating Sparsholt College and Andover College and University Centre Sparsholt) is committed to offering a Careers Service accessible to the whole College community and ensuring all students are fully equipped with the skills and knowledge to make confident career decisions effectively and independently in life and work.
- 1.2 Our commitment to the Lifetime Skills Guarantee is to provide an excellent Careers Service that will enable students to understand the range of opportunities available to them to acquire the skills and qualifications they need to succeed. This strategy sets out the ambitions and plans to maintain and expand an adaptable, proactive, flexible service, consistently embedded across further education, apprenticeships, higher education and part-time provision.
- 1.3 The College group firmly believes that by providing high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance, students will be empowered to make confident careers decisions. The Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance will be used as the infrastructure for the careers strategy and its delivery (see Appendix A) resulting in the following:
  - Students understand the full range of opportunities available to them
  - Students gain the skills valued in the workplace
  - Students receive access to an excellent programme of information, advice and guidance delivered by individuals with the right skills, training and experience
  - Students have access to careers advice and guidance that is tailored to their individual circumstances
  - The Careers Team working closely with the Enterprise Adviser Network in order to make connections with employers
  - Information for students' parents and supporters being accessible and shared regularly
  - The College meeting its key strategic priorities as outlined in the College Strategic Plan

## 2. Our Careers Programme

The College Group will offer a careers programme that is stable and structured. We will use the 8 Gatsby Careers Benchmarks to measure the results and impact of the following ambitions:

- 2.1 Students will access high quality, impartial careers information advice and guidance from appropriately qualified staff to help clarify their aspirations for work, understand the options open to them and make informed decisions about employment, further study and apprenticeships.
- 2.2 Students will receive support to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence to

enter the employment market.

- 2.3 Students will receive support to find suitable work placements or work experience to help develop the skills they need to secure and sustain meaningful employment.
- 2.4 All students, including students who meet the widening participation criteria as defined by Uni Connect (previously NCOP) will receive targeted and tailored support and interventions.
- 2.5 We will continue to provide accessible platforms for students, parents and supporters which contain clear labour market information about career outcomes through occupational maps, wage returns data and case studies.
- 2.6 We will continue to support the individual tracking of career activities and destination data to inform the development of the careers service.

### **3. Delivery**

- 3.1 **Careers Lead**  
The Head of Careers will lead the implementation of a service which achieves the Gatsby Benchmarks, regularly reporting progress to governors, senior leadership, staff and students.
- 3.2 **Work Experience**  
Students will receive support from subject teachers, progress coaches and the Industry Work Placements team to engage in:
  - Industry Work Placements
  - Work experience – course based
  - Work experience which aids career exploration and progression
- 3.3 **Access to Information, Advice and Guidance**  
All students will be able to access high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance through one-to-one and group sessions with a qualified Careers Advisor, as well as from experienced and qualified subject teachers and progress coaches during their college journey and beyond.
- 3.4 **Pre-Enrolment**  
Applicants, prospective students and their supporters will be signposted appropriately to information, advice and guidance to inform their choice of study. Training and regular CPD will be given in order to ensure all those involved in a learner's journey are able to signpost to relevant information and advice.

Our Schools Liaison team will support schools to provide opportunities for every pupil, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, to meet apprenticeship providers and to learn about technical education options. To this end we will provide multiple opportunities for prospective students to access subject tutors at events in-school, online and on campus including Open Days and visits themed around careers.

We will ensure students with additional learning needs such as those with Education Health and Care Plans and Experience of Care for example will receive appropriate advice and guidance in conjunction with our wider college teams including Wellbeing and their keyworker.

### 3.5 The Careers Programme

The Careers Service will support all students to understand how they can access training and learning throughout their lives and are well informed about what is on offer. The Head of Careers will liaise with subject teachers and progress coaches to embed careers content through the Tutorial Programme.

The Careers Team will support teaching and support staff to link careers to the curriculum. Students will have access to a range of events, visits, workshops and activities to support them to understand a wide range of options in order to make focused and informed career decisions. These activities will include:

- Futures Day
- Choices Week
- Careers and Higher Education Fairs
- Visits to HE conventions
- University taster sessions
- University visits
- Personal Statement sessions
- Student finance workshops
- Timetabled Higher Education progression briefings
- CV workshops
- Employer engagement and focus groups bespoke to learning areas
- Alumni talks
- Workshops delivered by staff who are vocational specialists
- Educational visits
- Work placements/experience
- One-to-one careers guidance
- Careers Induction sessions
- Careers briefings
- Employability skills

- 3.5 The Careers Team commits to communicating with parents and carers through its college and university websites, parent portal, information evenings, webinars, careers platforms and careers appointments where appropriate.

## 4. Progression

- 4.1 The College Careers Service and subject teachers will support students at every stage of applying to university.
- 4.2 Subject teachers will provide a high quality, personally written and proof read Academic Reference for all students wishing to apply to HE.

- 4.3 The Careers Service will support subject teachers with quality checking UCAS applications prior to their submission.
- 4.4 The College will hold an HE progression day 'UniBound', where all Level 3 First Year students will be invited to take part in workshops on: 'Choosing a Course', 'Personal Statements', 'HE Student Finance' and 'UCAS Application Process' delivered by College staff and external university staff.
- 4.5 The College Careers Service will organise regular drop-in sessions to cover all UCAS enquiries such as: application, personal statements and academic reference. The College will deliver organised talks to parents and carers on how to support the student through university including HE Student Finance to help clarify the student finance process
- 4.6 The Careers Service and subject teachers will organise timetabled HE briefings.
- 4.7 The College Careers Service will facilitate attendance at the relevant UCAS Exhibition to discuss progression opportunities with a broad range of universities.
- 4.8 **Jobs Board**  
The Careers Service and Subject Teachers will provide information on current employment opportunities relating to the local labour market.
- 4.9 **Students with special needs or at risk**  
All students with an EHCP will have an annual review in conjunction with the Careers Team.

Foundation students will be offered links to other providers and guidance for moving on.

Students who are at risk of becoming NEET or withdrawing from their course will be contacted by the subject teacher or progress coach and signposted to the Careers Service to be provided with high quality support and options.

- 4.10 Contact details for the Careers Service, Head of Careers and SLT Careers Lead:  
[careers@sparsholt.ac.uk](mailto:careers@sparsholt.ac.uk)

**Carol Allen, Head of Careers**

[CarolL.Allen@SparsholtCollegeGroup.ac.uk](mailto:CarolL.Allen@SparsholtCollegeGroup.ac.uk)

**Jonathan Baker, Vice Principal (Curriculum) and SLT Careers Lead**

[Jonathan.Baker@sparsholt.ac.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Baker@sparsholt.ac.uk)

## **5. Quality and Review**

- 5.1 Progress will be monitored by the Vice Principal (Curriculum) as College Careers Lead and the Marketing Manager (line manager to Head of Careers) will regularly report on progress to governors, senior leadership, staff and students.

- 5.2 The quality of Careers Advice and Guidance will be monitored through the College Self- Assessment Process which will inform the College Quality Improvement and Strategic Plan.
- 5.3 The College will use surveys, destinations data and focus groups to gather student feedback and monitor the effectiveness of this Careers Strategy.
- 5.4 The College will achieve all 8 Gatsby Benchmarks and maintain 'Matrix' quality standards.
- 5.5 The Careers Strategy will be updated by the Head of Careers every three years. Next review due 2025.

## The 8 Gatsby Careers Benchmarks

### 1. A stable careers programme

Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, governors and employers.

### 2. Learning from career and labour market information

Every student, and their parents, should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.

### 3. Addressing the needs of each student

Students have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each student. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.

### 4. Linking curriculum learning to careers

All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. STEM subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.

### 5. Encounters with employers and employees

Every student should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.

### 6. Experiences of workplaces

Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.

### 7. Encounters with further and higher education

All students should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.

### 8. Personal guidance

Every student should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a career adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to the appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made.