



The Priory School, Hitchin

Excellence in education, for every young person, every day

Name of policy	Raising Aspirations
Statutory	No
Date policy was updated	September 2025
Date of next review	September 2027
Governors committee	Standards of Education, Wellbeing, and Inclusion
Member of staff responsible for the policy	Katie Dolling
Approved by Headteacher for operational implementation on 9th September 2026 Pending formal Governing Body ratification on 13th October 2026.	

RATIONALE

The Priory School, Hitchin (TPSH) recognises that it has a statutory duty to provide learners from Year 7 to Year 13 access to independent and impartial careers information, advice and guidance (The Education Act (2011)).

TPSH is proud of our outstanding Raising Aspirations programme which provides Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG). We are committed to continuing our work in partnership with Services for Young People to provide this advice to the students under the leadership of our Raising Aspirations Co-ordinator.

AIMS

A young person's aspirations reflects their pathway through learning and work. It is part of the vision and mission of TPSH that all students need a planned programme of activities to help them choose 14-19 pathways which are right for them. The school aims to provide them the tools to be able to make informed choices and to be able to manage their future careers. Providing the right advice is crucial to allow the students the ability to sustain employability and achieve personal and economic wellbeing throughout their lives.

TPSH follows best practice guidance from the careers profession, from other expert bodies such as ACEG, The Enterprise and Careers Company and from specialist Government departments.

This policy aligns fully with the 8 Gatsby Charitable Foundation's benchmarks as set out in the DfE guidance. They can be seen in Appendix 1 of this policy.

This policy covers the legal duty of schools to ensure that a range of education and training providers can access pupils in Year 7 to Year 11 for the purpose of informing them about approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships.

This policy refers to events and opportunities in all Key Stages and in all years and these events will impact upon all students at the school. The aim of the Raising Aspirations programme is to meet the needs of all students at The Priory School. All of the activities are differentiated and personalised to ensure progression in their pathways learning and development and to strengthen their motivation, and their attainment at school.

All members of staff at TPSH are expected to be aware of this policy and the importance of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) in the education of students; CEIAG is not the sole responsibility of the Careers Lead.

It is important therefore that students leave school aware of themselves as individuals, aware of the opportunities available to them and able to make some decisions about their own life. They should be prepared for the transition from full time education to the world beyond. It is to these aspects of personal and social development that this policy will contribute.

In order for the Raising Aspirations team at TPSH to keep up to date with developments within the Careers framework including the Gatsby Benchmarks, the school is committed to providing these members of staff with the opportunities to attend relevant specialist CPD.

In providing a programme which raises aspirations, the school is also committed to challenging stereotyping and promoting equality and diversity.

PROCEDURES

The Raising Aspirations team has been structured to allow for specialist support to be provided for all Year Groups with a Coordinator in place for Key Stage 3 and 4 and a Coordinator in place for Key Stage 5. Overseeing all of Raising Aspirations is a member of SLT.

The Raising Aspirations team has very good links with local business' who work in tandem with the team to come in and meet students from all year groups, providing a variety of experience from the world of work.

All of the students at the school and their parents now have access to 'Unifrog', a careers tool, which allows the student to explore all the different pathways with both their teachers and their parents, widening their horizons to the possibilities available to them.

There is allocated form time to deliver RA activities for all KS3 and KS4 students. The careers lead also has meeting time allocated to speak to the relevant year group form tutors to go through what needs to be delivered. The topics covered are suitable to the year group, the choices they are due to make and also link to the CDI frame work.

As well as form time each year group has at least one RA focused assembly a year. External speakers are brought in for most of these assemblies including local collages, apprenticeship / training provers and higher education providers.

All Key Stage 3 students are provided with specialist careers lessons to equip them with the information to make informed choices for their options in Key Stage 4. This is then followed up by an individual interview by a member of SLT to make sure that the options chosen meet their personal needs.

To raise aspirations in Key Stage 3, all Year 9 students will be offered an opportunity to visit a university and to take part in related activities designed to remove any barriers to attending a university.

In Year 8 & 10 all students have the opportunity to take part in 'Take Your Child to Work Day', if students in year 8 are unable to secure a place, provision is made for them at school to take part in a work-related enterprise day. Year 10 students will be required to find a placement for their 2/3 days.

All Year 11 Students are interviewed after they have made their Post 16 choices to make sure that the options they have chosen are suitable for them. All students who are considering going to college or into apprenticeship are also offered an additional interview with Services for Young People if they require help in making their application or their decision. There is also the opportunity to attend drop in sessions with our independent careers advisor.

All Year 12 students are offered an opportunity to attend a Higher Education conference where they can obtain impartial advice regarding university applications and an Apprenticeship roadshow where they can discuss the available apprenticeships offered by those companies.

Visiting specialists from the world of work, apprenticeship and student finance are invited in to talk to Year 12 and 13 students.

All Year 13 students are offered one to one help in the university application process and in applying for employment and apprenticeships.

Visiting Alumni are invited to come in and share their experiences with a range of students in KS3 & 4 and all Year 12 and 13 students.

All year 12 students have the opportunity to take part in a week of Work Experience.

MONITORING

Funding is allocated in the annual budget planning round in the context of whole school priorities and particular needs in the CEIAG area. The Raising Aspirations Team is responsible for the effective deployment of resources. Sources of external funding for activities are actively sought.

The Raising Aspirations team meet fortnightly to evaluate any events which have already taken place and to discuss any requirements for up and coming events.

All events have online evaluation options for the students so that the Raising Aspirations team can analyse how to develop the event.

As part of the option evenings and parent's evenings, parents are also consulted on the provision of the Raising Aspirations programme,

The Raising Aspirations team's e-mail addresses are available on the website to provide contact between the team and parents / carers.

The Raising Aspirations team will identify potential CPD opportunities which could enhance the provision of the Advice and Guidance offered to the learners.

The CEIAG provision is reviewed annually by the Raising Aspirations team in the May of the current academic year using the Gatsby Benchmarks. This review is then presented to the SLT.

The CEIAG programme is planned, monitored and evaluated by the Raising Aspirations team in consultation with SLT.

The Raising Aspirations team work closely with the CEC and their allocated Enterprise Co-ordinator to review the schools' programme and to complete Compass+, which indicates how the school is performing against the Gatsby Benchmarks.

The Priory School, Hitchin (TPSH): Provider Access Policy Statement

Rationale

High quality careers education and guidance in school or college is critical to young people's futures. It helps to prepare them for the workplace by providing a clear understanding of the world of work including the routes to jobs and careers that they might find engaging and rewarding. It supports them to acquire the self-development and career management skills they need to achieve positive employment destinations. This helps students to choose their pathways, improve their life opportunities and contribute to a productive and successful economy.

As the number of apprenticeships rises every year, it becomes increasingly important that all young people have a full understanding of all the options available to them post-16 and post-18 including wider technical education options such as T-Levels and Higher Technical Qualifications.

Commitment

The Priory School, Hitchin (TPSH) is committed to ensuring there is an opportunity for a range of education and training providers to access students, for the purpose of informing them about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. TPSH is fully aware of the responsibility to set students on the path that will secure the best outcome which will enable them to progress in education and work and give employers the highly skilled people they need. That means acting impartially, in line with the statutory duty, and not showing bias towards any route, be that academic or technical.

TPSH endeavours to ensure that all students are aware of all routes to higher skills and are able to access information on technical options and apprenticeships (The Department of Education, July 2021: "Baker Clause": supporting students to understand the full range of education and training options, and the Provider Access Legislation, January 2023).

Aims

TPSH's policy for Access to other education and training providers has the following aims:
To develop the knowledge and awareness of our students of all career pathways available to them, including technical qualifications and apprenticeships.

To support young people to be able to learn more about opportunities for education and training outside of school before making crucial choices about their future options.

To reduce drop out from courses and avoid the risk of students becoming NEET (Young people not in education, employment or training).

Student Entitlement

TPSH fully supports the statutory requirement for students to have direct access to other providers of further education training, technical training and apprenticeships. The school will comply with the new legal requirement to put on at least six encounters with providers of approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships. This will be done in assemblies in National Apprenticeship Week and National Careers Week, in addition to providers attending careers events at school.

Updated provider access legislation (PAL)

The school will comply with the updated provider access legislation (PAL). It specifies schools must provide at least six encounters with approved providers of apprenticeships and technical education for all their students:

Two encounters for pupils during the 'first key phase' (year 8 or 9) that are mandatory for all pupils to attend

Two encounters for pupils during the 'second key phase' (year 10 or 11) that are mandatory for all pupils to attend

Two encounters for pupils during the 'third key phase' (year 12 or 13) that are mandatory for the school to put on but optional for pupils to attend.

Keys Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Sixth Form
Apprenticeship assembly	Year 10 Networking Fair	Post 18 pathways day
Training provider day	Apprenticeship Assessment centre workshop	Apprenticeship provision
MyPath form time	Get work Ready Day	UCAS day
Settle Housing	Bedford College Assembly	University of Hertfordshire visit
University of Hertfordshire visit	University of Hertfordshire	
Taylor Wimpy Construction	North Herts College Assembly	

Development

This policy has been developed and is reviewed annually by the Careers Leader (SEM) and Line Manager (**KDO**) based on current good practice guidelines by the Department for Education.

Links with other policies

It supports and is underpinned by key school policies including those for Careers, Child Protection, Equality and Diversity, and SEND.

Equality and Diversity

Access to other providers is available and promoted to allow all students to access information about other providers of further education and apprenticeships. TPSH is committed to encouraging all students to make decisions about their future based on impartial information.

Requests for access

Requests for access should be directed to **Sally Emler**, Careers Leader. **Sally Emler** may be contacted by telephone or email, **semmler@priory.herts.sch.uk** , Tel **01462 622300**.

Grounds for granting requests for access

Access will be given for providers to attend during school assemblies, timetabled Careers or Life lessons, and Careers or Raising Aspirations events that TPSH is arranging. Students may also travel to visit another provider as part of the trip to be organised in partnership with TPSH.

Details of premises or facilities to be provided to a person who is given access

TPSH will provide an appropriate room or assembly hall to be agreed. All rooms have computers, projectors and screens provided. Computer rooms can also be arranged. The Careers Leader or Careers Adviser will organise this, working closely with the provider to ensure the facilities are appropriate to the audience. Appropriate safeguarding checks will be carried out. Providers will be met and supervised by a member of the Careers Team who will facilitate.

Live/Virtual encounters

TPSH will consider live online encounters with providers where requested, and these may be broadcast into classrooms or the school assembly hall. Technology checks in advance will be required to ensure compatibility of systems.

Parents and Carers

Parental involvement is encouraged, and parents may be invited to attend the events to meet the providers.

Management

The Careers Leader coordinates all provider requests and is responsible to his/her senior management line manager.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints about this policy should be raised to Katie Dolling, email: kdolling@priory.herts.sch.uk

Katie Dolling will raise the complaint to Matt Blayney, Headteacher of The Priory School, Hitchin

Monitoring review and evaluation

The Policy is monitored and evaluated annually via the Leadership Team.

Appendix 1: The Gatsby Benchmarks

The 2024 updated benchmarks with highlighted changes can be found [here](#)

* Pre 2024 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.	□ Every school should have a stable, structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of the senior management team, and has an identified and appropriately trained person responsible for it. □ The careers programme should be published on the school's website in a way that enables pupils, parents, teachers and employers to access and understand it. □ The programme should be regularly evaluated with feedback from pupils, parents, teachers and employers as part of the evaluation process.
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.	□ By the age of 14, all pupils should have accessed and used information about career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options. □ Parents should be encouraged to access and use information about labour markets and future study options to inform their support to their children.
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.	□ A school's careers programme should actively seek to challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations. □ Schools should keep systematic records of the individual advice given to each pupil, and subsequent agreed decisions. □ All pupils should have access to these records to support their career development. □ Schools should collect and maintain accurate data for each pupil on their education, training or employment destinations.

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.	☐ By the age of 14, every pupil should have had the opportunity to learn how the different STEM subjects help people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers.
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.	☐ Every year, from the age of 11, pupils should participate in at least one meaningful encounter* with an employer. *A 'meaningful encounter' is one in which the student has an opportunity to learn about what work is like or what it takes to be successful in the workplace.
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.	☐ By the age of 16, every pupil should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have. ☐ By the age of 18, every pupil should have had one further such experience, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.
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.	☐ By the age of 16, every pupil should have had a meaningful encounter* with providers of the full range of learning opportunities, including Sixth Forms, colleges, universities and apprenticeship providers. This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and pupils. ☐ By the age of 18, all pupils who are considering applying for university should have had at least two visits to universities to meet staff and pupils. *A 'meaningful encounter' is one in which the student has an opportunity to explore what it is like to learn in that environment.
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 an appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made.	☐ Every pupil should have at least one such interview by the age of 16, and the opportunity for a further interview by the age of 18.