

Spotlight on Careers

Welcome

To our first Careers Newsletter from Witchford Village College and what a start it has been! We hope to be able to provide you with updates termly on events that students have been involved in relating to careers; forthcoming opportunities and generally keeping you in the loop with all things careers related. It is also your opportunity to feed back to us about any ways that you feel the programme could be improved or ideas that you have to enhance our offer to students. At Witchford Village College we aspire to ensure that every student reaches their highest potential and leaves with high aspirations and excitement for their future.

How our Careers Programme is measured

The Gatsby Benchmarks are how Careers is measured and regulated by the Government across the whole country. This ensures that we provide continuous quality provision for all of the students in our care. We create opportunities to engage with Universities, employers, sixth form providers and training providers to name a few. There are eight benchmarks which provide the structure for the careers programme. These are:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers or employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal Guidance



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EAST CAMBS SKILLS FAIR

All Year 10 students attended the East Cambs Skills Fair at Ely Cathedral in October 2021. This Skills Fair has been an annual event that all schools in East Cambs can access. Due to the pandemic it was cancelled for two years, but has now returned. Going to the skills fair may be students first opportunities to speak to local employers and see the range of employment sectors there are locally. There were opportunities to speak to a varie-

ty of employers and sixth form providers. Some interactive activities were available that students could take part in as well as picking up information leaflets and pens. Students commented that “they did not realise what the local area had to offer.”

This event is so well received that we have booked for the next one during the Autumn Term of 2022.

“The Careers Fair made me think more about what my options were and how I was going to get there”

MYCHOICE@16

The application process for Year 11 students started in earnest during November 2021. Sixth Form Providers invited students to book visits at their centres and welcomed them on tours. It gave students the chance to see what the sixth forms were offering and to gauge a feel for the provider. Witchford Village College also offered parents and students an open event on the 23rd September 2021 and invited all providers in as well as some local businesses, who provide apprenticeships. There was also an opportunity for parents and students to attend a Apprenticeship workshop to increase their understanding. We were also grateful to be supported at the event by our Enterprise Advisor Harvey Bibby, who also presented to parents and offered his continuing support to Witchford Village College with employer engagement.

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YEAR 11 DROP DOWN DAY—DECEMBER 2021

To continue to prepare students for the next steps after Witchford Village College we organised an off timetable day for Year 11 students. During this day students took part in activities such as an Apprenticeship Workshop with AIM Apprenticeships <https://theaimgroup.co.uk/> for those that were interested. A virtual session on Finance with Natwest Bank speaking directly to students and being able to answer their questions on such topics as “What is a credit card?; Is it important to have a good credit rating?”. Also such topics as PAYE and having an improved idea of finance in general. This subject was really well received and students fed back that they felt it was useful to understand these topics that would help them throughout their lives.

A proportion of the day was also dedicated to MyChoice@16, making applications and reviewing courses that students wanted to apply to. Prospectus were available for all students to take away and look at in their own time and with their families. Students also have to complete a personal statement. Which is a piece of writing all about them as individuals, their aspirations, interests and achievements. Help was on hand from our English Department to ensure every student could produce a personal statement which reflected all of these qualities.

Students also took part in a Mental Health workshop talking about some of the stresses during exam time and working out strategies to overcome these. Information and advice was also available for students about who could approach if they felt that they had concerns and anxieties.





Students in full flow interviews and the local businesses and representatives that offered their time and expertise—February 2022

INTERVIEW SKILLS DAY

On the 3rd February 2022 we welcomed in representatives from the local business community who offered all of our Year 11 students a one to one mock interview. This experience for students is so invaluable and has been sadly missing in person during the pandemic. Each student had an interview slot and had to complete a “Dream Job” application form, which the interviewer then talked to them about. The students then received verbal feedback and will also have the opportunity for written feedback to. This has given these students a taste of what an interview would feel like and how they present themselves could be the difference between achieving their desired employment or not.

Students commented “It was really helpful and made me think about how to prepare myself”. “I was anxious to take part, but it was really great to talk to different people”.

We can not thank the businesses and individuals enough who gave up their time and shared their expertise. Witchford Village College is always looking for ways to ensure that our students have experiences that will improve outcomes for them in the future and this was such an event.

The companies involved were: Grove-mere, Growth Works, G’s Fresh, Chair of Cambs Chamber of Commerce, Governors an Ex-Governors from WVC, Emerald Frog, Millrose Telecom, Red Shoes Accounting, AIM Apprenticeships and NEACO (Anglia Ruskin University).

NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK 7-11TH FEBRUARY



During National Apprenticeship week we were grateful to have local employers coming into school offering pop up stands at lunchtime so students can come and talk to them about opportunities or just discover what the apprenticeship route is like. This valuable opportunity meant that all students from all year groups could start to experience different employers and start to understand what the apprenticeship route may look like.

On Monday we had Millrose Telecom, Tuesday Richard Designs, Thursday Stainless Metalcraft and Friday Cambridge Commodities. Hopefully seeing all of these different employment sectors sparked an in interest in students to find out more.

Link to National Apprenticeship Week 7-11th February 2022 for Parents <https://amazingapprenticeships.com/resource/hints-tips-for-parents-carers/>



EYES ON THE PRIZE—YR 9

On Tuesday 1st March all Year 9 students took part in a virtual event called "Eyes on the Prize" during the morning. This was delivered by Anglia Ruskin University and included a virtual tour of the University, talks by present students and also Further and Higher Education Providers. AstraZeneca also spoke to students about apprenticeship opportunities. We have attended this event every year, usually in person, but due to covid restrictions at the University it was not possible this year. We hope to be back to in-person visits next year. All students were issued with a work book that they could complete during the morning and also take home for future reference.



CAMBRIDGE REGIONAL COLLEGE TASTER MORNING YR9—23RD FEBRUARY 2022

Witchford Village College welcomed Cambridge Regional College on the 23rd February 2022 for an event delivering a range of vocational subjects to Year 9 students. The tutors that came from CRC were all specialists in their field and the students were able to engage in subjects such as Engineering, Construction, Art, Computing, Sport & Uniformed Services and Care, Health & Early Years. The morning progressed really well with our students being able to consider some of the options that may be available for the future. We were also lucky enough that some of the present students from Cambridge Regional College, who were studying the subjects, were able to support and talk to students about life at CRC.



Students engaging with hand on tools

YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE

Students in Year 10 had the opportunity to source their own work experience placement for four days from the 7th to the 10th March 2022. We were so fortunate that local employers accommodated students and gave them a real chance at having a meaningful few days as an employee. Students commented when they returned to WVC "that it had given them an insight to what work was about". "The days were much longer than a school day but it felt great to be treated like an adult." Employers fed back to us that they were impressed at the level of maturity that students had shown and how they had fitted in well to the working world.



VISIT TO ST JOHNS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

St Johns College, Cambridge University welcomed Witchford Village College students from Year 10 and 11 to visit and think about what life might be like at University. The students listened to a presentation about myth-busting about attending University and also the Cambridge application process. A tour was also included, which students really enjoyed as the buildings are amazing.



NATIONAL CAREERS WEEK 7TH– 11TH MARCH 2022



Witchford Village College celebrated this annual event by engaging with a variety of businesses and providers to ensure that students were aware of the many opportunities that they could think about after school.

We were grateful to Cambridge Regional College, Cambridge Commodities Ltd and Hill Group who all took the time to man pop up lunchtime stands. These are popular with students as they provide an informal way to talk to businesses and providers and are open to all students in the school and not targeted at one year group. Two of the companies representatives were also ex-students so making it even more interesting for students to talk through with them what they had achieved with their career since leaving Witchford Village College.

YEAR 10 CAREERS DROP DOWN DAY

Ensuring that students are able to access information about all routes and employment sectors is really important at Witchford Village College.

On the 11th March we were fortunate to be able to invite Vistry Group in to talk about the many different career paths in the construction industry. We heard from Planning, Site Management and Sales to name a few.



One of the sessions during the day also focussed around

apprenticeships and CV Writing. Students spent time discussed what were good qualities to include in a CV and what impression an employer might gain from reading their CV. Apprenticeships were also discussed as a route, right up to Degree Level.

Careers in the Forces, particularly the RAF featured for students also during this day. A representative from the RAF spoke to students about different career paths within the services and what the



entry requirements may be. Students were surprised by the variety of different

paths that could be followed.

Alumni delivered to students as part of this day. They were able to speak about what they had achieved since leaving Witchford Village College and how their career aspirations may have changed along the way. We are always grateful when past students return to the school, it can put in perspective what can be achieved.





THANKS TO OUR ENTERPRISE ADVISOR

The majority of schools have been allocated an Enterprise Co-ordinator and Enterprise Advisor to help assist with employer engagement. Witchford Village College have been lucky enough to be allocated as our Enterprise Advisor Harvey Bibby—Marketing and Development Director from Grovemere Property. He brings with him a wealth of experience and the ability to facilitate engagement with many local businesses. Grovemere have also participated in events we have offered for students, often at short notice.

We thank Harvey and Grovemere for their ongoing commitment to us as a school now and in the future.



During National Careers Week some of the staff posting about previous jobs. Talking points for students to understand career journeys



For further information about the Careers Programme please contact

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INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY 8th March 2022

At Witchford Village College we not only celebrated International Womens Day by acknowledged all of our female colleagues, but we were lucky enough to welcome an inspirational past student. Lauren after leaving Witchford Village College went on to take A Levels but was undecided the direction she wanted to follow after that. She is now training to be a Site Project Manager for the Hill Group in Construction.



We have been so grateful to all of the businesses and individuals that have taken part in events in school. It makes such a difference for young people to see different employment sectors and understand the different routes into those businesses. Witchford Village College are always looking for more volunteers to help work with students in this capacity and if you, as a parent, would like to take part in any events or offer work experience or want to be involved in anyway please get in touch. Juliet Martin, Head of Careers jmartin@wvc.tmet.org.uk