



Castleford
Academy

Part of Castleford Trust



Careers Programme



Care Aspire Succeed

The Castleford Career Journey

Explore, Encounter, Embark

At Castleford Academy, our Careers Programme takes pupils on a clear journey from discovering their interests to making confident choices about their futures. Through our Explore, Encounter, Embark model, pupils gain the knowledge, experiences, and guidance they need to achieve success beyond school.

- **Explore (Years 7–8):** Pupils begin by identifying their skills, qualities, and aspirations. They explore how what they learn in school connects to a wide range of future pathways and careers, developing curiosity and ambition for the world beyond the classroom.
- **Encounter (Years 9–10):** Pupils deepen their understanding through real-world encounters with employers, further and higher education providers, and workplace experiences. They make key decisions about their GCSE options, take part in work experience, and continue to build the employability skills that prepare them for life after school.
- **Embark (Year 11):** Pupils focus on their next steps, whether college, apprenticeship, or employment. They receive tailored guidance and practical support with applications, interviews, and post-16 planning, ensuring every pupil is ready to move forward with confidence.

“This structured approach ensures that all pupils are inspired, informed, and well-prepared to take their next steps into further education, training, or employment.



Year 7- Explore



"Your journey starts here.
Discover what makes you
unique"

Year 7 – Explore: “Your journey starts here. Discover what makes you unique.”

Activity Title	Description	Gatsby Benchmark	Timescale
Future Fridays	A series of academy-based career lessons delivered during form time once per half term. Each session introduces pupils to key career concepts such as <i>what is a career</i> , <i>exploring possibilities and dream jobs</i> , <i>what is an entrepreneur</i> , <i>work-life balance</i> , and <i>careers of the future</i> . Lessons encourage aspiration, early career awareness, and self-reflection, helping pupils to explore their strengths, challenge stereotypes, and set goals for the future.	1, 2, 3 & 4	September- July
Careers Spotlight	Each term, subjects deliver a careers-linked lesson highlighting a career linked to their subject. Lessons explore how classroom learning connects to real jobs, including the skills, qualifications, and salaries involved. This helps pupils see the relevance of their studies and raises awareness of future pathways.	4	September- July
Future Skills Questionnaire	Pupils complete a questionnaire annually to share their aspirations and review our career provision at the academy. The results are used to guide the programme of workshops and assemblies through the year.	1, 2, 3	September - November
National Careers Week	During National Careers Week, pupils take part in daily form-time lessons focused on labour market information (LMI) to help them make informed choices about future careers. Lessons explore the types of jobs available locally and nationally, the skills and qualifications needed, and the opportunities in growing industries such as technology, healthcare, and sustainable energy. Activities across the academy will also challenge stereotypes, showcase diverse role models, and inspire pupils to think broadly about their future pathways	2, 3 & 4	Spring Term
Leadership Opportunities	Pupils can take on a variety of leadership roles, such as sports captains, library assistants, or Pupil Leadership Team members. These roles develop teamwork, communication, and responsibility, giving pupils experience in decision-making and managing projects	1	September- July
Guest Speakers	Assemblies and interactive sessions, including in-person and virtual talks, led by a range of employers. Pupils gain insight into different careers, workplaces, and the skills needed to succeed.	5	January- July
Extra- Curricular	A wide range of clubs and enrichment opportunities encourage pupils to explore interests, develop confidence, and build transferable skills such as teamwork, creativity, and communication. While not all activities link directly to future careers, they help pupils develop qualities valued by employers and support personal growth.	1	September- July
Year 7 Residential	A one-night residential focused on building resilience, teamwork, and confidence through outdoor pursuits and shared experiences that help pupils strengthen relationships and develop key life skills.	1	July
Pupil Visit – University Visit	Pupils visit a university to learn about degree-level study and life at university aspirations	7	Summer

Year 8- Explore



“Explore your interests-
your future is full of
possibilities”

Year 8 “Explore your interests — your future is full of possibilities”.

Activity Title	Description	Gatsby Benchmark	Timescale
Future Fridays	A series of academy-based career lessons delivered during form time once per half term. Each session introduces pupils to key career concepts and themes such as <i>creating the life you want</i> , <i>identifying personal interests</i> , <i>job applications and CVs</i> , and <i>understanding the challenges and rewards of work</i> . Lessons encourage aspiration, early career awareness, and self-reflection, supporting pupils to explore their strengths, challenge stereotypes, and set goals for the future.	1, 2, 3 & 4	September- July
Careers Spotlight	Each term, subjects deliver a careers-linked lesson highlighting a career linked to their subject. Lessons explore how classroom learning connects to real jobs, including the skills, qualifications, and salaries involved. This helps pupils see the relevance of their studies and raises awareness of future pathways.	4	September- July
Future Skills Questionnaire	Pupils complete a questionnaire annually to share their aspirations and review our career provision at the academy. The results are used to guide the programme of workshops and assemblies through the year.	1, 2, 3	September - November
National Careers Week	During National Careers Week, pupils take part in daily form-time lessons focused on labour market information (LMI) to help them make informed choices about future careers. Lessons explore the types of jobs available locally and nationally, the skills and qualifications needed, and the opportunities in growing industries such as technology, healthcare, and sustainable energy. Activities across the academy will also challenge stereotypes, showcase diverse role models, and inspire pupils to think broadly about their future pathways	2, 3 & 4	Spring Term
Leadership Opportunities	Pupils can take on a variety of leadership roles, such as sports captains, library assistants, or Pupil Leadership Team members. These roles develop teamwork, communication, and responsibility, giving pupils experience in decision-making and managing projects.	1	September- July
Guest Speakers	Assemblies and interactive sessions, including in-person and virtual talks, led by a range of employers and employees. Pupils gain insight into different careers, workplaces, and the skills needed to succeed.	2 & 5	September- July
Extra-Curricular	A wide range of clubs and enrichment opportunities encourage pupils to explore interests, develop confidence, and build transferable skills such as teamwork, creativity, and communication. While not all activities link directly to future careers, they help pupils develop qualities valued by employers and support personal growth.	1	September- July
Employer Panel	Pupils take part in a panel session with employees from a range of industries, asking questions to gain first-hand insight into different careers.	5	Spring Term
SPARKS programme	A bespoke programme with Hull University to raise pupil aspirations for Higher Education.	7	September - July
HARIBO early careers programme	A bespoke programme with local employer, Haribo. Pupils explore the range of career opportunities at Haribo and work in teams to design a new sweet. This workshop develops teamwork, communication, creativity and resilience.	4, 5, 6	September – July
Attainment Raising	Go Higher West Yorkshire progression officer delivers workshops to pupils to raise aspirations for Higher Education. A visit to the University of Leeds forms part of the programme.	3, 4, 7	September - July

Year 9- Encounter



“Every choice opens a new
door- be curious and
confident”

Year 9 – Encounter: “Every choice opens a new door — be curious and confident”.

Activity Title	Description	Gatsby Benchmark	Timescale
Future Fridays	A series of academy-based career lessons delivered during form time once per half term. Each session introduces pupils to key career concepts such as <i>taking control of your career journey, what comes after school and the main learning pathways, understanding the labour market, identifying your skills, and working, earning, and managing money</i> . Lessons encourage aspiration, informed decision-making, and self-reflection, helping pupils to recognise their strengths, explore opportunities, and set goals for their future.	1, 2, 3 & 4	September- July
Careers Spotlight	Each term, subjects deliver a careers-linked lesson highlighting a career linked to their subject. Lessons explore how classroom learning connects to real jobs, including the skills, qualifications, and salaries involved. This helps pupils see the relevance of their studies and raises awareness of future pathways.	4	September- July
Future Skills Questionnaire	Pupils complete a questionnaire annually to share their aspirations and review our career provision at the academy. The results are used to guide the programme of workshops and assemblies through the year.	1, 2, 3	September - November
National Careers Week	During National Careers Week, pupils take part in daily form-time lessons focused on labour market information (LMI) to help them make informed choices about future careers. Lessons explore the types of jobs available locally and nationally, the skills and qualifications needed, and the opportunities in growing industries such as technology, healthcare, and sustainable energy. Activities across the academy will also challenge stereotypes, showcase diverse role models, and inspire pupils to think broadly about their future pathways	2, 3 & 4	Spring Term
Leadership Opportunities	Pupils can take on a variety of leadership roles, such as sports captains, library assistants, or Pupil Leadership Team members. These roles develop teamwork, communication, and responsibility, giving pupils experience in decision-making and managing projects.	1	September- July
Guest Speakers	Assemblies and interactive sessions, including in-person and virtual talks, led by a range of employers and employees. Pupils gain insight into different careers, workplaces, and the skills needed to succeed.	5	September- July
Extra-Curricular	A wide range of clubs and enrichment opportunities encourage pupils to explore interests, develop confidence, and build transferable skills such as teamwork, creativity, and communication. While not all activities link directly to future careers, they help pupils develop qualities valued by employers and support personal growth.	1	September- July
Duke of Edinburgh Award	Pupils can complete the Duke of Edinburgh Award, tracking progress in volunteering, physical activity, and skill development, leading to a two-day expedition. Completing the award demonstrates commitment, resilience, teamwork, and communication—key employability skills valued by future employers.	3,5,6	Spring Term
GCSE Options Information Evening	A supportive evening for pupils and parents/carers to learn about the GCSE options process, understand subject choices, and discuss how pathways align with future careers and aspirations.	2 & 4	Spring Term
Sparks programme	A bespoke programme with Hull University to raise pupil aspirations for Higher Education.	7	September - July
Haribo early careers programme	A bespoke programme with local employer, Haribo. Pupils explore the range of career opportunities at Haribo and work in teams to design a new sweet. This workshop develops teamwork, communication, creativity and resilience.	4, 5, 6	September – July

Attainment Raising	Go Higher West Yorkshire progression officer delivers workshops to pupils to raise aspirations for Post-18 destinations. A visit to the University of Leeds forms part of the programme.	3, 4, 7	September – July
Budget Busters	Workshops delivered by University of Leeds to develop financial literacy, create real- life budgets and raise aspirations by showing that finance is not a barrier to Higher Education.	2, 4	September – July
Speak Up	Speak Up – Your Voice Matters is designed to help pupils explore the benefits of Higher Education and the skills needed to succeed within it. The programme builds communication, teamwork and reflection whilst fostering a sense of belonging. This is a boys only group.	2, 4	January - April



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Year 10- Encounter

“Step up, get involved, and
start shaping your future”

Year 10 – Encounter “Step up, get involved, and start shaping your future”.

Activity Title	Description	Gatsby Benchmark	Timescale
Future Fridays	A series of academy-based career lessons delivered during form time once per half term. Each session introduces pupils to key career concepts such as <i>reflecting on my career journey: past, present and future, wellbeing and balancing life, learning and work, is an apprenticeship right for me?, what makes an employer good to work for?, and what type of career is best for me?</i> Lessons encourage aspiration, informed decision-making, and self-reflection, helping pupils to recognise their strengths, explore opportunities, and prepare for post-16 choices.	1, 2, 3 & 4	September- July
Careers Spotlight	Each term, subjects deliver a careers-linked lesson highlighting a career linked to their subject. Lessons explore how classroom learning connects to real jobs, including the skills, qualifications, and salaries involved. This helps pupils see the relevance of their studies and raises awareness of future pathways.	4	September- July
Future Skills Questionnaire	Pupils complete a questionnaire annually to share their aspirations and review our career provision at the academy. The results are used to guide the programme of workshops and assemblies through the year.	1, 2, 3	September - November
National Careers Week	During National Careers Week, pupils take part in daily form-time lessons focused on labour market information (LMI) to help them make informed choices about future careers. Lessons explore the types of jobs available locally and nationally, the skills and qualifications needed, and the opportunities in growing industries such as technology, healthcare, and sustainable energy. Activities across the academy will also challenge stereotypes, showcase diverse role models, and inspire pupils to think broadly about their future pathways.	2, 3 & 4	Spring Term
Leadership Opportunities	Pupils can take on a variety of leadership roles, such as sports captains, library assistants, or Pupil Leadership Team members. These roles develop teamwork, communication, and responsibility, giving pupils experience in decision-making and managing projects.	1	September- July
Guest Speakers	Assemblies and interactive sessions, including in-person and virtual talks, led by a range of employers and employees. Pupils gain insight into different careers, workplaces, and the skills needed to succeed.	2 & 5	September- July
Extra- Curricular	A wide range of clubs, activities, and enrichment opportunities encourage pupils to explore interests, develop confidence, and build transferable skills such as teamwork, creativity, and communication. While not all activities link directly to future careers, they help pupils develop qualities valued by employers and support personal growth.	1	September- July
Work Experience	Pupils spend one week on a work experience placement to gain hands-on insight into the workplace. For 2025/26, placements are voluntary; from 2026/27, all pupils will take part	1 and 6	Summer Term
Mock Interviews	Pupils take part in a mock interview with an external employer to practise interview techniques in a supportive, low-stakes setting. Each pupil receives feedback on their performance to help them build confidence and improve for future college or job interviews.	5	Summer Term
Taster Days – Year 10 futures days	Visits to local post-16 provisions where students can sample subjects, experience the college environment and gain information to inform their decisions.	2 & 7	March- June
Attainment Raising	Go Higher West Yorkshire progression officer delivers workshops to pupils to raise aspirations for Post-18 destinations. A visit to the University of Leeds forms part of the programme.	3, 4, 7	September – July
Sparks programme	A bespoke programme with Hull University to raise pupil aspirations for Higher Education.	7	September - July



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Year 11-Embark

“Your future starts today.
Make it count”

Year 11 – Embark “Your future starts today — make it count.”

Activity Title	Description	Gatsby Benchmark	Timescale
Future Fridays	A series of academy-based career lessons delivered during form time once per half term. Each session introduces pupils to key career concepts such as <i>post-16 choices</i> , <i>identifying my employability skills</i> , <i>researching volunteering and paid work</i> , and <i>is AI a threat to our jobs?</i> Lessons promote aspiration, informed decision-making, and self-reflection, helping pupils to recognise their strengths, explore future opportunities, and confidently prepare for their next steps beyond school.	1, 2, 3 & 4	September- July
1-1 Careers Meeting	Each pupil has a one-to-one interview with a careers adviser to discuss future pathways, qualifications, and career options. Disadvantaged and SEND pupils, or those at risk of NEET, are prioritised. Weekly appointments are available for all pupils, with the option for parents to join meetings if requested.	8	September- July
Presentation	Assemblies led by the careers leader raise awareness of post-16 pathways, ensuring all pupils understand the options available, including further education, apprenticeships, and employment routes	2	Autumn Term
Presentation	Partner providers, such as Pontefract New College and Wakefield College, deliver assemblies to give pupils knowledge about post-16 options. Sessions cover different courses, entry requirements, and the pathways available after Year 11	2 & 7	Autumn Term
Presentation	Develop understanding of apprenticeship routes	2, 5 & 7	November- March
Apprenticeship workshops	Pupils can sign up for the apprenticeship group following the assembly launch. Workshops delivered by employers to raise the profile of apprenticeships and to support pupils with applications.	5, 6, 7	November - March
Y11 Information Evening and Careers fair	Pupils and their parents/carers have the opportunity to learn about post-16 options and the application process. The in-school careers fair allows families to speak directly with colleges, apprenticeship providers, local employers, and public services, gaining guidance on the full range of learning and workplace opportunities.	2, 5, 7	Autumn Term
Application Support Sessions	Workshops focused on completing college applications, writing CVs, and preparing personal statements. These sessions ensure pupils are confident and ready to take their next steps after Year 11.	2	September- July
Pre-destination Register	A database of pupil destinations is maintained to track post-16 plans. Pupils identified as at risk of NEET receive targeted support and guidance to ensure they secure a suitable pathway.	1 and 8	September- July
Leadership Opportunities	Leadership roles including Sports, Pupil Leadership Team, Head Pupil, etc.	1	September- July
Aspire	Pupils attend targeted ASPIRE sessions after school to strengthen subject knowledge and prepare for upcoming exams. These sessions reinforce the importance of achieving strong qualifications to open future education and career pathways.	4	September- July



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Ferrybridge Road
Castleford
WF10 4JQ

T: 01977 605060

E: admin@castlefordacademy.com