



## The importance of careers guidance at Stone Lodge Academy

Stone Lodge Academy is committed to offering all our students a high level of careers education, guidance and advice to enable them to make discerning decisions about their future. We value the importance of looking at the individual needs of the student and planning and delivering a career guidance programme that supports every student, considering the voices of the students. 'Schools should ensure every pupil, whatever their level or type of need, is supported to fulfil their potential. The overwhelming majority of young people with SEND, including those with high levels of need, are capable of sustainable paid employment, with the right preparation and support.' (DfE Careers Strategy: Making the Most of Everyone's Skills and Talents, 2018)

Through our career programme delivery, we strive to empower our students and break down barriers such as negative stereotyping and assumptions that can be made about student's limitations by encouraging community participation from local businesses and providers. One of our key drivers is to focus on increasing social mobility and fairness to all our students.

Our aim is to help our students realise their full potential. We believe that without a strong careers programme it is impossible to fully prepare our students for their next steps. We wish to offer as many meaningful encounters as possible and offer opportunities to access positive careers interventions. We want to endeavour to play our part in trying to reduce the number of students Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and improve positive changes in academic performance. We wish for our pupils to work towards their dreams and aspirations wherever possible and not be held back because of their needs or disability. We want our students to gain skills for life – not just to get a job, but to sustain employment and thrive in the community. To do this, we work with our students to develop communication skills, self-regulation, financial literacy, and home management, as well as travel and other skills to access their community.

## Our careers programme at Stone Lodge Academy

At Stone Lodge Academy the Gatsby Benchmarks are followed and included to provide a high-quality careers programme for our students (Please see below link for more information about the Gatsby Benchmarks). Stone Lodge Academy Career leads are also guided by representatives from the Careers Advisor Network in

ensuring that we are working towards a robust and high-quality framework for careers guidance.

Our Careers programme has a focus on gaining experiences in the workplace and employer encounters. A level 6 qualified Careers Advisor supports the students with impartial advice and guidance with regards to post 16 options and next steps. The Careers curriculum has explicit backing of the senior leadership team, to drive the Career programme forward at Stone Lodge Academy.

Our careers programme comprises of several strands: Work Related Learning, Business Enterprise, PSHE/Living in the wider world curriculum and ASDAN personal progress delivery. Flexibility is key, as we need to respond to the needs of the young people as they develop knowledge and skills in each strand.

Stone Lodge Academy's well-structured careers programme enables students to engage in encounters and experiences of work; allowing opportunities for students to make their own decisions, or participate in decision-making, and base these decisions on first-hand experience tailored to their needs and ambitions.

<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/schools-colleges/gatsby-benchmarks>

## Education & Training Post 16 and College Links

Stone Lodge Academy have close links with the local colleges. As part of their preparations for moving on, we have a college carousel offer for our Year 11 students and work in collaboration with other local special schools to rotate opportunities to visit local colleges so that students can experience each of the local colleges and are able to make informed choices about their post 16 options. We offer introductory visits to our Year 10 pupils later in the summer term in preparedness for them to access the college carousel confidently in year 11. Students have a chance to visit different colleges with their parents. Further information is provided at our annual transition events which take place in the autumn term. All pupils from Year 9 onwards are welcome to attend this event.

For students at Stone Lodge Academy, the year 9 transition review provides a key opportunity and the beginnings of discussion about career aspirations. Moving into Adulthood plans (MIA) are a key driver in determining where our students would like to be by the end of Year 11. Students and their families are consulted about what their hopes and aspirations are for their futures. Each year, they complete the Moving into adulthood paperwork in preparation for their annual review meeting where the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is discussed, reviewed and amended as necessary. The MIA plan, as it is known, invites students to tell us about hopes and dreams for when they are older – discussion around jobs, careers, next transition steps in learning, Sixth Form, college as well as independent travel support (free disabled person's bus pass), where they will live and management of health needs. Many students need to be supported to develop these thoughts and the school uses their Careers Advisor to help develop ideas and thoughts through the offer of advisory sessions in year 10 and 11. Students are encouraged to have more than one idea and are reminded that it is ok to change your mind about what they hope to do when they are older.

In the autumn term, through the Carousel college links, our focus is for our Year 11's to have taster mornings at One College, Suffolk New College (Rural Campus) and WS Training as well as opportunities to explore other further education providers such as New Skills Centre, where appropriate. Students will have the opportunity to access sessions at the colleges where they can experience the college day and meet prospective staff members that will support. They are accompanied by Stone Lodge Academy staff on these visits. These sessions will help familiarise the students with the idea of going somewhere new but also helps them make informed decisions about where they would like to go the following September.

Further support for parents/carers is offered by appropriate school representatives in completing application forms for colleges in good time for those students wanting to access SENDAT's 6<sup>th</sup> and other local colleges. The Key Stage 4 annual reviews are prioritised in the autumn term to ensure that applications are made to appropriate provisions in good time and robust liaison with the Local Authority through the annual review process is coordinated.

## Transition Post 16

Preparing students for the transition from school is a key priority in Key Stage 4. Most students will have been at the school for many years, for some since a very early age. The school understands that leaving school can be exciting but can also be a source of anxiety and confusion for students and parents alike. Students begin to transfer over to adult health services at 16 and to other adult services. The annual review is used as a platform to discuss these changes and opportunities for our students moving on.

Young Person's Workers who are part of the Early Help Team are attached to Stone Lodge Academy. Their role is to help us ensure that your son/daughter makes a successful transition onto a college or other provider post 16. They will be able to help with any queries about transition. These may be about choosing a college, a training provider, transport and finance or longer-term plans.

To contact Samantha Poston who represents Stone lodge Academy email:

01473 263559 or email [Samantha.poston@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Samantha.poston@suffolk.gov.uk)

## Measuring impact at Stone Lodge Academy

At SENDAT Academy we strive hard to prepare our students for an adult life which is rich, rewarding, and meaningful and to encourage them to become responsible and active members of the communities they live in.

### Our Careers and Transition Team and measuring impact

The following team meet termly. We use 'Compass' to identify and plan how we can develop and improve our careers provision by assessing our schools against the Gatsby Benchmarks. Auditing our existing activity through Compass was a great starting point for Stone Lodge Academy, we have liaised regularly with our New

Anglia, Careers and Enterprise Network since 2019. Going through this process confirmed that we were doing more than we initially thought, but also highlighted opportunities for us to improve in key areas. We intend to use this tool to record our interventions further by drilling down on careers activities that group cohorts and individuals engage in which will document how many careers encounters they have. Individual reports can be shared with parents at parents evening to show the child's engagement in careers learning opportunities provided at school. We are striving to meet all the eight benchmarks in line with best careers practice.

## Meet the Careers team at Stone Lodge Academy



### **Shirley Dixon**

Shirley is the Careers Information, Advice, Guidance and Education Adviser and leads on Careers at Stone Lodge Academy. She also manages the Employment Engagement Officer who works with students, parents, and carers in organising work experience and employer engagement opportunities for our students at Stone Lodge Academy. Shirley is also involved in reviewing and assisting with the arrangements of employer engagement for our students and ensuring that careers education is embedded into Stone Lodge Academy's curriculum.

If you are a provider wishing to request access for the purpose of providing information about your training or education offer, please contact Shirley on 01473 601175 or email [shirley.dixon@sendat.academy](mailto:shirley.dixon@sendat.academy).

### **Jennifer Williams**

Jennifer is the Employer Engagement Officer for Stone Lodge Academy, and her role is to lead on work with local employers and the community to arrange employer contact for our students at Stone Lodge Academy. She also leads on arrangements of work experience opportunities for our Year 11 students and organises enterprise activities for our year 10 students.



### **Tom Garrard**

Assistant Head Teacher, Key Stage 4 lead at Stone Lodge Academy. Tom is involved in reviewing and assisting with the arrangements of employer engagement for our students and ensuring that careers education is embedded into Stone Lodge Academy's curriculum.



## **NEWANGLIA**

Local Enterprise Partnership  
for Norfolk and Suffolk

### **Karen Cross**

New Anglia representative, Operational Hub Lead.

Karen is responsible for supporting schools and colleges in Ipswich with their careers and enterprise activities and to engage with the world of work in the delivering of consistent, comprehensive, and high-quality career guidance for students through established local networks with employers, businesses and higher and further education providers.

### **New Anglia – Local Enterprise Partnership for Norfolk and Suffolk**

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership works with businesses, local authority partners and education institutions to drive growth and enterprise in Norfolk and Suffolk. We are transforming the economy by securing funds from government to help businesses grow, through the delivery of ambitious programmes to ensure that businesses have the funding, support, skills, and infrastructure needed to flourish and ensuring that the voice of our business community is heard, loud and clear. The Economic Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk sets out our ambitions to grow our economy, create **88,000 new jobs** and **30,000 successful new**

**businesses.** We achieve economic growth by securing public and private investment and delivering a range of programmes and initiatives with partners to improve infrastructure, skills and business support.



Ms Melanie Hercus

Volunteer Enterprise Advisor – Volunteer from the world of work who works closely with the New Anglia Careers Enterprise team and Stone Lodge Academy to provide strategic support and advocate for our students. Melanie works for Realise Futures, an adult SEND service that enhances people’s lives through the work placements, employment, and training opportunities that they offer. Realise Futures primary aim is to improve and promote the economic and social well being of those who are disadvantaged and/or disabled, across Suffolk and Norfolk.

## Parent and Carer feedback

Parent and carer feedback is often acquired via telephone contact, face to face conversation or using surveys allowing the Stone Lodge Academy Careers team to collect and evaluate information provided and make any changes that we feel necessary. We value any parental/carer feedback and will always listen to what is being communicated. We encourage this feedback at any given opportunity.

## Strengthening links with Local Employers

We seek to build partnerships with businesses and other employers, employment services, and other voluntary organisations, to help broaden our students’ horizons. We also value opportunities for our students to have supported encounters with the workplace and work experience. Our focus is to establish what employers can offer the school and students, but also what the schools and students can offer the employer. We endeavour to create a long-lasting partnership which is mutually beneficial.

We strive to provide our students with encounters of the workplace and employers. If you would like to promote opportunities such as: Volunteer Work, Employability workshops or other opportunities for our students to get involved in, please contact:

Shirley Dixon on 01473 601175 shirley.dixon@sendat.academy. Please also refer to the links below for further insight into how you can support our students.

<https://www.talentinocareers.co.uk/employers.html>

<https://send.excellencegateway.org.uk/employers-and-employability>

## Destination data

All our students now visit educational facilities which are appropriate to their chosen future pathways such as day centres, volunteer organisations, further education colleges or training providers.

Stone Lodge Academy work closely with the Local Authority in ensuring that students moving on from the school have been offered a Post 16 placement and we liaise with parents/carers to support them with any queries or concerns that they may have with regards to their child's transition and next steps.

As we become more confident in the use of Compass Tracker, we hope to use the effective tool provided on this system to track our Alumni (we would need the students consent to proceed with this initiative). This is a systematic tool that will help us to safely and efficiently store the pupil's destination data which can be easily accessed. We aim to use the Alumni data effectively by working towards encouraging students to return back to school to talk to existing students and sharing their experiences around next steps after Year 11.

## Useful websites around Careers and Information, Advice and guidance for parents/carers and students

### Students

- <https://thesource.me.uk/>
- <https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/>
- [https://www.scope.org.uk/employment-services/support-to-work-register/?utm\\_source=Google&utm\\_medium=CPC&utm\\_campaign=tailored\\_ppc&utm\\_content=looking\\_for\\_work&gclid=Cj0KCQiAqdP9BRDVARIsAGSZ8AmZzA0N3I2K6EbDXif\\_RgPdbrejKV9CnXYrTmJFqHEMqnTXCXOsidYaApHOEALw\\_wcB](https://www.scope.org.uk/employment-services/support-to-work-register/?utm_source=Google&utm_medium=CPC&utm_campaign=tailored_ppc&utm_content=looking_for_work&gclid=Cj0KCQiAqdP9BRDVARIsAGSZ8AmZzA0N3I2K6EbDXif_RgPdbrejKV9CnXYrTmJFqHEMqnTXCXOsidYaApHOEALw_wcB)

### Parents

The websites listed below are specifically aimed at parents, carers and guardians and provide a wealth of useful information:

- <https://www.parentalguidance.org.uk/>
- <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/youth-support-and-careers-advice-work-experience-and-activities/careers-advice-and-guidance/>

- <https://www.ucas.com/advisers/which-for-teachers/help-your-students-get-into-uni/careers-advice-and-guidance-activities-to-support-students-with-send>