



CAREERS IMPACT REPORT

Academic Year 2025 to 2026

This report evaluates the reach, coherence and inclusivity of the careers programme delivered during 2025 to 2026. It brings together the taught curriculum, personal guidance, employer and provider encounters, work experience, workplace visits, transition activity, targeted programmes and wider system leadership.

The programme maintained a planned careers entitlement while responding to a significant change in local authority funding for personal guidance. Provision was prioritised according to need, with particular attention to pupils identified through the Risk of NEET Indicator. Participation figures represent recorded activity and should not be interpreted as unique pupils unless stated.

33 planned careers lessons across Years 7 to 11	90% of Year 11 received personal guidance	270 Year 10 mock interviews	181 five-day work experience placements
1,100 pupils attended the careers fair	180 pupils at an FE taster day	50 pupils at a university taster day	5 schools quality assured through CIS review

Prepared by the Careers Leader

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2025 to 2026 programme combined a stable, progressive careers curriculum with an expanded work experience offer and a wide range of employer, workplace, further education and higher education encounters. Targeted programmes continued for cared-for pupils, disadvantaged pupils and disengaged learners, alongside academic enrichment and subject-linked activity.

KEY STRENGTHS

- A sustained curriculum entitlement. The planned sequence of six careers lessons in Years 7 to 10 and three in Year 11 continued, covering self-awareness, employability, labour market information, career adaptability, financial understanding, digital identity and career management.
- A substantial work experience programme. A total of 181 pupils completed a self-placed five-day placement. Pupils unable to secure a placement received a structured alternative week comprising 20 hours of employer engagement and five hours of virtual work experience through Springpod.
- Needs-led personal guidance. Ninety per cent of Year 11 received a one-to-one interview. Following the withdrawal of local authority funding for universal guidance, appointments were prioritised using Risk of NEET Indicator information.
- Targeted and sustained intervention. Camp Vimto, Skills for Life and Pathfinders provided extended development for pupils facing disadvantage, care experience or disengagement.
- Strong employer and system leadership. Employer partnerships supported curriculum challenges, workplace visits, a careers fair involving more than 50 organisations, and strategic activity locally and across Greater Manchester.

IMPACT EVIDENCED IN 2025 TO 2026

- Approximately 1,100 pupils from Years 8 to 11 attended the careers fair and met representatives from more than 50 employers and further education providers.

- Pupils experienced workplaces across public service, professional regulation, hospitality, catering, technology, sport and construction.
- The work experience model ensured that pupils without placements still received a purposeful programme rather than missing the entitlement entirely.
- Year 10 pupils developed interview skills and received individual written feedback from employers.
- Further education and university taster days enabled large cohorts to experience progression environments directly.
- The academy contributed to careers quality assurance, employer mobilisation and strategic discussion across Rochdale and Greater Manchester.

EVALUATION PRIORITIES

The central development priority is to restore access to universal personal guidance while retaining a needs-led model for additional appointments. The academy will also continue strengthening individual participation tracking, learner feedback, employer evaluation and the connection between careers activity, intended destinations and sustained outcomes.

CAREERS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The established careers curriculum continued across Years 7 to 11. Learning progressed from transition and self-awareness towards decision making, employability, career management and post-16 action planning.

YEAR GROUP	PLANNED LESSON SEQUENCE
YEAR 7	Changes and achievements; Transition and influence; What are you like; Let's get talking; What is work; AI and the world of work
YEAR 8	Work versus school; Job families; Quashing stereotypes; Post-16 destinations; Transferable skills; Let's get presenting
YEAR 9	Personal attributes; Skills and jobs; Elevator pitch; Making decisions; Working today; Working tomorrow and labour market information
YEAR 10	Exploring possibilities; Work and lifestyle; Rights and responsibilities; Career adaptability; Financial understanding; Wellbeing
YEAR 11	Managing my career journey, including goal setting and action planning; Digital identity; Networks and social capital

CURRICULUM COHERENCE

The sequence gave pupils repeated opportunities to revisit personal strengths, skills, workplace expectations and progression routes at increasing levels of complexity. Contemporary themes included artificial intelligence, labour market information, career adaptability, digital identity and social capital.

SUBJECT-LINKED CAREERS LEARNING

- Fifty Year 9 digital literacy pupils completed a curriculum-enhancing workshop with a robotics company.
- Food and nutrition pupils completed a one-day Bake Off challenge sponsored by Dunsters Farm, including staff video introductions, product development and judging by an employer representative.
- The RAF delivered an industry insight event.
- Engineering pupils worked with Target Fire Protection on workplace practice and industry insight.
- A science-linked CSI workshop was delivered to highly motivated Year 8 pupils selected by the science department.

NATIONAL CELEBRATION WEEKS AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

During National Apprenticeship Week and National Careers Week, subject areas highlighted careers, professional pathways and progression routes connected to their curriculum. Two staff development sessions were also delivered to strengthen whole-school understanding and support consistent careers learning across subject areas.

PERSONAL GUIDANCE AND TRANSITION

Ninety per cent of Year 11 pupils received a one-to-one personal guidance interview. This was below the academy's previous universal level because the local authority withdrew funding for universal guidance. Available capacity was deliberately focused on pupils identified through the Risk of NEET Indicator and therefore at greater risk of not securing a sustained education, employment or training destination.

PROVISION	REACH	PURPOSE
ONE-TO-ONE PERSONAL GUIDANCE	90% of Year 11	Individual support with next steps, with priority given to pupils identified through RONI.
FURTHER EDUCATION TASTER DAY	180 pupils at Rochdale Sixth Form College	Direct experience of a further education environment, courses and progression routes.
UNIVERSITY TASTER DAY	50 pupils at Manchester Metropolitan University	Experience of university study and the higher education environment.
STOCK MARKET CHALLENGE	Pupil group	Practical introduction to financial decision making through the Manchester University community challenge.
YOUTH SKILLS DAY	10 pupils	Presentation to a panel of industry participants about skills and their importance.

EVALUATION OF GUIDANCE COVERAGE

The 90% figure represents strong coverage in a constrained funding context, but it is not treated as equivalent to the previous universal entitlement. Prioritisation protected access for the pupils at greatest risk. Restoring universal access, while maintaining additional support for priority pupils, remains an important programme objective.

WORK EXPERIENCE AND EMPLOYER PREPARATION

A total of 181 pupils completed a five-day work experience placement that they had secured themselves. This developed independence in identifying opportunities and enabled pupils to experience workplace expectations over a sustained period.

ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYER WEEK

Pupils who were unable to secure a placement completed a structured week of employer activity. The programme provided 20 hours of employer engagement sessions and five hours of virtual work experience through Springpod. This ensured that lack of a self-placed opportunity did not result in a week without meaningful careers learning.

PREPARATION AND ENCOUNTER	CONTRIBUTION
YEAR 10 MOCK INTERVIEWS	The previous model was repeated for approximately 270 pupils. Each pupil completed a 15-minute interview with a community or employer representative and received written feedback.
MEET THE PROFESSIONALS	A speed-networking event enabled Year 10 pupils to speak with professionals from different roles and sectors.

TALK THE TALK	A targeted Year 9 oracy session developed verbal communication and presentation confidence.
YOUTH SKILLS DAY	Ten pupils presented their thinking about skills to an industry panel.
SIEMENS WILD HEART CHALLENGE	Pupils attended a full-day experience with Siemens, applying skills through an employer-led challenge.

IMPACT

Together, the placement programme, alternative week and preparation activities gave pupils experience of recruitment, communication, workplace behaviour, teamwork and reflection. The alternative programme also promoted equity by preserving meaningful employer engagement for pupils whose access to placements was more limited.

TARGETED AND SUSTAINED PROGRAMMES

CAMP VIMTO

Ten pupils from cared-for and disadvantaged backgrounds completed a sustained programme combining personal development, employer insight and individual guidance. It included a two-day residential focused on growth mindset, teamwork and personal development; a day at Vimto headquarters meeting employees in different roles; work with specialist teams to develop a new product; a presentation to the senior leadership team; an oracy presentation workshop; and a personal guidance interview.

PATHFINDERS

The programme supported 12 disengaged learners interested in construction. The Casey Group sponsored the programme, provided new kit for the construction department and facilitated additional workshops. The sustained model connected regular industry contact with practical progression routes and increased the contribution employers could make to curriculum provision.

SKILLS FOR LIFE

The Talent Foundry Skills for Life programme was delivered again to a group of cared-for pupils. Employer-led activity focused on self-esteem, employability and the personal skills needed to manage future transitions.

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

New cohorts participated in AVECC and Think Like a Linguist. AVECC provided sustained academic enrichment through university and academic encounters, while Think Like a Linguist, led by St Anne's College, Oxford, promoted the value of language study and university-level thinking.

WHY THESE PROGRAMMES MATTERED

These interventions provided more time, continuity and relationship-building than a single encounter. They were targeted at clearly identified needs: care experience and disadvantage, disengagement from education, employability confidence and the need for greater academic stretch.

WORKPLACE SAFARIS AND INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Workplace visits helped pupils connect curriculum learning and career interests to real working environments.

HOST OR SETTING	REACH	EXPERIENCE
MINISTRY OF HOUSING	14 pupils	Workplace safari introducing roles in central government and public service.

GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL, MANCHESTER	36 pupils	Workplace safari exploring professional regulation and the range of roles within the organisation.
CAPGEMINI	Pupil group	Workplace safari in technology and professional services.
ICON SPORTS	Pupil group	Return visit exploring business, sport, retail and customer service.
BR CATERING	Hospitality and catering group	Workplace insight in catering and hospitality.
HAMPTON BY HILTON HOTEL	Hospitality and catering group	Workplace insight into hotel operations and hospitality roles.
CALDERBROOK ALPACAS, LITTLEBOROUGH	Construction group	Observation of a live fencing installation and the application of construction skills.
TARGET FIRE PROTECTION	Engineering group	Employer-led insight into fire protection, safety and engineering practice.
SIEMENS	Pupil group	Participation in the one-day Wild Heart Challenge.

BREADTH AND RELEVANCE

The visits covered public service, regulation, technology, hospitality, catering, construction, sport and engineering. Several were linked directly to pupils' curriculum areas, making occupational learning more concrete and enabling pupils to compare workplace cultures and routes into different industries.

EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS AND CURRICULUM ENRICHMENT

ACTIVITY	EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTION	PUPIL LEARNING
DUNSTERS FARM BAKE OFF	Sponsored the challenge, provided video introductions from staff and supplied a representative to judge.	Product development, food careers, teamwork and presenting work to an external audience.
ROBOTICS WORKSHOP	A robotics company worked with 50 Year 9 digital literacy pupils.	Curriculum enhancement and exposure to robotics and technology careers.
CSI WORKSHOP	Crime scene investigation activity for highly motivated Year 8 pupils selected by science.	Application of scientific thinking in an occupational context.
RAF INDUSTRY INSIGHT	The RAF introduced its work, roles and pathways.	Awareness of careers and progression in the armed forces.
TARGET FIRE PROTECTION	Returned to work with engineering pupils.	Industry practice, health and safety and engineering careers.
THE CASEY GROUP AND PATHFINDERS	Sponsored the programme, donated new departmental kit and facilitated additional workshops.	Construction pathways, employer contact and sustained engagement for 12 learners.

CAREERS FAIR

The academy careers fair brought together more than 50 employers and further education providers. Every pupil from Year 8 to Year 11 had scheduled access, resulting in approximately 1,100 pupil visits across the day. The

event enabled pupils to compare sectors, courses, employment routes and post-16 opportunities through direct conversations with representatives.

EMPLOYER VOICE

The programme used employers in different ways: as hosts, sponsors, mentors, interviewers, judges, workshop leaders and industry panellists. This variety enabled pupils to learn both about occupations and through authentic tasks, feedback and workplace expectations.

LOCAL AND GREATER MANCHESTER SYSTEM LEADERSHIP

ACTIVITY	CONTRIBUTION
STRATEGIC COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE	Three forums were hosted with Greater Manchester Combined Authority, headteacher, Enterprise Adviser Network chair, Business in the Community, secondary school and further education representation. The Careers Leader participated as Specialist Leader of Education for Careers and acted on behalf of school leadership where required.
ROCHDALE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE	Three meetings were hosted with GMCA and all 13 Rochdale secondary schools. As a Community of Practice lead, the Careers Leader directly led a group of seven schools.
CAREERS IMPACT SYSTEM REVIEW	The Careers Leader co-facilitated a further review with GMCA, quality assuring the careers programmes of five secondary schools across Greater Manchester.
PAN-GM CONFERENCE	Rochdale was represented at GMCA's Pan-GM Strategic Community of Practice for Careers conference. Discussion focused on quality, equity, capacity, consistency and meaningful progress beyond benchmark completion.
SEND SPECIALIST DEVELOPMENT	The Careers Leader completed a Level 7 extension course in specialist SEND careers training.
STAFF DEVELOPMENT	Two careers CPD sessions supported staff to connect subject teaching with careers and professional pathways.

CONTRIBUTION TO QUALITY

This work supported challenge, consistency and shared learning beyond the academy. The SEND specialist training strengthened leadership knowledge within the school, while the Careers Impact System review contributed directly to quality assurance across five Greater Manchester schools.

BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS IMPACT SHOWCASE

The Careers Leader received an award at Business in the Community's North West Responsible Business Impact Showcase. The award celebrated community and collaboration and recognised employer engagement developed through leadership of the Hollingworth Academy careers programme.

PRIDE OF PLACE SUMMIT FRINGE EVENT

At Business in the Community's annual Pride of Place Summit fringe event in London, the Careers Leader presented to prospective ambassadors on why businesses need to support education. This positioned the academy's experience within a wider discussion about responsible business and place-based partnership.

THE KING'S SEEING IS BELIEVING

The academy hosted part of Business in the Community's flagship The King's Seeing is Believing programme, supported by Salesforce and Linklaters. Senior leaders from United Utilities, Sodexo UK and Ireland, Siemens, Rochdale Development Agency, Willmott Dixon, DWF, Palladium, Casey, KPMG UK, Simkiss Control Systems, MWH Treatment, Anchor and Agent Academy came together in Rochdale to consider economic and regeneration opportunities and the action required to ensure communities are not left behind.

Led by Louise Beardmore, Chief Executive of United Utilities, the visit connected business leaders with local community organisations. At Hollingworth Academy, pupils spoke directly about their aspirations and the positive contribution of career-related activity. This gave senior leaders first-hand evidence of young people's ambitions and the role business can play in supporting them.

WIDER IMPACT

These activities extended employer engagement beyond individual pupil events. They created a platform for pupil voice, strengthened relationships with senior business leaders and advocated for sustained business involvement in education and the future of Rochdale.

EVALUATION AGAINST PROGRAMME AIMS

PROGRAMME AIM	EVIDENCE FROM 2025 TO 2026	EVALUATION
PROVIDE A COHERENT ENTITLEMENT	Thirty-three planned lessons across Years 7 to 11, national celebration weeks and subject-linked employer activity.	The taught sequence remained stable and current. Assessment of what pupils know and remember should continue to develop.
SUPPORT INFORMED PROGRESSION	Ninety per cent Year 11 guidance coverage, an FE taster for 180 pupils and a university taster for 50.	Strong reach despite the funding change. Universal guidance coverage remains the desired standard.
PROVIDE MEANINGFUL WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE	181 five-day placements plus a 25-hour alternative programme for pupils without placements.	A substantial and inclusive model. Pupil and employer feedback should be analysed alongside placement quality.
RESPOND TO DIFFERING NEEDS	Camp Vimto, Skills for Life, Pathfinders, AVECC and Think Like a Linguist.	Targeted programmes addressed care experience, disadvantage, disengagement and academic stretch.
BUILD EMPLOYER AND SYSTEM CAPACITY	Careers fair for 1,100 pupils, workplace safaris, sponsored curriculum activity, BITC leadership, six Communities of Practice and quality assurance across five schools.	Strong evidence of partnership leadership and influence within and beyond the academy.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The programme maintained breadth and ambition while adapting to reduced external funding for personal guidance. Its strongest evidence lies in the scale of work experience, needs-led intervention, curriculum-employer links, workplace exposure and wider partnership leadership. The clearest development need is to restore universal personal guidance and strengthen evidence of what pupils learned and how activity influenced their decisions.

PRIORITIES FOR CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT

PRIORITY	PLANNED APPROACH	EVIDENCE TO RETAIN
RESTORE UNIVERSAL GUIDANCE	Explore sustainable capacity for every Year 11 pupil while retaining additional appointments for RONI priorities.	Coverage, repeat appointments, pupil need and resulting actions.
EVALUATE WORK EXPERIENCE QUALITY	Use consistent pupil and employer feedback across placements and the alternative week.	Preparation, task quality, skills developed, attendance and future intentions.
TRACK EQUITY OF ACCESS	Review individual participation by year group, SEND, disadvantage, care experience and other priority indicators.	Coverage, repeated participation, gaps and targeted follow-up.
MEASURE LEARNER DEVELOPMENT	Use short pre- and post-questions for major programmes and selected curriculum units.	Changes in knowledge, confidence, career readiness and intended action.
CONNECT ACTIVITY TO DESTINATIONS	Review intended destinations, applications, offers and sustained destination data alongside guidance and participation records.	Evidence of appropriate and sustained progression.
SUSTAIN EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS	Develop repeat partnerships that contribute to curriculum, work experience, guidance and targeted programmes.	Quality, continuity, employer feedback and commitments secured.

CONCLUSION

During 2025 to 2026, Hollingworth Academy delivered a broad and responsive careers programme. Pupils experienced a progressive curriculum, personal guidance, employer interviews, sustained work experience, workplace visits, progression tasters, curriculum-linked industry activity and targeted programmes matched to differing needs.

The academy also made a substantial contribution beyond its own pupils through quality assurance, professional leadership, employer mobilisation and advocacy for business engagement in education. Continued improvement will focus on restoring universal guidance and demonstrating more systematically what pupils learn, how their confidence and decision making develop, and whether their next steps are appropriate and sustained.

