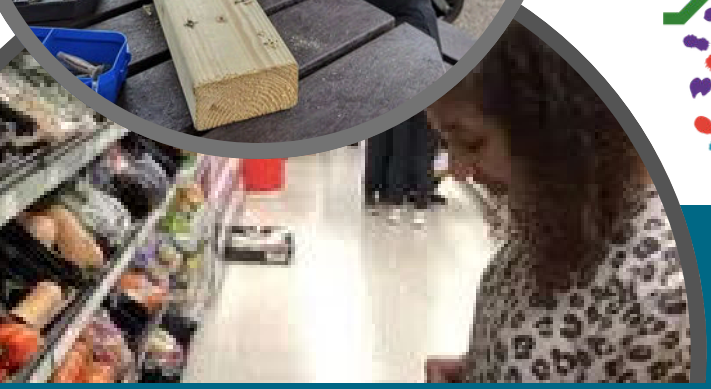
DYSART SCHOOL

Careers for All

2026- 2027



Led by Marlene Cooper & Steph Cruse
(Careers Lead)
Reviwed Annually

Dysart School

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

CAREERS FROM THE EARLIEST YEARS

Preparation for adulthood begins from the moment a pupil joins Dysart.

OUR WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH

At Dysart, careers education is much broader than learning about jobs. From the primary years, pupils begin developing the communication, independence, confidence, interests and experiences that prepare them for adult life.

IN THE PRIMARY YEARS, PUPILS BEGIN TO...

Make choices

Communicate preferences and begin to understand their own interests and strengths.

Build independence

Take part in familiar routines, develop responsibility and practise everyday life skills.

Understand their community

Learn about people, places, services and different roles within school and the local community.

+ Develop readiness for adulthood

Build the foundations for participation, self-advocacy, decision-making and future pathways.

Year 7 is not the beginning of careers education.
It is the point where our formal careers programme becomes more explicit, building on foundations already developed through the curriculum.

OUR CAREERS MODEL

How careers learning develops at Dysart

EDUCATE

Build understanding

We help pupils understand themselves, their strengths and the world beyond school.

- Sequenced learning from Primary to KS5
- Embedded across curriculum and topic cycles
- Exploring interests, strengths and preferences
- Understanding roles, environments and expectations
- Linked to EHCP outcomes and Dysart Skill Ladders

ENABLE

Build capability

We develop the skills pupils need to participate as independently as possible.

- Pathway-led, personalised teaching
- Communication and self-advocacy
- Regulation and engagement
- Independence and decision-making
- Real-life skills including money, travel and routines

ENGAGE

Apply in real life

We provide meaningful experiences that allow pupils to practise and apply their learning.

- Community access and travel learning
- Encounters with employers and employees
- Enterprise opportunities
- Work-related learning and work experience
- Employer, college and provider encounters

EVOLVE

Review and refine

We use evidence of progress and outcomes to continually develop each pupil's pathway.

- Review progress, engagement and outcomes
- Use pupil voice, accreditation and data
- Adapt pathways and provision
- Plan personalised next steps
- Keep our careers offer ambitious and relevant

Our model ensures careers learning develops progressively from the earliest years, giving every pupil the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to participate, belong and thrive in adulthood.

Careers across the Curriculum

Careers learning is built through everyday teaching, not taught in isolation.

CAREERS IS EVERYWHERE

Across all key stages, curriculum learning develops the knowledge, skills and behaviours pupils need for meaningful participation in adult life. EHCP outcomes, Dysart Skill Ladders and pathway goals help make this learning personalised and purposeful.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

Communication

Expressing choices, asking for help, interacting with others and developing self-advocacy.

Independence

Following routines, managing belongings, making decisions and completing everyday tasks.

Maths & English

Using literacy and numeracy in meaningful contexts such as shopping, timetables, money and communication.

Community

Accessing local places, understanding services, travel learning and participating in community life.

Personal Development

Confidence, regulation, relationships, responsibility and understanding expectations.

Work-related Learning

Enterprise, practical tasks, employer encounters, work experience and accreditation as pupils progress.

Every subject and experience can contribute to a pupil's future.

A 5–19 CAREERS JOURNEY

Progressive, personalised and linked to each pupil's next steps.

PRIMARY • FOUNDATIONS

Pupils begin to understand themselves and the world around them.

- Choice-making and communication
- Interests, strengths and preferences
- Independence and responsibility
- People, jobs and roles in school and the community
- Participation in community life

KS3 • BUILDING UNDERSTANDING

Pupils develop self-awareness, communication and early independence.

- Employer and employee encounters
- Enterprise opportunities
- Skill labs and practical learning
- Whole-school responsibilities
- Early work-related behaviours

KS4 • APPLICATION

Pupils apply learning in real-life contexts and develop independence.

- Work-related learning
- Community-based learning
- Ascentis accreditation pathways
- Seasonal enterprise projects
- Continued employer encounters

KS5 • TRANSITION

Pupils prepare for adulthood and personalised next steps.

- Work experience opportunities
- Vocational and employability accreditation
- Encounters with FE and providers
- Personalised transition planning
- Education, employment or training pathways

PERSONALISATION & ACHIEVEMENT

Tailored pathways. Meaningful progress. Real outcomes.

PATHWAYS

Careers learning is adapted through Dysart's pathways to ensure every pupil can access meaningful opportunities.

- Ensures access for all pupils at the right level
- Removes barriers to thinking and engagement
- Supports progress at the right pace
- Enables meaningful success and builds confidence

- Communication
- Regulation
- Independence
- Participation

ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is meaningful, personalised and linked to real-life outcomes.

- Ascentis Personal Progress Entry 1
- Ascentis Independent Living (Entry 1-3)
- Ascentis Life Skills Entry 1
- Ascentis Employability Skills Entry Level 1
- Pre-entry awards (Maths, Literacy and Digital)
- Maths and English Stepping Stones to Functional Skills Entry Level 1 and 2
- Dysart Footprints (KS3)

Accreditation is embedded in learning, personalised and reflective of real-life capability.

By personalising learning and recognising achievement, we empower every pupil to build the skills, confidence and qualifications they need for a successful future.

IMPACT, PARTNERSHIPS & REVIEW

Dysart's Careers Lead and Vice principal evaluate the effectiveness of the careers programme through pupil progress, engagement, accreditation outcomes and sustained destinations.

IMPACT - HOW WE KNOW IT WORKS

PUPIL OUTCOMES

- Sustained destinations
- Independence and employability skills
- Applying learning in real-life contexts

ENGAGEMENT

- Participation in enterprise and life skills / work related learning / work experience.
- Confidence, aspiration, application of skills in real world.
- Readiness for next steps

ACHIEVEMENT

- Skill Ladder progression
- EHCP progress
- Accreditation outcomes

VOICE

- Pupil voice
- Parent/carer feedback
- Employer feedback

LEADERSHIP & QUALITY ASSURANCE

Our careers programme is evaluated termly using Compass+ and internal review, enabling us to identify strengths, gaps and next steps.

Aligned with Gatsby Benchmarks and SEND best practice embedded into design

Quality assured through: learning walks, monitoring, EHCP reviews and destination tracking

Staff expertise developed through CPD and coaching

Provision reviewed and adapted in response to need and impact

ACCESS & PARTNERSHIPS

- Information available to pupils, families, staff and employers
- Provider Access Policy in place

Strong partnerships with:

- Employers and local businesses
- Colleges and training providers
- Community organisations

Meaningful encounters with the world of work

REVIEW & DEVELOPMENT

This programme is:
Reviewed and refined annually

We adapt based on:

- Pupil needs and outcomes
- Destination data
- Emerging opportunities
- Feedback from pupils, families and partners

Information about the careers programme is available to pupils, families, staff and employers via the website and direct communication with Marlene Cooper (mcooper@dysartschool.org)