

Education and Inclusion Services Directorate

Agenda Item No. 8.4

Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks in Rhondda Cynon Taf

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide information on the Gatsby Good Career Benchmark pilot that has been conducted in 22 Rhondda Cynon Taf schools from January 2019 to December 2021

1.1 Key terms

Gatsby Benchmark Manager	GBM
Career Leader	Member of staff in school with responsibility for managing all aspects of Career Education
Steering Group	Members of a group invited to steer and follow progress of the pilot in a termly update meeting.

2. RECCOMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the outcomes of the pilot are reviewed and proposals, as found in the conclusion of this report, for developing the work of the Gatsby pilot are scrutinised.

2.1. It is also recommended that actions for development and continuation of the Gatsby Good Career benchmarks as detailed in appendix 1 are scrutinised and where appropriate agreed.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1. The Gatsby Benchmarks derive from the 'Good Career Guidance' report from The Gatsby Foundation, which identified a set of eight benchmarks that schools can use as a framework for improving their careers provision. They make up a key feature of Careers guidance and access for education and training providers Statutory guidance for governing bodies, school leaders and school staff October 2018 published by The Department of Education in England and after a pilot in the North East of England became an integral part of Careers Education in English schools.

The Benchmarks are widely acknowledged as a breakthrough in the development of Careers Education. They are part of the formal Careers Education strategy in England and are born from extensive research into what "Good Careers Education looks like" by Sir John Holman on behalf of the Gatsby Foundation. They 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 and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces

7. Encounters with further and higher education.
8. Personal Guidance.

3.2. Rhondda Cynon Taf was selected by Welsh Government to host a pilot of the Gatsby Benchmarks in its secondary schools, with a view to the benchmarks being rolled out across all Welsh schools. In January 2019 Kate Owen was appointed as Gatsby Benchmark Manager to manage the pilot on a two year secondment from her substantive post as Deputy Head of the School of Support in Ysgol Nantgwyn.

3.3. By September 2019 all 22 schools offering secondary provision to pupils in Rhondda Cynon Taf had a Career Leader in post and had been audited against their progress in the benchmarks at least once.

3.4. Career Leaders now benefit from termly Career Leader meetings, during which best practice and guidance is shared. For 2 consecutive years the Career Leader from Bryncelynog School, Hayley Jacobs, has been a finalist in a National Career Awards event from the Career Development Institute. We await an online awards ceremony in March 2021 to discover if she is a winner this year. This is a highly prestigious award category and evidence that we are developing and sharing excellence that is of the highest quality with our Career Leaders in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

4. The Gatsby benchmarks have meant that through their Gatsby audit schools now have to provide evidence that each and every child is receiving a range of careers related experiences from the age of 11 to 18.

4.1. A system of tracking has been developed by one of the career leaders and is now used across all of the pilot schools. It involves using software that all schools already use and have been able to add Gatsby tracking as part of its ongoing use.

4.2. The Gatsby Foundation sent representatives to visit 2 pilot schools in 2019. They were very complimentary about what they described as our innovative approach to tracking and shared the model with school in England.

4. Fourteen of the schools had been audited twice and all 22 had significantly developed their understanding of and progress towards all 8 of the Gatsby Benchmarks.

5.1. In the second formal audit in December 2019; schools showed significant progress in the development of careers in the wider curriculum. 65% of the pilot schools made improvement. Two other schools could already evidence that this was embedded into the curriculum.

5.2. The GBM has supported schools in the development of resources for all curriculum areas

5.3. Pilot schools are in a strong position to use the current work linking and weaving careers into the new curriculum for Wales and have already used the benchmarks to support this thinking and planning.

5.4. Career Leaders are sharing good practice from across the pilot to their curriculum leads

6. The benchmarks require that schools ensure that all pupils experience a meaningful experience with a 6th Form College and an apprenticeship provider at least once by the age of 16 and again by the age of 18.

6.1. The implementation of this; and tracking to ensure each and every child receives this experience, means pupils have greater understanding of the options available to them. During the development of the Gatsby Benchmarks in RCT, schools have improved the quality and quantity of these experiences. Tracking procedures mean this can easily be quality assured in terms of numbers of encounters.

6.2. All schools have a Career Plan that outlines the way they will address Careers education and how pupils will be enabled to have the experiences as outlined in the Gatsby Benchmarks.

6.3. There is an expectation that governing bodies will be updated annually on their school's Gatsby profile. The Career Leaders have presented to their governing bodies giving them a deeper understanding of the progress of the benchmarks in their school.

7. Since the Covid 19 Pandemic schools have been asked to utilise an interim version of the benchmarks that allows them to continue to offer careers education opportunities. The GBM has worked closely with the Employment Education and Training team to create and plan virtual career education opportunities.

7.1. The Gatsby Foundation have been complimentary of the measures we have in place to support continuation of the benchmarks in schools during the pandemic. The GBM was asked to share the interim benchmarks and the plan we are using in articles with a number of UK wide publications including the Careers Matters magazine and Future Talent Ed magazine.

7.2 While it has undoubtedly been challenging to continue the Gatsby Benchmark work during the pandemic it has helped schools maintain a focus on the importance of careers education.

7.2. An interim report was commissioned by Welsh Government to assess the progress of the pilot in March 2020. The report can be viewed using this link :

<https://gov.wales/gatsby-benchmarking-pilot-interim-evaluation>

<https://llyw.cymru/gwerthusiad-interim-or-peilot-meincnodi-gatsby>

7.3. The GBM has produced an action plan based on the eight recommendations in the report and further development planning. Please see Appendix 1.

7.4. Welsh Government have made the decision not to lengthen or expand the pilot beyond December 2021. As an alternative to rolling out the benchmarks across Wales, a new Careers Mark award will be developed.

7.5. RCT Senior leadership have decided to continue the work started by the pilot in Rhondda Cynon Taf for another two years and the GBM has been seconded for a further two years to continue developing The Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks in RCT schools.

7.6. While schools are unable to teach face to face lessons for the majority of their pupils the GBM will continue to support schools remotely and encourage Career Leaders to follow the interim benchmark plan put in place at the start of the pandemic.

8. Conclusion

8.1. Secondary schools in RCT will continue to use the Gatsby Good Career Benchmark model to deliver and track Career Education and interactions.

8.2. Schools will be audited against the Gatsby Benchmarks on a termly basis. The GBM will provide feedback to Head teachers and RCT SLT after each audit.

8.3. The GBM will agree a working action plan to improve Gatsby audits for each school after each audit cycle.

- 8.4. A model of the benchmarks will be developed for Primary Schools. The GBM will work on links between Secondary and Primary schools to develop provision and transition links through Careers Education.
- 8.5. The GBM will support schools in the development of the Gatsby + mentoring model to support learners who are underachieving or in danger of becoming NEET.
- 8.6. The GBM will report termly to Senior Leadership on the development of the benchmarks. An audit tool is in development with the Digital Improvement team to map progress against benchmarks and other key school improvement data. This will be used to measure the effectiveness of the Benchmarks.