

Enterprise Advisers

Examples of best practice



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Our mission is to prepare and inspire young people for the fast-changing world of work.

Our role is to link schools and colleges to employers and help them to deliver world class careers support for all young people by:

1. **Building Networks**
2. **Supporting Careers Leaders**
3. **Backing the Gatsby Benchmarks**

Our Enterprise Adviser Network matches schools and colleges with senior business volunteers to help create powerful, lasting partnerships between schools, colleges, employers and careers programme providers. As an Enterprise Adviser, you will take your passion for raising aspirations of young people and combine it with your skills and strategic thinking.

Find out more in this brochure about the experiences and stories of other Enterprise Advisers working in the network.



Jackie Towndrow

Enterprise Adviser and Associate Director of Blue Arrow

Having worked in recruitment in Hertfordshire for over 26 years, Jackie was really interested in understanding how educators can prepare students to be ready for the workforce. She joined Blue Arrow in 1992 as a consultant and during her role has managed on-site client services for a range of local Hertfordshire employers.

On her role as an Enterprise Adviser at Townsend School in St. Albans, Jackie says:

“More and more frequently we were seeing applicants for roles who were well educated academically but unprepared and without soft skills for the workplace. When I saw the advert for becoming an Enterprise Adviser it seemed a perfect fit. This was also a really great opportunity to give something back to the local community and for supporting this school in developing their careers programme is very much in line with Blue Arrow’s corporate social responsibility initiative.

“As the role has developed, I have enjoyed being able to widen my network and see the impact of working with the school and supporting them in enhancing careers advice and the experiences available for students.

“Amongst other interventions I have helped the school to achieve elements of Benchmark 1— all meetings are now documented, and careers events and guidance is available in various forms for all year groups – tracked by event calendar, feedback from parent evenings and student feedback via careers ambassadors.

“Within Benchmark 3 all students now have an electronic file to record achievements, brand me presentations, CV and interview workshops and an annual careers carousel.

“We are also developing Wednesday lunchtime careers talks either online or with an employer coming in to school.

“All school trips will have an additional requirement to note all the job roles they see – for example in a theme park: catering, design, engineering, marketing, customer service, gardening etc.”

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If I could give one piece of advice to other Enterprise Advisers, it would be not to be afraid to challenge – nicely – be a critical friend. Our role is to support and help improve the opportunities and aspirations of the students through delivery of a structured careers programme!



Martin Care

Enterprise Adviser and Bid Director of Bombardier Transportation



Martin enjoys using his industry experience to help link schools with business and had worked at Derby Moor Academy delivering mock interviews, CV workshops and enterprise days prior to being appointed as their Enterprise Adviser. He started this role soon after the appointment of their new headteacher and was able to work with the leadership team in assisting with building the careers programme as part of their strategic development plan.

On his role as an Enterprise Adviser at Derby Moor Academy in Derby, Martin says: “The headteacher and his team see careers as a fundamental piece of the jigsaw of building the aspirations of this school. **Building up a strategy set around the Gatsby Benchmarks and using the Compass tool has been a really useful and fulfilling experience.**

“I think an Enterpriser Adviser has a number of roles to play, perhaps being a contributor where we have the knowledge, and to act as a critical friend – feeling comfortable to challenge by asking ‘so what?’ when building objectives for example. We can also add value by supporting the school team as an extra voice when interacting with the range of key stakeholder groups regarding careers and employability issues, from the students and parents as well as members of staff.”

As well as being personally interested, Martin has noticed that involvement in this type of programme has resulted in more visibility and direction in terms of community engagement in his own organisation. A recognition that relationship between the business and the school is mutually beneficial has generated an increase in support for school-employer activities.

Martin says; “I’ve continued to be involved with elements of direct engagement with students where I can. Working with Year 10’s about how an interview or CV works, or with Year 8’s on how you would launch a new pop band by selecting a target market, or managing a project budget is amazing fun and gives me a real sense of satisfaction. I have seen a whole level of engagement with the school community that I didn’t previously know was there.



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Beki Tonks

Enterprise Adviser and owner of her own music business



Beki has a strong interest in using her experience to help children with special educational needs. She has worked in recruitment, training, enterprise and management across the South East, and spent her time within Sussex Chamber of Commerce and Young Enterprise focusing on skills training and careers information support. She then set up her business to build on her personal passion of helping children with special educational needs.

On her role as an Enterprise Adviser at Oakgrove College in Worthing, Beki says: "Often the parent/ carers will have low expectations of being able to get their young people into a form of work or further education. There was also the challenge that few local employers were open to offering work experience opportunities to students with learning disabilities. I've been supporting the school in growing their network and attracting more placement opportunities."

Beki meets the headteacher regularly to develop strategy and activity focussed on three strands: improving parental aspirations for their children, raising pupil's aspirations and changing employer perceptions.

"At the beginning of the business breakfast the students were nervously eyeballing the adults and not sure how to interact with them. One young man was encouraged to come out and was introduced to some of the business people who got him talking about his love for animals. Within minutes he was speaking confidently about his aspirations of working in a zoo. **To experience him and the other students buzzing afterwards about their conversations and securing several work placements and other opportunities was hugely rewarding.**"

MENCAP representatives also attended the breakfast and offered to partner with the college and older pupils from the local Further Education college on a film and photography project to raise awareness of autism.

"We're in the early stages but the MENCAP partnership will allow students to get creative, share their experiences, receive mentoring from older pupils and earn a small income from sales of the film and calendar. It's an exciting and unique opportunity for them to experience the world of work."



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