



Robert Smyth Academy

Dear Parents/Carers,

Careers/Work experience

Last week, the Leicester and Leicestershire Careers Hub came into RSA to conduct a review of the careers education we offer. This included a thorough and detailed audit of all aspects of careers education and provision during the day and an afterschool meeting of stakeholders including staff, parents and local employers. The Careers Hub also sent out a survey to parents to invite your views. The feedback from this has allowed us to identify clear strengths and will also inform the way in which we build our careers provision going forward. We would like to thank all parents who completed this survey as we were told there were more responses from RSA parents than any other school in the county. This was seen as a reflection of your engagement as parents. The responses also reflected your knowledge of career pathways and options at both Post-16 and Post-18 suggesting students are informed and are able to discuss this with you. Again, thank you for the vital part you play in the ongoing dialogue about careers throughout your child's education.

We have also heard from the DfE this week that from 2026, all schools will need to ensure that students in years 7-9 have a week's worth of work experience, and then a further week in years 10-11. We are in the fortunate position of already having almost all of our Year 10 students placed with an employer for a work experience week at the end of June, an impressive feat of logistics and good will between school, parents, students and employers. We will now start working towards adapting the programme at Key Stage 3 to meet this new expectation.

All students at RSA currently have a careers day every year tailored to the specific needs of their age and stage. These days will usually include interactions with volunteers from local industry who can share their experiences and offer a wider understanding of careers both locally and nationally. In year 11, this will include a Careers Fair with representatives not just from industry but local colleges, apprenticeship providers and the Careers Hub coming into the academy. We also ensure that all students with any level of disadvantage have an extra meeting with our Careers Advisor once a year.

Alongside these specialist days, careers information and inspiration is also woven into each curriculum area. Subject staff will flag up different career paths and display information and examples in their areas to promote the different pathways students could pursue. There is real variety on display. For example, the many options of 'careers in the creative industries' on display in the textiles department includes 'medical textiles', a highly specialised route requiring a high level of dexterity.

Last week also saw one of our tutor groups (10L2) present their tutor group assembly on careers information. This included interviews with a variety of members of staff about their career journeys. This was a highly aspirational project and impressively informed in terms of pathways.

Of course, we always welcome feedback from parents on how we can improve this aspect of what we do. We are also keen to receive offers from parents who would be willing to share their own career experiences. This could be as a volunteer on one of our careers days or as a 'human library' talk, organised by Mrs Coxon in the library. This initiative started retired individuals who shared details of their illustrious careers. However, it has expanded and we have recently had speakers who, for instance, work in the Houses of Parliament and report on Formula 1 races.



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Careers education is at the heart of what we do as an academy as it a crucial indicator of students thriving when they leave school. It works best when it is an entirely joined up picture between the school, students, parents and the local community.

Thank you for your involvement so far; please let us know if you have more to offer.

Yours sincerely,

Lorna Kirk
College Leader



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