

Careers Newsletter

Spring 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are delighted to update you on our careers programme for 2025-26. There have been lots of changes to the curriculum to accommodate the Gatsby Benchmark updates.

The careers programme includes developing essential life and employability skills. Rewards linked to Candle Credits and the school House system are built into the challenge lessons. This year the key skills of Speaking and Listening are being developed through our Oracy initiative led by Mrs Dibben.



KS3 Work Experience

For parents of students in Key Stage 3 (Years 7–9), the 2025 Gatsby Benchmark updates introduce a significant shift. In the past, "work experience" was something you only did in Year 10 or 11. Now, the government and the Gatsby Foundation recommend that students start building their "workplace hours" much earlier.



The new Work Experience Guarantee aims for students to complete a total of 50 hours (roughly 10 days) of work-related activity across their secondary education, with the first 25–30 hours ideally starting in KS3.

KS3 Work Experience Recommendations (Ages 11–14)





Since traditional week-long office placements are often difficult for younger students due to health and safety, the 2025 focus is on progressive, bite-sized experiences

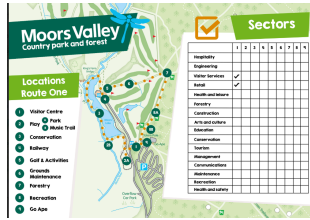

What Makes it "Meaningful" in 2026?

For work experience to meet the updated Benchmark 6 and be meaningful, the school must ensure it includes three things:

1. **Preparation:** Your child should research the industry *before* the experience.
2. **Action:** They must perform a task (even a small one), not just stand and watch.
3. **Feedback:** An adult from that workplace should tell them what they did well.

Workplace Experiences at Emmanuel

Year	Type of Experience	Employer	Task
All	<p>Employer-Led Projects (In-School)</p> <p>Instead of going to an office, the "workplace" comes to the classroom.</p> 	<p>JP Morgan</p> 	<p>Whole school assembly to launch competition: To create an app to be used by your peers.</p> <p>The winning entry has their app developed by JP Morgan for use and all runners up get prizes and feedback.</p>
7	<p>Virtual Work Experience (VWEX)</p> 	<p>NHS</p> 	<p>Step into the NHS Competition</p> <p>Lesson 1: Y7 pupils log on to the website and do the personality quiz. They then investigate up to 350 careers in the NHS. Watch videos and read job descriptions.</p> <p>Lesson 2: Pupils are then challenged</p>

			<p>to make a job advert for the NHS career of their choice. To be completed for homework. These can be models, posters, board games, animations/ videos or webpages.</p> <p>Entries are sent to the SITN team for judging.</p>
8	<p>Workplace Visits & "Insight Days" Brief visits to local businesses or factories to observe different departments.</p> 	<p>Moors Valley Country Park</p> 	<p>Lesson 1: Pupils learn about industries at Moors Valley. Lesson 2: Use of Unifrog to explore salaries and qualifications for jobs at Moors Valley. Lesson 3: Visit to park Talk by ranger Supervised walk, using map, to stop at various points to listen to scripted descriptions of careers involved there. Lesson 4: Task at school - to create a Christmas Event at Moors Valley, including staff requirements.</p> <p>The Moors Valley Team then judge the work produced and supply feedback.</p>

We would also like to tell you more about Unifrog- the digital programme which we have subscribed to this year.



Unifrog: Starting the Journey (KS3)

At Key Stage 3, your child is just beginning to think about who they are and what they might enjoy doing in the future. To support them, our school uses

Unifrog, a universal destinations platform that makes exploring the world of work and education fun and accessible.

While university or a full-time job might feel a long way off, KS3 is the perfect time for "low-pressure" discovery. Unifrog helps students connect their current school subjects and hobbies to future possibilities.

How KS3 Students Use Unifrog

For younger students, the focus is on self-discovery rather than making final decisions:

- **Personality & Interests Quizzes:** Engaging, psychometric quizzes help students understand their strengths and suggest careers that match their character.
- **The Careers Library:** With over 1,000 profiles, students can see what a "typical week" looks like for various jobs, what they'd earn, and even what the job market looks like in our local area.
- **Recording Success:** The "Activities" and "Skills" tools allow students to build a digital portfolio. Whether they joined a football team, helped at a cake sale, or excelled in a drama production, they can record it now so they don't forget it when they need to write a CV later.
- **Subject Exploration:** The "Read, Watch, Listen" tool suggests books, films, and podcasts related to their favourite subjects, helping them develop a deeper interest in what they are learning in class.

Why Start in KS3?

Research shows that early career exploration increases student motivation. When a student sees how Maths connects to being a Games Developer, or how English connects to Journalism, they often feel more engaged with their current schoolwork. It also helps them feel more confident when it comes to choosing their GCSE options in Year 9.

Your Role as a Parent

You can support your child by:

- 1. Exploring Together: Log in with your child and look at their "Interests Profile" results. It's a great conversation starter.**
- 2. Encouraging Reflection: If they do something outside of school (like Scouts, Duke of Edinburgh, or a sports club), remind them to log it in their Unifrog Locker.**
- 3. Parent Newsletter: When you sign up, you'll receive expert guides on how to talk to your child about their future without making it feel like "homework."**

Are you an Employer or Educator?

We actively invite parents to come into school and talk about their own career journeys and job descriptions. If you would like to be part of the Emmanuel Middle School Careers Programme, Please contact Elaine Robertson through the school office.