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### Key dates:

**Monday 3.2.2025**  
Careers Treasure Hunt event

**Monday 24.3.2025:**  
Year 10 mock exams start

**Tuesday 25.3.2025:**  
Careers Event –  
Careers Quiz

# CAREERS NEWSLETTER

Welcome back to our school careers newsletter. This year will see our current headteacher, Hazel Bunting, retire for a well-earned rest after 15 years and our new headteacher, Jodie Evans, takes over. Please read below to find out more. In this issue we have also reviewed our careers destinations data for 2023 – 2024 and have included some information which we hope you find useful. We have also completed our year 11 mock exams, which we are delighted to say have gone very smoothly. Excitingly, we have also welcomed a number of new students into our school. Our programme of work for parental engagement has also started. We have a joint parent and student activity planned for February with letters going out shortly, so please keep an eye out for them, it would be lovely to see you there. We have also included some other exciting news about events that have been taking place in our schools over this term. As you can see, we have been as productive as ever as we strive to secure the best outcomes for our students.

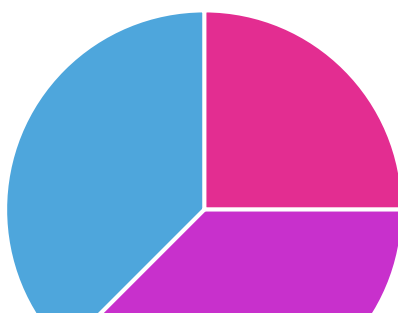
[alisongoode@exceptional-ideas.co.uk](mailto:alisongoode@exceptional-ideas.co.uk).

## OUR DESTINATION DATA FOR 2023-2024

Below is a chart showing the post-16 destinations for the Year 11 students that left us at the end of last year.

- **Specialist provisions:**  
Special Provision at Chelmsford College, the Community College Initiative (CCI) in Chelmsford
- **Small training providers:**  
CTP in Witham, TCHC at Basildon GAPS Centre.
- **College:** Colchester Institute, Braintree College

Destination Data 2023-2024



## Spotlight on... Healthcare Careers: A Future-Proof Choice

Healthcare is one of the most secure and rewarding career sectors, with over 350 job roles across 1,148 hospitals, 10 ambulance trusts, and 6,311 GP practices in the UK. People will always need healthcare, making it a future-proof industry.

While there are shortages of dentists, doctors, and nurses, healthcare jobs offer the chance to make a real difference. Supporting patients from illness to recovery can be incredibly fulfilling. The work is challenging but comes with a strong sense of teamwork and belonging.

Healthcare isn't just about patient care. There are vital roles in cleaning, maintenance, finance, HR, and administration that keep services running smoothly. These staff members enable clinical teams to focus on saving lives.

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/>

### SCIENCE DAY



## GATSBY SCORES

Once again, we've made improvements in our compliance against the Gatsby Benchmarks, which is the nationally recognised marker to ensure that we are providing high quality careers education. The Gatsby Foundation recently reviewed careers education provision nationally and has released a report so we will be making further improvements to our careers service based on the recommendations from this report. One of our targets is to link careers to curriculum learning. This term in preparation for their GCSE science exams, some of our students have been conducting experiments. These include investigating enzyme activity, exploring the process of photosynthesis, and comparing how different concentrations of sugars and salts affect osmosis in potato cells. It was a great opportunity for students to work together to conduct the tests and make predictions about the results. Many careers in the health industry begin with an enjoyment and interest in science. We take great pride in encouraging our students to be hands on learners and develop curiosity.

Gatsby Benchmark	Current compliance %	Our compliance in 2023/2024 %	What we need to do to improve
Linking curriculum learning to careers	100%	43%	

## Staying Active While Making a Difference



For National Volunteering Day this term some of our students have been staying fit and active while volunteering in the local community. Recently, they helped clear up the local park and assisted an elderly neighbour with garden maintenance. Their efforts have been warmly received, with residents expressing gratitude on social media for the positive impact our students have made.

### Career Connections:

These activities align with careers in health and social care, such as community support work, occupational therapy, and public health roles. Through volunteering, students develop teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills—key attributes for careers in healthcare and social services.

## Micronutrients

One of our Year 11 students has been learning about the role of micronutrients in keeping the body fit and healthy during his food tech class. Micronutrients like vitamins and minerals help the body function properly—for example, vitamin C from red peppers boosts the immune system, and iron helps transport oxygen around the body. His one-pot pasta dish with red peppers, basil, and other nutritious ingredients looks both delicious and healthy!

Understanding nutrition isn't just useful for making tasty meals—it can also lead to careers in healthcare. Dietitians, nutritionists, and healthcare assistants all use knowledge about food and health to help people live better lives. Learning how food affects the body could even spark an interest in studying sports science, medicine, or public health in the future.



## OUR HEADTEACHER RETIRES

Hazel Bunting, our dedicated Head Teacher, has finally decided to give her responsibility and decision-making skills a well-earned rest. Hazel now wishes to spend her valuable time pursuing all of the hobbies and interests that she has previously been shoehorning into the limited free time she has been able to allow herself while being both head teacher and partner in Exceptional Ideas. Hazel will continue to act as a company Director but will be handing over the head teaching reins to Jodie Evans.

Now, obviously, we were not going to just let Hazel go without giving us all the benefit of her years of experience. We asked Hazel some questions about her careers journey and more. Here is what she said:

**Tell us a bit about your careers journey and how it has progressed or changed across the years.**

I left school after A levels and was unemployed for a while. I worked for a few months as a lab assistant in a uni. I then trained as a nurse, qualifying but realising that I didn't want to work shifts forever and returned to FE college to do more A levels. After this I went to uni to do a degree in psychology, still not sure what I was going to do full time. After that I did a PGCE and worked as a primary school teacher then left that to work in the special needs department of the local council.

**Did you go to university and if so, was this useful to you?**

Yes, I did, for my degree, then PGCE then to do a course on teaching children whose first language isn't English and started an M Ed. I switched courses after I started working for a national company who worked with children in care and those excluded from school. I then returned to the open university to complete a Master's degree in Business Administration.

**Do you have any regrets about your career's choices?**

No, I have loved my working life overall. I am now retiring so I can pursue my love of art.

**What did careers advice look like when you were in secondary school? What support did you get?**

LOL. I was told that, as I could type I should be a secretary. When I suggested that I might like to be an architect they laughed. Things were very different back then.

**You have owned your own business for many years, what are the positives and negatives of being your own boss?**

The positives are that I have got to work with extremely caring and talented adults and some incredible young people. I was also able to demonstrate that respect is the key to helping young people to achieve and grow in confidence.

The downside is the constant pressure and employing people!! It increases the workload hugely.



## HEADTEACHER RETIRES CONTINUED...

**What careers or general advice would "older Hazel" give to your younger self with the benefit of hindsight?**

I would advise myself that I can achieve anything I set my mind to and not to accept barriers put in the way by others. Also, that once a choice is made it doesn't have to be forever. You can always retrain and achieve your goals through working hard and challenging yourself.

**What are you going to do with all your spare time in retirement? What's next?**

ART!! This would have been my second choice... In fact I had just got a place on an art foundation course when I got the job as a trainee nurse. I am now going to fill my time being creative, learning more skills, challenging myself to improve. Oh and swimming, kayaking and much travelling.

***We wish Hazel all the best in her future endeavours and hope that she does get to have a bit of a rest!***

## NEW CAREERS LOGO FOR EXCEPTIONAL IDEAS



In September, all students participated in a careers event where they were asked to create a logo for our careers service to a specific brief. We had an amazing response with some fantastic designs submitted.

Our winner was...

**Oliver Carter from Teaseldown School** who received a certificate and a prize. Here is the winning design but keep your eyes peeled for our logo on letters and save the date cards soon.

## Walking Treasure Hunt

This event will take place on:

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025**

**1:15pm to 3.00pm**

**at Wethersfield Village Hall, Wethersfield, Essex.**

We hope you can join us and have some fun. Younger siblings who are not in school are welcome to join in although pushchairs / prams may be necessary due to the hills and distance of the walking.

### Open Events:

**Colchester Institute – January  
Thursday, 23 January 2025**

**Suffolk New College – March  
Wednesday, 5 March 2025**

**Harlow College – February Tuesday,  
11 February 2025**

**Chelmsford College –February  
Wednesday, 5 February 2025**

**Please visit their websites for more information and keep transition leads updated with any visits you make. Alternatively, visits can be done during school time, if more appropriate.**

**Next Issue: April 2025**