

# The Cheadle Hulme High School Series

This series of case studies aims to provide schools and colleges with a better understanding of how to develop their careers strategy in a structured, effective manner.

## Our careers journey

Cheadle Hulme High School is in Stockport and is part of the Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership. Case study three of this series showcases the outcomes from the school's new Careers Strategy. For more information about this – or any other questions, please contact Louis Garbutt at [Louis.Garbutt@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:Louis.Garbutt@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

## Outcomes

As a result of such a strong evaluation process, the school's Compass results for Benchmark 1 improved from 35 per cent to 64 per cent. They now have an articulated careers strategy alongside a clear operational plan of careers activities that has been co-developed with senior stakeholders. There is a growing sense of shared ownership of the careers strategy due to the alignment with school values and priorities in the School Development Plan.



A strategic approach to careers has been taken including the Headteacher and trustees which has raised the profile of careers and increased the knowledge of senior leaders at the school.

The Careers Leader is no longer an isolated role with sole responsibility for the career. There is a wider culture of responsibility for careers across the whole school with key staff supporting him. This wider definition of careers as a responsibility of all staff has increased awareness of how careers can support school priorities and has helped to remove some of the barriers blocking quality provision across all year groups. The Enterprise Adviser has offered real value in a management consultancy role.

## Key roles

The people who have been instrumental in the success of the school's careers programme and influenced the change thus far should be acknowledged. A collaborative approach by the Careers Leader, Enterprise Adviser and Enterprise Coordinator has been essential in making this change happen.

**Careers Leader** – The Careers Leader has shown leadership through his position within the school.

- Firstly, by providing an honest and transparent assessment of the school's current provision which allowed for open and constructive conversations.
- Secondly, through a committed approach to working alongside an Enterprise Adviser and Enterprise Coordinator; being open to taking on new ideas and approaches and turning them into tangible actions within the school.
- Thirdly, through gathering and involving stakeholders within the school (including the Headteacher) in order to take a collective approach to developing a careers strategy and build the guiding coalition to create a greater sense of ownership for careers.

- Fourthly, through developing and implementing a forward-thinking careers strategy for the school.

**Enterprise Coordinator** – The Enterprise Coordinator has acted as a guide for both the Careers Leader and the Enterprise Adviser as they sought to develop a robust careers strategy. This has been achieved through:

- Introducing best practice from across the Enterprise Adviser Network,
- Acting as a facilitator for the Enterprise Adviser to be able to use their skills most appropriately, ensuring the discussion remains strategic and framed around the Gatsby Benchmarks,
- Coordinating and updating a development plan based on actions.

**Enterprise Adviser** – The Enterprise Adviser has acted as a management consultant by supporting the Careers Leader to develop a careers strategy. The expertise of the Enterprise Adviser and their critical friendship have been instrumental in driving the system change in how the school approaches careers. This has been delivered through a series of group and 1-2-1 meetings with the Careers Leader and Enterprise Coordinator, co-developing and facilitating a strategic visioning workshop (incorporating practice from their professional experience) and providing strategic frameworks to support the Careers Leader in their role.

## What's needed for this approach to be effective?

**Effective Careers Leadership** – Louis has experience of following this approach at another school and was aware of some of the potential challenges of not being able to secure the engagement of senior leaders as that essential guiding coalition. This case study exemplifies what can be achieved when a Careers Leader is in a position of leadership (or is empowered to lead). John as Deputy Headteacher was able to use his influence within the school to gather key stakeholders to help shape a careers strategy but also had the power to implement anything that was developed.

**School commitment** – Without John's commitment to meet with Liz and Louis on a regular basis, so that plans and understanding of what needed to happen could be developed, the school could not have developed such a well informed and practical careers strategy. Similarly, the willingness and engagement of the Headteacher and trustees to take part in this process shows a commitment from the school that is necessary to implement the strategy.

**Taking a strategic approach** – This case study details how taking a strategic approach to careers can put a school on a path to a stable careers programme informed by a strategy that can be clearly understood by all stakeholders and can garner the support of senior leaders and staff. This is vital to sustainability. Kotter's change management model has also supported this process providing a helpful framework to guide the school.



**Enterprise Adviser contribution** – As mentioned previously, through taking such a strategic approach, the Enterprise Adviser was able to use the management consultancy skills that she was recruited for, helping to guide the school through this process.

**Sharing of best practice** – Cheadle Hulme High School benefitted from an approach that had been tested by Louis and Enterprise Advisers from across the Greater Manchester Enterprise Adviser Network. By getting access to a number of different variations of this approach developed by other Enterprise Advisers, Liz was able to build on those and shape delivery to best fit Cheadle Hulme High School which has produced excellent results.

**Honest evaluation** – Such results could not have been produced had John not completed Compass in an honest and almost conservative fashion. Through recognising honestly that the school did have gaps in the Gatsby Benchmarks, this then paved the way for Louis and Liz to best support John and develop the best approach to take to progress the school.

## Further advice

**Managing the operational imperatives** – short term compromise for longer term benefit.

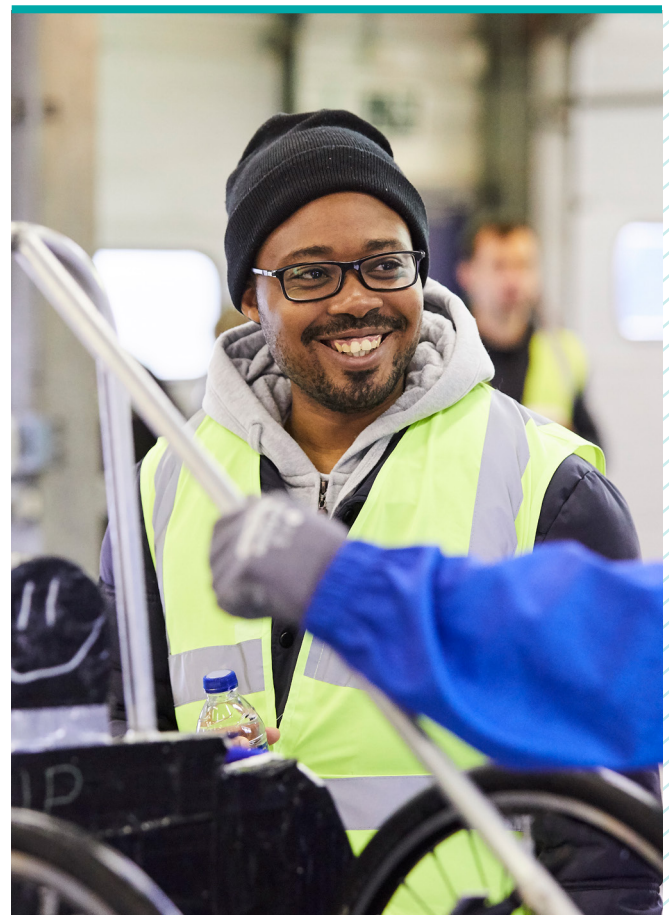
Enabling the Enterprise Adviser to support at a strategic level and drive strategy can be viewed as compromising their capacity to support operational delivery of careers activities. However, setting the foundations and having a clear strategy means the Enterprise Adviser can now support operational delivery and engage her wider networks to help with encounters which are meaningful. You can access a [checklist](#) and [slide deck](#) explaining what makes encounters meaningful from The Careers & Enterprise Company's website.

**More collaboration with Enterprise Coordinators helps accelerates sharing best practice.**

As the Enterprise Coordinator, Louis supported this piece of work with little collaboration from the wider team. Ensuring colleagues within the wider contributed to this process (e.g. reflection, workshop delivery, feedback), at the time versus sharing after the fact helps to accelerate sharing of best practice and enables this approach to be replicated in other schools.

**More collaboration with Enterprise Advisers helps accelerates sharing best practice.**

Identifying Enterprise Advisers within the network who have complimentary skills to support each other in delivering this process builds capacity and enables this approach to be adopted across a wider network of schools. It supports Enterprise Advisers to grow their own knowledge and expertise.



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