



The Quality in Careers Standard >>>>

QUALITY IN CAREERS WEBSITE ©

CEIAG Case Study:

Sutton High School, Sutton, Surrey

THE SCHOOL

Sutton High School is an independent girls' day school in the London Borough of Sutton. The school was opened in 1884 and is a member of the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST). There are approx. 600 girls on roll from 3–18 years old, with 350 in the senior school. The aim of the school is to provide an academically rigorous and challenging education for girls within the framework of a caring and supportive community.

Sutton High School has a long history of academic excellence and its examination results often place it in the top 100 independent schools in the country. 31 students in the senior school have special educational needs and there are 19 English as an Additional Language (EAL) students. The school is a diverse community of girls from varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds, including our overseas students for whom English is a second language. Emphasis is placed on the individual and her particular strengths and talents.

Careers Education is included as part of the curriculum from Year 7 with lessons delivered by a specialist PSR (Personal and Social Relationships) teacher and by the Head of Careers. The subject has a high status within the school, with all staff involved in a range of activities. The philosophy of the Careers Department is that it seeks to provide an atmosphere of care, encouragement and positive support in which students can find their own strengths, explore possible options and make informed and appropriate career decisions.

Approximately 98% of its students leave Sutton High to take up a place at University; a few will progress to Art Foundation courses, Music Conservatoires or will choose to take a gap year. In 2016, one student left to undertake a Degree Apprenticeship in Engineering with the BBC.

CAREER EDUCATION INFORMATION ADVICE AND GUIDANCE (CEIAG)

The Head of Careers has the postgraduate Diploma in Careers Guidance (DCG) and is in school on 3 days a week, providing information, advice and guidance interviews. She works closely with the Senior Leadership Team and the PSR Coordinator.

Further support is provided by The Morrisby Organisation which carries out the psychometric profiling and conducts guidance interviews for Year 11; and by the Inspiring Futures Foundation who provide training, Careers events and organise Careers Experience days for students across the country

As part of the Girls Day School Trust, the school also benefits from the GDST CareerStart programme with a range of lessons being delivered by specialists, for example on networking, skills for the future and leadership skills. Taster days are organised with large companies, for example a weekend Engineering Conference was held for 6th Form students and day events have been organised with HSBC, Rolls Royce, Nomura and other such companies. Preparation courses are provided for students applying to competitive university courses.

Close links are maintained with employers and higher education institutions.

BROAD RANGE OF ACTIVITIES

Here is a flavour of what Sutton High School offers:

- Year 7 students interview members of staff across a range of occupations and give presentations; they research using the Job Explorer Database (JED) website
- Year 8 students take part in the Real Game and Take Our Daughter to Work day
- Year 9 have careers interviews with their parents and the Head of Careers; they learn about decision-making skills, use the Fast Tomato website and they learn about managing their online profile
- Year 10 work on CVs and Interview techniques and learn about their rights and responsibilities in the workplace and have a Careers Day which takes the form of an Assessment Centre. They visit the city of Oxford and have a university talk
- Year 11 complete the Morrisby psychometric profile and have face-to-face careers interviews with guidance practitioners provided by Morrisby
- The GDST CareerStart programme supports the curriculum by giving a variety of skills related lessons to all year groups
- The school has developed a very active STEM club and has hosted The Big Bang@SuttonHigh event as part of the Big Bang Fair – a programme of UK-wide events to get students excited about science, technology, engineering and maths. (<http://nearme.thebigbangfair.co.uk/>)
- UCAS support - all students have individual interviews. The Head of Careers sends relevant information to them about different courses and careers. They have university visits, speakers, university-style lectures, taster days, study skill sessions and visits to employers. Unifrog provides a very useful tool for both students and staff
- Students from Year 7 have a Pupil Profile that they update regularly to reflect their softer skills and the competencies gained through a variety of school and external experiences and this is then used to help with CVs and application forms

HIGH QUALITY GUIDANCE

The school puts great emphasis on guidance interviews throughout years 9 – 13 with all these year groups having individual interviews with the Head of Careers and, in addition, all of Year 11 having a guidance interview from an external qualified guidance specialist.

ENGAGING EMPLOYERS

- Year 8 students go on Take Our Daughter to Work Day and share their experiences of the workplace with their peers when they return
- All Year 11 students take part in work experience and the school works closely with Employers to facilitate this
- The school organises a Careers Fair for students in Years 9 - 13 where students can find out about careers in different fields and attend talks from over 60 of our recent alumnae, our parents, universities and from local employers
- The school works with local employers through the local Education Business Partnership and students attend talks and presentations
- Links with the school's alumnae are encouraged, and alumnae help with mock interviews, talks and presentations.

QUALITY

Sutton High School achieved the then-named 'Gold Career Mark' Quality Award for CEIAG (2015) having been successfully accredited 4 times. In 2017 it was reaccredited, this time by Career Mark (Complete Careers) as a Licensed Awarding Body for the single **national Quality in Careers Standard**.

Comments from Career Mark Awarding Body assessors included:

- *"The school's commitment to career learning is demonstrated by having the Chair of Governors involved, the employment of a specialist Personal and Social Responsibility teacher and having a qualified level 6 guidance professional as Head of Careers*
- *The school successfully invests significant resources in its career programme and achieves what it seeks to, creating learners who are effective career planners.*
- *As the students move through the school, they are helped to develop their self-awareness and self-development and linking their skills and interests to employability skills and the world of work*
- *The school delivers an extensive and varied careers curriculum which includes a wide range of external providers and a diverse range of activities.*
- *The students were able to recount in some detail and with considerable enthusiasm, the vast range of careers related activities which the school offers. The students clearly appreciated this. Without exception they found the whole programme interesting, stimulating and beneficial.*
- *The students value the careers provision very highly and fully appreciate the contribution it makes to their own career development planning. This was demonstrated admirably by the way in which all students seen could articulate with*

clarity their short term, medium term and long- term career plans and can be summed up by the following quote from a former Year 13 student:

'Sutton High School cares about what we want to do, whether it's academic or not. Being guided and encouraged to think about our futures from a young age, we are more capable of making informed choices when the time comes.' ”

Comments from the Students included:

- *“The Real Game was a very helpful session the school has covered with us because we were all given different jobs with various salaries and with that we had to buy a house, car etc. This was really good because it brought you into reality and it showed you how hard the real world is and that you have to work hard to get the best results. (Key Stage 3 student)*
- *I have found the careers advice and support a huge benefit regarding what I want to do when I am older. We have had several interviews, all of which have helped me to make decisions which will help me in the future. The Head of Careers has also helped me get work experience with a company that I am really interested in and gave me a lot of advice on how to write my covering letter and CV to them. (Key Stage 4 student)*
- *The careers support we have had over the years has been diverse, encouraging and enjoyable. It has always taken into account the fact that plans change and people change and has never tried to pigeon-hole people into deciding on a career at too young an age. (Key Stage 5 student).”*

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