

Birmingham Independent College

Complex Needs Learners Careers Policy

Next Review: October 2026

BIC's Complex Needs cohort comprises students with complex communication and sensory needs, many of whom are non-verbal or require high levels of structured support. The college's curriculum prioritises **communication, independence, sensory engagement, and community participation**, ensuring that careers-related learning is meaningful, accessible, and EHCP-driven.

Benchmark 1: A Stable Careers Programme

How BIC meets it:

- A **whole-college careers strategy** tailored to each curriculum pathway (Academic, Functional/Vocational, and Experiential/Complex Needs).
- For Complex Needs learners, careers and life-preparation objectives are embedded within the **Experiential Curriculum Framework**, with personal targets linked to EHCP outcomes.
- The programme is shared with families and reviewed termly with multi-agency input (careers adviser, therapist, social worker, parent).

Evidence: Individual Learning Plans (ILPs); EHCP reviews; sensory careers/life skills timetables.

Benchmark 2: Learning from Career and Labour Market Information

How BIC meets it:

- Labour market learning is adapted into **practical, sensory, and experiential formats** (e.g., role-play “world of work” days, object-based learning, workplace simulations).
- Staff and parents use visuals, sensory prompts, and video modelling to introduce learners to different roles and community participation opportunities.

Evidence: Photo diaries, video evidence, EFL portfolios, family workshop logs.

Benchmark 3: Addressing the Needs of Each Pupil

How BIC meets it:

- Complex Needs learners' aspirations are mapped to their **EHCP outcomes** under “Preparation for Adulthood” (Employment, Independent Living, Community Inclusion, Health).
- The college uses an **individualised “Pathway to Adulthood” plan** that links sensory preferences and functional skills to achievable life and employability goals.

Evidence: Pathway profiles, annual review updates.

Benchmark 4: Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers

How BIC meets it:

- The **Experiential Curriculum** integrates employability through **enterprise, daily living, and community participation** modules.

- Examples: sensory cooking (catering pathways), animal care (farm programme), recycling projects (environmental awareness), and collaborative art sales (micro-enterprise).

Evidence: Schemes of work, EFL tracking, “My Future” folders?

Benchmark 5: Encounters with Employers and Employees

How BIC meets it:

- Adapted “employer encounters” include on-site visits from supported employment agencies, volunteers, and local business owners who engage through storytelling, role-modelling, or sensory demonstrations.
- Staff pre-teach vocabulary and prepare social stories to encourage positive engagement and maximise understanding.

Evidence: Photos, video logs, visitor schedules, feedback from employers/families.

Benchmark 6: Experiences of Workplaces

How BIC meets it:

- For Complex Needs students, “work experience” is redefined as **community participation and supported enterprise exposure** — such as helping at a local café, farm, or charity shop under close staff supervision.
- Virtual work tours and school-based enterprise activities extend experiences safely and accessibly.

Evidence: Individual work placement plans, feedback reports,].

Benchmark 7: Encounters with Further and Higher Education

How BIC meets it:

- Transition planning includes visits (in person or virtual) to **post-19 provisions, supported internships, or day centres**.
- College transition staff collaborate with social care and next-step providers to create individual **Transition Portfolios**.

Evidence: Transition meeting records, supported visits, provider feedback.

Benchmark 8: Personal Guidance

How BIC meets it:

- Every Complex Needs learner has access to a **qualified Level 6 Careers Adviser (Birmingham Careers Service)** and a **keyworker** who supports goal-setting and reflection.
- Guidance is delivered collaboratively with therapists and family to ensure recommendations reflect communication needs, safety, and long-term wellbeing.

Evidence: Careers action plans, adviser reports, parent feedback.

Additional Enhancement: BIC's Strengths

- **Multi-sensory careers education** embedded in life skills, enterprise, and enrichment activities.
- **Family engagement** ensures continuity between home, college, and community.
- **EfL digital platform** captures qualitative evidence of progress, demonstrating intent, implementation, and impact for inspectors.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Careers Lead and Senior Leadership Team:

- Review the careers and Complex Needs curriculum annually against the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Gather feedback from students, families, employers, and staff to inform continuous improvement.
- Report progress to Governors and external partners.

Evaluation draws on:

- Student voice (verbal, non-verbal, and observational evidence)
- EHCP reviews
- Destination tracking data
- Ofsted feedback and self-assessment

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal / Head of College:

Ensures statutory compliance and strategic leadership of the careers and **PMLD** programme.

Careers Lead:

Oversees design, implementation, and evaluation; maintains partnership with Birmingham Careers Service.

Class Teachers & Keyworkers:

Embed careers learning into daily practice; record outcomes on **EFL**; maintain communication with families.

Parents / Carers:

Engage in reviews, reinforce skills at home, and support transitions.

Governors:

Provide oversight, ensuring that careers provision meets regulatory and local authority expectations.

Safeguarding, Inclusion, and Equality

BIC ensures all careers and Complex Needs activities uphold safeguarding standards, including:

- Supervision and risk assessment for external visits.
- Respect for student dignity, privacy, and communication rights.
- Inclusive practice that values diversity and eliminates barriers to participation.

All staff follow **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)** and the **BIC Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.

Review and Continuous Improvement

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier if new statutory guidance emerges.

The next scheduled review will take place in **October 2026**.

Feedback from staff, parents, students, and external partners will inform all revisions.

This policy reflects Birmingham Independent College's commitment to unlocking every learner's potential through inclusive, aspirational, and life-focused education.