

County Council Meeting – 13 October 2022**Question to Councillor Price
Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)****By Councillor Afsar**

Question

According to the Sutton Trust, only 30% of year 13 students nationwide completed work experience. Is there a figure for the percentage of year 13 students in Staffordshire who are excluded from gaining valuable work experience, and what can be done to improve the situation? (Reference: Page 8 Local Government first, no 670 April 2022)

Reply

Staffordshire County Council does not collect this information on behalf of schools and colleges. Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, governors, employers and other agencies.

The Department for Education expects all schools and colleges to use the internationally recognised Gatsby Benchmarks to develop a careers programme that increases opportunities for students to access everything from experiences of the workplace and personal guidance with a careers adviser, to engagement with employers, colleges, training providers and universities. The benchmarks are non-statutory but support schools and colleges by providing a framework around which they can develop their careers programme in line with their legal requirements to provide independent careers guidance to pupils throughout their secondary education (11 to 18-year-olds) (the Gatsby Benchmarks). Benchmark 6 sets out that every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.

This benchmark is less about work experience and more about experiences of the workplace. Employers will have a critical role in providing 16 to 18-year-old students with first-hand experience of their chosen occupational area in an authentic setting over a long period of time.
