

# Stuart Gander

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## Can you tell us a little bit about your school? What is your approach to career related learning?

We are an all through school for 3-19-year olds and there are roughly 1850 students (primary school all the way up to sixth form). We are in 1/5 of the most deprived areas of the country, with a large proportion of students from ethnic minority groups. We are a specialist maths and computing school and our pupil premium students is above national average. We achieved outstanding from OFSTED for the 16 to 18 study programmes criteria and we were awarded the Investors in Careers Mark, the highest accolade a school can receive for its excellence in careers education.

## What did you want to be when you grew up and why?

I wanted to be a physiotherapist. My degree took me on a different pathway, and I visited the Midwest region and West Coast of America where I worked as a high school soccer coach. I knew from this incredible experience that I wanted to be a teacher.

## What events has the school hosted/taken part in?

We host many careers events in school including; mock interviews, speed networking, careers fairs, pathways evenings and other workshops and interventions.

## How would you describe the children's aspirations at your school before and after the Inspiring the Future event/activities?

The students at Eastbury are incredibly aspirational. As a school, we encourage all young people to think big, dream big and believe big. We want them to be prosperous leaders of the future and develop the necessary skills to be successful in the modern world.

## What inspired your school to sign up to Inspiring the Future?

I undertook the ELP course through Teach First in 2015. Our course leader promoted your site and it was a no brainer to sign up and get volunteers in as soon as possible.

## Has an Inspiring the Future volunteer come in that has a job you hadn't heard of before or had access to? If so, please can you give us an example?

Yes! We had a data scientist for Hotels.com for the networking event with year 9. This was an unusual job and something I hadn't considered, so it was great that the students could ask her questions and find out a little more on what the job entailed.

## How long has your school been using Inspiring the Future?

We have been using Inspiring the Future for three years now and we will continue to use the outstanding inspirational volunteers in years to come.

## What has been the best thing about being part of Inspiring the Future?

Without doubt, meeting and connecting with new professionals and developing long working relationships.

## What would you say to volunteers thinking of signing up to Inspiring the Future?

Do it! Even if you inspire one young person from doing just one event in a school, the impact you can have on that individual is life changing.

## Would you recommend Inspiring the Future to other schools? What would you say to encourage them to sign up?

Yes 100%. All schools should sign up as it meets so many of the Gatsby Benchmarks and increases the number of encounters with employers.

## What difference has Inspiring the Future made to the school and your pupils?

Inspiring the Future has made an instrumental impact on our young people. The volunteers are super excited to be in school and this passion rubs off on the students and they get to talk to so many different professionals, which will help them to consider a wider range of pathways.

## Was there an especially inspiring moment that happened at one of the events?

I think all the events have been inspiring for our young people, but the speed networking event will stand out to me this year. I was able to secure 20+ volunteers and all 300 students in year 9 took part in the morning event, which ensured that students got the opportunity to speak to many different professionals from different industries. Many students commented in their evaluation that this really helped them with making the right decisions for their GCSE subjects.

Another inspiring moment happened at our mock interview day for year 10. We had two alumni volunteers that were with us and it was a lovely surprise in the morning when I realised, they were ex-students.

## When is your next Inspiring the Future activity?

I don't have a date in the diary yet but will reach out to the volunteers soon to set up an 'life in the day of an apprentice' event in October/November 2019.

## Describe Inspiring the Future in five words

Inspirational, networking, pathways, motivation and knowledgeable.

**Inspiring the Future has made an instrumental impact on our young people.**