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community school  
and sixth form

# PROVIDER ACCESS POLICY

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Signed by Chair of Committee:	

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## **Introduction**

This policy statement sets out The Weald Community School and Sixth Form's arrangements for managing the access of providers to pupils at the School for the purposes of providing them with information about their education and/or training offer(s).

Publication of this policy complies with the School's statutory duties under sections 42B(3-7) and 45A of the Education Act 1997, as amended by the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, alongside the consultation draft of the 'Access for education and training providers' statutory guidance for schools, which came into force on the 1st January 2023.

## **Statutory Requirements**

As per section 42B(1) and 45A of the Education Act 1997, schools must ensure that there is an opportunity for a range of education and training providers to access students during the relevant phase of their education for the purpose of informing them about approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships.

Schools must provide the following number of encounters\* with providers of technical education or apprenticeships following the criteria specified in section 14 of the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 for each 'key phase' as follows:

- **'First Key Phase' (Years 8-9):** two encounters with two different providers  
*(mandatory for all pupils to attend)*
- **'Second Key Phase' (Years 10-11):** two encounters with two different providers  
*(mandatory for all pupils to attend)*
- **'Third Key Phase' (Years 12-13):** two encounters with two different providers  
*(mandatory for the school to arrange and deliver but optional for pupils to attend)*

*Definition of 'encounters' live, meaningful engagement with students. Encounters must be with providers of approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships. Encounters must allow for student questions and interaction.*

## **Student Entitlement**

All students in years 7 to 13 are entitled to find out about, and understand how to make applications for, the full range of education and training options available to them, *(including technical and apprenticeship qualifications)* as part of the School careers programme. This includes via hearing from a range of education and training providers about the opportunities they offer, for example through options events, assemblies, group discussions, and taster events.

## **Management of Provider Access Requests**

### **Procedure**

Any provider wishing to request access to the School for the purposes of providing students with information about education and training opportunities should contact the School's designated careers lead via [careers@theweald.org.uk](mailto:careers@theweald.org.uk) or 01403 787200 extension 260.

### **Data Protection (GDPR)**

Personal data shared between the School and providers will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Student data will not be shared without appropriate lawful basis.

### **Access**

A number of events, integrated into our careers programme, offer providers the opportunity to visit the School so that they can speak with students and/or their parents. Parents may be informed in advance of significant provider events (e.g., careers fairs). To view our careers programme, please visit the School website ([click here](#)). Providers are welcome to speak with our designated careers lead, using the contact details provided above, to identify the most suitable opportunity for them.

We also invite providers to join the School's careers mailing list so that they can receive invitations from the designated careers lead or a delegated member of School staff about our upcoming careers programme activities, such as our annual careers fair ([click here](#)).

### **Granting and Refusing Access**

All requests to access students for the purposes of providing information and guidance related to education and training opportunities will be considered on an individual basis, including factors such as whether a suitable opportunity and appropriate facilities are available.

- Decisions will be made in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Providers will not be unfairly discriminated against.
- Students with SEND will have equitable access to provider encounters.

Providers may raise concerns via the School's complaints procedure.

### **Safeguarding**

Our External Visitors Policy, available to view on the School's website, outlines our procedure for checking the identity and suitability of visitors. All providers will be expected to adhere to this policy. All external providers will be supervised by a member of School staff at all times unless otherwise agreed in advance in line with safeguarding procedures.

DBS requirements will be determined in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education and the School's safeguarding procedures.

### **Premises and Facilities**

The School will make the main hall, classrooms, or meeting rooms available for discussions between the provider and students as appropriate to the activity. The School will also make available audio-visual and other specialist equipment to support provider presentations where appropriate and available. These arrangements can be discussed and agreed in advance of the visit with the designated careers lead or a delegated member of School staff. Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to ensure accessibility for students with SEND.

Providers are welcome to leave a copy of their prospectus or other relevant course literature for display in our careers library, which is located within our Learning Resource Centre (LRC) and available to all students at lunch and break times.

### **Monitoring Arrangements**

The School's arrangements for managing the access of education and training providers to students is monitored by a senior leadership team member responsible for the careers programme.

The School maintains a record of all provider encounters, including date, provider, year group and number of students attending. Records are retained for audit/inspection purposes.

This policy will be reviewed by the designated careers lead every two years, or at an earlier date in the event of relevant statutory updates. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Body.

### **Links with Other Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:

- Careers Education, Information, Advice, and Guidance (CEIAG) Policy
- External Visitors Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Managing Abusive Parents/Carers and Visitors Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Vexatious Complaints Policy
- Work Experience Policy