Policy Information Sheet

Name of Policy:	**Careers Provider Access Statement**
Delegated Authority	☒ Trust Board ☐ Nominated Committee ☐ CEO ☐ CFO ☐Other _____
Policy review cycle	☒ Annual ☐ 3 years ☐ 4 years ☐ Other _____
Statutory policy	☒ Yes ☐ No
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2.0	R.Kitson	Updated in line with DfE statutory careers guidance, Provider Access Legislation, Gatsby Benchmarks, Ofsted expectations and the school Annual Rolling Careers Plan.	14.07.2026

Provider Access Policy Statement

This statement should be read alongside the Careers Policy and the Annual Rolling Careers Plan.

1. Aims

This statement sets out Hartlepool Free School's arrangements for managing access requests from education and training providers. It explains how providers of technical education, apprenticeships, further education, training, supported internships and related pathways can access pupils to inform them about the full range of options available at key transition points. The statement supports impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance and reflects the school's SEND/SEMH context by ensuring access is planned, safe, inclusive and meaningful.

2. Statutory requirements

This statement has been updated with reference to the DfE statutory guidance Careers guidance and access for education and training providers, updated June 2026. It reflects section 42B of the Education Act 1997, section 45A of the Education Act 1997, the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 and relevant school information publication requirements.

- The school must publish a Provider Access Policy Statement setting out the circumstances in which education and training providers will be given access to pupils.
- The Trust Board must ensure pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive at least six encounters with providers of technical education or apprenticeships.
- Encounters must take place during the standard school day for a reasonable period of time and must allow pupils to hear about the provider, their approved qualifications or apprenticeships, related careers, what learning/training is like, and to ask questions.
- The policy statement will be reviewed annually and approved by the Trust Board.

3. Pupil entitlement

All pupils in Years 8 to 13 are entitled to:

- find out about technical education qualifications, apprenticeships, supported internships, FE, training and other progression routes as part of the careers programme;
- hear from a range of providers about the opportunities they offer, including local and regional routes;
- understand how to make applications for academic, vocational, technical and training routes;
- receive information that is impartial, accessible and adapted to their communication, SEND, SEMH and preparation for adulthood needs;
- have time to prepare for and reflect on provider encounters through the Annual Rolling Careers Plan, Careers Passports, EHCP/PfA reviews, destination planning and transition support.

4. Provider access entitlement and annual rolling programme

The school uses a rolling annual programme. This means pupils receive repeated provider encounters over time, rather than the statutory entitlement being treated as a one-off event.

Phase	Minimum entitlement	How HFS meets this through the rolling programme	Evidence
Years 8-9	Two mandatory encounters for pupils to attend. Encounters may take place in Year 8 or between 1 September and 28 February in Year 9.	Annual November provider encounter for Year 8/9 with FE, technical education, apprenticeship or training provider. Pupils therefore receive one encounter in Year 8 and one in Year 9. Catch-up access will be arranged where a pupil joins late or misses an encounter.	Provider access log; register; provider materials; pupil reflections; Compass+ record.
Years 10-11	Two mandatory encounters for pupils to attend. Encounters may take place in Year 10 or between 1 September and 28 February in Year 11.	Annual November provider encounter for Year 10/11 with college, apprenticeship, technical education or training provider. Additional supported visits and provider input are planned in March as part of application and transition preparation.	Provider access log; applications tracker; transition records; Compass+ record.
Years 12-13 where applicable	Two encounters must be put on by the school, but attendance is optional for pupils. Encounters may take place in Year 12 or between 1 September and 28 February in Year 13.	Where a pupil is on roll in KS5, the school will offer appropriate encounters with FE, supported internship, apprenticeship, training, employment or higher technical providers. This may be delivered in school, online, or through supported visits.	Offer/invitation record; attendance where accepted; provider feedback; transition/destination record.

The annual programme also includes careers passport reviews, pupil voice, CV writing, enterprise activities, independent careers guidance, mock interviews, work experience preparation, work experience, transition passports, destination tracking and parent/carer engagement. These activities support the Gatsby Benchmarks and Ofsted expectations, but statutory provider access encounters are specifically recorded against Provider Access Legislation.

5. Opportunities for access

Providers are welcome to request access at any point in the year. The most suitable opportunities will usually sit within the school's planned annual careers programme:

Term/month	Planned opportunity	Pupil group	Notes for providers
September	Careers programme shared; provider access requests reviewed; website statement checked.	Staff/providers	Providers may contact school to discuss suitable access opportunities.
November	Statutory provider encounters: Year 8/9 and Year 10/11.	Years 8-11	Preferred window for planned PAL encounters. Sessions may be in school, online or off-site.

Term/month	Planned opportunity	Pupil group	Notes for providers
March	Technical pathways/apprenticeships input; supported visits for colleges, supported internships, employment preparation and adult services.	KS3/KS4	Additional provider input, supported visits and catch-up arrangements where appropriate. For Year 9/11 statutory counting, relevant encounters must take place by 28 February.
April-May	Work experience preparation, employer research, workplace visits and placements.	KS3/KS4	Useful opportunities for employer/provider engagement and workplace exposure.
June-July	Transition passports, destination confirmation, progression portfolio and annual impact review.	Year 10/11 and leavers	Providers may contribute to transition planning and destination confirmation.
KS5 where applicable	Post-16/post-18 technical, apprenticeship, supported internship, employment or training encounters.	Years 12-13	Offered where pupils are on roll in KS5; attendance is optional for pupils but the opportunity will be recorded.

6. Management of provider access requests

A provider wishing to request access should contact:

Provider Access Contact / Careers Lead	Rick Kitson
Telephone	01429 850081
Email	Rick.kitson@hartlepoolfreeschool.org.uk

Requests should ideally be made at least four school weeks in advance, although the school will consider shorter notice where this is practical and beneficial for pupils. Providers should include the proposed session content, target year group, staff attending, safeguarding information, accessibility needs, preferred date/time, equipment required and how the session links to technical education, apprenticeships, training or progression routes.

7. Granting and refusing access

Access will normally be granted where the request supports pupils' understanding of education, training, technical, apprenticeship, supported internship or employment pathways; can be delivered safely; is impartial; is accessible to pupils with SEND/SEMH needs; and fits within the planned careers programme or a suitable alternative time.

Access may be refused or postponed where the request presents safeguarding concerns, is not age-appropriate or impartial, duplicates existing provision without added value, cannot be reasonably

accommodated due to staffing/timetable constraints, is not linked to approved education/training routes, or cannot be adapted to meet pupils' needs. Where access is refused, the school will explain the reason and, where appropriate, offer an alternative date, group, format or route for sharing information.

8. Safeguarding, SEND and reasonable adjustments

All providers must follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Visiting Speakers/Visitors procedures and staff instructions while on site. Visitors must sign in, wear identification and remain supervised unless separate arrangements have been agreed in line with safeguarding procedures. Providers are expected to use accessible language, avoid assumptions about pupils' future routes, and work with school staff to make reasonable adjustments such as smaller groups, visual supports, preparation materials, sensory considerations, supported questioning and reflection time.

9. Premises and facilities

The school can provide suitable rooms, interactive screens, internet access where available, presentation facilities and space for small-group discussions. Online encounters may be used where meaningful and appropriate. Providers may leave or send accessible literature and digital resources, subject to school agreement. Providers should discuss any equipment, accessibility or health and safety requirements in advance.

10. Monitoring, evidence and review

Provider encounters will be recorded through the school's careers evidence systems, including Compass+/Compass records, provider access logs, attendance/registers, pupil reflections, provider feedback, application/destination trackers and the annual careers impact review. The Careers Lead will review this statement annually with SLT and the Trust Board, ensuring it remains aligned with statutory guidance, the Careers Policy, the Provider Access Legislation and the Annual Rolling Careers Plan.

11. Complaints

Any complaint relating to provider access should be raised through the school's Complaints Policy in the first instance. If a complaint remains unresolved, it may be escalated in line with the DfE statutory guidance on careers guidance and provider access.

12. Links to other policies and documents

- Careers Policy
- Annual Rolling Careers Plan
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Visiting Speakers/Visitors Policy or procedures
- SEND/SEN Information and EHCP review procedures
- Curriculum/PSHE Policy
- Educational Visits and Risk Assessment procedures

- Complaints Policy