



The Castle School

ACHIEVE | BELONG | PARTICIPATE

Provider Access Policy Statement (PAL)

Access for colleges, training providers, university technical colleges, universities and all other post 16 providers, including technical, vocational and academic routes and apprenticeships

Updated January 2023

This policy statement sets out the arrangements for managing the access of providers to students for the purpose of giving them information about the provider's education or training offer.

This complies with the school's legal obligations under Section 42B of the Education Act 1997.

Pupil Entitlement:

All students in years 8 to 11 are entitled:

- to find out about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships opportunities, as part of a careers programme which provides information on the full range of education and training options available at each transition point;
- to hear from a range of local providers about the opportunities they offer, including technical education and apprenticeships – through options events, assemblies and group discussions and taster events;
- to understand how to make applications for the full range of academic and technical courses.

In line with the updated Provider Access Legislation, from January 2023, all schools must provide a minimum of six encounters for all students with post 16 providers, as above. This is broken down into key phases: -

Year 8 or 9 Two encounters for students that are mandatory for all to attend

Year 10 or 11 Two encounters for students that are mandatory for all to attend

These provider encounters will be scheduled during the main school hours and the provider will be given a reasonable amount of time to, as a minimum:

- share information about both the provider and the approved technical education qualification and apprenticeships that the provider offers
- explain what career routes those options could lead to
- provide insights into what it might be like to learn or train with that provider (including the opportunity to meet staff and students from the provider)
- answer questions from all students, including our most vulnerable and those with additional learning needs

As part of the The Castle School Trust, The Castle School defines an encounter as at least 30 minutes during the school day.

The school days runs from 8.45 a.m. until 3.20 p.m.

As part of our careers programme, we will consider requests from approved training, apprenticeship, technical and vocational education providers, including University Technical Colleges where appropriate, to speak to our students. The Castle School will also approach these providers directly when planning and organising key career related events throughout the school year such as school assemblies, webinars within the curriculum, including live events, careers engagement events and parents' evenings. Meaningful encounters may be planned using the [Making it meaningful checklist](#).

The quality and impact of careers provision at The Castle School is monitored by our Careers Leader, Senior Leadership Team and the Heart of the South West Careers Hub through Compass+ auditing. Access and opportunity to engage with technical, vocational and training providers will form part of this process.

Premises and Facilities

The Castle School has a range of facilities available for providers to use in support of our careers programme. This includes a school hall, classrooms, I.T. rooms, outdoor space and online conference platforms.

The school will also make available access to IT support for provider presentations. This will all be discussed and agreed in advance of the visit with the Careers Leader.

Meaningful online engagement is also an option and we are open to providers that are able to provide live online engagement with our pupils.

Providers are welcome to leave a copy of their prospectus or other relevant course literature for the careers section of the school library. This is available to all students during lunch and breaktimes.

Destinations of our students

Last year our year 11 students moved to range of providers in the local area after school:

- Sixth Form 63%
- FE Colleges 31%
- Apprenticeships 2%
- Other 4%

These providers included:

- Richard Huish College
- Bridgwater & Taunton College
- Exeter College
- The SPACE

Management of provider access requests

All requests made by providers should be emailed at least 6 weeks in advance of the expected date of the session. In the first instance, requests by providers should be sent to: -

Name of Careers Leader: - Julia Corbett

Careers Leader email address: - jjcorbett@castle.somerset.sch.uk

Tel No: - 01823 274073

Granting Requests and Refusal of Requests

Once your request has been submitted, The Castle School's Careers Leader will respond to you within 10 working days. All requests will be given due consideration by the Careers Leader and Senior Leadership Team.

Once the request has been granted, we will ask you for a range of information to share with our students and parents before the session. This may be a prospectus, letter, presentation to share with students and parents in advance of your session.

This should include: -

- Details of the opportunities you offer including technical education, courses and entry requirements
- What is learning like with your institution?
- How do you prepare students for their best next step on successful completion of your course/training?
- Provide examples of linking courses with careers relating to the labour market and recent positive destinations of students who have completed their learning with you

Requests will be considered against: -

- Clashes with other planned activities or visits.
- Interruption to preparation for public or internal examinations.
- Availability of school staff, space and resources to host the session.
- All requests will also be considered in line with the school's Safeguarding policy. For questions on this policy statement or the wider careers programme at The Castle School please do not hesitate to contact us.
- The Castle School will keep a log of all provider requests for access and the outcomes and record on Compass+ to support the delivery and evaluation of the careers programme.

Opportunities for access

The Castle School offers the four provider encounters required by law and a number of additional events, integrated into the school careers programme. We will offer providers an opportunity to come into school to speak to students or their parents or carers.

Year Group	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Year 8			Pathways assembly
Year 9	Pathways assembly	Introduction to HE – taster sessions at University Centre Somerset	<i>No encounters – legislation requires encounters to take place by 28 February if in year 9</i>
Year 10	Post-16 pathways assembly Apprenticeships/ independent training providers' presentation	University visit.	Academic, technical and /vocational tasters at local colleges

Year 11	College application workshops School Careers Fair	Post-16 interviews	<i>No encounters – legislation requires encounters to take place by 28 February if in year 11</i> Confirmation of post-16 education and training destinations for all pupils
---------	--	--------------------	---

Complaints

If a provider has reason to make a complaint in relation to this statement please email Jim Thomson, Deputy Head, jthomson@castle.somerset.sch.uk at The Castle School, who will investigate further. Or subsequently you can contact [The Careers & Enterprise Company](https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk) on provideraccess@careersandenterprise.co.uk or [Heart of the South West Careers Hub](https://www.heartofthesouthwestcareers.co.uk)

DATE OF APPROVAL: January 2023

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: January 2025