WESTSIDE SCHOOL

PROVIDER ACCESS POLICY STATEMENT

2026-2027

Policy Written By:	SLT Lead for Careers and Post-16
Ratified By:	Board of Trustees
Review Date:	July 2027 (or sooner if statutory guidance changes)

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1. Purpose and aims

Westside School is committed to ensuring that every student understands the full range of routes available after school. This statement explains how education and training providers may access students to give information about approved technical education qualifications, apprenticeships and other relevant education or training opportunities.

The policy aims to:

- set out a clear and fair procedure for requests for access;
- secure meaningful, impartial encounters with a range of providers;
- ensure that technical, vocational, apprenticeship and academic routes are presented without bias;
- support informed transitions and ambitious, sustained destinations for Westside students; and
- make provider encounters inclusive and accessible, including for students with SEND, EHCPs, additional needs or disrupted educational histories.

2. Statutory framework

This policy has been updated with reference to the Department for Education's statutory guidance Careers guidance and access for education and training providers, updated 23 June 2026. The guidance is issued under section 45A of the Education Act 1997 and applies to maintained schools, academies, free schools (including alternative provision) and pupil referral units in England.

The relevant legal and statutory framework includes:

- sections 42A, 42B, 45 and 45A of the Education Act 1997;
- section 72 of the Education and Skills Act 2008;
- section 14 of the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, which strengthened the provider access duty; and
- Schedule 4(15) of the School Information (England) Regulations 2008.

Westside School must have regard to the statutory guidance and must publish a provider access statement. Careers guidance must be independent and impartial, must include information about the full range of education and training options—including

apprenticeships and technical education—and must promote the best interests of each student.

3. Student entitlement

All students in Years 8–11 at Westside School are entitled to:

- a planned and progressive careers programme appropriate to their age, needs and stage of career development;
- information about the full range of post-14 and post-16 options, including academic, technical, vocational, apprenticeship, supported internship and employment routes;
- meaningful encounters with providers, employers and employees;
- access to current careers and labour market information;
- personal guidance from an appropriately qualified, independent careers adviser at key decision points;
- support to understand entry requirements, application processes, financial considerations and progression opportunities;
- careers learning across the curriculum, including employability, enterprise and workplace skills;
- provision that challenges stereotypes, discrimination and low expectations and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion; and
- reasonable adjustments and personalised support so that encounters are accessible and meaningful.

4. Required provider encounters

The provider access duty requires at least two provider encounters in each of three key phases across Years 8–13. Because Westside currently educates students in Years 8–11, the first and second key-phase requirements apply directly to students on roll. If Westside admits students in Years 12 or 13, the third key-phase requirements will also apply.

Key phase	Timing	Minimum	Attendance	Westside position
First	Year 8, or 1 Sept–28 Feb in Year 9	2	Mandatory for all pupils	Applies
Second	Year 10, or 1 Sept–28 Feb in Year 11	2	Mandatory for all pupils	Applies
Third	Year 12, or 1 Sept–28 Feb in Year 13	2	School must offer; pupil attendance optional	Applies only if pupils are on roll

4.1 What counts as a meaningful encounter

A provider encounter is one meeting or session between students and one provider. To count towards the statutory minimum, it must take place for a reasonable period during the standard school day and include, as a minimum:

- information about the provider and the approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships it offers;
- information about the careers to which those qualifications or apprenticeships may lead;
- a clear explanation of what learning or training with the provider is like; and
- an opportunity for students to ask questions.

Online encounters may be used where they enable meaningful interaction and meet the statutory requirements. Encounters outside normal school hours may complement the programme but do not count towards the statutory minimum. Each student should experience encounters with a range of providers rather than repeated contact with only one organisation.

5. Management of provider access requests

5.1 Procedure

A provider wishing to request access should contact:

Named contact	Keighley McNeish – SLT Lead for Careers and Post-16
Email	careers@westsideschool.org.uk
Telephone	0207 505 0512
Information requested	Proposed date, year group, intended outcomes, content, delivery format, staffing, safeguarding information, accessibility needs and equipment required

Requests should normally be submitted at least six school weeks before the proposed activity. The Careers Coordinator will acknowledge and consider requests in consultation with the SLT lead, relevant pastoral or curriculum staff and the Designated Safeguarding Lead as necessary.

5.2 Decision-making

Requests will be considered fairly and in relation to:

- statutory encounter requirements and gaps in the planned careers programme;
- the relevance, quality and impartiality of the proposed session;
- student age, needs, prior learning and transition points;
- curriculum, timetable, staffing and premises capacity;
- safeguarding, health and safety, data protection and accessibility requirements;

- avoiding unnecessary duplication while maintaining a range of providers and routes; and
- reasonable notice and the provider's ability to meet the agreed learning outcomes.

Access may be declined where a request cannot safely or reasonably be accommodated, does not meet the purpose of the provider access duty, is overtly promotional without appropriate educational value, duplicates existing provision without adding value, or conflicts with the school timetable or safeguarding requirements. A refusal will not be based on a preference for a particular institution or route. Where possible, an alternative date, format or opportunity will be offered.

6. Safeguarding, equality and accessibility

All visitors must follow Westside School's safeguarding and child protection procedures, visitor arrangements, staff instructions and code of conduct. The school will check identity and suitability as appropriate. Providers must not have unsupervised access to students unless this has been expressly authorised and all required safer-working and safeguarding checks are complete.
Providers must share materials in advance when requested and must ensure that information is accurate, age-appropriate, inclusive, impartial and free from discriminatory language or stereotyping. Personal data must not be collected from students without prior school agreement and a lawful, transparent process.
Westside will make reasonable adjustments so students with SEND, EHCPs, literacy or communication needs, medical needs or other vulnerabilities can participate. Adjustments may include smaller groups, accessible formats, visual supports, pre-teaching, additional processing time, familiar staff support and adapted questioning. Providers should alert the school promptly to any accessibility constraints.

7. Premises and facilities

Subject to availability and the nature of the activity, Westside may provide classrooms, halls, dining space or meeting rooms for group or one-to-one activity. ICT and presentation equipment may be made available by prior agreement. The Careers

Coordinator will agree rooming, timings, supervision, access arrangements and technical requirements before the visit.
Providers may supply prospectuses and appropriate course literature for display or distribution. Materials should also be available in accessible or electronic formats where practicable. Westside does not operate a sixth-form common room; references to one in the previous policy have therefore been removed.

8. Previous providers and destinations

Westside has worked with a range of education, training, employer and community partners. Examples include ClementJames Centre, Chelsea FC, Queens Park Rangers and Spark! Charity. This list is illustrative and does not restrict access by other suitable providers.
Information about student destinations and the wider careers programme is published on the Westside School website and reviewed as part of the school's destination tracking and quality-assurance arrangements.

List of providers:

1. Ben Kinsella Trust
2. Fulham Reach Rowing
3. Gawain Hewitt Creativity (creativity through music)
4. HS2 in North Acton
5. mailto:joshua.marlow@scsrailways.co.uk
6. IGD Employability- Hark London
7. Jack Petchey Foundation
8. Lyric Theatre Hammersmith
9. Museum of Youth Culture - brian@museumofyouthculture.com
10. Old Vic Theatre – Take the Lead Programme
11. Ragged School Museum
12. Talk the Talk Oracy - Mark Farmer
13. Teamsport Acton - karting

14. The Design Museum
15. Traq– Quad racing - Surrey
16. Tri-borough Music Hub
17. University of Hertfordshire
18. V&A Museum of Childhood
19. VIY (Volunteer it Yourself) alan@teamviy.com
20. Wellcome Collection
21. WestZone

9.Complaints

Concerns about provider access should first be raised with the SLT Lead for Careers and Post-16. Formal complaints may be made through the school's published complaints procedure. Providers may also contact The Careers & Enterprise Company about provider access at provideraccess@careersandenterprise.co.uk. This does not replace the school's complaints process.

10.Monitoring, evaluation and review

The SLT Lead for Careers and Post-16 monitors implementation of this policy, supported by the Careers Coordinator. The Board of Trustees provides strategic oversight. The policy and careers programme will be reviewed at least annually and sooner when legislation or statutory guidance changes.
Monitoring will include:

- student participation, including attendance at required encounters;
- the range of providers, routes and sectors represented;
- student, staff and provider feedback;
- accessibility and participation for SEND and vulnerable groups;
- student applications, intended destinations and sustained destination data;
- careers programme records and Gatsby Benchmark evaluation, including Compass+ or successor tools;
- internal quality assurance and trustee review; and

- relevant external review or inspection findings.

Appendix A: Indicative access opportunities

The programme is reviewed annually and may change in response to student need and provider availability. Statutory encounters will be clearly identified and recorded.

Year	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
8	Careers introduction; employability and labour-market learning; provider encounter	KS4 options and technical/vocational routes; provider encounter where scheduled	College/training-provider tasters; employer encounter
9	Careers learning and pathway exploration	KS4 options; any outstanding first-phase statutory encounter completed by 28 February	Technical/vocational tasters and curriculum-linked careers activity
10	Post-16 academic, technical and apprenticeship routes; provider encounter; work-experience preparation	Employer/provider networking; college and training-provider encounters	Work experience and reflection; technical/vocational tasters

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Year	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
11	Open events, applications, apprenticeship and technical-route encounter; personal guidance	Interviews and applications; any outstanding second-phase statutory encounter completed by 28 February	Destination confirmation, transition support and contingency planning

Appendix B: Key references

Department for Education: Careers guidance and access for education and training providers (updated 23 June 2026): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-provision-for-young-people-in-schools/careers-guidance-and-access-for-education-and-training-providers
Education Act 1997, section 42B: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/44/section/42B
Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, section 14: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/21/section/14
The Careers & Enterprise Company: Provider Access Legislation: https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/
Linked Westside policies: Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance; Safeguarding and Child Protection; Curriculum; SEND; Equality; Data Protection; Health and Safety

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