Provider Access Policy Statement

Date approved	20/07/2026	**Approved by**	Director of Education
Date for review	01/07/2027	**Author**	SEMH & Inclusion Advisor

1. Purpose of this Statement

This policy statement sets out Castle School's arrangements for managing the access of education and training providers to pupils for the purpose of informing them about their technical education, apprenticeship, and training offer. This complies with Section 42B of the Education Act 1997 and aligns fully with the **updated Department for Education statutory guidance (May 2025)**.

The school must ensure that a *range* of providers can access pupils in Years 8–13 to discuss approved technical education and apprenticeships, in line with the **Provider Access Legislation (PAL)**.

2. Student Entitlement

All pupils in Years 8–13 are entitled to:

- Learn about technical education, apprenticeships, and training opportunities as part of a structured careers programme offering information on all available post-16 and post-18 pathways.
- Hear directly from a range of providers about their offer via **assemblies, talks, workshops, taster sessions, and events**.
- Understand how to apply for academic, technical, and apprenticeship routes.

Statutory Minimum Encounters (as per 2025 guidance):

Schools must provide **six encounters** with technical education and training providers:

- **Years 8–9:** Two mandatory encounters (one in each key phase).
- **Years 10–11:** Two mandatory encounters (one in each key phase).
- **Years 12–13:** Two encounters (pupils may choose to attend).

Encounters must take place:

- During the school day; and

- For a meaningful period, allowing providers sufficient time to explain pathways, progression routes, and training experiences.

A *meaningful encounter* involves a structured opportunity for pupils to meet a provider, hear information, ask questions, and gain insight into learning/training with that provider.

3. Requests for Access

Providers wishing to request access should contact the Deputy Headteacher for Curriculum and Standards:

Dave Burrows on D.Burrows@castleschoolderby.co.uk

Requests will be reviewed by senior leadership to ensure suitability for the needs of our pupils.

4. Opportunities for Access

Castle School hosts a range of careers-related events accessible to providers, including:

- Careers fairs and themed careers weeks
- Assemblies and presentations
- Workshops and small-group sessions
- Taster days and enrichment events.

Details of current opportunities are published on the school website:

Castle School Website

Providers may also request bespoke opportunities. The school will accommodate these where appropriate and beneficial for pupils.

5. Provider Expectations

Once approved, providers can expect:

- A named contact from the school to coordinate the visit.
- Access to appropriate facilities including halls, classrooms, meeting rooms, and AV equipment.
- Support to ensure compliance with safeguarding requirements.

Online or virtual encounters are welcomed if they provide live, interactive engagement.

Providers may leave prospectuses, course literature, or applications with the Careers Lead, who should make these accessible to pupils during break and lunch times.

6. Premises and Facilities

The school will make reasonable adjustments to ensure providers can deliver effective sessions. This includes:

- Presentation spaces (hall/classrooms)
- Breakout rooms for small group sessions
- IT/AV equipment
- Reasonable arrangements for parking, setup, and materials.

All arrangements must comply with the Respect **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.

7. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The school evaluates provider encounters using:

- Student and staff feedback
- Careers programme quality assurance processes
- Gatsby Benchmark tracking.

This ensures that all encounters are meaningful and contribute to pupils' preparation for future education, employment, and training.

8. Complaints

Complaints regarding provider access should be raised through the school's standard Complaints Procedure.

Signed

Headteacher: Ellen Wilkinson

Date: 20/07/2026