

Thomas Ashton School

Careers Adviser Access & Provider Access Policy

- Owner: Careers Leader – Emma Stewart
- Approved by: Local Governing Body Summer 2025
- Review cycle: Annual Feb 2027
- Related policies: Safeguarding & Child Protection; SEND; Visitors; Health & Safety; PRSHE; Relational and Behaviour

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out how external careers advisers, education and training providers, employers and community organisations can request and arrange access to pupils at Thomas Ashton School, a specialist SEMH setting for ages 7–14. It aligns with the eight Gatsby Benchmarks and the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance on careers education and provider access.

2. Legal and Framework Alignment

1. Gatsby Benchmarks: Our programme design and evaluation align to the eight Benchmarks for good career guidance.
2. DfE Statutory Guidance: We have regard to the latest statutory guidance on careers guidance and access for education and training providers.
3. Provider Access Legislation (PAL): We deliver at least two meaningful encounters with approved technical education and apprenticeship providers for pupils in Years 8–9 during the school day; attendance is mandatory. Our provider access policy statement is published on the school website.
4. SEND/Special Schools: The Benchmarks apply to all young people; implementation is adapted to the needs of our pupils and reflects SEMH considerations.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- Careers Leader (SLT): strategy, delivery, quality assurance, publication of programme.
- Pastoral Team: SEMH-informed adjustments; coordination with EHCP outcomes.
- Link Governor: oversight of compliance and impact.

4. Pupil Entitlement (Ages 5–14)

All pupils will access age-appropriate career-related learning and impartial information about education and training routes, with SEMH-aware delivery and LMI embedded from KS1 to KS3 (see Programme Overview and Curriculum Map).

5. Provider Access (PAL) – Years 8–9

We schedule two in-day, mandatory encounters with providers of approved technical education and apprenticeships across Years 8–9. Encounters are designed to be meaningful (clear aims, interactivity, Q&A and reflection). We act impartially and present all routes, including T Levels, apprenticeships and college pathways.

6. Requesting Access

Contact: Careers Leader - Jack Sweeney - Phone: 01613686208

Please include: purpose, target year group(s), activity outline, staffing ratio, required space/IT, and proposed dates. We aim to respond within 10 working days (subject to safeguarding checks).

7. Safeguarding, Wellbeing and Risk

- All visitors must follow our Safeguarding Policy, sign in at reception, and provide ID; DBS checks may be required or supervision provided.
- SEMH-informed delivery: small groups or 1:1, predictable routines, low-arousal environments, visuals/social stories, right to pause/adjust sessions.
- Risk assessments for on-site and off-site experiences; accessibility and sensory considerations documented.

8. Managing Visits and Quality

We brief visitors on SEMH communication and session design. Encounters map to Gatsby Benchmarks 5 (employers), 6 (workplace experiences) and 7 (FE/HE providers) in age-appropriate formats (e.g., on-site demonstrations, curated micro-experiences, quiet-hour site visits, virtual tours).

9. Publication, Evaluation and Review

The Careers Programme and this Policy Statement are published on our website. We evaluate using Compass/Compass+ (secondary) ,gather pupil/parent voice, and report impact to governors annually.