

FOOTSTEPS TRUST PROVIDER ACCESS LEGISLATION POLICY

1. Policy Statement

Footsteps Trust is committed to ensuring that all students receive high-quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) which prepares them for successful transitions into further education, training, apprenticeships and employment. As an Alternative Provision, the Academy recognises that many students may require highly personalised careers support and transition planning.

This policy sets out the Academy's arrangements for:

- Careers education and guidance.
- Provider Access Legislation (PAL).
- Access for education and training providers.
- Compliance with the Baker Clause.
- Post-16 progression support.
- Preparation for adulthood and employment.

The Academy is committed to ensuring all students receive impartial careers guidance and meaningful encounters with employers, training providers, colleges and apprenticeship providers.

2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy has regard to:

- Education Act 1997 (Section 42A and 42B).
- Provider Access Legislation (PAL).
- Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022.
- The Baker Clause.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.
- Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance.
- Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance.
- SEND Code of Practice.
- Independent School Standards.

The Academy recognises that effective careers guidance supports safeguarding, attendance, engagement, aspiration and positive outcomes for vulnerable learners.

3. Aims

The Academy aims to:

- Raise aspirations and ambitions.
- Support informed decision-making.
- Promote equality of opportunity.
- Increase awareness of post-16 pathways.
- Reduce the risk of students becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).
- Develop employability and life skills.
- Promote positive destinations.
- Support students with SEND and additional vulnerabilities.

4. Careers Programme Principles

The Footsteps careers programme is designed to:

- Meet the needs of Alternative Provision learners.
- Be flexible and responsive to individual circumstances.
- Promote progression into education, employment or training.
- Challenge stereotypes.
- Encourage ambition.
- Support preparation for adulthood.

The programme is underpinned by the eight Gatsby Benchmarks and is adapted to reflect the needs of students who may join Footsteps at different points throughout the academic year.

5. Student Entitlement

All students are entitled to:

Careers Education

- Access a structured careers programme.
- Learn about future pathways and opportunities.
- Develop employability skills.

Impartial Careers Information

- Receive independent and impartial careers guidance.
- Access information about all available post-16 options.

Provider Encounters

- Meet education and training providers.
- Meet employers.
- Learn about apprenticeships.

Date of Issue: September 2026

Date of Review: September 2027

- Learn about Further Education and Higher Education opportunities.

Personalised Guidance

- Access individual advice and support.
- Receive guidance tailored to personal circumstances.
- Receive additional support where vulnerabilities or SEND exist.

6. Provider Access Legislation (PAL)

In accordance with Provider Access Legislation, all students in Years 8 to 11 will have opportunities to learn about:

- Further Education.
- Sixth Form provision.
- Apprenticeships.
- Technical qualifications.
- Vocational pathways.
- Employment and training routes.

The Academy will not promote one pathway over another and will ensure students can consider a full range of opportunities.

7. Opportunities for Access

Providers may be invited to engage with students through:

- Careers fairs.
- Careers events.
- Assemblies.
- Workshops.
- Classroom activities.
- Small group sessions.
- Individual discussions.
- Mock interviews.
- Employer engagement activities.

The Academy recognises that many students join Alternative Provision mid-year and therefore careers provision will be adapted to ensure equitable access to opportunities.

8. Working with Referring Schools

Footsteps Trust works collaboratively with commissioners and referring schools to ensure:

- Careers programmes complement each other.
- Information is shared appropriately.
- Progression planning is coordinated.
- Students receive continuity of support.

Where appropriate, destination planning will involve:

- Parents and carers.
- Referring schools.
- Local Authorities.
- Virtual Schools.
- External agencies.

9. Careers Programme Content

Key Stage 3

Students will explore:

- Career interests.
- Skills and strengths.
- Different occupational sectors.
- Exploring future aspirations.
- Introduction to labour market information.

Key Stage 4

Students will develop understanding of:

- Qualifications and pathways.
- Apprenticeships.
- Technical routes.
- Further Education.
- Employment opportunities.
- CV writing.
- Applications.
- Interview skills.
- Workplace expectations.

10. Work-Related Learning

The Academy will seek to provide opportunities including:

- Workplace visits.
- Employer encounters.
- Careers workshops.
- Project-based learning.
- Volunteering opportunities.
- Work experience placements where appropriate.

Opportunities will be tailored to individual needs and circumstances.

11. Support for Vulnerable Students

Additional support will be provided for students who:

- Have SEND.
- Have EHCPs.
- Are Looked After or Previously Looked After.
- Experience SEMH needs.
- Are at risk of becoming NEET.
- Require enhanced transition support.

Careers planning will form part of wider educational and safeguarding planning.

12. Careers Leadership

The Academy will appoint a named Careers Leader responsible for:

- Strategic oversight of careers provision.
- Provider engagement.
- Gatsby Benchmark development.
- Quality assurance.
- Monitoring destinations.
- Evaluation and improvement.

The current policy identifies:

Chaz Syed (Operations Manager) and **Shavanya Williams (Senior Learning Mentor/CEIAG Officer)** as key leaders for careers provision.

13. Provider Access Requests

Education and training providers wishing to request access should contact:

Careers Leader / CEIAG Lead

Current contact details should be reviewed annually and published on the Academy website.

The Academy will consider all requests fairly while ensuring:

- Safeguarding arrangements are met.
- Students receive balanced opportunities.
- Learning time is used effectively.

14. Premises and Facilities

The Academy will make appropriate facilities available for provider encounters, including:

- Meeting rooms.
- Teaching rooms.
- Hall space.
- ICT facilities.
- Presentation equipment.

Arrangements will be agreed in advance with the Careers Leader.

15. Safeguarding

All provider access arrangements must comply with:

- Safeguarding procedures.
- Visitor procedures.
- KCSIE 2026 requirements.

Providers visiting the Academy must:

- Sign in.
- Follow safeguarding expectations.
- Be appropriately supervised where required.
- Comply with Academy policies.

Safeguarding remains the Academy's highest priority.

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Academy will evaluate careers provision through:

- Gatsby Benchmark reviews.
- Student feedback.
- Parent/carer feedback.
- Destination data.
- NEET monitoring.
- Provider feedback.
- Referring school feedback.

Outcomes will inform continuous improvement planning.

17. Impact Measures

The Academy will monitor:

- Student destinations.
- Participation in careers activities.
- Apprenticeship awareness.
- Further education applications.
- Employment and training outcomes.
- Student confidence and readiness for next steps.

Reducing NEET figures remains a key objective.

18. Complaints

Complaints relating to careers provision or provider access should be raised through the Academy's Complaints Procedure.

Where concerns relate specifically to Provider Access Legislation, complainants may seek advice from the relevant Department for Education processes following completion of the Academy's complaints procedure.