Castle School
Together We Learn

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Policy

Provider Access Statement

Autumn 2026

Key principle

Castle School is committed to inclusive, impartial and accessible careers education, information, advice and guidance for every pupil. Careers learning is personalised to pupils' strengths, communication needs, aspirations and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes, supporting meaningful preparation for adulthood and informed decisions about education, training, employment and community participation.

Be Confident | Be Kind | Be Creative

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1. Policy statement and statutory framework

Castle School provides careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) linked to the four Preparation for Adulthood outcomes: employment, independent living, friends, relationships and community, and good health. Pupils and families should be supported to consider a broad range of realistic but ambitious options, including paid or supported employment, volunteering, further education, training and meaningful community opportunities.

This policy is intended to be read alongside the Department for Education statutory guidance "Careers guidance and access for education and training providers" (updated June 2026), the Education Act 1997 (including sections 42A and 42B), the Equality Act 2010 and relevant SEND statutory guidance. The school will use the updated eight Gatsby Benchmarks (implemented from 2025/26) as an improvement framework.

2. Aims and principles

- Develop pupils' self-awareness, communication, independence, functional skills and confidence.
- Offer age-appropriate, accessible experiences of work, employers, education and training.
- Provide impartial, timely information to pupils and families to support informed post-school choices.
- Challenge stereotypes and avoid restricting aspirations on the basis of disability or other protected characteristics.
- Use pupils' interests, strengths, preferred communication and EHCP aspirations to shape provision.

3. Scope and inclusive delivery

The program applies across secondary and sixth-form provision, adapted to individual learning pathways and communication needs. Staff will use reasonable adjustments, accessible formats, supported decision-making, visual resources, assistive communication and appropriately supported visits or placements. Families and relevant professionals will contribute without replacing the pupil's voice.

4. Roles and responsibilities

- Governing body: oversee the school's careers duties, provider access arrangements, program quality and impact; identify a governor with strategic responsibility.
- Headteacher and senior leadership: resource and support an embedded whole-school program.
- Careers Leader: a named, appropriately trained member of staff will coordinate, evaluate and publish the program, maintain employer/provider links and monitor Gatsby progress. Clare Laidler Claidler@castle.cambs.sch.uk
- Deputy Head, Assistant Headteachers, pathway leads and Level 4 Transition Coordinator: retain the planning, work-related learning and transition functions described in the previous policy, with responsibilities confirmed locally.
- Teachers and support staff: embed careers-related learning, record experiences and support pupil voice and EHCP outcomes.
- Independent careers adviser, in house careers advisor and external partners: provide appropriately qualified, impartial guidance and specialist transition support.

5. Curriculum and program delivery

Careers education is delivered through PSHE, mathematics, functional skills, life and living skills, enterprise, community activities, work-related learning and individual transition planning. Existing examples include school enterprise, catering and hospitality, horticulture, retail, conservation, supported work experience, job coaching and independent travel training.

Key Stages 3 and 4

Pupils explore interests, strengths, relationships, wellbeing, safety, budgeting, communication and the world of work. From Year 9, options and aspirations are discussed through EHCP reviews and accessible pupil profiles; the school's "Moving On" information and events support families.

Years 10 and 11

Pupils build vocational and employability skills through suitable on-site and off-site experiences, travel training where appropriate, and consultation with families, social care and transition professionals. Workplace experiences should be meaningful, accessible and planned with risk assessments and appropriate support.

Sixth Form

The program develops functional English and mathematics, financial planning, college links, work-related learning, enterprise, volunteering, community participation and leisure opportunities, alongside person-centred post-school transition planning.

Program planning should provide progressive encounters with employers, workplace experiences and further education/training providers in line with the updated Gatsby Benchmarks, taking account of each pupil's needs and stage of learning.

6. Independent personal guidance

Pupils will have access to independent, impartial personal careers guidance from an appropriately trained adviser when significant education or career decisions are being made. The program should provide at least one personal guidance meeting by age 16 and a further meeting by age 18, with additional support when needed. Guidance must be accessible, person-centred, linked to EHCP aspirations where relevant, and cover a range of options without favouring a particular provider. The school must confirm the adviser, referral route and record-keeping arrangements before approval.

7. Provider access and encounters

The school must arrange at least six encounters with providers of technical education or apprenticeships for pupils in Years 8–13: two in Year 8 or by 28 February of Year 9; two in Year 10 or by 28 February of Year 11; and two in Year 12 or by 28 February of Year 13. The first four are mandatory for pupils to attend; the final two must be offered but pupil attendance is optional. Encounters must take place during the normal school day, allow pupils to ask questions and be accessible to pupils with SEND.

The school must publish a separate or appended provider access policy statement setting out requests, grounds for granting/refusing access, facilities, timing and how the six encounters are delivered (Appendix A)

8. Partnerships and transition

Castle School works with families, the Additional Needs Pathway Adviser (ANPA), Preparation for Adulthood Additional Needs Team (PAANT), Youth Impact Program (YIP), employers, charities, further education

colleges, social care and other post-school providers. Partnership activities may include careers forums, visits, placements, mock interviews, provider events and joint transition meetings. All information should be current, impartial and accessible.

9. Publication and communication

The school website should publish the careers program summary, the named Careers Leader and contact details, how pupils, parents/carers, staff and employers access the program, the approach to measuring impact, the next review date and the provider access statement. The school should share information in accessible formats and invite regular feedback.

10. Monitoring, impact and review

The Careers Leader will coordinate an annual review informed by pupil and family voice, employer and provider feedback, observation, learning walks, Evidence for Learning records, work experience evaluations, destination and transition information, and an audit against all eight updated Gatsby Benchmarks. Findings will inform school improvement priorities and be reported to governors.

Appendix A. Provider access statement

1. Purpose and statutory basis

This statement sets out the arrangements by which education and training providers may access pupils at Castle School to explain approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. It is intended to meet section 42B of the Education Act 1997, as amended, and the Department for Education statutory careers guidance (updated June 2026). It should be read alongside the school's CEIAG Policy and safeguarding arrangements.

2. Our school context

Castle School provides personalised learning through pre-formal, semi-formal and formal pathways. Its careers and Preparing for Adulthood program considers employment or volunteering, independent living, relationships and community, and good health. Provider encounters will be adapted to each learner's communication, sensory, physical and learning needs, with appropriate support and reasonable adjustments.

3. Statutory provider encounters

The school will arrange at least six opportunities for encounters with providers of technical education or apprenticeships across Years 8–13:

- • Two encounters during Year 8 or by 28 February in Year 9 (attendance mandatory for pupils).
- • Two encounters during Year 10 or by 28 February in Year 11 (attendance mandatory for pupils).
- • Two encounters during Year 12 or by 28 February in Year 13 (school provision mandatory; pupil attendance optional).

Within each key phase, encounters must involve two different providers. They will take place for a reasonable period during the normal school day, with accessible opportunities for pupils to ask questions. Events for parents outside the school day supplement, but do not replace, these encounters.

4. Opportunities for providers

The school's program may include accessible presentations, small-group sessions, practical demonstrations, provider visits, careers and life-skills learning, transition activities and appropriately supported encounters. Castle School also holds October Opportunities Events involving colleges, the Preparing for Adulthood Additional Needs Team, work-based learning providers and charities. These events support families but count towards statutory encounters only where the relevant pupil encounter requirements are met during the school day.

5. Requests for access

Education and training providers wishing to meet pupils should contact the school in advance, describing their organisation, approved qualifications or apprenticeship offer, proposed audience, intended activities, accessibility requirements and preferred dates.

Careers and employer engagement enquiries: Clare Laidler claidler@castle.cambs.sch.uk.

General school contact: office@castle.cambs.sch.uk; 01223 442400.

The school will discuss arrangements with the provider and confirm access in writing.

6. Grounds for granting or refusing access

Requests will be considered fairly with regard to statutory entitlements, relevance to pupils' pathways and transition stages, diversity of education and training options, the quality and impartiality of information, safeguarding, accessibility, available accommodation and the school timetable. Access may be rescheduled or declined where safeguarding requirements cannot be met, the offer is unsuitable or inaccessible despite reasonable adjustments, or a requested date cannot be accommodated. Decisions will not be made to favour a particular provider or route.

7. Premises, facilities and safeguarding

Subject to advance agreement, the school may provide a suitable teaching or meeting space and access to presentation equipment where available. The school and provider will agree any requirements for accessible materials, communication aids, mobility access, staff support and practical demonstrations. All visitors must follow the school's visitor, safeguarding, health and safety and data protection procedures. Providers must not collect or use pupil personal information without appropriate authorisation.

8. Information to be provided

Each statutory encounter will allow pupils to understand who the provider is; which approved technical qualifications or apprenticeships it offers; the careers or progression routes these can lead to; and what learning or training with the provider is like. Pupils will have an opportunity to ask questions through their preferred means of communication, including supported or alternative communication where appropriate.

9. Monitoring, publication and review

The careers team will keep a record of providers, dates, year groups, accessibility adjustments and pupil participation to evaluate whether statutory encounters have been offered. This statement will be published on the school website and reviewed at least annually by the Careers Leader, with governing body agreement.

10. Related information

Castle School careers webpage: https://www.castleschool.info/curriculum/careers-information

Department for Education statutory guidance:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-provision-for-young-people-in-schools/careers-guidance-and-access-for-education-and-training-providers