



Outcomes
First Group

Provider Access Policy

Options Higford

Options Higford School: Provider Access Policy Statement (Baker Clause)

Ownership: Options Higford School

Date updated: May 2026

Rationale

High-quality careers education and guidance is essential in preparing pupils for adulthood, particularly within a specialist SEND setting. It supports pupils to understand the world of work, develop independence, and explore realistic and aspirational pathways.

At Options Higford School, careers education is embedded within our *Preparation for Adulthood* approach, ensuring pupils gain meaningful experiences that support future destinations in education, employment, or supported living.

As technical pathways, apprenticeships, and vocational routes continue to expand, it is essential that pupils and their families have access to clear, impartial information about all available options.

This policy aligns with statutory guidance, including the Baker Clause and the Provider Access Legislation 2023.

Commitment

Options Higford School is committed to:

- Providing pupils with access to a wide range of education and training providers
- Ensuring encounters with providers are meaningful, accessible, and tailored to individual needs
- Promoting impartial careers guidance, with no bias towards academic or technical routes
- Supporting pupils to make informed decisions about their future

We recognise our responsibility to prepare pupils for adulthood in a way that is realistic, ambitious, and personalised.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Develop pupils' awareness of all available pathways, including technical education and apprenticeships
- Provide opportunities to engage directly with providers
- Support informed decision-making for post-16 and post-18 transitions
- Reduce the risk of pupils becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)

Pupil Entitlement

All pupils are entitled to:

- Learn about technical education qualifications and apprenticeship pathways
- Hear from a range of education and training providers
- Understand different routes into employment and independent living
- Participate in multiple encounters with providers throughout their school journey

In line with statutory expectations, the school will aim to provide a minimum of six meaningful encounters with providers where appropriate to pupil need and pathway.

Opportunities for Access

Providers may be invited to engage with pupils through:

- Careers assemblies and themed weeks (e.g. National Careers Week)
- Careers and enterprise events
- Work-related learning sessions
- Small group workshops or targeted interventions
- On-site and off-site experiences, including visits to colleges or workplaces

All encounters are carefully planned to ensure they are accessible, appropriate, and meaningful for pupils with SEND.

Management of Provider Requests

Providers wishing to request access should contact the Careers Leader.

Requests should include:

- Intended year group(s)
- Format of the session (e.g. assembly, workshop, small group)
- Any equipment or resources required

The Careers Leader will coordinate all requests, ensuring alignment with the school's careers programme and pupil needs.

Facilities

The school will provide:

- Suitable classroom or group spaces
- IT equipment including screens and projectors
- Staff support to facilitate engagement and accessibility

Sessions will be adapted as required to meet the needs of pupils, including communication support, smaller group delivery, or sensory considerations.

Options Higford School | Careers Policy Suite | Last Review: May 2026 | Next Review: May 2027 |
Reviewed by: Jenna Johnson, Deputy Headteacher

Safeguarding

All providers and visitors must comply with the school's safeguarding procedures, including those in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Visitors will be:

- Appropriately vetted where required
- Supervised by a member of staff at all times
- Briefed on pupil needs and expectations

Equality and Inclusion

Options Higford School is committed to ensuring all pupils have equal access to provider encounters, regardless of need or pathway.

All activities will be adapted to ensure:

- Accessibility for pupils with autism and additional needs
- Appropriate communication methods
- Meaningful engagement for all learners

Parental Involvement

Parents and carers are encouraged to engage with careers education.

Where appropriate:

- Parents may be invited to attend events
- Information about providers and pathways will be shared
- Support will be offered to help families understand next steps

Requests for Access

Requests for access should be directed to Stacey Bratt, careers lead. Stacey may be contacted by telephone or email – Stacey.bratt@optionsautism.co.uk Tel: 01952630600

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints about this policy should be raised to Stacey Bratt, email:

Stacey.bratt@optionsautism.co.uk

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually by Stacey Bratt, careers lead
- Monitored through the school's Quality Assurance processes
- Evaluated through feedback from pupils, staff, and providers

Links with Other Policies

This policy is supported by and should be read alongside:

- Careers Policy
- Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy

Publication of Information

This policy is published on the school website alongside the Careers Policy and wider careers programme, ensuring transparency and compliance with statutory guidance.

Providers who have been invited into Options Higford school to date include:

Kay Vernon – Independent careers adviser

Sharon Ruff – Operational hub lead

Jo Mundy – NHS research

Lisa Green – Head of cleaning services Wolverhampton Council

Adam Mundy – Tattoo artist

Kaylee Mundy – Cinema operative

Kurran Kullar – Wolves foundation

Animals UK – professional animal trainers

Circus skills group

Local jewellery maker

West Mercia Police