

Last review: February 2026
Review date: February 2027
SLT Governors Link: NC/ID/EV
Approval Committee: Governing Body



PROVIDER ACCESS STATEMENT

Gillingham School

Hardings Lane, Gillingham

Dorset, SP8 4QP

Introduction

This policy statement sets out the school's arrangements for managing the access of providers to pupils at the school for the purposes of giving them information about the provider's education or training offer. This complies with the school's legal obligations under Section 42B of the Education Act 1997 and the subsequent Provider Access Legislation 2023.

Student entitlement

All students in years 8-13 are entitled:

- To find out about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships opportunities, as part of a careers programme which provides information on the full range of education and training options available at each transition point.
- To hear from a range of local providers about the opportunities they offer, including technical education and apprenticeships – through assemblies and group discussions and taster events.
- To understand how to make applications for the full range of academic and technical courses.

For pupils of compulsory school age these encounters are mandatory and there will be a minimum of two encounters for pupils during the 'first key phase' (year 8 to 9) and two encounters for pupils during the 'second key phase' (year 10 to 11). For pupils in the 'third key phase' (year 12 to 13), particularly those that have not yet decided on their next steps, there are two more provider encounters available during this period, which are optional for pupils to attend.

These provider encounters will be scheduled during the main school hours, and the provider will be given a reasonable amount of time to, as a minimum:

- share information about both the provider and the approved technical education qualification and apprenticeships that the provider offers
- explain what career routes those options could lead to
- provide insights into what it might be like to learn or train with that provider (including the opportunity to meet staff and pupils from the provider)
- answer questions from pupils.

Meaningful provider encounters

One encounter is defined as one meeting/session between pupils and one provider. We are committed to providing meaningful encounters to all pupils using the [Making it meaningful checklist](#). Meaningful online engagement is also an option, and we are open to providers that can provide live online engagement with our pupils.

Previous providers

The school has previously been visited by several providers.

These include Yeovil College, Kingston Maurward College, Wiltshire College, Exeter Maths School, British Army, Navy and RAF, Merck, J P Morgan, Dextra, NHS, ASK About Apprenticeships, DSTPN, University of Southampton, University of Exeter, Dorset Police.

Student Destinations

In 2024 our Year 11 students moved to a range of providers in the local area after school:

136 students joined our school Sixth Form.

111 students joined a Further Education College.

14 students gained Apprenticeships.

In 2024 our Year 13 students moved to a range of providers in the local area and beyond after school:

37% students went to university.

7% took up an apprenticeship.

The percentage of students who opted for a gap year or who went straight into employment is yet to be collated.

Management of provider access requests

Procedure

A provider wishing to request access should contact Emma Vallender, the Careers Leader.

01747 822222

evallender@gillingham-dorset.co.uk

Opportunities for access

The school offers the six provider encounters required by law (marked in bold text below) and several additional events, integrated into the school careers programme. We will offer providers an opportunity to come into school to speak to pupils or their parents or carers.

Please speak to our Careers Leader to identify the most suitable opportunity for you.

Year	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
8	<p>STEM Week A STEM careers focused set of activities. Organised and delivered by Merck a company specialising in science and technology who will also do a session on the training and apprenticeship routes that they offer.</p>	<p>Introduction to Careers Resources</p> <p>Careers Week - a careers lesson in each subject</p> <p>Options Assembly</p> <p>Options Evening</p>	
9	<p>STEM Week a STEM careers focused set of activities. Organised and delivered by Merck a company specialising in science and technology who will also do a session on the training and apprenticeship routes that they offer.</p> <p>Next Steps Evening - A careers fair, including studio schools, universities, gap year organisations, volunteer organisations and employers offering apprenticeships, school leaver programmes and graduate opportunities.</p>	<p>KS4 Options</p> <p>Future Skills Survey</p> <p>Careers Fair – North Dorset Careers Hub</p>	<p><i>No encounters – legislation requires encounters to take place by 28 February if in year 9</i></p> <p>Careers Week – a careers lesson in each subject, to include labour market and CV writing.</p> <p>Update Unifrog with activities to prepare for writing CVs next term.</p>
10	<p>Introduction to Work Experience Database</p> <p>Writing CVs and searching to work experience placements in weekly registration periods.</p> <p>Next Steps Evening - A careers fair, including universities, gap year organisations, volunteer organisations and employers offering apprenticeships, school leaver programmes and graduate opportunities.</p>	<p>Careers Week - a careers lesson in each subject. Lessons will incorporate researching Labour Market information and breaking down stereotypes</p> <p>Introduction to Apprenticeships – Dextra</p>	<p>Yeovil College Experience Day</p> <p>Work Experience</p> <p>Meetings with Careers Advisor</p>

11	<p>Careers Lessons PSRE – application processes including mock interviews</p> <p>Careerpilot Pathway Planner</p> <p>College Showcase – including a range of local colleges</p> <p>Next Steps Evening - A careers fair, including universities, gap year organisations, volunteer organisations and employers offering apprenticeships, school leaver programmes and graduate opportunities.</p> <p>Sixth Form Information Evening</p> <p>Meetings with Careers Advisor</p>	<p>Post 16 Interviews</p> <p>Meetings with Careers Advisor</p> <p>Future Skills Survey</p> <p>Updating Unifrog with Post-16 Intentions</p>	<p><i>No encounters – legislation requires encounters to take place by 28 February if in year 11</i></p> <p>Meetings with Careers Advisor</p>
12	<p>Meetings with Careers Advisor</p> <p>Next Steps Evening - A careers fair, including universities, gap year organisations, volunteer organisations and employers offering apprenticeships at the higher level, school leaver programmes and graduate opportunities.</p> <p>STEM Enrichment option</p>	<p>Future Routes Sessions – bi-weekly. Including Careerpilot Pathway Planner, applying to university, writing personal statements, introduction to Higher and Degree Apprenticeships.</p> <p>JP Morgan Trip</p> <p>Work Experience</p> <p>UCAS Apprenticeship Fair</p> <p>Meetings with Careers Advisor</p> <p>Apprenticeship talks from Dextra</p> <p>STEM Enrichment option</p>	<p>University Trip</p> <p>Future Routes Evening to include university and degree apprenticeships with representatives from local companies.</p> <p>Future Routes interviews</p> <p>Alumni Speed Dating – with ex-students representing different career routes</p> <p>STEM Enrichment option</p> <p>Meetings with Careers Advisor</p>
13	<p>Future Routes sessions – Five one-hour sessions to support students: 1) Application Process - UCAS, Apprenticeships, Employment 2) Writing a good Personal Statement/Letter of Application 3) Interview Skills 4) UCAS OR Apprenticeships/Employment -- narrowing choices, 5)- starting work.</p> <p>Next Steps Evening - A careers fair, including universities, gap</p>	<p>Meetings with Careers Advisor</p> <p>Future Skills survey</p> <p>Intended destinations survey</p>	<p><i>No encounters – legislation requires encounters to take place by 28 February if in year 13</i></p> <p>Meetings with Careers Advisor</p>

	<p>year organisations, volunteer organisations and employers offering apprenticeships at the higher level, school leaver programmes and graduate opportunities.</p> <p>Meetings with Careers Advisor</p>	
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The school policy on safeguarding [Child Protection Procedures \(gillingham-dorset.co.uk\)](http://Child Protection Procedures (gillingham-dorset.co.uk)) page 8 sets out the school's approach to allowing providers into school as visitors to talk to our students.

Premises and facilities

The school will make the main hall, classrooms or private meeting rooms available for discussions between the provider and students, as appropriate to the activity. The school will also make available AV and other specialist equipment to support provider presentations. This will all be discussed and agreed in advance of the visit with the career's leader.

Meaningful online engagement is also an option, and we are open to providers that can provide live online engagement with our pupils.

Providers are welcome to leave a copy of their prospectus or other relevant course literature either in our Library or Sixth Form Study Centres. All areas are available to students throughout the school day.

Complaints

If providers which to make a complaint about a lack of access:

Contact Mr Paul Nicholson Headteacher pnicholson@gillingham-dorset.co.uk / 01747 822222.

Alternatively, with The Careers & Enterprise Company via provideraccess@careersandenterprise.co.uk