

First Steps Together

Provider Access Statement

1. Introduction

This Provider Access Statement sets out how First Steps Together ensures that pupils are given access to a wide range of education, training and career pathways, in line with statutory requirements and best practice. First Steps Together is an independent group of six specialist SEN schools, committed to supporting pupils to prepare for adulthood through high-quality, personalised careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG).

This statement is published in accordance with the requirements of the **Baker Clause** (Section 42B of the Education Act 1997, as amended) and reflects the school group's commitment to ensuring pupils and their families are informed of relevant post-16 and post-19 opportunities.

2. Aims

First Steps Together aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Are supported to make informed choices about their next steps in education, employment or training.
- Have access to impartial and meaningful information about a range of post-16 and post-19 pathways.
- Develop aspirations and an understanding of progression routes that are appropriate to their individual needs, abilities and interests.
- Are prepared for adulthood, including further education, supported employment, independent living and community participation.

3. Student Entitlement

All pupils at First Steps Together are entitled to:

- Access to up-to-date, impartial careers information, advice and guidance.
- Opportunities to learn about technical education, further education, training, supported internships and other progression routes.
- Encounters with a range of providers, where appropriate, to help them understand realistic next steps.
- Support that is personalised, accessible and responsive to their SEND, communication needs and EHCP outcomes.

Provision is differentiated to ensure that pupils can engage meaningfully and that information is presented in an accessible and appropriate format.

4. Management of Provider Access Requests

4.1 Who Can Request Access

Access to pupils may be requested by:

- Further education colleges
- Specialist post-16 and post-19 providers
- Training providers
- Supported employment and internship providers
- Apprenticeship and technical education providers (where appropriate)

4.2 How to Request Access

Requests for access should be made in writing and submitted to:

Careers Lead / Senior Leader (CEIAG)

First Steps Together

Requests should include:

- The name of the organisation
- The nature of the provision offered
- The target age group
- The proposed format of engagement
- Any specific requirements to support accessibility

4.3 Decision-Making

Requests will be considered by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that:

- The opportunity is appropriate to the age, needs and abilities of pupils.
- The provision aligns with pupils' EHCP outcomes and preparation for adulthood.
- Safeguarding, accessibility and suitability requirements are met.

First Steps Together reserves the right to decline requests that are not deemed appropriate for the pupil cohort.

5. Opportunities for Access

Provider access may be facilitated through a range of activities, including:

- Careers events or themed learning activities
- Workshops or information sessions
- Assemblies or small group discussions
- One-to-one or supported group sessions
- Visits to external providers, where appropriate
- Engagement with parents/carers as part of transition planning

All activities are adapted to meet pupils' SEND needs and communication styles.

6. Safeguarding and Inclusion

All provider engagement at First Steps Together is subject to safeguarding procedures and supervision by school staff.

- Providers must comply with safeguarding requirements and school policies.
- Sessions are delivered in a manner that is inclusive, accessible and sensitive to pupils' needs.
- Staff remain present to support pupils and ensure engagement is appropriate.

7. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of provider access is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team as part of the school's careers provision and preparation for adulthood offer.

- Feedback from pupils, parents/carers and staff is used to inform future planning.
- Provision is reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and best practice.
- This statement is reviewed annually to ensure it remains current and effective.

8. Policy Review

This Provider Access Statement applies across all six First Steps Together schools and is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team.