RIDGEWAY
SECONDARY SCHOOL

Provider Access Statement

Ridgeway Secondary School 2026–27

Updated 12 November 2026 | Next review November 2027

Purpose and scope

This statement explains how education and training providers can access pupils at Ridgeway Secondary School. It supports informed choices about academic, technical and vocational pathways, including apprenticeships, and sets out arrangements under section 42B of the Education Act 1997.

Our careers programme develops throughout Years 7–11 through careers education, provider and employer engagement, personalised guidance and experiences of work. We promote the full range of routes and support pupils at GCSE options and post-16 transition points.

Pupil entitlement

All pupils in Years 7–11 are entitled to learn about technical qualifications and apprenticeships, hear directly from providers and understand how to apply. The minimum is two encounters with different providers in Years 7–9 and two more in Years 10–11. Where delivered in Year 9 or Year 11, these must take place by 28 February. Attendance is mandatory for all pupils.

Ridgeway's Years 7–11 provision covers these two phases. The further two encounters required in Years 12–13 apply at pupils' subsequent institutions.

Meaningful provider encounters

Each encounter takes place during the normal school day, lasts long enough for meaningful engagement and explains the provider's offer, relevant technical qualifications or apprenticeships, progression routes and the experience of learning or training there. Pupils must have time to ask questions. Live online sessions may be used where they meet these expectations.

Preparation and reflection help pupils relate each encounter to their interests and next steps. Staff will adapt participation for pupils with SEND and address barriers for disadvantaged pupils. Employer talks, careers lessons and guidance interviews support the wider programme; they count as provider encounters only where the statutory conditions are met.

Careers leadership

Careers Leader: Mrs Carly Sandell, Assistant Headteacher for Personal Development and Wellbeing.
Careers Adviser: Mrs Natasha Dunne.

Provider access requests should be addressed to Mrs Sandell via office@rss.shiresmat.org.uk or 01527 892867. The school office will direct requests to the Careers Team.

Opportunities for access in 2026–27

Providers can contribute through assemblies, workshops, group discussions, taster activities and live online sessions. The timetable below proposes provider access opportunities for Years 7–11, including the required encounters from Year 8. The Careers Leader will agree the provider, date, duration and format of each session. Individual bookings remain to be confirmed.

Year	Provider access opportunity	Timing and phase requirement
Year 7	Introductory provider talks, assemblies or interactive workshops exploring careers, routes into further education and training, and the links between subjects and future opportunities.	Throughout 2026–27 by arrangement. Early careers awareness; the statutory provider encounter entitlement begins in Year 8.
Year 8	Two school-day encounters introducing technical education and apprenticeships, with two different providers.	Spring and summer 2027 delivery windows; records carried forward into Year 9.
Year 9	Review Year 8 records and arrange any outstanding encounters with two different providers across the phase. Link sessions to GCSE option choices.	Autumn 2026 and spring 2027, no later than 28 February 2027.
Year 10	Two school-day encounters exploring post-16 technical qualifications and apprenticeships, with two different providers.	Spring and summer 2027 delivery windows; records carried forward into Year 11.
Year 11	Review Year 10 records and arrange any outstanding encounters with two different providers across the phase. Include course and application information.	Autumn 2026 and spring 2027, no later than 28 February 2027.

For Years 7–11, the requirement is two encounters per phase, rather than two in every year. Attendance and provider records will be checked so that every pupil completes the relevant phase entitlement, with catch-up arrangements where needed.

Wider careers opportunities

The Ridgeway Careers Fair on Thursday 1 October 2026 offered Year 10 pupils and parents a 5–6pm session and Year 11 pupils and parents a 6–7pm session. Colleges, sixth forms, training providers and employers were represented. This evening event complements the required school-day encounters and is not counted towards them.

The wider programme includes the Years 7–11 spiral careers curriculum, drop-down learning, post-16 pathways information, Unifrog resources, Year 11 one-to-one guidance and Year 10 work experience preparation. Providers can discuss additional opportunities with the Careers Team.

Requesting access

Requests should describe the organisation, qualifications or training offered, proposed year group, session content, preferred dates and any access or equipment needs. The Careers Leader will agree how the session fits the programme, including preparation, pupil questions and follow-up.

Decisions on access requests

The school welcomes providers offering relevant, impartial information about education and training. Access will be considered in relation to pupils' needs, the balance of routes represented, statutory encounter requirements, available time and facilities, and safeguarding arrangements.

A request may be declined or an alternative date or format offered where the proposed activity does not meet these requirements, duplicates provision without additional benefit, conflicts with essential school commitments, or cannot meet safeguarding expectations. Any decision will be explained to the provider. Access will not be restricted because pupils are interested in a different pathway.

Provider links

Education and training organisations listed for the October 2026 Careers Fair included Heart of Worcestershire College, Worcester Sixth Form College, Solihull Sixth Form College, Arrow Vale Sixth Form, Alcester Grammar School, Worcestershire Apprenticeships and Herefordshire and Worcestershire Group Training Association. North Bromsgrove was listed as awaiting confirmation.

Employers and organisations listed included FRP Technologies, Thorlux, Acrofab, Mills Pyatt, Kings Court Hotel, DWP, Spring Masters, Astwood Construction, the police and GPS Healthcare. Fair participation and employer engagement are distinct from confirmation of a qualifying school-day provider encounter.

Destinations of our pupils

The final 2026 destination records show progression to sixth forms, further education colleges, specialist provision and apprenticeships. Recorded destinations included Heart of Worcestershire College, Worcester Sixth Form College, Saint Augustine's High School and Sixth Form, Trinity High School and Sixth Form College, Cadbury College, Arrow Vale Sixth Form, North Bromsgrove, Alcester Grammar School, Sandwell College, Pershore College and Hartpury College.

Routes included A levels, vocational and technical courses, a T Level in Health, foundation and skills programmes, and an agriculture apprenticeship. Destination information helps the Careers Team review provision and support successful transitions.

Premises facilities and safeguarding

The school can make the main hall, classrooms or private meeting rooms available, according to the activity. Audio-visual and other specialist equipment will be agreed in advance. Providers must follow the school's safeguarding and visitor procedures, with appropriate staff supervision. Accessibility, communication needs and reasonable adjustments will be discussed before the visit.

Live online engagement is also available by agreement. Providers may leave prospectuses or relevant course literature for pupils through the Careers Team and the Careers Resource Centre, available at break and lunchtime.

Complaints and review

Concerns about provider access should be raised through the school's published complaints procedure. Providers may also contact The Careers & Enterprise Company at provideraccess@careersandenterprise.co.uk.

The Careers Leader will review this statement annually with the governing body, using encounter records, pupil and provider feedback and destination information. The next scheduled review is November 2027, with earlier changes where needed.

Reference: Department for Education, Careers guidance and access for education and training providers, updated 23 June 2026. School information updated from the 2026–27 careers strategy, programme resources, October careers fair records and final 2026 destinations.