

East Midlands Academy Trust

Alternative Provision Commissioning Arrangements

'Every child deserves to be the best they can be'

Scope: East Midlands Academy Trust & Academies within the Trust	
Version: V3	Filename: Alternative Provision Commissioning Arrangements
Approval: March 2025	Next Review: March 2026 This Guidance will be reviewed annually and approved by the Trust CEO.
Owner: Head of Education	
Policy type:	
Non- statutory Process	

Revision Date	Revisor	Description of Revision
September 2025 v3	Thompson Team	Updated to reflect changes and additions to national guidance. Now including DfE voluntary standards for AP Providers
March 2025 v2	Thompson Team / Jenny Nimmo	Referencing updated legislation and guidance. Added emphasis to preparation for adulthood.
March 2024 v1	Thompson Team	New Policy

Contents

1. AIMS AND PURPOSE.....	2
2. LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE	2
3. REASONS FOR REFERRAL.....	3
4. COMMISSIONING A PROVIDER.....	3
4.1. Suitability of provision	3
4.2. Referral process.....	4
4.3. Quality Assurance.....	4
5. RESPONSIBILITIES	5
 Appendix A – Alternative Provision Home/School Agreement.....	 7
Appendix B – Alternative Provider/School Agreement	9
Appendix C – Alternative Provision Home/School Agreement Review	10
Appendix D – Individual Learning Plan.....	11
Appendix E – Alternative Provision Quality Assurance Checklist.....	14

1. AIMS AND PURPOSE

EMAT aims to ensure that our curriculum is inclusive and accessible and enables all pupils to succeed. We also recognise the need to offer provision that allows some pupils to achieve their potential outside of what is accessible at our academies. Alternative Provision (AP) is educational provision for pupils who are unable to access mainstream education for a number of different reasons, or who are unsuited to the mainstream provision on offer.

To facilitate this as a learning pathway, it is sometimes appropriate to work with different local providers to help pupils who are not reaching their potential in a school-based environment. This document demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that such provision results in secure outcomes and future pathways for our young people.

2. LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

This document should not be viewed in isolation. The school adheres to all relevant legislation, statutory guidance and local guidance including but not limited to:

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- The Education Act 2002
- DfE (2025) Alternative Provision
- DfE (2024) Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units including pupil movement
- DfE (2024) Working together to improve school attendance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

This policy links with other school policies and procedures, including:

- Behaviour policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Online Safety policy
- SEND policy
- Equality policy
- Sex and Relationship Education policy
- First Aid policy
- Curriculum policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Antibullying policy
- IT acceptable use policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing policy

3. REASONS FOR REFERRAL

Pupils will be referred to an AP on the basis that the provision is better suited to meet their individual needs and therefore more appropriate for them than the full-time provision at school is able to offer because, for example:

- A pupil's strengths are not being developed through the school's curriculum (aligned with the National Curriculum). AP recognises pupils have unique different strengths and individual needs and AP may be more suitable to enable some pupils to be successful.
- A pupil has had one or more fixed-term suspensions and are at risk of permanent exclusion from school. AP may be a desirable alternative to permanent exclusion by encouraging their continued engagement with education.
- A pupil has not been attending school regularly and AP offers a different setting with a different choice of subjects for pupils which may encourage attendance.
- AP may better be able to better meet the needs of pupils who are unable to access the academic and social demands of onsite education expectations, with a commitment to reintegration back into mainstream based on agreed individualised timeframes between the commissioner and the host school.
- Due to a pupil's specific needs, AP may better meet a pupil's EHCP obligations.
- AP may be better placed to meet the demands of a pupil's medical needs beyond the school.

4. COMMISSIONING A PROVIDER

Before commissioning a Provision and allowing our pupils to attend AP we will:

- Follow the EMAT procurement process.
- Complete an agreed contract and sign a Service Level Agreement.
- Complete a check of Risk Assessments and required documentation including compliance documentation (eg – public and employer liability insurances).
- Be satisfied that a safeguarding checklist and DBS checks have been completed.
- Work in collaboration with AP to continually improve the service for our pupils.

4.1. Suitability of provision

There will always be a clear rationale (as demonstrated through pupils' Individual Learning Plans; see Appendix D) in place to ensure that the provision will enable the pupil to make good progress. To ensure this:

- We work in continuous collaboration with providers to assess the quality and suitability of the alternative education provided for our pupils. This will take place on a half termly basis.
- Service Level Agreements will be agreed with the school and provider.
- It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that the AP is registered and approved where possible and that they have relevant policies in place to cover Child Protection and Health & Safety. Apart from exceptional circumstances, we will ensure we work with AP who are recommended by the local authority.

- Qualifications pupils receive will be nationally recognised and enable progression to further education. If this is not the case, progress will be monitored, and time limited to prevent a pupil from falling behind academically and to ensure that continuation of education or training can be sustained until the age of 18.
- Providers must also be able to offer pupils their statutory entitlement to education relating to faith and physical education and should also expect to offer personal, social, health, careers and economic education (PSHCE). This will allow pupils to develop key skills and attributes such as resilience, sexual health, risk-management and self-esteem alongside careers offer.
- We will review the academic and personal impact of AP for pupils attending on a regular basis.

4.2. Referral process

- We will use the guidance in the DfE (2025) Alternative Provision document as a basis for making arrangements for Alternative Provision:
- Parents/carers will be fully involved in the process and any decisions taken.
- Pupils who are referred to AP will remain on the school roll.
- The school remains ultimately responsible for the pupil, and the offer of AP shows a commitment by the school to provide an inclusive approach to the pupil's education.
- We will set up an initial meeting involving all relevant parties, including parents/carers, external agencies and others as appropriate.
- Responsibilities for supporting the child and timescales for reviewing the contract will be agreed during the initial meeting.
- Any agreement around AP for a pupil will be regularly reviewed.
- Failure to attend may put the placement at risk and will carry the same consequences as non-attendance at school. The pupil and parent/carer must be made aware of this from the outset.

4.3. Quality Assurance

Ensuring high quality AP is vital to ensure that providers meet our expectations and requirements. AP will differ from pupil-to-pupil, dependent on their needs. However, the providers commissioned by the school must:

- Represent excellent value for money resulting in improved indicators (improved attendance and engagement, reduction in suspension, a high-quality curriculum, successful outcomes, effective transition, and appropriate destinations).
- Be suited to individual pupils' capabilities and identify their specific personal, social, and academic needs to help them overcome any barriers to attainment and learning.
- Achieve good academic attainment in line with that provided at the school and deliver appropriate accreditation and qualifications.
- Be in line with school and trust expectations including those related to safeguarding, behaviour, health and safety and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations).

The school will carry out regular quality assurance checks of each provider using the quality assurance checklist (see Appendix E).

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Provider will ensure that they:

- Provide an agreed structured programme of learning, with clear aims, objectives and methods, leading to a nationally recognised qualification.
- Provide the school with their curriculum offer including details of all costings where possible.
- Provide all tools, equipment and materials required.
- Provide a set of personal safety equipment required for all practical work where necessary and provide training in its use.
- Provide a thorough induction programme, including health and safety, at the start of the programme.
- Carry out risk assessments on all aspects of programmes prior to the commencement of the programme.
- Provide a clear process for the reporting of accidents.
- Keep all pupil details in accordance with the GDPR.
- Employ staff with relevant teaching and vocational experience and ensure their Continued Professional Development.
- Collect and supply the necessary data for audit requirements.
- Contact the named person in school immediately regarding any pupil whose behaviour or progress is causing concern. School permission must be obtained before sending a pupil off-site for any reason. Failure to do so will be considered as a breach of safeguarding protocols.
- Provide an identified person to be available for support.
- Monitor progress and provide half termly reports to the school and discuss the reports with the young learner at the end of half each term.
- Record individual attendance and inform the host school of absences daily.
- Maintain an attendance record on site which can be inspected by the school at any time.
- Notify the school of any timetable changes or any variation.
- Comply with drugs, bullying and behaviour management guidelines.
- Comply with local authority's trips and visits guidelines and ensure that all necessary documentation is completed.
- Ensure that the provider's Safeguarding and Child Protection guidelines and policy are complied with.
- Ensure a Designated Safeguarding Officer and an appropriately qualified First Aider are available whenever pupils are on site.
- Ensure quality assurance systems are robust.
- Provide learning support for pupils who require it.
- Provide a free meal where there is an entitlement and have agreed lunchtime arrangements that are detailed in the pupil induction booklet.
- Ensure courses offered have a clear post-16 progression route in education, training or employment with training.
- Invoice the school for the agreed amount on a termly basis ensuring it complies with the financial agreement unless there is an alternative financial agreement between the home school and alternative education provider.



The school will ensure that they:

- Nominate an appropriate member of staff to act as the key contact and coordinator.
- Meet with parents/carers and obtain written permission for the use of AP.
- Carry out a risk assessment, if required, for pupils it identifies for AP.
- Provide in writing, prior to the commencement of the programme place, relevant detailed reports on the pupil's circumstances, behaviour and educational status.
- Provide emergency contact numbers and information on any known medical condition/s.
- For pupils who hold an ECHP or who are deemed to have special educational needs, provide information about these needs in writing and by giving verbal updates as and when required.
- Notify the provider of any significant change or circumstances involving the pupil or details likely to affect programme delivery.
- For those pupils with an ECHP, the school will review the plan and provide any support, driven by the school SENDCo.
- Support the providers with concerns and provide support if other problems occur.
- Take responsibility for non-attendees after notification of absence.
- Arrange, co-ordinate and finance transport to and from the provider, if deemed necessary and appropriate.
- Attend meetings or events held by the provider.
- Ensure that all providers have the necessary health and safety arrangements in place including the relevant insurance cover.
- Settle invoices for the agreed payment within the provider's specified time, as outlined in the financial agreement.

Please see signed Alternative Provider/School Agreement in Appendix B.

Appendix A – Alternative Provision Home/School Agreement

Pupil name:	Date:
Alternative Provision Placement	
As discussed, and agreed in the meeting for Alternative Provision placement, below are the terms of the agreement we expect you to adhere to whilst attending Alternative Provision. Once committed to Alternative Provision, pupils must attend, and parents/carers must support this. Failure to attend may put the placement at risk and will carry the same consequences as non-attendance at school.	
Terms of Alternative Provision Home/School Agreement	
The pupil will: • Attend the allocated provision as indicated on their timetable. • Follow school behaviour policy, and Alternative Provision behaviour policy. • Engage in learning, subjects and activities set out to support their personal and academic progress.	
The parent/carer will: • Ensure their child attends Alternative Provision as indicated on their timetable. • Attend all meetings regarding their child - both at school and at Alternative Provision. • Engage with both school and Alternative Provision regarding all matters relating to their child. • Engage with and agree to behaviour and/or attendance contracts put in place to support their child.	
The school will: • Continually assess the quality and suitability of providers of Alternative Education for our pupils. • Monitor attendance of pupils referred to Alternative Providers, update records daily and liaise with the attendance team, putting in support if required. • Ensure that meetings capture the voice of the parent/carer, and visits capture the voice of the child.	
Pupil signature:	
Date:	
Parent/carer signature:	
Date:	
School signature:	
Date:	

Name of provider:	
Days and times	Curriculum offer
Parent/carers views	
Pupil's views	
Parent/carers signature:	
Date:	
Pupil signature:	
Date:	
School signature:	
Date:	
Next review date:	

Appendix B – Alternative Provider/School Agreement

Name of pupil			
Learning programme(s) including Accreditation			
Start date		End date	
Cost			
Registration / certification cost			
Any additional cost			
Terms of payment			
Signed for school		Name	
Position		Date	
Signed for provider		Name	
Position		Date	

Appendix C – Alternative Provision Home/School Agreement Review

Name of pupil:	Date:
Name of provider:	
Days and times	Curriculum offer
Parent/carer views	
Pupil's views	
Agreed actions	
Parent/carer signature: Date:	
Pupil signature: Date:	
School signature: Date:	
Next review date:	

Appendix D – Individual Learning Plan

Name of pupil:		Date of birth:	
		Year group at point of referral:	
Date joined school:		Attendance at point of referral:	
Attendance at key review points:			
SEND Status		CP/LAC status	
Overview of pupil:			
Actions and interventions taken by the SCHOOL to improve attendance, behaviour, learning and engagement:			
Action / Intervention:		Impact:	

External agency support:	
Action/Intervention:	Impact:
Reason for referral to Alternative Provision:	
Parent and child's view re change of provision:	
Name of Provider:	
Curriculum Offer (Including qualifications, timetable of offer, number of hours):	

Academic Outcomes – predicted at point of referral	
Academic Outcomes Achieved:	
Post 16 Destination (If applicable):	
Summary of impact of Individual Learning Plan:	Date:

Appendix E – Alternative Provision Quality Assurance Checklist

Provider name, address and contact number: Telephone:		Details of pupils attending (Including initials, year groups and number of days):
Compliance Visit held with:		
Date:	Time:	Location:
Standard checked before the visit	What was seen (Are documents in date? Are documents related to current staffing at the provision?)	Actions to be undertaken/recommendations
1. Have staff undertaken DBS checks?		
2. Have all required recruitment checks been completed for all staff?		
3. Do staff have a First Aid at Work Qualification?		
4. Is there a qualified Designated Safeguarding Lead?		

Standard checked before the visit	What was seen	Actions to be undertaken/recommendations
5. Does the provider have an up-to-date Safeguarding Policy?		
6. Is the providers Safeguarding Policy on their website?		
7. Does the provider have a Behaviour Policy?		
8. Does the provider have a staff behaviour policy including processes for dealing with low level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing procedures?		
9. Is there a valid Electrical Safety Certificate?		
10. Is there an Asbestos Register?		
11. Does the venue have Public Liability Insurance?		
12. Does the venue have Employers Liability Insurance?		
13. Does the venue/site have a relevant risk assessments in place? Does it cover venue, remote supervision, equipment?		
14. Has the venue provided a safer recruitment statement / Letter of assurance?		
Standard checked during the visit	What was seen	Actions to be undertaken/recommendations

15. Does the provider have an ICO certificate?		
16. Does the provider have a GDPR Policy?		
17. Does the provider have an IT security policy?		
Safeguarding		
1. Are there any concerns or gaps from the pre-visit checks which need addressing? (Including new staff DBS checks and training)		
2. Is the provision classified as an “Alternative Provision” or is it a registered Independent School?		
3. If the provision is not a registered independent school, are all young people attending part time?		
4. Do any pupils have an EHCP?		
5. Have all staff received annual safeguarding training?		
6. Is there a Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead on site at all times?		
Standard checked during the visit	What was seen	Actions to be undertaken/recommendations

7. Do staff know how to respond to a safeguarding concern? Is this in line with the safeguarding policy?		
8. Have first aid boxes been viewed? Is there a process for checking first aid boxes? What is this?		
9. Is there a Medical Room on Site?		
10. How are first aid incidents recorded? Are there any first aid records for our pupils?		
11. Are Fire Plans up around the building?		
12. Are there Fire Extinguishers and Smoke Alarms in situ and clear Fire Escapes? When does testing take place?		
13. Is an appropriate Fire Safety Policy in place?		
14. Have relevant staff received training in relation to the use of fire extinguishers?		
15. Has equipment been PAT tested? When was it tested? When is scheduled for next testing?		
16. Are Changing Rooms Available?		
17. Are both Girls and Boys Toilets, and if needed a gender-neutral toilet in situ?		
Standard checked during the visit	What was seen	Actions to be undertaken/recommendations

18. Do any of our pupils have risk assessments? (If required)		
19. Do any of our pupils have PEEPS? (If required)		
20. What are the transport arrangements to take pupils to and from the provision?		
21. Are risk assessments in place for transport?		
22. Is site access secure?		
23. Is an appropriate health and safety policy in place?		
Quality of Education		
1. What is the Curriculum Offer?		
2. Is the venue on the UK Register of Learning Providers?		
3. Is there a Teaching and Learning Policy?		
4. Is there an Assessment / Marking Policy?		
5. Is there a scheme of work / learning journey?		
6. Does the scheme of work / learning plan for progression over time?		
7. Is there evidence in pupils work of progression over time?		
Standard checked during the visit	What was seen	Actions to be undertaken/recommendations

8. Is there evidence of appropriate adaptation of the curriculum to meet pupils' needs?		
9. Have staff had relevant training to support and meet pupils' needs?		
10. Is there evidence of PSHE / personal development, including paying regard to the protected characteristics?		
11. Is the curriculum offer appropriate for the age, aptitude and needs of the learner?		
12. Are classroom/site resources and facilities of sufficient quality, quantity and range?		
13. Is there evidence of literacy and numeracy in the curriculum?		
14. Are the provider's leaders and relevant staff clear on how they should communicate: · Pupil absence · Safeguarding concerns · Relevant information about pupil progress · Relevant information about behaviour · Are the agreed arrangements recorded in writing?		
Additional comments:		

Pupils seen on the visit: Pupil voice (What are the pupil's thoughts on the venue? Do they feel they are making progress? Do they enjoy the provision?)		
School signature: Date:		