



# Alternative and Off-Site Provision Policy

*This policy has been approved by the Board of Trustees with reference to the academy's Equality Policy. The aims of the Equality Policy are to ensure that Plume Academy meets the needs of all, taking account of gender identity, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that in this academy we meet the diverse needs of students to ensure inclusion for all and that all students are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.*

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## Alternative and Off-Site Provision Policy

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## **Alternative Provision**

### **1.1 Definition of Alternative Provision**

This is education arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; education arranged by schools for pupils on a fixed period exclusion; and pupils being directed by schools to off-site provision to improve their behaviour. (DfE, 2013)

### **1.2 Main legislation covering the duties and powers relating to these issues (DfE, 2013)**

- Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, as amended by section 3A of the Children, Schools and Families Act 2010;
- Section 29A of the Education Act 2002;
- Sections 6A and 100 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- Sections 1C and 4 of the Academies Act 2010 (as amended);
- The Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) Regulations 20071;
- The Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Management Committees etc.) (England) Regulations 2007;
- The Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Short Stay Schools) (Closure) (England) Regulations 2010;
- The Pupil Referral Units (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2012; and
- The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following academy policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

### **1.3 Key Points**

Local Authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such arrangements being made.

- Governing bodies of schools are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education from the sixth day of a fixed period exclusion.
- Schools may also direct pupils off-site for education, to help improve their behaviour.

## 2. Alternative and Off-Site Provision

### 2.1 The main reason for choosing Alternative Provision:

Alternative and Off-Site Provision is educational provision for students who are not accessing mainstream education for a variety of reasons. These may include:

The students' key talents are not being developed through the national curriculum. Alternative Provision recognises that we are all individuals with different strengths and weaknesses and that mainstream education is not for everyone.

The student has had one or more fixed-term suspensions and is at risk of permanent exclusion from the academy. Alternative Provision is a strategy to avoid permanent exclusion for students and to encourage inclusion in education.

The student has not been attending the academy regularly for whatever reason and is therefore unlikely to achieve GCSEs. Alternative Provision offers a different setting with a broader choice of various qualifications for students which may encourage attendance.

### Offsite Direction

Good behaviour in schools is essential to ensure that all pupils benefit from the opportunities provided by education. The government recognises that off-site direction is essential behaviour management tool for headteachers and can be used to establish high standards of behaviour in schools and maintain the safety of school communities<sup>1</sup>.

In line with the relevant guidance<sup>2</sup>, Plume Academy may elect to use off-site direction as a short-term measure as part of academy's behaviour management strategy.

Section 29a Education Act 2002 states that: *"The governing body of a maintained school in England may require any registered pupil to attend at any place outside the school premises for the purpose of receiving educational provision which is intended to improve the behaviour of the pupil."*

This legislation applies to local authority-maintained schools and not academies. However, as an academy, Plume Academy can direct pupils off-site for the improvement of behaviour as our funding agreement and/or articles of association make it clear that we will comply with the above legislation.

### Short-term Education at a Partner School (STEPS arrangement)

A STEPS arrangement will be considered by the academy if the usual academic and social expectations within a mainstream class are deemed to be appropriate and achievable for this student at the time of planning. The purpose of STEPS at the outset is for the student to make progress and once that period time at the partner school has completed, return to the home school. As part of the planning, alternative options should be considered, once the time limit has been reached, which may include a managed move on a permanent basis (if a learner is in a mainstream school) upon review of the time-limited placement.

Parental consent is **not** required in order for a school to direct a pupil off-site under this provision. However, it should be a collaborative process so far as is reasonably practicable.

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<sup>1</sup> [Department of Education - Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance September 2023](#)

<sup>2</sup> Section 29A Education Act 2002. The legal requirements and statutory guidance relating to this power are set out in guidance on alternative provision: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision>.

## 2.2 All procedures have been developed on the basis of the following principles

- Students referred to off-site alternative provision should be referred on the basis that this provision is more appropriate for them than what Plume, Maldon's Community Academy can provide.
- If an alternative placement breaks down the situation will be discussed and a meeting convened and if it is unable to be resolved the student will be expected to return to Plume, Maldon's Community Academy.
- Once committed to off-site alternative provision, students must attend, and failure to do so should carry the same consequences as non-attendance to the academy's mainstream provision.
- Plume Academy will monitor the students' attendance at the new provider.
- Attendance at off-site alternative provision will be monitored closely and every step will be taken to ensure that accurate attendance data is kept by the academy.
- All professionals have a statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and tracking and reporting attendance at alternative provision is an essential component in achieving this.
- There is an expectation that any safeguarding concerns are raised with the **Designated Safeguarding Lead** at Plume, Maldon's Community Academy, **Mr Stoneman (Deputy Head Teacher and DSL)** and that all alternative providers adhere to the Child Protection and **Safeguarding Policy** held by the academy.

## 2.3 Responsibility of Plume Academy

Once a placement has been agreed, the academy maintains responsibility for:

- Student welfare: safeguarding, child protection; health and safety.
- Sharing all relevant information with the provider including any information on SEND, literacy, safeguarding or other issues.
- Setting out in writing the agreed objectives and plans for the placement, and monitoring progress against the objectives of the placement, including carrying out frequent visits to the provider.
- Where reintegration to the academy is an objective, planning for and providing an appropriate package of support to assist the student's reintegration.
- Attendance monitoring and follow-up of absences.
- Meeting the needs identified within a child's EHC plan or statement of Special Educational Need.
- Where a student is eligible for free school meals, this will need communicating to the provider and suitable arrangements made.
- Sanctioning a fixed term suspension or permanent exclusion; students are legally on the roll of a school and therefore only the students' home school can sanction these.
- Ongoing contact with the student and provider to exchange information, monitor progress and provide pastoral support.

- Careers guidance, schools to ensure students receive their full entitlement to careers information, advice and guidance.
- Student outcomes – obtaining a final report on the students’ achievements during the placement including attainment and progress, attendance records and evidence of change in behaviour.
- Seeking students’ views on success of the placement.
- For Year 11s, working with the provider to prevent young people becoming NEET and ensuring that they can move on to suitable education, training or employment alongside part-time study. The academy will collect and record information about the student’s next destination, as an indicator of alternative provision quality.

## **2.4 Roles and responsibilities**

### **Local Authority (LA)**

The Local Authority is responsible for:

- Arranging suitable full-time education for learners who have been permanently excluded from the academy.
- Arranging suitable full-time education for learners who would not receive suitable education without alternative provision, e.g. because of illness.

### **Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees will be responsible for:

- Arranging suitable full-time education for students who receive a fixed-period suspension of more than five academy days.
- Where appropriate, directing learners off-site for education to improve their behaviour.
- Monitoring and reviewing the implementation of this policy.

### **Joint Head of Academy – Mrs Clark**

The Joint Head of Academy will be responsible for:

- Taking overall responsibility of the academy’s use of alternative provision and the implementation of this policy.
- Reporting on the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy to the Board of Trustees.
- Ensuring that budgets for alternative provision are established in due time, approved by the Board of Trustees and managed effectively.
- Notifying parent/carers when their child has been directed to alternative provision.
- Sharing the relevant information with the chosen alternative provision provider to facilitate the transition from the academy to the provider.
- Supporting members of staff with the monitoring and support of alternative curriculum provision.
- Arranging the appointment of the alternative provision lead.
- Continually assessing the quality and suitability of providers of alternative education.

### **Alternative Provision Lead – Mr Stoneman**

The alternative provision lead will be responsible for:

- Liaising with the relevant members of staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to ensure that the appropriate measures are in place to support students in alternative provision.
- Undertaking visits to the alternative provision sites, as requested by the SLT, to review the progress of relevant students.
- Deciding on an appropriate course of action, in conjunction with the SLT and Joint Head of Academy, if informed by a provider of any serious behavioural incidents involving the academy's students.
- Assisting in the identification of students with SEMH needs and developing appropriate support plans for these students.
- Assisting in the development of reintegration plans for students with SEMH needs.
- Giving alternative provision settings details of a student's SEMH needs, where appropriate, so their placement can be catered to them.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that the alternative education providers used by the academy are registered and approved, and that they have the relevant policies in place to cover safeguarding, child protection, and health and safety.
- Ensuring that all adults at the provision are cleared to work with students, e.g. they have the relevant DBS checks.
- Ensuring that all alternative providers receive and adhere to the academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

### **Attendance Officer**

The Attendance Officer will be responsible for:

- Monitoring the attendance of students who have been referred to alternative provision and updating the academy's records on a weekly basis.
- Providing attendance updates to the alternative provision lead and Joint Head of Academy as required.

### **Whole Academy Lead for Inclusion (WALI) and SENDCo**

The WALI and SENDCo will be responsible for:

- Giving alternative provision providers details of a student's SEND, where appropriate, so their placement can be catered to them.

## **2.5 Attendance**

The school Attendance Officer for the Campus (Mrs Frampton Singh or Mrs Yorston) as well as the Maximising School Attendance Home Visit Coordinator (Mrs Harrington), will:

- Monitor attendance of students referred to alternative providers and update records on a weekly basis.
- Provide attendance updates to the DSL, Mr Stoneman. Each student attending alternative provision MUST remain on a school roll and the school retains the ultimate duty of care for pre-16 pupils, wherever they are being educated. Whilst a student is attending an alternative provider, they are 'on a non-permanent' placement from the academy and providers are obliged to support the academy in their duty of care.

To ensure robust safeguarding of students in placement, there is an expectation that schools and providers have a clear agreement about how the academy are informed of attendance and the subsequent follow up of absence. The provider is responsible for enrolling pre-16 student onto their course(s) and for recording, monitoring and reporting attendance and absences.

## **2.6 Safeguarding**

- All professionals have a statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and tracking and reporting attendance at alternative provision.
- Attendance at off-site alternative provision will be monitored closely and every step should be taken to ensure that accurate data is kept by Plume, Maldon's Community Academy. Alternative providers will be contacted each day by Plume, Maldon's Community Academy to check the student is attending and will follow up any subsequent absences.
- Plume, Maldon's Community Academy will make contact with parents/carers and try and resolve any absence issues to ensure regular attendance is achieved.
- Students whose attendance falls below the Plume, Maldon's Community Academy target will be subject to a number of interventions as set out in the academy Attendance Policy.
- There is an expectation that any safeguarding concerns are raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at Plume, Maldon's Community Academy and that all alternative providers adhere to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy held by the academy.

## **2.7 Monitoring Academic Progress, Behaviour and Pastoral Welfare**

- The student's attainment data will be communicated to the alternative provider on commencement of placement.
- A termly report will be completed by the alternative provider as part of the monitoring process.
- The student will be visited on a regular basis by an appropriate staff member from Plume, Maldon's Community Academy and an Alternative Provision Record will be completed.
- The student's own views on the placement will be considered as part of the monitoring process.



- The provider will be expected to contact Plume, Maldon's Community Academy to inform them of any serious behavioural incidents.
- Students who are making less than satisfactory progress will be subject to a formal review meeting involving Plume, Maldon's Community Academy, the student, parents/carer and the provider.
- In extreme circumstances, or following an agreed number of unsatisfactory review meetings, the placement may be ended, and next steps considered.

## **2.8 Process**

Plume, Maldon's Community Academy will set up a meeting involving all relevant parties, including parents/carers and others as appropriate.

- A representative from the academy will clearly explain to families the reasons why the alternative provision is being offered. If the provision is being offered as an alternative to permanent exclusion this must be clear to parents/carers so that they are able to make an informed decision. If parents/carers refuse to accept the offer of alternative provision as an appropriate alternative to Permanent Exclusion, the Joint Head of the Academy would need to decide whether to proceed with the original exclusion.
- Students and their parents/carers will sign the necessary documentation for Off-Site Alternative Provision.
- Responsibilities for supporting the students and timescales for reviewing the provision would be agreed during the initial meeting.
- Students must attend the Off Site Alternative provision as required and parents/carers must support this.
- Alternative learning providers will contact Plume, Maldon's Community Academy whenever the student is absent.
- If a student is absent, Plume, Maldon's Community Academy will contact parents/carers and try and resolve the issue to ensure regular attendance is achieved and if unsuccessful, contact the academy's Attendance Officer for advice. If necessary this should then be referred to other agencies as appropriate.
- Plume, Maldon's Community Academy will formally monitor attendance and update records and maintain contact with the alternative learning provider.
- If the placement does not appear to be working or if the student is not attending - a formal meeting should be held involving the academy, parent/carer, students and any other appropriate person. The meeting will reinforce the expectations of the original agreement while seeking feasible alternatives.
- If a student is permanently excluded from an alternative provision placement, a meeting will be convened between the academy, alternative provider and the family to discuss either a return to the academy or to identify a further alternative provider.
- Any agreement around alternative provision for a student must be regularly reviewed. Timescales and responsibilities for reviewing the agreement must be clear to professionals, parents/carers and the student and occur every term.

- Impact/success will be measured against the targets the students are set in a meeting once per term. Examples of these could include: attendance, behaviour and qualifications.

## **2.9 Reintegration**

Where it is considered appropriate for a student to return to mainstream education, an academy and the alternative provision setting will work together to develop a reintegration plan.

The reintegration plan will be overseen by the Deputy Head Teacher in collaboration with the Joint Head of Academy. The Deputy Head Teacher for Behaviour and Attitudes will arrange a meeting with the alternative provision setting to develop the reintegration plan.

Before reintegration, the Deputy Head Teacher, will obtain a final report on the student's achievements during the placement; this includes academic attainment and progress, attendance records and evidence of a change in behaviour.

The Deputy Head Teacher will also speak to the student to assess their views on the success of the placement.

In light of the final report and views of the student, the Deputy Head Teacher, will implement an appropriate reintegration plan based on the student's needs.

This may include a discussion with the student's parent/carers and/or setting specific objectives for the student to achieve on reintegration, e.g. attendance or behaviour.

Students that have reintegrated back into the academy will be continually supported in line with their specific needs. If a student returns to the academy and has not engaged in the off-site direction, the decision will lay with the Joint Head of Academy. They will decide or determine whether the student should return to the academy or/if the resulting reason in their return would lead to a final decision of a permanent exclusion outcome. Any decision would be clearly outlined in the final review meeting and outlined by the Plume Academy representative on behalf of the Joint Head of Academy as well as ensuring it is captured in writing.