

Wakefield Alternative Provision Quality Assurance Framework

Our Recommended Minimum Standards for Alternative Provision Providers

1. Introduction

Every child deserves an education that enables them to fulfil their potential, whatever their background and needs. Sometimes their education will need to be supplemented by a different approach, outside of mainstream and special schools, in Alternative Provision. A large and growing number of Alternative Provision settings have been established across and just outside the Wakefield district. Wakefield Local Authority's main Alternative Provision settings are our Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), but we may also use settings elsewhere. We have developed this Quality Assurance Framework to ensure that whenever children and young people are placed in Alternative Provision, this offers them a safe and appropriate education.

2. Definition & Guidance

Alternative provision (AP) is for children of compulsory school age who do not attend mainstream or special schools and who would not otherwise receive suitable education, for any reason. AP is provided through full or part-time, and short or longer-term placements. Placements can be delivered by AP academies, AP free schools and pupil referral units (PRUs). Other settings also provide AP, including independent schools, further education colleges, and other providers from the private and voluntary sectors.

Department for Education Guidance states that 'any AP setting that is not maintained by a local authority or non-maintained special school and caters full-time for five or more children of compulsory school age; or one or more such child who is looked after, has an EHC plan or has a statement of SEN must, by law, be registered with the Department for Education, and inspected.'

'Full time' is not defined in law, but generally, the DfE considers any institution that is operating during the day, for more than 18 hours per week, to be providing full-time education. This is because the education being provided is taking up the substantial part of the week in which it can be reasonably expected a child can be educated, and therefore indicates that the education provided is the main source of education for that child. It is considered that this is the child's main place of education if they attend there for the majority of the week, even if they are also partially attending the allocated mainstream school.

AP settings that are not maintained by local authorities or non-maintained special schools, and do not meet the definition of 'full time', do not have to be registered with the Department. These settings are therefore not inspected by Ofsted in their own right. Local authorities and schools acting as the commissioner for such settings should assure themselves that the setting is registered where appropriate, and delivered by high quality staff with suitable

training, experience and safeguarding checks. Commissioning schools are also assessed during all Section 5 Ofsted inspections to determine how effectively they ensure that the AP they use is safe for children, and that those children are making progress, behaving and attending well.

We expect that schools who individually commission Alternative Provision for their pupils to also refer to this framework, using it alongside their own policy, approach and measures, as it defines some minimum requirements for the settings they engage, to ensure that they are meeting their legal and educational responsibilities. Schools are reminded that, ultimately, they are accountable for the AP they commission.

3. Wakefield's Alternative Provision Quality Assurance Framework

QA Ref:	Standard:	Yes/No	Notes:
Part 1: Context of the Setting			
1a	Is the AP setting operating under the definition of full-time? (See part 2 for the definition of this)	Yes/No	If no, and you are placing the pupil part-time with the AP setting, you will be expected to provide the remaining hours of education for the pupil. You must undertake your own QA and other measures alongside using this Framework before taking up a part-time AP placement, including planning for coverage of the curriculum.
1b	If the AP setting is operating under the definition of full-time, are they registered with the Department for Education?	Yes/No	If yes, check Ofsted Reports and any other available information related to inspections, to inform your QA. If no, Wakefield Local Authority do not recommend that you engage this setting. There is a chance that they could be operating illegally as an unregistered school. Please inform the LA and Ofsted if you believe this to be the case.
1c	Do the vision of the setting and the objectives of the placement meet the overall identified needs of the pupil for whom you are commissioning a place? Have you or a representative visited the setting? Have you consulted with other schools who may have used this setting?	Yes/No Yes/No Yes/No	It is important that the setting provides the right 'fit' for the pupil and their identified needs. You should ensure that you acquire a good understanding of both the pupil and the setting. If the answer to these questions is 'no', you should explore other options.

QA Ref:	Standard:	Met? Date:	Notes
<p>Part 2: Safeguarding & Health and Safety <i>We strongly recommend that AP settings in our district use Wakefield's Annual Safeguarding Audit, and that commissioning schools request a completed copy of this from them. Commissioning schools should take reasonable steps to satisfy themselves of the following:</i></p>			
2a	<p>Use and publication of welfare and safeguarding policies including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding & Whistleblowing Policies with reference to KSIE including named DSL (senior staff member) and managing allegations • Behaviour and Welfare Policies including approach to physical intervention, sanctions and exclusions, CSE, substance misuse, e-safety and transition arrangements • Anti-bullying & Attendance Policies • Complaints Policy • Statutory website requirements <p><i>This is not an exhaustive list. You should expect safeguarding standards to be at least as high as those in your own setting.</i></p>		
2b	<p>Evidence of Safer Recruitment policies and statutory vetting checks on all staff who will be working with your pupil/s plus complete SCR</p>		

2c	<p>Use and availability of Health and Safety policies, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Policy including for use of specialised machinery if this is included vocational studies • Written First Aid arrangements • Fire risk assessment and procedures • Individual risk assessments for pupils where necessary <p><i>This is not an exhaustive list. You should expect H and S standards to be at least as high as those in your own setting.</i></p>		
2d	Physical inspection of the site and buildings confirms these are maintained to a good standard, fit for purpose and with clear measures in place for the safety of pupils.		
2e	Formal visits at least once per term are undertaken whilst pupils are on site, and behaviour management is in line with policy		
QA Ref:	Standard:	Met? Date:	Notes
<p>Part 3: Curriculum & Outcomes <i>Commissioning schools should take reasonable steps to satisfy themselves of the following:</i></p>			
3a	Pupils have access to study in core subjects that is suitable for their ability levels		
	The setting provides a range of other appropriate academic subject studies		
	Pupils have access to a vocational offer (usually secondary only)		

	Therapeutic/social skills/PSHE/RSE programmes are in place that effectively meet the needs of all pupils, especially those with SEMH/behavioural difficulties		
3b	The setting regularly monitors the quality of teaching and learning and takes steps to improve it where necessary, reporting details to the commissioning school as required, using a format and methods which the school has checked and approved.		
3c	The setting is able to meet the needs of your pupil if they have SEND, and will deliver, monitor and update records and programmes as appropriate in partnership with parents and pupils (if they cannot provide this, your school's SENDCo should continue to allocate time and resources for this pupil)		
3d	According to year group, pupils have access to study and assessment for national tests and formal qualifications, including those at GCSE level, and particularly in core subjects		
3e	The setting has clearly defined objectives for the personal and academic progress of pupils placed with them agreed with the mainstream school, and evaluates and updates these regularly, including detail about the next steps for their pupils (for example, destinations after KS4, NEET stats)		
3f	The setting has arrangements for working with external agencies such as SEND advisers and Social Workers, and attending meetings when required.		

QA Ref:	Standard:	Met? Date:	Notes
Part 4: Actions to undertake whilst the pupil is attending the AP setting			
4a	Ensure that transitions in and out have clear objectives, are reviewed regularly and are designed to enable the pupil to (re)integrate successfully. Involve pupil, family and any relevant external agencies with this process		
4b	Name a key member of staff in each of the mainstream setting and the AP to visit regularly, acting as a point of contact and to gather and record pupil views, and ensuring that the pupil maintains a sense of connection and belonging with their mainstream school		
4c	Undertake as a minimum 1 formal visit per term to the setting, using the QA framework and raising any issues with the setting		
4d	Liaise with the setting regarding attendance, behaviour, exclusions, SEND issues and any other issues which are relevant, and ensure that attendance codes are shared twice daily and used correctly		
4e	Evaluate the effectiveness of the setting regularly and at the end of the placement, and use this to inform next steps for the pupil, request improvements and for the purposes of future commissions		