



EXTRACT FOR SCHOOLS FORUM

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Alternative Provision Service Specification

2016 - 2019

I. INTRODUCTION

Overview

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) seeks to strengthen and improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people and narrow the achievement gap for those young people who may be at risk of not achieving.

This will include:

- Intervening earlier through effective identification of need before problems escalate; high quality targeted provision in mainstream schools and clear and accessible referral routes to draw in external support.
- Ensuring high quality provision outside mainstream schools where appropriate to do so, commissioned either by the local authority or by schools directly.
- Improving the management and use of data, to ensure effective tracking and safeguarding of young people, linked with agreed protocols about reporting, information sharing and partnership working.
- Delivering high quality alternative provision¹ and early intervention to keep young people in learning and achieving so that they can make a positive contribution to society.

Background Information

In April 2014 the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead made the strategic decision to change its approach to deliver alternative provision and adopt a partnership arrangement with schools, providers and the Management Committee of the PRU. As a result, there is no longer a physical PRU and since September 2014, RBWM has delivered its statutory obligations for alternative provision through RISE (Respect, Inspire, Succeed, and Engage) Alternative Provision and a small, dedicated team of officers. The DfE number has been maintained which enables it to have a school roll and associated funding.

RISE Alternative Provision has the aim of securing earlier identification and intervention and the optimum provision for any young person who may need alternative provision through the delivery of four themes:

- Building capacity in and between schools
- Short-term programmes
- Managed Moves
- Alternative Provision

During 2014-5, individual alternative provision placements have been spot purchased from a range of alternative providers for young people excluded from school and for those at significant risk of exclusion. In addition, full-time alternative provision placements and short-term programmes have been commissioned in partnership with schools for young people who were at risk of

¹Local 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.

failing in mainstream schools. For those young people unable to attend mainstream school owing to diagnosed health needs, 1:1 tuition has been arranged.

RISE Alternative Provision 2014-15

RBWM has high aspirations for all children and young people and believes that all schools and academies will try to provide for the learning needs of all pupils placed in their care. There may be times in a child or young person's education, where for one reason or another, they are not able to access mainstream provision. However, it is vital that the educational needs of the child or young person are met in a suitable setting, given the circumstances, to enable that young person to receive the most appropriate support and provision and secure good outcomes.

All children and young people educated outside of mainstream schools should have access to full-time educational provision, with personalised learning to meet their specific needs, unless this is inappropriate either due to medical needs or where alternative provision has been agreed as part of a time-limited Pastoral Support Plan (PSP).

RISE Alternative Provision aims to ensure the highest standards and quality of alternative provision for any learner who - because of illness or any other reason – cannot access their educational entitlement in a mainstream setting or who is at risk of failing.

RISE Alternative Provision adheres to the following principles for the effective delivery of high quality alternative provision:

- a) Have high expectations for the achievement of all children/ young people providing a range of holistic programmes to ensure outcomes are improved and the achievement gap is narrowed.
- b) Ensure that there are rigorous systems for the assessment and monitoring of pupil progress and that programmes prepare learners for the next stage of education, employment and/ or training.
- c) Ensure there is a sufficiency and range of high quality alternative provision and interventions to meet the diverse needs of learners
- d) Ensure that alternative provision provides value for money and is accessible in a timely, equitable and, where possible, planned way.
- e) Establish, in partnership with schools and providers, clear protocols regarding funding arrangements and reporting/ monitoring processes.
- f) Listen to and respect what children, young people and their families have to say and design services to meet their needs.
- g) Work in partnership with all stakeholders and make sure there is good communication between and amongst all partners and agencies
- h) All provisions meet statutory expectations, ambitious standards, and quality assurance processes and there is a highly skilled and well supported workforce.
- i) Ensure there is a collective responsibility for safeguarding.

II. ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD COMMISSIONING STRATEGY 2015-2019

Right Provision – Right Reasons – Right YP – Right Time

Over the course of the year, several factors have emerged:

- a) We need to meet the needs of children and young people as early as possible at risk of failing in mainstream provision in order to give every opportunity for this vulnerable group to be successful. Opportunities for collaborative working are sought.
- b) The profile of children and young people at risk of not maintaining their mainstream place across all phases is more complex and challenging for schools to manage. This includes children and young people with significant social, emotional and behavioural issues as well as an increasing number of pupils with social anxiety and complex mental health issues who are unable to maintain attendance at school for periods of time.
- c) An audit of schools undertaken in April 2014, highlighted an increased need and demand for full-time KS4 vocational and therapeutic alternative provision placements that meet the needs of learners as well as for short term programmes at KS2 – 3.
- d) There was a need for more consistent processes regarding access and funding agreements.
- e) Schools are seeking alternative solutions and wishing to work in partnership with the local authority.
- f) As a small authority, the numbers in need of alternative provision are small and yet the needs are diverse and wide ranging; there is no “one size fits all” solution.

As a result, we recognised the need to build a sustainable strategy for the delivery of alternative provision and develop a strong operational and strategic partnership with and between providers to improve outcomes for children and young people.

It is RBWM's intention to put alternative provision on a more sustainable footing for the longer term and to establish clear commissioning and procurement arrangements with schools and providers.

We wish to

- further improve the quality assurance and monitoring arrangements for the provision of alternative education;
- Provide a suitable platform to ensure value for money;
- Engage a broader range of providers in order to develop the market; and
- Seek new and innovative solutions to improving outcomes for this vulnerable group.

Market Engagement Event

In order to gauge interest in the procurement process, a Market Engagement Event was held in July 2015 with invited providers, schools and parent representatives.

Key messages from feedback:

- Priority must be early intervention/ proactive approaches to prevent escalation of problems.

- Access to Alternative Provision needs to be across all key stages to bolster early intervention and preventative approaches.
- Clarity and transparency required regarding funding arrangements with schools.
- Consensus was for a framework approach with some concerns expressed that this may set up unwanted competition between providers rather than partnerships/ collaboration.

Further discussion has now taken place in the light of feedback, the known and immediate needs and priorities and the current capacity and resources to deliver. The following has been agreed:

- To develop a Commissioning Framework for a 3 year period (January 2016 – December 2019) with the option of a one year extension for services and programmes across all key stages for alternative provision
- To initiate a Tender process for 3 Lots in the first phase of implementation (from September 2015) with the aim of operational delivery/ call off from January 2016.
- Please note: current placement arrangements with alternative providers will remain until the end of the agreed period of the placement. It is anticipated that procurement for new placements for alternative provision placements will take place from January 2016.*

III. ALTERNATIVE PROVISION SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Desired outcomes for learners accessing alternative provision:

- Children and young people are engaged in education, have a positive attitude to learning and confidence in their academic achievements
- Children experience reduced risk and increased resilience including in relation to emotional health and well-being.
- Children and young people achieve stretching academic and vocational attainment targets to improve future life chances.
- Children and young people are able to make a successful transition to either mainstream education settings, specialist settings and/ or progression routes at 16.
- Children and young people are kept safe and are able to make safe lifestyle choices.

Meeting Service User Needs:

The Framework as a whole is designed to meet the needs of children and young people at KS1, 2, 3, and 4 who are:

- Permanently excluded from school; or
- At risk of disengaging from mainstream education and/ or being excluded from school; or
- Unable to attend mainstream school owing to health needs including social and emotional needs and mental health needs or
- Require additional support during a transition to specialist provision or
- Otherwise require alternative education provision to meet their educational entitlement eg Children in Care without a school place or in line with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Whilst not exclusive to these groups our current needs assessment demonstrates that we require provision to meet the following needs:

At all key stages:

- a) Children and young people with challenging behaviour needs
- b) Children and young people with low self esteem, confidence and poor emotional health and well-being who are unable to access mainstream school for a period of time
- c) Children and young people who are otherwise vulnerable/ disengaged from education system due to, for example, family breakdown or homelessness; domestic abuse etc and are at risk of failing in mainstream school
- d) Children and young people at KS 1, 2 and KS3 who require short-term 1:1 or small group support to maintain full-time educational placements in mainstream schools
- e) Children and young people engaged within the youth offending system including those returning from secure accommodation
- f) Children in Care, including those children who require short-stay education pending full-time placements in mainstream school, Children with Education, Health and Care Plans who require alternative provision to meet their needs

At Key Stage 4:

- a) Young people in Year 11 who are permanently excluded or disengage late in the GCSE course and require additional support to remain engaged in education.
- b) Long term disengaged young people with poor attendance records who are at risk of becoming NEET post 16.
- c) Young people in Year 11 identified by CAMHS or suitably qualified health professional as being unable to access mainstream school owing to mental health or health needs
- d) Young people who would benefit from a mixture of vocational, academic and work-based learning to progress successfully post 16
- e) Young people who have experienced significantly disrupted education ie multiple school placements and who require a flexible approach to accrediting their learning and remain engaged post 16.
- f) Young people approaching Year 10 or Year 11 who are at significant risk of failing in mainstream schools, for example with multiple fixed term exclusions, and where further assessment/ short-term intervention is needed.

Description of Lots

In order to secure the required personalised provision, the Framework will have 3 Lots.

Type of Provision	KS4	KS3	KS2	KS1
1. Full-time Alternative Learning Packages	Y	x	x	x
2. Short-term and part-time programmes	Y	Y	Y	Y
3. Preventative Programmes and Interventions with schools	Y	Y	Y	Y

Full-time Alternative Learning Packages at KS4 (LOT 1)

- Will be designed to provide alternative education provision and appropriate learning experiences and qualifications to ensure progression into post 16 education, employment or training.
- Will include both packages by a sole provider and packages delivered as consortia with 2 or more providers to meet individual needs. All packages delivered by more than one provider will require a “lead” provider to coordinate the package and report to the referring organisation.
- The Alternative Provision Programme offered should be for one year, full time to follow the same calendar year as schools in the borough. The course would provide 25 hours of supervised learning per week spread over 5 days.
- Provision can be offered on a individual placement or for block purchase.

Short-term and Part-Time Programmes (LOT 2)

- Short-term “Revolving Door” programmes (part time or full time) will support children and young people for a fixed period of time with the aim of sustaining access to mainstream school either through reintegration or transition to a new school (or special school).
- Full-time education is defined as 23.5 hours at KS2; 24 hours at KS3. Part-time engagement in full-time learning will only be in place as a short-term measure as part of a time-limited Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) or where full-time learning is not appropriate due to health needs. .

Preventative Programmes and Interventions with schools (LOT 3)

- Will be bespoke programmes delivered with individual schools or a consortia of schools to address identified purposes and with agreed outcomes
- These programmes are not intended to be part of the core entitlement or take children “off-site” for extended periods of time
- Programmes will vary in length according to the needs of the cohort and agreement between provider and referrer.