



BARNSLEY SCHOOLS' ALLIANCE

STRONGER TOGETHER TO IMPROVE EDUCATION

Support • Challenge • Inspire



Alternative Provision Guidance and Directory 2025 /26



BARNSLEY
Metropolitan Borough Council



**Barnsley – the place
of possibilities.**

Alternative Provision Guidance and Directory

1. Introduction

In line with Section 19, this Directory sets out Alternative Provision available in Barnsley, how it can be accessed and who might be eligible.

The Statutory Guidance provides a set of guiding principles that Barnsley schools should follow. Our aim and vision is for children and young people in Barnsley to receive alternative provision that meets their needs, is flexible, high quality and allows children to achieve and succeed.

Through this Guidance, the Barnsley Schools' Alliance Educational Improvement Strategy and associated plans such as our co-produced "Every Child in School Every Day" Plan and mechanisms such as our Early intervention (Green) Panel; will help focus us upon driving improvement across our key priorities including: attendance, SEND, reducing suspensions and exclusions, supporting a reduction in the number of children electively home educated. and improving pupil outcomes. We will work together to share best practice, develop innovative solutions and support each other to ensure that children and young people thrive and achieve in their education journey.

This guidance emphasises the need for early intervention, comprehensive safeguarding checks, time limited places with clear reintegration planning pathways to mainstream education, with parental involvement. Any school placing a child or young person in Alternative Provision must ensure that proactive measures and due diligence has been undertaken prior to placement and in consultation with the Local Authority where needed. We need to collectively ensure high-quality provision is being utilised, with commissioners also supporting due diligence processes before placements are made.

Working in partnership with parents, carers, children and young people and providers is critical to achieving good outcomes and ensuring that we have the right education arrangements for Alternative Provision within the local area.

Good quality Alternative Provision can be used to support and assist children and young people through education. This directory sets out the guiding principles and what is available in our local area (detailed in Appendix A).

2. What is Alternative Provision?

Alternative Provision is defined as 'education arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education'. Schools can use alternative provision to try to prevent exclusions, or to re-engage pupils in their education.

Alternative provision is a broad term for educational settings that are different from mainstream schools, providing tailored support for students with a range of needs. Alternative provision can be arranged directly by schools or by the Local Authority.

Alternative provision can be full or part time, placement can be for a short period or longer dependent upon individual circumstances. Alternative provision aims to help children and young people to overcome barriers for learning and as a way of reintegrating them back into mainstream education where appropriate.

Alternative Provision can be registered or unregistered. Registered provisions are schools or education providers who:

- offer provision over 15 hours a week
- facilitate examinations
- are regulated by Ofsted (also known as maintained schools); this includes maintained schools, academies and free schools

An Alternative provision provider must be registered if it provides full-time education to:

- 5 or more pupils of compulsory school age
- 1 or more pupils of compulsory school age with an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- 1 or more pupils of compulsory school age who are looked after by the local authority

Unregistered provisions are educational providers who:

- are not required to be Ofsted registered
- can only offer up to 15 hours per week
- do not facilitate examinations

Unregistered facilities tend to be small, specialist organisations; these providers are not schools.

3. Who is the guidance for?

This guidance is for parents and carers, schools, academies and professionals working with children and young people.

Alternative provision can be used for children and young people who are:

- at risk of exclusion from school; or
- excluded from school on a fixed term basis; or
- at risk of breakdown of school placement, which might result in low attendance; or
- require additional support when moving between mainstream schools; or

- Otherwise require alternative provision to meet their educational needs, for instance in line with an Education, Health and Care Plan or is a Looked After Child with no school place.

4. This Directory sets out provision available in the area, how to access the provision and how to make sure that the right checks have been made.

The directory is not an approved list of providers, instead it includes what is available in our local area and how to access it.

For alternative provision that is arranged by the Local Authority, all providers must meet the necessary checks and quality assurance applied. For alternative provision that is arranged by schools and settings the same principles apply, and all arrangements must be checked and quality assured.

5. What is Good Alternative Provision?

Good alternative provision meets the needs of pupils and makes sure they achieve good educational attainment. Alternative provision in Barnsley should provide:

- A good educational offer which leads to good attainment and progress
- Secure good attendance
- A bespoke offer that meets individual need
- Can be focused on individual areas of interest
- Should be ambitious for all children in attendance
- Should make sure all children have individual plans with education targets that are regularly reviewed
- Is provided in a suitable environment that is safe, welcoming and reflects children's needs
- Where providers work well with parents and carers, schools and the Local Authority to reintegrate children and young people back into mainstream education
- Offer a flexible, wide-ranging curriculum offer
- Where children and young people tell us it is a place they want to go and know they are succeeding and achieving.

6. Oversight and Monitoring of Alternative Provision

The Local Authority must maintain on-going contact with all providers where a child or young person is placed. There must be clear procedures in place to exchange information, monitor progress and attendance and monitor the contract.

The Local Authority must also keep a clear record of the length of time children and young people are placed in provision and where their next destination is. This will be completed through quality assurance monitoring visits, contract management, data sharing and feedback from children, young people and families.

The school commissioning the placement should maintain a full record of all placements they make, including a pupil's progress, achievements and destination following the placement. This should also include the pupil's own assessment of their placement.

It is the commissioning school's responsibility to make arrangements for payments to providers.

7. What Schools Should Know

If schools are arranging alternative provision directly then they should follow the same principles as outlined above (oversight and monitoring)

- Schools should maintain a full record of all placements they make, including progress, achievements and destination following the placement
- Schools must inform the LA immediately of any child with an EHCP prior to placement
- Schools should complete the half termly Data Dashboard Alternative Provision Return for any children on reduced provision

8. Full-time or Part Time Provision

Full time education is not defined in law, but the DfE consider an institution to be providing full-time education if it is intended to provide, or does provide, all, or substantially all, of a child's education.

Relevant factors in determining whether education is full-time including:

- a) the number of hours per week that is provided - including breaks and independent study time.
- b) the number of weeks in the academic term/year the education is provided.
- c) the time of day it is provided.
- d) whether the education provision in practice precludes the possibility that full-time education could be provided elsewhere.

Everyone has a responsibility to make sure that children and young people in alternative provision are safe and well. If anyone is aware of any organisation operating outside of the registration process for schools, they should inform Ofsted and the Local Authority if they consider a provider is operating as an unregistered school.

Any provider of education should be registered as an independent school if it meets the criteria, that it provides full time education to 5 or more pupils of compulsory school age, or a pupil who is Looked After or has an EHCP.

The Department for Education (DfE) considers any institution that operates during the day for more than 18 hours per week to be providing full-time education. This is because such provision occupies the majority of the time in which a child can reasonably be expected to receive education, indicating it is their primary source of learning.

9. Key Points to Consider Before Commissioning Alternative Provision

Both the Local Authority and schools should make sure they have considered the following points before commissioning alternative provision:

- Has the child, parent or carer (school if LA making the arrangement) been spoken to before the decision for alternative provision is made
- What other considerations are there, such as transport arrangements?
- What does the pupil want, or need, to get out of the provision?
- How long should the provision be for?
- Is it part time or full time?
- How will it fit with the pupil's mainstream curriculum?
- What will success look like at the end of the provision?
- What outcomes do you hope to achieve – particularly in the areas of attendance, attitude, attainment, behaviour and positive destination?
- Check the registration status of each provider and whether they should be registered if they are not.
- Never use provision which contravenes the registration regulations.
- Check provider's policies and procedures

The Local Authority will use the quality assurance framework and the commissioning checklist for all alternative provision arrangements. It is advised that schools apply the same approach. Checks should include:

- Registration
- Policies and procedures including behaviour policies
- Detailed curriculum plans and schemes of work
- Student assessment procedures
- Safeguarding arrangements
- Health and safety policies
- Complaints procedure
- Quality of accommodation
- Qualifications and experience of staff

- Arrangements for administering first aid, fire risk assessment and recruitment procedures
- Commissioning is value for money and appropriate to the needs of the child/young person.

10. Risk Assessments

The Local Authority and schools have a responsibility to make sure that alternative provision meets the standards set out in the Health and Safety Act 1974.

Under the management of Health and Safety at work regulations 1999 employers have a responsibility to ensure that young people at work (including those attending Alternative Provision) are not exposed to risk due to the lack of experience. Please refer to guidance by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The Local Authority and schools should consider the requirements for individual risk assessments to be completed when attending alternative provision.

11. Pre-Checks to be Completed Prior to Placement

For all alternative providers, Barnsley council will undertake a pre-placement check before any child or young person is placed in alternative provision or alternative arrangements are secured.

There should also be agreement on key points of contact between the provider and school during the placement to discuss any issues or concerns. This includes the reporting of any serious accidents or incidents to the school who should follow their own employer's accident reporting procedure.

Schools should carry out appropriate monitoring for any direct placements they commission and make sure that throughout the placement it continues to be appropriate and fit for purpose.

12. Safeguarding

The Local authority and schools must make sure that all providers of alternative provision are compliant with the statutory guidance "Keeping children Safe in Education 2025".

13. Once a Child is Placed in Alternative Provision

- A contract is put in place setting out all requirements from the Local Authority
- That all providers of Alternative Provision will send the Local Authority data on attendance on a half termly basis unless it can be provided online
- All providers will be visited termly

- For children with an EHCP the Local Authority is informed prior to any use of AP.
- Attendance is monitored and action is taken when non-attendance is evident
- There will be half termly review meetings
- Payment arrangements outlined
- Contact is made with Parent, Carer and Child to outline progress and attainment
- Report any safety concerns or incidents requiring physical intervention to the management team
- Report any changes to the agreed delivery model e.g. dates, times offer, special arrangements
- Report any Ofsted notifiable incidents
- Any complaints are investigated appropriately and referred to LADO if relevant
- Send copies of individual learning plans

14. Where a School Arranges Alternative Provision

The school maintains responsibility for all children attending alternative provision, the child/ren must remain on their individual school roll. Any authorised and unauthorised, or any unexplained absences must be marked by the providers. Schools and providers must adhere to the DfE national codes to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations.

In terms of Pupil Enrolment Status if the pupil is dual-registered (e.g. still on roll at a mainstream school), the main school is responsible for providing Free School Meals to those children or young people who are eligible.

In the event of a child and young person who is permanently excluded, the Local Authority secures provision (day 6) and the child or young person is placed on the roll of the commissioned provider.

15. Statutory Guidance on Alternative Provision

- The Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance (DfE 2025)
- The Education Act (DfE 1996)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2025)
- Creating Opportunity for all: Our Vision for Alternative Provision (DfE 2018)
- Unregistered Independent Schools and Out of Schools Setting (DfE 2018)
- Voluntary National Standards for Non-School AP (DfE 2025) (*the government intentions to legislate making them mandatory*)

16. Appendix A (Pages 9 – 12) List of Providers in Barnsley

The directory is not an approved list of providers, instead it includes what is available in our local area and how to access it.

Parents and carers, children and young people, schools and settings can check what is available in the Barnsley Local Area in the Local Offer Website:

[What's on in your local area](#)

Provider	Address	Contact Number	Contact Email & Phase
Springwell Alternative Academy	Academy, Thornton Road, Barnsley, S70 3NG	01226 291133	springwellaa@springwellacademies.co.uk (Primary & Secondary Day 6 Provision)
St Wilfrid's Delta Alternative Academy	St Wilfrid's Road Doncaster DN4 6AH	01302 562540	pittardd3@stwilfridsacademy.org.uk (Key Stage 4 Year 10/11)
Academy 21	Academy21 Sixth Floor 3 Burlington Gardens London W1S 3EP	0800 2088210	contact@academy21.co.uk (Online offer Years 7, 8, and 9 to progress to their GCSE studies)
Prospero Tuition	Sterling House, The Bourse, Boar Lane, Leeds, LS1 5EQ	0113 887 2160	Leeds@prosperoteaching.com (Primary & Secondary Phase)
Provide	Provide Education Ltd, 3 Morston Claycliffe Office Park, Whaley Road, Barnsley, S75 1HQ	01226 729084	southyorks@provideeducation.co.uk (Primary & Secondary Phase)
Learn Direct	Learndirect Ltd, 1st Floor Wilson House Lorne Park Road, Bournemouth, BH1 1JN	01202 006 464	learndirect.com (KS4 upwards)

Provider	Address	Contact Number	Email
Nisai	Nisai Virtual Academy Limited, Floor 428 Clarendon Road Watford, WD17 1JJ	02084248475	info@nisai.com <i>(Young people ages 8 plus)</i>
Interhigh	Sixth Floor, 3 Burlington Gardens, London, W1S 3EP	01873 777444	contact@kingsinterhigh.co.uk <i>(Young people ages 8-18 years old)</i>
Open College	Open College UK LTD Kingsway House Business Centre40 Foregate Street Worcester, WR1 1EE	0204 5770365	customersupport@opencollege.info <i>(Post-16)</i>
Kip McGrath	Kip McGrath Education Centre, Barnsley North, Unit 7 Morston Claycliffe, Office Park, Barugh Green Barnsley S75 1HQ	01226 242100	barnsleynorth@kipmcgrath.co.uk <i>(Primary & Secondary Phase)</i>
Farmspace	Farmspace Barnsley Cic, Lower Coates Farm Blackergreen Lane Silkstone Common, Barnsley S75 4PR	0770 8931231	enquiries@farmspacebarnsley.co.uk <i>(KS2 to KS4)</i>
Yorkshire Construction	Yorkshire Construction Academy Fairfield Avenue, Pontefract, WF8 4LA	07840 394402	Damien@YCSA.co.uk <i>(Post-16)</i>

Provider	Address	Contact Number	Email
Think Employment	140 Victoria Street, Grimsby, Northeast Lincolnshire, DN31 1NX	01472 493000	hello@thinkemployment.com (Post-16)
Lead Academy	Pure Offices, Kembrey Park, Swindon SN2 8BW	020 3880 8347	info@lead-academy.org (Post-16)
Mindjam	MindJam Ltd, 43 Coopers Holt Close Skellingthorpe, Lincoln LN6 5SY	01522 462978	hello@mindjam.org.uk (Young people aged 6 – 25 years)
Enemy of Boredom	Enemy of Boredom Academy Ltd, The Court House, Broadway, Bracknell, RG12 1AE	01344 304978	anna@eobacademy.com (Young people aged 14 – 25 years)
GSL Education	GSL Education, PO Box 1738, Huddersfield, HD1 9FX	020 7739 2211	info@gsleducation.com (Primary and Secondary education)
Hepp DT		07724948006 / 07506561003	enquiries@heppdt.co.uk (Primary education)
4Tech Training	4Tech Training Ltd, Unit 9, Cocker Street Training Estate, Blackpool, FY1 2E	01253 963	graham@4techmoto.co.uk (Year 10 onwards)
Oaktree Academy AP	Oaktree Academy Centre Ltd, 463 Waterloo Road Blackpool, FY4 4BW	01253 978936	mbond@oaktreechildcare.co.uk (Primary and Secondary education)

Provider	Address	Contact Number	Email
Alexandra Boast Tuition	A Boast, Find Your Sparkle, 23 Vicarage Crescent, Grenoside, Sheffield S35 8R	0793295752	Alex.findyoursparkle@gmail.com <i>(Primary)</i>
Cygnets Hospital	83 East Bank Road, Sheffield, S2 3PX	0114 279 3350	chcl.referrals@nhs.net <i>(Primary and Secondary education)</i>
Bespoke Education	Bespoke, Engagement Education CIC, 10 Cubley Rise Road, Cubley, Penistone, Sheffield S36 9A	07810780629	majackson@bespoke-education.org <i>(Primary and Secondary)</i>