



The Thomas Adams School

Policy Statement

Alternative Provision

Updated August 2022

Reviewed by Governors

Alternative Provision

“Alternative provision has been defined as “education outside of school...arranged by LAs or Schools...It can range from pupil referral units and further education colleges to voluntary or private sector projects.” It can also be defined as something in which a young person participates as part of their regular timetable, away from the site of the school or the pupil referral unit and not led by school staff.”

Alternative Provision DFE 2013

The School:

- Gives careful consideration to the desired outcomes of the alternative provision we use, and select the provision accordingly. The desired outcomes are:
 - Opportunity to improve their workability skills e.g teamwork, communication.
 - Provide a basis for development of supporting students with their post 16 destination.
- Ensures that the students have every chance of gaining qualifications at a level which matched their potential.
- Considers how the organisation of the curriculum ensures that students attending alternative provision do not fall behind.
- Ensures that the quality of what is provided by the alternative provision placement is never less than could be provided at school.
- Ensures that the school, or a leader within a partnership, have assessed the quality and suitability of all the providers we are using.
- Gives appropriate written information about our students to providers, including about SEN, literacy and numeracy skills and social and behavioural skills. If a PCP is available, we provide this.
- Visits the students at their provision regularly and sufficiently frequently to ensure their well-being and progress.
- Works with the placement to complete tracking document in student’s work experience booklet where the students’ progress can be tracked and their achievements recorded.
- Uses this information to evaluate the progress made by students and the suitability of placements.

Justification for Alternative Provision

- This should be part of a continuum of support for challenging or vulnerable students, the main aim of which is to secure examination success and a suitable destination at the end of Year 11.
- To counter disaffection, which might take the form of poor attendance and/or behaviour, by capturing students’ interests and helping them to see the point of learning.
- To extend types of experiences and styles of learning offered.
- To cater for those students who are at “The end of the line” – when students were in danger of permanent exclusion and we do not see a way that we could cater for them in school.

Desired Outcomes

The elements of successful alternative provision which are used to assess impact are:-

- Students remain a full part of the school at all times and at no time are "out of sight, out of mind."
- The provision is a planned part of a personalised pathway, from the start of Year 10.
- It has clearly defined intentions which relate to personal and academic outcomes based
- The provision complements, not replicating or replacing, the school's own curriculum.
- Attending the alternative provision placement does not involve "missing" lessons, but is part of a timetable constructed around the group or individuals.
- If lessons are missed...arrangements are made for good-quality additional tuition and there is no reliance on students to "catch up" without being taught.
- The school provides pastoral support to ensure that students are not isolated when at placements and can seek advice back at school when needed.
- If the provision is accredited, the school or college is clear about the purpose of the accreditation. The accreditation is not tokenistic; it is valued by the school, recognised by future employers or colleges, and complements rather than replicates the accreditation being gained in school.
- If the provision is not accredited, the school enables students to gain sufficient qualifications during their time in school.

Identification, Commissioning and Selecting Outside Provision

The care which the school put into sourcing, selecting and commissioning alternative provision, and the support mechanisms available to us to do so, are key elements of the process. Our best practice contains the following elements.

- Providers have to meet a set of clearly defined minimum standards. These include safeguarding, health and safety, quality of accommodation, value for money, hours offered and procedures for communication with the school. The school use EBL (Telford Education Business Links) who complete health and safety checks.
- The provision is selected taking into account the balance of the students curriculum, their personal and social needs, the accreditation offered, and the opportunities for progression.
- The quality of what is provided is never less that could be provided or would be accepted at school – including accommodation, communication, tracking of progress and safeguarding.
- The student is involved in the process and visits the provider in advance.
- The parents/carers of the student are expected to help source the placement.
- Learning and progress – academic, vocational and/or personal – are the clear focus of the placement.
- The school gives the provider clear, jargon free, relevant information about the student's needs from the outset.
- The provider tells the school if they need to know anything else and do not try to replicate the information through testing or assessment.
- The provider tells the school what the student is aiming for and can reasonably be expected to learn though the placement.

Rigorous Quality Assurance

The school keeps firm "ownership" of students who attend it and ensures that the placement meets the student's needs at all times. Rigorous quality assurance is a crucial part of this.

- The student knows that the school is interested in their provision and will intervene and support them if there are any problems.
- The school has a key link member of staff who liaises with the placement provider and takes an on-going interest in the student's progress.
- Staff from the school routinely visits the provider, at agreed intervals, to monitor the quality of the provision. We are also responsive if there are problems at any point.
- At the same time, the school respects the fact that the provision may look different from "school" and does not interfere unnecessarily.
- The provider records the student's personal, academic and placement-specific progress as agreed with the school. The student is involved in self-evaluation.
- The school triangulates this with data such as overall attendance, behaviour and progress to evaluate the impact of the provision on the outcomes for the student.
- If a student is not making adequate progress, the school finds out why and responds accordingly, offering support or challenge to the student or the provider concerned, and if necessary, changing the placement.
- The school will complete the Shropshire Quality Assurance for Alternative provision over the course of the first term on 2022/23 with providers.

Measurements of Impact

- The students' enjoyment of their placement leads to good attendance at the placement
- Students achieve their academic targets.
- Students who were previously disaffected start to see the purpose of some of their other lessons in the school.
- As students learn new skills, often those which their peers do not have, they become more confident.
- Increased levels of motivation leads to improved attendance.
- Students gain appropriate accreditation from their placement, which contributes to their qualifications at the end of Year 11.
- Students make positive choices about the next steps at the end of Year 11.
- Impact is judged through the evaluation of destinations.