



Alternative Provision Strategy 2025 – 2028

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1. Context

The Department for Education (DfE) defines **alternative provision (AP)** as education arranged by local authorities or schools for pupils who, due to exclusion, illness, or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education. This includes settings such as pupil referral units (PRUs), further education colleges, and independent providers.

Within Bury AP may be used to support pupils on fixed-period exclusions, those needing off-site education to improve behaviour, or those who cannot attend mainstream school due to health reasons or permanent exclusion. Alternative Provision may also be used to provide interim support whilst a school place is sought or to form part of the provision of an EOTAS package.

This Strategy supports the principles contained within the Bury LET's do it strategy, Bury Education Strategy and SEND strategy

Bury LET's do it strategy	Bury Education Strategy	Bury SEND Strategy
<p>This strategy supports key priorities of LET's, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A better future for the children of the borough • Improved quality of life • Improved educational attainment • Increased adult skill levels and employability 	<p>This strategy supports the key commitments of the Education Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive • Safe • Effective • Collaborative and Connected • Sufficient and Sustainable <p>Bury All-Age Work and Skills Strategy This strategy supports the aim of the work and skills strategy, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping people of all ages in Bury access quality education, training and job opportunities 	<p>This strategy supports the things Bury young people with SEN have said are important to them, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am safe • The people that care for me are respected and supported • I feel healthy and well • I have fun • I have the freedom to choose my next steps, and I am as independent as possible • I have my say and feel heard • I feel included at home, school and in the community

2. Principle and Purpose.

The aim of the Alternative Strategy is to:

Increase the number of young people who are supported in mainstream through early identification, intervention and targeted support and reduce the numbers requiring longer term placements in Alternative Provision settings.

It is a key priority of the Bury Alternative Provision Strategy to:

Ensure that children and young people receive good quality Alternative Provision and EOTAS (Education other than at school) that meets their needs and prepares them for the next stage in their education and/or training.

To ensure this all types of Alternative Provision placements should:

- Hold high aspirations for young people and enable them to achieve to their full potential.
- Are co-produced with families and take account of young people's views and wishes.
- Support early intervention and identification of need to enable young people to continue to thrive in their education setting.
- Provide the right support, at the right time, according to need.
- Ensure that young people feel engaged, safe and well supported
- Enable young people to develop the skills and confidence that they need in order to progress to the next stage of education and employment and become independent.
- Are outcomes focussed, and carefully planned, monitored and reviewed, in order to ensure positive outcomes for young people.
- Provide good education, support and or training which prepares young people for adulthood.
- Provide support to successfully reintegrate and/or transition to the next stage of education and/or training.

A three-tier model for alternative provision

The alternative provision strategy aims to provide support to young people through a three-tiered system of support:

Targeted support in mainstream schools, in order to ensure that young people's needs are identified, and met at an early stage, enabling them to thrive in a mainstream setting. This support will include building capacity within the mainstream setting through advice and training and may include direct support for the young person through outreach services provided by the local authority, multi-academy trusts and independent alternative providers. This may be one to one support, mentoring, counselling or small group intervention delivered on the school site.

Time-limited placements, for those who require more intensive support to address their needs and to re-engage in learning. This may include vocational placements used to compliment school provisions and to support young people with transition to the education and training. Time-limited placements should have a clear focus and be established with the expectation that the young person would return to their mainstream schools with their needs clearly identified and strategies and support in place to support reintegration.

Transitional Placements, in order to support young people to move on to a new mainstream or specialist setting when they are ready, or to a suitable post-16 destination. This includes those young people who require placements under the local authorities Section 19 duty¹. Alternative providers will support these children and young people to recover as much academic progress as possible and support them to develop the skills and confidence to thrive in their next setting.

¹ The Local Authority has a legal obligation under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 to arrange suitable education (often full-time) for children of compulsory school age who can't attend school due to illness, exclusion, or other significant reasons, ensuring they receive education which would otherwise be unavailable.

3. Exclusion, Managed Move and Off-site Direction Protocols

Many of those young people who access Alternative Provision in Bury, do so because they have been permanently excluded.

All partners within Bury including schools, health and the local authority are committed to working together to prevent exclusion and to ensure that young people are supported to remain in school, wherever possible, and to achieve to their full potential.

All partners are committed to working together to ensure that young people’s needs are met and that permanent exclusion is used only as a last resort. Early intervention is paramount, and as such, recommendations that are included in the Bury Graduated Approach Toolkit as suggested additional supportive interventions, should be considered alongside statutory responsibilities and expectations.

Early Intervention	Exclusion Protocol	Managed Move and Off-site Direction Protocol
<p>Bury Ordinarily available provision This refers to the inclusive support and resources provided in schools to meet the needs of all children including those with SEND.</p> <p>Bury Graduated Approach Toolkit Bury SEND Graduated Approach Toolkit</p> <p>Communities of Practice (Schools) Supports clusters of school to work collaboratively with support from services to build capacity and share expertise and best practice</p>	<p>The Bury exclusion protocol is designed to support schools and partners to implement early intervention strategies to prevent the need for Permanent Exclusion. The Protocol includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bury Exclusion Protocol • Alternative Provision Directory • Managed Move and off-site direction protocol • Substance Misuse Protocol • Checklists for Permanent Exclusion • Weapons and Young People Protocol • Sexually harmful behaviour protocol 	<p>Schools may consider the use of managed moves and off-site direction as an alternative to permanent exclusion.</p> <p>Guidance regarding Managed moves and off-site direction (PPP) are outlined in the protocol</p> <p>Managed Moves This is used to initiate the process which leads to the transfer of a pupil to another school permanently.</p> <p>Off Site Direction (PPP) Schools may direct a pupil to attend another setting to improve behaviour. This may include an alternative provision setting.</p>

4. Statutory Responsibilities and Alternative Provision

Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, requires local authorities to make arrangements to provide “suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them”. Bury Councils response to delivering its Section 19 responsibilities are detailed in the Bury Section 19 Policy which can be found [here](#).

Where Alternative provision is used to support young people under Section 19, this is always a temporary provision with the aim of supporting transition and reintegration back into a school setting.

<p>Permanent Exclusion</p> <p>Secondary All secondary aged pupils will be referred to the AP Academy (Ashgrove School) for 6th day provision.</p> <p>Where there is not capacity at the PRU, provision would be requested from registered providers on the AP Directory in the first instance.</p> <p>Primary Provision from the 6th day is to be made using registered alternative provision from the directory in the first instance.</p>	<p>Illness and otherwise</p> <p>Requests for support under Section 19 where a young person is unable to attend school due to illness or otherwise, are considered by the multi-agency panel in accordance with the Section 19 policy</p> <p>Provision is made through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home tuition and Tutoring Service • Alternative Provision Directory 	<p>EOTAS (Educated otherwise than at school) EOTAS status may be granted where the local authority is satisfied that the provision in a young person’s EHCP cannot be delivered in a school or post-16 setting.</p> <p>An EOTAS package may include, but is not restricted to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online schooling or Home tuition • Other tuition centres • Alternative Provision <p>Where alternative provision is agreed and commissioned by the local authority, the provider will always be selected from the AP Directory.</p> <p>Full details can be found in the Bury EOTAS policy</p>
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[The Alternative Provision Directory](#)

The Alternative Provision directory provides details of Alternative Providers who have been approved through the local authority due diligence process. This contains both school and non-school alternative provisions covering a wide range of types of provision and is available on the local offer. Local authority teams are required to use the directory to source provision, when placing on behalf of the local authority, whilst schools are advised to do so.

5. Due Diligence and measuring Impact

The local authority will maintain oversight of the numbers of Bury children and young people placed in Alternative Provision and will carry out quality assurance and monitoring for those children and young people directly placed by the local authority. Where schools place in alternative provision, the school is responsible for carrying out due diligence and for monitoring the placement. The local authority is committed to ensuring that all providers used by Bury meet the voluntary national standards for non-school Alternative Provision which can be found [here](#).

<p>Use of Alternative Provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By year and school • By SEND status • By Primary SEND need • By reasons for admissions – PEX, Medical, EOTAS, school commissioned. 	<p>Data collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of Bury pupils placed in each alternative provision • Numbers placed under Section 19 and as a result of EOTAS • Half-termly/termly collection for all Bury pupils placed at providers on the Bury Directory • Year 11 outcomes data from AP • AP Academy outcomes data • EHC Reviews • NEET data • Exclusion and suspension data
<p>Outcomes of Alternative Provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of individual learning plan outcomes for pupil's placed by Bury local authority • Pupil and parent feedback • Attendance by pupil and average for provider • English and Maths progress where this is part of the provision • Engagement score • Length of time in AP placement • Vocational outcomes where appropriate • EHC Review • Destination data • NEET 	<p>Quality Assurance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process and due diligence completed for providers to access the Bury AP Directory • QA Visit at least once per year to assess against voluntary national standards for providers where Bury pupils are placed • Focus on Safeguarding and welfare of children, Admissions, guidance and support, Health and Safety and the Quality of Education (including progress and attainment) • LA teams and school intelligence collected through AP Assurance Board and actions identified • 6 weekly contract monitoring visits to assess pupil progress against Individual Learning Plans • EHC Review feedback

6. Partnerships and Governance

SEND Strategic Impact and Assurance Board

Education Board

Alternative Provision, Section 19 and EOTAS Strategy Group

Purpose: To oversee the strategic development of Alternative Provision and ensure effective, provision and support for young people who require alternative provision and EOTAS.

Chair: AP and SEND Sufficiency Lead. **Meets:** Half-termly

Section 19 Multi-Agency Panel

Purpose:

To consider requests for provision under Section 19 and for EOTAS status.

Chair: Attendance and Exclusion Manager

Meets: Fortnightly

Representation from:

Education/Inclusion, Attendance, CAMHS, School Nurse, Hospital School, Early Help

Associated documents:

[Bury Section19 policy](#)

[Bury EOTAS Policy](#)

Alternative Provision Assurance Board

Purpose:

To maintain an oversight and assurance of Alternative Provision across the borough with regard to quality of provision:

Chair: AP and SEND sufficiency Lead

Meets: Monthly

Representation from: Attendance and Exclusion, SEND Support Service, Virtual School, EHC Assessment and Review Team, Children's commissioning, Safeguarding.

Associated Groups:

AP and AP Academy Multi-Disciplinary Team

Multi-agency group chaired by the AP and SEND sufficiency Lead to identify support requirements for young people placed at the AP Academy and with other AP settings.

AP Providers Forum

Forum for providers on the Bury AP Directory which meets as required to share updates and developments in the local area

7. Priorities for Development

1	Develop AP packages to support early intervention and provide targeted support, in order to reduce demand for longer term Alternative Provision and support reintegration to school.
2	Increase the range, quality, and quantity of Alternative Provision placements available in Bury to meet identified need and ensure a wide range of curricula, qualifications and approaches and support reintegration to school.
3	Provide assurance and ensure due diligence through a directory of providers registered with the local authority and who meet the voluntary non-school alternative provision standards.
4	Ensure that all programmes and placements for young people in Alternative Provision are outcomes focussed, regularly reviewed and support reintegration to school where possible.
5	Further develop the range of educational support available to support young people who require Section 19 medical provision.
6	Further develop the range of provision available to the primary age pupils, including those that require provision under Section 19
7	Ensure a multi-agency partnership approach to planning and monitoring Alternative Provision Placements.
8	Collaborate through provider forums to ensure providers work in partnership with the Local Authority and schools to develop provision to meet young people's needs and extend the training offer provided through the Partnership to all local providers.