



THE ASPIRE HUB

Prospectus



Admissions & Referrals

The Aspire Hub is an Independent School for children to attend when mainstream school or the Local Authority have identified that they need an Alternative Provision to support their Social, Emotional and Mental Health. This is in line with 'Guidance for School on the use of Alternative Provision: Directions and Notices to Attend' which is a document produced by The DfE. Throughout this Framework, we will refer back to this document – statements taken from the document will be marked with an * and in italics for reference. A copy of the Guidance is also available.

At The Aspire Hub(s), our aim is to work with all parties to improve the pupils behaviour. All pupils who attend The Hub, are at risk of permanent exclusion.

The maximum number of pupils each Aspire Hub will admit is 20. Admissions are agreed between Aspire Behaviour Management, school, parents and in some cases, the Local Authority. Children must remain on school role while attending The Hub(s). We require that all parents/carers and schools take an active role in implementing strategy and changes to manage the behaviour and social, emotional, mental health needs of the children who attend.

*** Introduction**

The Government's policy intention is that all children, regardless of circumstance or setting should receive a good education to enable them to shape their own futures. Therefore alternative provision (AP) and the framework surrounding it should offer good quality education on par with that of mainstream schooling, along with the support pupils need to overcome barriers to attainment. This support should meet a pupil's individual needs, including social and emotional needs, and enable them to thrive and prosper in the education system.

- *Schools may direct pupils off-site for education, to help improve their behaviour (legislation allows maintained schools to do this without parental consent, however there is no provision for academies to do so unless parental consent is obtained).*
- *While 'full-time' is not defined in law, pupils in alternative provision should receive the equivalent amount of education as they would receive in their school. Full-time can be made up of two or more part-time provisions.*
- *The alternative provision may be provided at session times outside the normal school day. This should be clearly stated within the notice/direction paperwork.*

Definition of Alternative Provision

For the purposes of this guidance, the DfE definition of alternative provision is as follows: "education arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; education arranged by schools for pupils on a fixed period exclusion; and pupils being directed by schools to off-site provision to improve their behaviour". Alternative provision may also include circumstances where pupils are required to attend elsewhere for curriculum purposes.

Purpose and Aims of The Aspire Hub(s)

- To provide a flexible, preventative resource which is responsive to the particular needs of the children.
- To provide on-going assessment and support for children in KS1/KS2 showing signs of emotional stress and behavioural difficulties with the aim of enabling children to access the curriculum and participate fully in school life.
- To provide a secure and reliable small group setting where children's difficulties are looked at from a developmental perspective and they can learn by experiencing nurturing. The caring adults in the group actively work towards reintegrating the children back into their schools.



- To help children learn to behave appropriately, use their curiosity constructively, improve their self-esteem, make decisions and wise choices through understanding the consequences of certain ways of behaving and develop confidence and skills through a close and trusting relationship with adults.
- To work intensively with parents/carers offering evidence based parenting, stay and play sessions and family intervention.
- Whilst at The Aspire Hub, children will have contact with a named adult at their school on a weekly basis, to share progress and development.
- To work intensively with outside agencies offering speech and language assessments and interventions.
- Providing information and observations to support CAMHS referrals, working alongside Social Care to ensure that all children are safeguarded.

Whilst working at an early intervention stage, we expect to reduce the numbers of exclusions across the borough.

Inclusive Practice in The Aspire Hub, we recognise that every child matters and aim to respond to each child's needs, taking into consideration their:

- Cultural background
- Life experiences Strengths
- Communication needs
- Emotional and social needs
- Developmental needs
- Physical needs.

Entry/Suitability Criteria

The following guidelines inform the suitability of a child being considered for The Hub:

- Children who are underachieving for a range of social, emotional and behavioural reasons: -
 - Children who are withdrawn, unresponsive and reluctant to communicate
 - Children who have difficulty in forming trusting relationships with others
 - Children who are restless, cannot listen, behave impulsively or aggressively
 - Children whose known early or recent history suggests that they may be at risk of developing social, emotional, behavioural or mental health needs
 - Children who are known to have attachment difficulties.
- There is parental/carer agreement to the provision
- Overriding the above considerations is the need to achieve a balance of difficulties within the group in order to ensure a likelihood of success and progress for all children. This could mean that a child may fit the above criteria, but will not be offered a place when considered with the other group members.
- Children received via referral through AP (Alternative Provision) are discussed with the Local Authority and those with a complex or uncertain picture may be referred to The Hub for an assessment period; on completion of assessment, review meeting to be held to consider appropriate placement via Local Authority.

The Aspirations Room Leader will be consulted in the decision about whether or not the child can realistically be placed for assessment at a specific time and the decision will be based on the interests of all the pupils.

Please see Appendix 1: Criteria Checklist for The Aspire Hub(s)

The Setting

The Aspire Hubs are a unique setting with two classrooms, which have been designed and developed to create a homely atmosphere. The classrooms are defined into formal work areas, play areas and quiet areas. The rooms have their own kitchens and dining areas. The provision and sharing of food is paramount and provides an opportunity for practising important social skills (conversation, manners, turn-taking, sharing) as well as learning. Children will be



using the kitchen to help prepare their lunches – this will be timetabled twice a week. Children will also be expected to help clean and tidy the kitchen and dining areas.

Play materials at pre-school level are available in addition to age appropriate educational equipment and resources for more formal work in line with National Curriculum statutory requirements.

Children come from schools throughout Lancashire and attend a full-time/bespoke programme reviewed on a 6 week timetable.

Children may be undergoing Statutory Assessment for Education and Health Care Plan (Code of Practice 2014).

The Aspire Hub can provide the base into which children start their reintegration back into mainstream. Ongoing assessment and planning inform the process of reintegration.

Staffing

Principal

Hub Administrator

SENCO

Family Liaison

Transition Co-Ordinator

The Butterfly Room (Classroom 1):

Aspirations Room Leader

2 x Aspirations Key Worker

The Den (Classroom 2):

Aspirations Room Leader

2 x Aspirations Key Worker

The role of the staff is to:

Build and sustain nurturing relationships with the children and families in The Hub, be good role models, demonstrating appropriate and positive behaviour that is consistent and continuous. Recognise that it is through a positive and affirming relationship that a child can perceive themselves as worthwhile.

The ratio of staff to pupils is 1:4.

*** Commissioning appropriate, good-quality alternative provision (AP)**

In cases of fixed term exclusions or direction to AP for behaviour, the main school is responsible for ensuring that the alternative provision is of a high standard and appropriate to the needs of the individual pupil. This will involve clearly defined interventions, objectives and timescales. The package of support should be agreed with the provider(s), set out in writing and regularly reviewed and monitored as appropriate.

The written agreement with the alternative provider should also specify how the pupil's attendance is to be monitored and followed up, and what arrangements are in place for communication between the main school and the alternative provider. However, ultimately the school where the pupil is dual-main registered is responsible for ensuring suitable education is being provided for and accessed by the pupil at the alternative provision.



Provision

The Aspire Hub implements all therapy and strategy based on the Nurture Group Principal. A Nurture Group provides a modified curriculum in an environment based on the six principles advocated by Marion Bennathan and Marjorie Boxall. The over-arching Nurture Group Principal is to provide a carefully, structured day, where there is a balance of learning and teaching, affection and routine within a home-like atmosphere. Nurture Groups are designed to offer pupils:

- Security
- A trusting relationship with 2 or 3 reliable adults in which missing or insufficiently internalised essential early learning experiences are provided
- Support for children's positive emotional and social growth and cognitive development at whatever level of need the child shows by responding to them in a developmentally appropriate way
- Direct teaching

The 6 Principles are:

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. The importance of nurture for the development of self-esteem
4. Language as a vital means of communication
5. It is understood that all behaviour is a communication
6. The importance of transitions in children's lives is understood

Curriculum:

The Aspire Hub provides two linked curriculums:

1) The Nurture Curriculum – designed to support a range of developmental needs and focuses on developing the following skills: collaboration, exploration, investigation, making choices and decisions, organisation, explanation, communication, sharing, turn-taking, observation, taking responsibility, recording, interpreting, predicting, recalling and reflecting.

2) The Nurturing Curriculum – designed to provide opportunities for missed or inadequately covered experiences resulting in gaps in learning and to consolidate learning at Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

During the Placement: Assessment, Monitoring and Review

- Placement in The Hub is for a maximum of 6 weeks. This will be reviewed every 6 weeks in order to benefit long term from the intervention and depending on need, progress and suitability.
- Pupils are monitored and reviewed throughout their placement and the suitability of The Aspire Hub is constantly assessed
- The following assessments are employed to inform the placement, monitor progress and aid target setting: -
 - CAF/Early Help
 - The Boxall Profile (Every 6/12 weeks)
 - Summative Assessments/PIVATs (Upon entry and exit)
 - Nurture Group Reintegration Readiness Scale (Every 6 weeks)
 - Speech and Language assessments
 - Other standardised assessments may also be used to identify a child's strengths and areas for development in their learning.
- Individual Plan (IP) reviews with parents/carers and the pupil's school are held at review. At these reviews, plans for reintegration are always considered. Reintegration is gradual and flexible according to need and is organised, lead and supported by The Hub/Aspire staff.
- Monitoring of the pupils involves consultations with a range of agencies: -

- The Speech and Language Therapy Service
- Occupational Therapy Services
- Educational Psychology
- CAMHS
- Social Care



The following information is provided for schools who intend to seek placement at The Hub(s).

Please use template for Direction/Notice to parents/carers on separate document, filling in the necessary information, on your own headed paper.

*** Pupils Directed to Attend School Commissioned Alternative Provision**

*In some instances the school may believe that a pupil's needs are such that they should receive some – or all – of their education otherwise than at their school of registration. This may be in order for the pupil to receive vocational training, where appropriate, or an aspect of the curriculum not accessible in the main school. In some instances, the school will commission alternative provision at another school, a college or other provider, or via a short stay school. In **all** cases where a pupil is required to attend a commissioned alternative provider, a notice to attend **should** be put in place.*

The notice/direction provides the formal framework within which alternative provision can be put in place to meet the needs of the pupil. Where the attendance of a pupil at the alternative provision to which they have been directed is an issue, parent(s) are under the same duty under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, requiring them to ensure their child's attendance at that provision as if it were their main school.

*However, if a pupil is to be required to attend alternative provision to **improve their behaviour**, this **must** always be done through a direction and must follow the requirements set out below.*

*** Pupils Directed to Attend Alternative Provision to Improve their Behaviour**

Governance boards of maintained schools have the power to arrange for registered pupils to be directed off-site in order for them to receive educational provision to improve their behaviour, but the school must comply with the Regulations. Non-maintained, state funded schools, must be able to evidence a similar power has been adopted within their rules of governance in either instance. If there is no such power then parental consent will be required. In these instances, the Regulations relating to Directions are commended by the DfE as good practice.

*** What is a "direction"?**

A direction in this instance is defined within regulation as a notice in writing to the parents of a pupil who is being required to attend alternative provision for the purposes of improving behaviour. A direction provides the formal framework within which alternative provision can be put in place to meet the needs of the pupil.

*** When and why would such a direction be used?**

*Where a pupil's behaviour is such that the main school has tried several strategies but is unable to effect a change, alternative provision may provide an early intervention strategy to facilitate an improvement. Schools should therefore look to have an increased focus on the early assessment and identification of a pupil's needs before his or her behaviour has deteriorated to the extent that exclusion is the only option. A direction for a pupil to attend alternative provision for the purposes of improving behaviour is **not** an exclusion (as covered by the statutory guidance "Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England").*

Pupils cannot be required to access alternative provision for the purposes of improving behaviour outside of the directions framework. To do so would be classed as an "unofficial exclusion" and deemed unlawful. Additionally, a direction to attend off-site provision indefinitely, regardless of the benefit to the pupil, should not be seen as a tool to subvert the exclusion process.

*** The processes involved in issuing a direction to attend alternative provision**

If a pupil is to be directed to attend alternative provision in order to improve behaviour, a written direction must be issued by the governance board of the main school to the parent/s. Parents' approval is not needed for the direction to be put in place.



The direction must be provided as soon as possible, but no less than two days prior to the first expected day of attendance at the alternative provision. Any communication relating to the direction, e.g. notice, invitation or notification must be given by post. Therefore, consideration should be made to allow for postage time.

Nothing in the guidance precludes directions/notices to attend AP being used for pupils who are subject to an EHC plan/Statement of SEN, however, schools need to ensure that the authority is satisfied that the alternative provision continues to meet the needs set out in the EHC plan/Statement.

When a pupil has a statement of special educational needs (or an Education Health Care Plan) the local authority SEND team must also be served with the notice of direction within the same timescales.

*** The direction must include:**

- *The address of where the alternative provision is to be provided*
- *Details of the person(s) to whom the pupil should report*
- *The number of days for which the direction will be imposed (including an end/review date)*
- *The times at which the provision will commence and end each day; including details of the break between the morning and afternoon session*
- *The reason for and objectives of imposing the direction*

A direction to off-site provision can remain in place at the start of the next academic year to that in which it was issued.

*** Reviews**

It is not mandatory for reviews to be held at set intervals. However, reviews should be frequent enough to provide assurance that the off-site education is achieving its objectives and that the pupil is benefitting from it. The review could result in an early end to the direction, or to the direction being extended.

The regulations state that parents (and the local authority where the pupil has a statement of special educational needs (or an Education Health Care Plan)) can request a review of the placement. On receipt of such a request the governance board of the main school must carry out a review as soon as it is reasonably possible; unless a review has been held in the 10 weeks preceding the request.

No later than 6 days prior to a review date, the governance board of the main school must provide written invitation to all "appropriate persons", named below, asking for them to attend the meeting or provide a written report prior to the meeting. All "appropriate persons" should be asked their views as to whether the alternative provision should continue.

*** Appropriate persons are:**

- *The parent/s*
- *The provider of the alternative provision*
- *The head teacher of the original/main school*
- *An impartial representative of the governance board of the original/main school. This should not be the Headteacher of the original/main school or any person who has been the headteacher of the school within*

the previous five years and he/she should not be an employee of the local authority which maintains the school

- *For pupils with a statement of special educational needs (or an Education Health Care Plan), a representative from the local authority SEND team (?)*



The governance board must ensure, as far as is practical, that review meetings are held at a time that is suitable for all "appropriate persons".

*** Notification of the outcome of a review**

The governance board must give written notification of their decision and the reasons for it to all "appropriate persons" no later than 6 days after the review meeting. Where the outcome requires an amendment to the arrangements, the direction should be amended and reissued to "appropriate persons".

*** Transport to the Alternative Provision**

Where a pupil is being directed/required to attend alternative provision the governance board must consider whether the distance to the alternative provision means that transport/funding for transport is required. Where statutory entitlement applies, then the Local Authority should be asked to assist. In all other cases, the school governance board is responsible for funding any transport or making suitable arrangement.

*** Reintegration**

When the governance board of a school has directed a pupil off-site, it should have a plan and processes in place to reintegrate the pupil at the end of the placement when he/she returns to the school, including an appropriate package of support.

Reintegration/Exit Criteria

- Initial reintegration is planned and agreed using the identified member of staff from the school they are on role with, along with 1:1 support from Aspire. The member of school staff (who the child has had contact with each week) will need to visit The Hub in order to prepare and sustain the child for reintegration – this will be planned bespoke, as per the child. The 1:1 support with the Aspirations Key Worker, enables them to observe the child within the mainstream environment, plan, implement and assess the effectiveness of appropriate support strategies. The amount of time a child spends in mainstream is agreed and bespoke.
- Parents are informed of all plans and timescales regarding reintegration and invited to attend all relevant meetings
- Reintegration back to the child's school is planned with the Head Teacher, class teacher and SENCo of this school and The Hub team
- Children's progress will be reviewed after 6 weeks. Some children will be reintegrated back into their schools, however some children are not ready for the mainstream environment and are identified as needing further support
- Where assessment suggests that placement at The Aspire Hub is not providing the anticipated/expected progress or where reintegration back to the child's school is not appropriate for other reasons, an alternative plan is drawn up in consultation with parents and all involved professionals and discussed with the Local Authority.

Agenda for Initial planning meeting for reintegration

Purpose of Meeting:

To plan and agree the reintegration process for a child who is ready to return to mainstream education.

Attendees:



Family Liaison and/or Transition Co-ordinator (if necessary)

School – At minimum a member of SLT in addition to any Support Staff and other agencies (if necessary)

Agenda

Context of reintegration within the whole process

- Reintegration is phase 3 of a phase 4 process:
 - Phase 1 – Difficulties building in school, observation, Boxall, PIVATS and speech and language assessment framework, in-school interventions, award of placement in The Aspire Hub
 - Phase 2 – Full-time/part-time placement in The Aspire Hub (6-12 weeks dependant on child and review)
 - Phase 3 – Reintegration programme back into mainstream school and full time return to school with support; may include EHC Plan or process of Statutory Assessment underway)
 - Phase 4 – Child is managing more independently in school, although there may still be some support.

Behaviour Management Strategies and rewards

- Generic Nurture Group strategies for behaviour management shared with identified member of school staff
- Management Strategies specific to child – information provided
- Relevant paperwork shared with school – IP, PIVATS and readiness to reintegrate scale, curriculum books, golden book, reports from external professionals etc. – copies provided

Additional funding

Advice provided about any additional funding that may be available.

Photographs

These are taken to help prepare the child back in The Hub for the transition. These photographs will include:

- Photo of the school
- Photo of the classroom and any other room the child may be taught in
- Photo of Class teacher or Support staff and name

Other considerations

- Involvement of parent/carer – parental details/permissions
- Arrangement of regular quick review meetings/communications with class teacher/TA/SENCO
- Dates provided for any Multi-professional meetings e.g. CP Conference/Core Group/Network/TAF meetings
- Update of any difficulties/worries/changes/transitions that pupil or family may be experiencing close to or during reintegration



Additional Information

Exclusion of placement

In a very small number of cases, a child's behaviour can deteriorate to the extent that their behaviour then endangers the health and safety of the child themselves, other children in The Hub and/or The Hub staff. We are mindful of the range of reasons why this situation may develop and every effort is made to support the child and work with the parents/carers to improve this set of circumstances. However, IF this difficult and worrying behaviour is sustained over a maximum period of half a term AND does not respond to the additional support interventions put in place by The Hub, then The Hub will close the placement. The child's school and parents/carers will be fully aware and kept updated of the difficulties and attempts to resolve and improve the situation. If the decision is made to close the placement, an urgent review meeting will be held in conjunction with school and a representative from the Local Authority.

Staff Training

Staff are recruited on a skills/experience basis. All staff members have an enhanced DBS Certificate and are fully inducted and provided with appropriate training which consists of the following:

- Principles and practices of Nurture Group
- Understanding behaviour
- De-escalation
- Safeguarding
- FGM
- Team-Teach
- Positive handling
- Attachment theories
- Mental Health & Anxiety
- Food Safety
- First Aid
- Paediatric First Aid
- NVQ (Level 2,3 & 4)

The Aspire Hub staff are encouraged to attend courses to help them acquire the skills needed to work with pupils in The Aspire Hub.

All Nurture Group staff are Team-Teach and positive handling trained. This is an approach which employs a broad range of risk reduction strategies, considering behaviour and its consequences holistically and placing the emphasis on de-escalation; restraint is a small part of this approach and always used as a last resort.

Managing Physically Challenging Behaviour

Children in The Hub often present with a delay in their emotional development; this becomes very apparent when they are cross, anxious, disappointed or confused. We accept that children sometimes struggle to regulate their emotions and thoughts which then affect their behaviour. We also understand that behaviour is a form of communication. There are occasions when a child's behaviour becomes physically oppositional and challenging. Staff do not condone this choice of behaviour but it has to be managed positively in a way that encourages recovery and repair.

"Positive Handling" describes the approach to manage this behaviour. It involves: -



- Use of space
- Safe environments
- Comfortable environments
- Diversions
- Calm stances and postures
- Non-threatening facial expressions
- Low tone, volume and pace in communication
- Careful use of words
- Physical reassurance and prompts
- Effective guides and escorts
- Releases and holds

The expectation is that staff will continue to communicate, assess the situation, look and listen for opportunities to divert or de-escalate, even if they have to hold the child to keep them safe.

Positive Handling Logs on CPOMS document agreed strategies, non-verbal, verbal and physical which support the child. The aim is always to provide security, safety and acceptance, allowing for recovery and repair.

This document relates to The Aspire Hub(s) at the following address':

The Aspire Hub Burnley,
Chapel Place,
Burnley,
BB11 1LE

The Aspire Hub Bolton,
Dalton House,
Westhoughton,
Bolton,
BL5 2JE