

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

Christ is our teacher.

At St Bernard's we believe that all persons are created by God, unique and equal. We strive to create a caring Christian community in which we provide education based on Gospel values where all people reach their full potential. We aim to develop positive relationships with every individual and family, the parishes and the wider community.

"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full"

John 10:10

Reviewed by:	J Collins, Vice Principal (Standards), July 2025
Reviewed by:	A Riding, Principal, July 2025
Review date:	July 2026
Signed:	Austin Senior, Chair of Governors

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Context

Alternative provision is educational provision for students who are unable to access mainstream education for a number of different reasons, or who are unsuited to the mainstream provision on offer. At St Bernard's we recognise that there is a need to ensure that our curriculum is inclusive and accessible, providing opportunities for all students to succeed. Moreover, we recognise the need to offer the type of provision that allows some students to achieve their potential outside of what is accessible at St Bernard's Catholic High School.

To facilitate this individual learning pathway, St Bernard's Catholic High school works with different local providers to help students who have struggled to reach their potential in a school based environment to succeed.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

- To outline the reasons why students might be offered Alternative Provision.
- To ensure that alternative provision is offered to suitable students in a consistent way.
- To provide guidance on the referral process and the suitability of Alternative Providers.
- To ensure there are suitable procedures in place relating to attendance and the safeguarding of students when under the care of Alternative Providers.
- To outline the arrangements in place for keeping in touch with students to monitor academic progress, behaviour and pastoral welfare.
- To guide and support staff with the monitoring and support of Alternative Provision.

Reasons why we might offer Alternative Provision

Students will be referred to Alternative Provision on the basis that this provision is more appropriate for them than what St Bernard's Catholic High School can provide. Some reasons might be:

- The student's strengths are not being developed through the National Curriculum. Alternative Provision recognises that students have different strengths and weaknesses and that mainstream education is not suitable for some. The emphasis on vocational education that some Alternative Provision offers may be more attractive to and suitable for some students.
- The student has had one or more fixed-term exclusions and is considered to be at risk of permanent exclusion from school. Alternative Provision is seen as a desirable alternative to permanent exclusion for students and to encourage their continued inclusion in education.
- The student has not been attending school regularly, and is therefore unlikely to achieve GCSEs. Alternative Provision offers a different setting with a broader choice of subjects for students which may encourage attendance. Alternative Provision may provide a greater opportunity for a student to progress to a suitable post-16 pathway.

Responsibilities

Governing Body will:

- Monitor the implementation of the Alternative Provision Policy and review it on a regular basis.

The Principal will:

- Take overall responsibility for the school's use of Alternative Provision for pupils
- Report to the Governing Body on the effectiveness of the implementation of the Alternative Provision Policy.

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The SLT team will:

- Understand and comply with the guidelines detailed within the Alternative Provision Policy and other related documents.
- Arrange for the identification of an appropriate member of staff to attend meetings relating to pupil referrals and conduct at least half termly progress visits to the Alternative Provider.
- Continually assess the quality and suitability of providers of alternative education for pupils.
- Ensure that liaison takes place with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), SENDCO, person responsible for attendance and other relevant staff to ensure that the appropriate measures are in place to support pupils who are being educated in an alternative setting.
- Decide on an appropriate course of action if informed of any serious behavioural incidents by an Alternative Provider.
- Arrange for the appropriate intervention when a pupil's attendance falls below the academy target.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will:

- Ensure that the Alternative Provider is registered and approved and that they have relevant policies in place to cover Safeguarding, Child Protection and Health and Safety.
- Ensure that all relevant safeguarding checks have been made for staff working in the alternative setting and that confirmation of these checks is recorded on the academy's Single Central Record.
- Ensure that all Alternative Providers hold a copy of, and adhere to, St Bernard's Catholic High School Safeguarding Policy.

The person responsible for attendance will:

- Ensure that arrangements are in place to alert St Bernard's Catholic High school of non-attendance at the alternative setting.
- Monitor the attendance of pupils within alternative settings and report to the Principal/SLT should attendance fall below the school's target.

The SENDCO will:

- Provide details of provision mapping and other relevant information to the Alternative Provider to cater for the Special Educational Needs of pupils.

The pupils will:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety, or that of other people who may be affected by their actions during their placement.
- Fully co-operate with the Alternative Provider, and behave in line with the provider's Behaviour Management Policy.

Policy Process Suitability of Providers

- St Bernard's Catholic High School will access a range of Alternative Provision placements and there will always be a clear rationale in place to ensure that this provision will allow the pupil to make good academic progress.
- Senior Leaders will continually assess the quality and suitability of the providers of alternative education for their pupils.

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- Senior Leaders will ensure that the Alternative Provider is registered and approved and that they have relevant policies in place to cover child protection and health and safety.
- All pupils who are referred to Alternative Provision will have access to a core curriculum, as well as an alternative curriculum covering a range of other areas.
- St Bernard's Catholic High School will use the DfE publication, 'Alternative Provision: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (Jan 2013)' as a basis for making arrangements for Alternative Provision.
- Parents/carers will be fully involved in the process and any decision taken.
- Pupils who are referred to Alternative Provision will remain on roll at St Bernard's Catholic High school and we will fund the placement. As a school we remain ultimately responsible for the pupil and the offer of Alternative Provision demonstrating our commitment to an inclusive approach to the pupil's education.
- St Bernard's Catholic High School will organise a meeting involving all relevant parties, including parents/carers, prior to the placement commencing.
- A representative from St Bernard's Catholic High School will clearly explain to parents/carers, and the pupil where appropriate, the reasons why Alternative Provision is being offered.
- The pupil's parents/carers will sign the Alternative Provision consent letter. Responsibilities for supporting the pupil and timescales for reviewing the provision must be agreed during this initial meeting.
- Once committed to Alternative Provision, pupils must attend and parents/carers must support this. Failure to do so will carry the same consequences as non-attendance to school.
- Impact/success will be measured against targets agreed in the initial meeting and these will be reviewed regularly.

Attendance

- All professionals have a statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and tracking and reporting attendance at Alternative Provision is an essential component in achieving this.
- Attendance at Alternative Provision is monitored closely and every step should be taken to ensure that accurate attendance data is kept.
- Alternative Providers will contact St Bernard's Catholic High School whenever the pupil is absent.
- St Bernard's Catholic High School will then make contact with the parents/carers to try and resolve this issue to ensure that regular attendance is achieved.
- St Bernard's Catholic High School will formally monitor attendance and update records and maintain contact with the Alternative Provider on a weekly basis.
- Pupils whose attendance falls below that of the school's target will be subject to the same procedures in school, as per the attendance policy.

Monitoring academic progress, behaviour and pastoral welfare

- The pupil's attainment data will be communicated to the Alternative Provider prior to the placement.
- A termly report will be completed by the Alternative Provider as part of the monitoring process as per the school's Academic Mentoring procedures.
- The pupil will be visited on a regular basis, at least once per half term, by an appropriate member of staff from St Bernard's Catholic High School and an 'Alternative Provision Record' will be completed.
- The pupil's own views on the placement will be taken into account as part of the monitoring process.

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- The provider will be expected to contact St Bernard's Catholic High School to inform them of any serious behavioural incidents.
- Pupils who are making less than satisfactory progress will be subject to a formal review meeting involving the school, parents/carers and the provider.
- In extreme circumstances, or following an agreed number of unsatisfactory review meetings, the placement may be ended.

Safeguarding

There is an expectation that any safeguarding concerns are raised with the DSL at school and that all Alternative Providers adhere to the child protection and safeguarding policies held by St Bernard's Catholic High school. Our duty of care extends to all pupils, including those who are undertaking Alternative Provision. To assist this, we will:

1. Identify actions to be taken, when and by whom, if any child protection or safeguarding concerns are raised during the placement.
2. Provide pupils with clear advice and a point of contact at school in case of problems.
3. Ensure that any safeguarding concerns are shared with Alternative Providers is appropriate, to ensure that they can continue to support the pupils during their placement.
4. Ensure that the Alternative Provider has recruited staff in line with safer recruitment practices and that confirmation of enhanced DBS checks are recorded within the school's Single Central Record.

Work Experience – Extended Placements

In some circumstances, students might take part in an extended work placement as part of their Alternative Provision. If this is the case our Work Experience Policy will be followed to set up the placement. St Bernard's Catholic High school will work with B&E Together, as outlined in the policy, to organise the placement.

In line with the school's Work Experience Policy, the school's attendance officer will contact the employer each day to ensure the student is on placement

The student will be visited by a member of staff from St Bernard's Catholic High school at least once per term and the same meeting and review document will be completed.