

IOI Alternative Provision Sector Specialist Group

Welcome



Our Members have a shared vision of Outdoor Learning as a highly valued form of development, education and employment in UK society.

Why are we here?



Why are we really here?

- In England there were 13,191 SEN pupils on roll in 335 AP Schools January 2023. (FFE Data Lab 2024)
- The number of subsidiary registrations for 2023 is reported (11,900) giving a total number of 25,100 placements. (FFE Data Lab 2024)
- In January 2024, there were around **1.7 million** school pupils in England with identified SEN (18% of all pupils)
(The House of Commons Library 2024)

Why are we really here?

- The number of 18 to 64 yr olds with Learning Disabilities in employment nationally = 5.1% (NHS Digital 2021)
- In 2021 children with Special Educational Needs were absent from school 30.6% of the time (Children's Commissioner 2023)
- The number of prisoners with Special Educational Needs in a sample report nationally is 36% (Ministry of Justice 2023)

The Alternative Provision landscape

The most common type of alternative provision is a pupil referral unit (PRU): a school that caters for children who aren't able to attend a mainstream school. Around a third of pupils in alternative provision attend PRUs.

Other types of alternative provision include:

- Therapeutic farms
- Forest schools
- Outdoor learning centres
- Sports facilities
- Hospital schools
- Animal-assisted therapeutic centres
- Vocational and practical courses like car mechanics or hairdressing

(The School Run 2024)

The DfE plan

- Three-tier system for AP, with early support in mainstream schools, intensive placements in AP settings, and longer-term placements.
- Early intervention will focus on early identification and intervention, with a greater emphasis on classroom practice and improved access to specialist services.
- Practice guides for mainstream settings by the end of 2025, with a focus on areas of need in primary and secondary schools.
- The DfE has approved a new wave of special free schools to give more children access to local special school places.
- The DfE will introduce a new Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator National Professional Qualification (SENCo NPQ) for schools.
- The DfE will develop and share best practice within and beyond AP.

(DfE 2024)

What should we expect the DfE to be looking for:

The Department for Education are looking for the following:

- Quality of education provided
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- Premises of and accommodation at schools
- Provision of information
- Manner in which complaints are handled
- Quality of leadership in and management of schools
- Safeguarding procedures

How should we respond



Alternative Provision Specialist Group Purpose

- Use the outdoors as a way of standing in the gap between the marginalised and society.
- Recognise, learn and exchange ideas for best practice being delivered in the outdoors.
- Share frameworks of assessment to demonstrate progress made by a child/ young person on an AP programme.
- Represent IOL members who are delivering Alternative Provision.
- Enable members to give children & young people the opportunity to make good choices.

Ideas to support those providing AP in the Outdoors

IOL Member led training in the following areas:

- Safeguarding
- Skills & Techniques in the Management of Challenging Behaviour
- Development of Leadership within the staff team
- Quality of education provision
- Development of education resources

Ideas to support those providing AP in the Outdoors

- Sharing of resources
- Information on where to source materials
- Identification of systems that support the provision
- Open questions
- ???????
- ???????

Reflections

1. The Alternative Provision landscape is going to change
2. The DfE are going to create new legislation and expectations
3. Providers are going to need to conform to the legislation
4. Quality data to support evidence of effective development
5. This is an opportunity for those working in the outdoors

Conclusion

