R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision Admissions Policy

Policy Reference:	REAL.10
Version Number:	1
Applies to:	R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision
Associated documents:	
Implementation date:	September 2026
Next review due by:	September 2027
Approved by:	Service Lead / Operations Director
This policy has been reviewed to ensure it promotes safeguarding and does not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups	

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0. Summary of changes since previous version of policy

- New Policy

1. Aims

R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision is committed to ensuring equitable access to education and positive outcomes for all children and young people referred to its services.

This policy aims to:

- Provide a transparent and consistent framework for managing admissions and referrals into R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision.
- Ensure that all referrals are considered fairly and in accordance with the individual needs of children and young people.
- Support commissioners, local authorities, schools, colleges and other referring agencies to make informed placement decisions.
- Ensure that safeguarding considerations are central to all admissions decisions.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion within the admissions process.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation, statutory guidance and data protection requirements.
- Provide clear information regarding referral pathways, assessment procedures, placement allocation and admission arrangements.

R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision recognises that every child and young person has unique educational, social and emotional needs. Admission decisions will therefore be based upon an assessment of need, risk, suitability of provision and available capacity to ensure the best possible outcomes for each learner.

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0-25 Years
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance
- School Admissions Code 2021
- Data Protection Act 2018

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- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Human Rights Act 1998

This policy should be read alongside all safeguarding, attendance, behaviour, SEND, equality and data protection policies.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Commissioners of educational provision.
- Local Authorities.
- Referring schools and academies.
- Multi-Academy Trusts.
- Parents and carers involved in placement discussions.
- R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision leaders and admissions staff.
- Pastoral Leads and Tutors involved in placement assessments.
- Children and young people referred to R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision.

The policy covers all referrals and admissions into R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision services regardless of funding source, location or commissioning arrangement.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Head of Alternative Provision will:

- Ensure effective implementation of this policy across all provisions.
- Monitor referral and admissions practices to ensure fairness, consistency and compliance.
- Review admissions arrangements regularly and respond to changes in legislation and statutory guidance.
- Provide strategic oversight of placement decisions where required.

4.2 Hub Leads/Provision Managers will:

- Review referral information and assess suitability for placement.
- Undertake initial assessments and risk evaluations prior to admission.
- Maintain communication with commissioners, families and professionals throughout the admissions process.
- Ensure placement arrangements meet identified educational and safeguarding needs.

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4.3 Admissions and Administrative Staff will:

- Process referrals in accordance with agreed procedures.
- Maintain accurate records of admissions decisions and supporting documentation.
- Ensure information is handled in line with data protection requirements.

4.4 Commissioners and Referring Agencies will:

- Provide accurate and complete referral information.
- Submit relevant safeguarding, SEND and educational documentation.
- Inform R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision promptly of any significant changes in circumstances.

5. Definitions

Term	Definition
AP	Alternative Provision
CYP	Child or Young Person
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
Commissioner	The organisation funding and commissioning the placement
Referral	Formal request for placement consideration
Placement	Educational provision agreed following admission

6. Referral Process

6.1 Referral Submission

Referrals may be received from:

- Local Authorities.
- Schools and Academies.
- Multi-Academy Trusts.
- Virtual Schools.
- Other authorised commissioning bodies.

All referrals must be submitted using the approved referral documentation and accompanied by relevant supporting information.

The following information may be required before consideration of admission:

- Current educational information.

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- Attendance records.
- Behaviour records where appropriate.
- SEND documentation.
- EHCP documentation (where applicable).
- Safeguarding information.
- Risk assessments.
- Relevant professional reports.
- Medical information relevant to educational provision.

6.3 Referral Review

Referrals will be reviewed by designated staff to determine:

- Suitability of provision.
- Ability to meet educational needs.
- Safeguarding considerations.
- Health and safety requirements.
- Risk management factors.
- Availability of placements and resources.

Additional information may be requested where necessary.

7. Admissions Criteria

7.1 Eligibility

R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision accepts referrals for children and young people who require alternative educational arrangements due to:

- Medical needs.
- Social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Risk of exclusion.
- Permanent exclusion.
- Reintegration support.
- Special educational needs.
- Other circumstances identified by commissioners.

7.2 Placement Decisions

Admission decisions will be made following careful consideration of:

- Individual learner needs.
- Existing support arrangements.
- Safeguarding requirements.

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- Risk assessment outcomes.
- Suitability of available provision.
- Capacity within services.
- Potential impact on existing learners and staff.

7.3 Refusal of Admission

A referral may be declined where:

- The provision is unable to meet identified needs safely.
- Appropriate staffing or specialist resources are not available.
- Admission would create an unacceptable safeguarding risk.
- The referral information provided is insufficient to support decision-making.

Where a referral is declined, feedback will be provided to the commissioner where appropriate.

8. Assessment and Placement Allocation

8.1 Initial Assessment

Prior to admission, R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision may undertake:

- Educational assessments.
- Risk assessments.
- Transition planning discussions.
- Multi-agency consultations.

8.2 Placement Allocation

Placement decisions will consider:

- Educational suitability.
- Geographical location.
- Availability of resources.
- Specialist support requirements.
- Individual learning needs.

8.3 Transition Arrangements

Transition arrangements will be agreed for each learner and may include:

- Introductory visits.
- Planning meetings.
- Individual transition programmes.
- Family engagement activities.

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9. Safeguarding and Information Sharing

9.1 Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains the highest priority throughout the admissions process.

All referrals will be reviewed to identify:

- Current safeguarding concerns.
- Past safeguarding concerns.
- Child protection plans.
- Vulnerabilities.
- Risk factors requiring management.

Admissions decisions will reflect the organisation's safeguarding responsibilities.

9.2 Information Sharing

Information received during the referral and admissions process will:

- Be processed lawfully.
- Be stored securely.
- Be shared only where necessary and appropriate.
- Comply with data protection legislation.

10. Equality and Inclusion

R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision is committed to ensuring admissions processes are:

- Fair.
- Transparent.
- Inclusive.
- Free from discrimination.

Admissions decisions will not discriminate on the basis of:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Gender reassignment.

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- Sexual orientation.
- Pregnancy or maternity.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered to support equitable access to provision.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Head of Alternative Provision is responsible for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of this policy.

The policy will be reviewed:

- Annually.
- Following significant legislative or regulatory changes.
- Following organisational changes impacting admission arrangements.

The review will consider:

- Referral and admission trends.
- Feedback from commissioners and stakeholders.
- Compliance with statutory guidance.
- Safeguarding outcomes.
- Equality and inclusion considerations.

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