



Stone Lodge Alternative Provision Policy

Policy Written By:	Ollie Sharp
Policy Review date:	September 2026

Stone Lodge Therapeutic School is a specialist independent school that supports pupils with a wide range of social, emotional and mental health needs. Many pupils join the school following placement breakdown in mainstream schools, specialist settings or alternative provisions. As a result, the school provides highly individualised educational programmes designed to re-engage pupils with learning, develop resilience and prepare them for their next stage of education, employment or training.

Our primary aim is for pupils to access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum within the school environment. However, for some pupils, carefully selected Alternative Provision (AP) can enhance their educational experience and support the achievement of their individual outcomes.

The use of Alternative Provision is considered only where it adds clear educational value and complements the school's curriculum offer. This may include opportunities to:

- Access accredited qualifications not available within the school's curriculum.
- Develop vocational skills and career pathways.
- Access specialist facilities, equipment or expertise that cannot be provided by the school.
- Engage in programmes that support preparation for further education, employment or independent living.
- Support engagement with education through therapeutic or specialist interventions.

All Alternative Provision placements are carefully assessed to ensure they are appropriate, safe and capable of delivering high-quality educational experiences. The school maintains oversight of pupils' attendance, progress, achievement, safeguarding and wellbeing while they attend Alternative Provision.

Placements are reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the pupil and contribute positively to their educational progress and long-term outcomes. Stone Lodge Therapeutic School remains responsible for the pupil's overall educational programme and works closely with providers, families and external agencies to ensure consistency, quality and accountability.

Alternative Provision is therefore used as a targeted and purposeful element of a pupil's educational programme, enabling them to access opportunities that enhance their learning, broaden their aspirations and support successful future destinations.

Our use of Alternative Provision is based on our core values of Care, Understanding and Ambition.

Statutory Guidance

This policy should be read alongside:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- DfE Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- SEND Code of Practice
- Stone Lodge Safeguarding Policy

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- Stone Lodge Attendance Policy
- Stone Lodge Behaviour Policy

Care

At Stone Lodge Therapeutic School, safeguarding and wellbeing are at the centre of all decisions regarding Alternative Provision.

- Safeguarding is paramount and all Alternative Providers are assessed for safeguarding, health and safety and suitability before placement.
- Pupils are supported by a dedicated member of Stone Lodge staff who understands their needs and advocates on their behalf.
- The Therapy Team will liaise with Alternative Providers where necessary to ensure therapeutic needs are understood and supported.
- Some provisions are used specifically to support social, emotional and mental health needs, for example equine therapy or therapeutic interventions.
- Pupils continue to receive the same safeguarding protections as when attending school.

Understanding

Alternative Provision placements are designed around the individual needs of each pupil.

- All decisions regarding Alternative Provision are made in consultation with the Therapy Team and Senior Leadership Team.
- All pupils attending Alternative Provision have appropriate risk assessments in place.
- Providers are given relevant information regarding pupils' needs to ensure they can provide appropriate support.
- Programmes are highly individualised and reviewed regularly.
- Provision may change over time as pupils develop confidence, resilience and engagement.
- It remains the ambition of Stone Lodge Therapeutic School that all pupils access their entitlement to a full-time education wherever possible.
- Alternative Provision may also be used to provide specialist opportunities that a small school cannot always offer directly, for example Hair and Beauty, Construction or Animal Care.

Ambition

Stone Lodge Therapeutic School believes all pupils can be successful.

- Pupils are supported to attend, engage and make progress.

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- Alternative Provision is used to help pupils achieve positive outcomes and fulfil their aspirations.
- Achievement and attainment are monitored and tracked by subject leaders and the Senior Leadership Team.
- Pupils are supported to develop independence and preparation for adulthood.
- Placements are intended to improve future opportunities for further education, training and employment.

Approval of Alternative Provision Placements

The decision to place a pupil in Alternative Provision will be made by the Heads of School in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, Therapy Team, parents/carers and, where appropriate, the pupil.

Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), consideration will be given to identified outcomes, annual reviews and recommendations from professionals involved with the pupil.

The rationale for the placement, intended outcomes and review arrangements will be clearly documented.

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

The Principal will:

- Approve all Alternative Provision placements.
- Ensure placements are safe, suitable and educationally appropriate.
- Maintain overall accountability for pupils attending Alternative Provision.
- Ensure appropriate monitoring and quality assurance arrangements are in place.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL will:

- Oversee safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure providers have effective safeguarding procedures.
- Maintain communication with providers regarding safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure concerns are acted upon promptly and appropriately.

Therapy Team and SENCO

The Therapy Team and SENCO will:

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- Contribute to placement decisions.
- Support providers in understanding pupils' needs.
- Monitor the impact of placements on wellbeing and progress.
- Contribute to reviews and future planning.

Subject Leaders and Teachers

Subject leaders and teachers will:

- Monitor attendance, engagement and achievement.
- Review progress against planned outcomes.
- Liaise with providers regarding curriculum delivery and attainment.

Alternative Providers

Alternative Providers are expected to:

- Maintain appropriate safeguarding arrangements.
- Report attendance daily.
- Communicate concerns promptly.
- Provide progress information when requested.
- Deliver agreed programmes safely and effectively.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Support attendance and engagement.
- Work collaboratively with the school and provider.
- Attend review meetings where required.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is paramount. All pupils attending Alternative Provision remain on the roll of Stone Lodge Therapeutic School and receive the same safeguarding protections as any pupil attending school.

Prior to approval, providers will be assessed through a due diligence process which may include:

- Safeguarding and child protection procedures.

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- Designated Safeguarding Lead arrangements.
- Safer recruitment processes.
- DBS checking procedures.
- Staff safeguarding training.
- Health and safety procedures.
- Fire safety arrangements.
- Insurance documentation.
- Risk assessment procedures.

Providers will be given the contact details of the school's Designated Safeguarding Leads and expectations regarding reporting concerns.

In many cases pupils will be accompanied by Stone Lodge staff to provide support and reassurance.

Attendance

Attendance is monitored and tracked by the school with oversight from the Senior Leadership Team.

When pupils attend Alternative Provision:

- Attendance will be confirmed directly with the provider.
- Attendance will be recorded in line with statutory requirements.
- Morning registration takes place between 9:00am and 9:30am.
- Afternoon registration takes place between 12:00pm and 12:30pm.
- First day calling procedures will be followed for unexplained absence.
- Welfare checks and home visits may be undertaken where appropriate.

Attendance information contributes to ongoing placement reviews.

Monitoring and Review

Stone Lodge Therapeutic School retains responsibility for all pupils attending Alternative Provision.

Each placement will be reviewed regularly, normally at least termly, and will consider:

- Attendance and punctuality.
- Progress towards academic and vocational outcomes.
- Progress towards EHCP outcomes where applicable.
- Safeguarding and wellbeing.

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- Behaviour and engagement.
- Suitability and effectiveness of the provision.

Written reports may be requested from providers and considered by the Senior Leadership Team, Therapy Team and relevant staff.

Where placements are no longer meeting the needs of the pupil, changes may be made or placements ended.

Quality Assurance

All Alternative Providers are subject to quality assurance processes.

This may include:

- Initial provider visits.
- Review of policies and procedures.
- Discussions regarding curriculum delivery and outcomes.
- Monitoring visits by school staff.
- Attendance and progress reviews.
- Feedback from pupils and families.
- Review of safeguarding arrangements.

The school will maintain regular communication with providers to ensure pupils receive a safe, ambitious and high-quality educational experience.

Transport

It may be necessary for staff to transport pupils to Alternative Provision to support engagement.

Staff may use their own vehicles where they hold:

- Appropriate business insurance.
- A valid driving licence.
- A valid MOT certificate where applicable.

School vehicles are also available for staff use.

Depending on the location of the provision and the risk assessment of the pupil, independent travel may be appropriate. This may include:

- Public transport.
- Walking.
- Taxi transport.

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Where taxi transport is used, only approved providers will be commissioned.

Safeguarding considerations will always be central to transport decisions.

Governance and Oversight

The Proprietor and Senior Leadership Team will receive regular information regarding:

- Attendance at Alternative Provision.
- Progress and achievement.
- Safeguarding concerns.
- Placement effectiveness.
- Destination outcomes.
- Quality assurance findings.

This ensures effective oversight and accountability for all Alternative Provision arrangements.

Concerns, Complaints and Escalation

Any concerns regarding the suitability, quality or safety of Alternative Provision must be reported immediately to the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where safeguarding concerns arise, the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed without delay.

The school reserves the right to suspend or terminate placements where:

- Safeguarding concerns are identified.
- The provision no longer meets the pupil's needs.
- Expected standards of education, welfare or communication are not maintained.

Complaints regarding Alternative Provision will be managed in line with the school's Complaints Policy.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes to legislation, guidance or school practice.

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