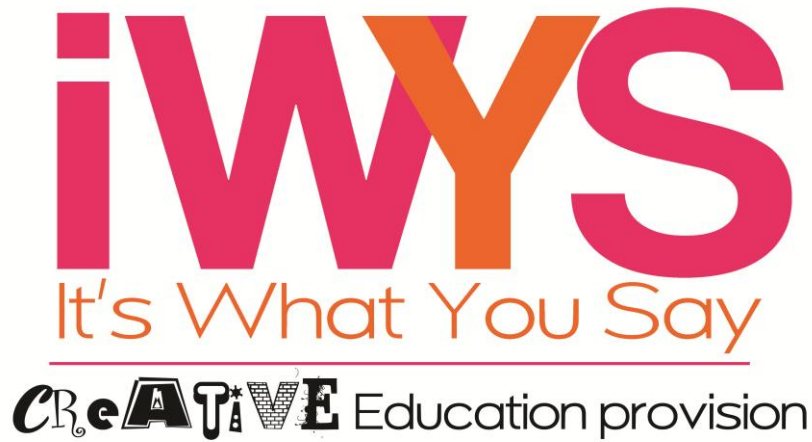




IWYS

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Academic Year 2026–2027

Document control

Policy owner	Head of Provision / Proprietor
Applies to	All teaching staff, tutors, support staff, visiting tutors and other adults involved in learners' education
Effective date	October 2026 (subject to approval)
Review date	October 2027, or sooner following changes to statutory guidance or provision
Approval	To be completed by the Proprietor / Head of Provision

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1. Purpose and aims

IWYS Alternative Provision (IWYS) is committed to providing safe, purposeful, inclusive and high-quality education that helps each learner make progress academically, socially and emotionally. This policy sets out the expectations for planning, teaching, assessment and the review of learning across the provision.

The policy recognises that learners may have experienced disrupted education, exclusion, anxiety, unmet additional needs, barriers to attendance or other circumstances affecting engagement. These experiences must inform support and adaptation; they must not lead to low expectations.

Through teaching and learning, IWYS aims to:

- provide a safe, respectful and predictable learning environment;
- establish ambitious, individualised learning goals and support measurable progress;
- identify and address gaps in knowledge, skills, literacy and numeracy;
- deliver a broad, relevant curriculum that supports qualifications, personal development and preparation for adulthood;
- develop independence, resilience, confidence, communication and positive relationships;
- support successful reintegration, transition, further education, training or employment where appropriate;
- ensure that teaching is informed by assessment, learner voice and collaboration with families and placing schools.

2. Scope and principles

This policy applies to all learning delivered by IWYS, including classroom-based teaching, small-group and one-to-one sessions, vocational and practical learning, off-site or community activities, online learning where used, and learning delivered by visiting or commissioned tutors.

Teaching should be learner-centred, trauma-aware, strengths-based and culturally responsive. Staff should use clear routines and consistent boundaries while recognising that behaviour may communicate unmet needs. Relationships must be professional, respectful and boundaried.

Core principles are high expectations; inclusion and reasonable adjustments; safeguarding first; purposeful learning; accurate assessment; learner participation; consistency across staff; and preparation for positive next steps.

3. Legal and guidance framework

IWYS will have regard to relevant legislation and guidance applicable to its status, placements and activities. The framework includes, where applicable:

- Education Act 1996 and relevant duties concerning suitable education and special educational needs;
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled learners;
- Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (statutory guidance in force from 1 September 2026);
- Alternative Provision: statutory guidance for local authorities, headteachers and governing bodies, updated February 2025;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and relevant information-sharing guidance;
- Prevent duty guidance and applicable online safety, health and safety, data protection and safeguarding requirements;
- the commissioning school's or local authority's arrangements, placement agreement and any relevant EHCP or support plan.

The precise legal duties that apply can differ according to whether a placement is commissioned by a school or local authority and whether the provider is registered or unregistered. IWYS leaders must check applicability rather than assume every school-specific duty applies identically to every provider.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Proprietor / Head of Provision: establish a clear educational vision; ensure staff, resources and timetable arrangements support effective teaching; monitor quality and learner outcomes; ensure relevant policies and statutory responsibilities are implemented; and address weaknesses promptly.

Teachers and tutors: plan coherent learning; communicate clear objectives and success criteria; adapt teaching to individual need; maintain accurate assessment and attendance records; provide feedback; promote safeguarding and positive behaviour; and report concerns or lack of progress.

Teaching assistants and support staff: support access and independence, follow teacher direction and agreed plans, avoid doing work for learners, record relevant observations and raise concerns.

Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and safeguarding team: ensure concerns affecting learning or attendance are acted on under safeguarding procedures and information is shared appropriately.

Learners: attend and participate as consistently as they are able, treat others respectfully, attempt tasks, ask for help and contribute to reviews of their goals.

Parents/carers and placing schools: share relevant information, support attendance and agreed learning goals, contribute to reviews and communicate changes that may affect the learner's safety, wellbeing or education.

5. Curriculum, planning and sequencing

The curriculum should be purposeful, suitably broad and matched to learners' ages, starting points, needs, aspirations and intended destinations. It should include appropriate core learning in English, mathematics and digital skills, alongside personal development, PSHE/RSHE where applicable, careers education, life skills and relevant vocational or practical subjects.

Where learners are working towards recognised qualifications, teaching should map learning to the relevant specification, assessment objectives and examination or awarding-body requirements. Staff must use current specifications and ensure any practical or vocational activities are appropriately supervised and risk assessed.

Planning should show how prior knowledge is revisited, new knowledge is introduced and practised, and learning is sequenced towards longer-term goals. Schemes of work should identify key knowledge, vocabulary, skills, resources, assessment opportunities, adaptations and links to safeguarding or personal development where relevant.

Each learner should have an initial assessment and an individual learning plan or equivalent record. This should draw on prior attainment, baseline tasks, school records, EHCP/support plan information where relevant, learner voice, family/placing-school information and any identified barriers to learning. Plans should set specific, realistic but ambitious targets and be reviewed regularly.

Staff should check that curriculum time is used effectively and that learners receive sufficient teaching and practice to make progress. Changes to a learner's programme should be documented and, where appropriate, agreed with the placing school, local authority and family.

6. Teaching approaches and lesson expectations

Lessons should be purposeful, well organised and adapted to the learners present. Staff should establish a calm start, explain the learning intention, activate prior knowledge, model new learning, provide guided practice, check understanding and give learners opportunities to practise independently.

Effective teaching may include explicit instruction, worked examples, questioning, discussion, practical demonstrations, retrieval practice, chunking, visual supports, scaffolded tasks, guided reading, vocabulary instruction, structured collaboration and carefully chosen digital resources. Staff should select methods to suit the subject and learner rather than follow a single formula.

Learning objectives and success criteria should be communicated in accessible language. Staff should make the purpose of tasks clear and check that learners understand what to do before expecting independent work.

Questioning and ongoing checks should identify misconceptions early. Staff should respond by re-explaining, modelling, changing the task, offering a scaffold or extending learning where appropriate. Praise and feedback should be specific and reinforce effort, strategy, improvement and successful learning behaviours.

Work should be appropriately challenging, accessible and meaningful. Worksheets or online tasks should not replace direct teaching, interaction and assessment. Practical work must be safe, adequately resourced and supervised.

Staff should maintain professional boundaries, follow the staff code of conduct and avoid practices that humiliate, shame or discriminate against learners.

7. Assessment, recording and reporting

Assessment should support learning as well as measure outcomes. Staff should use baseline assessment, questioning, observation, quizzes, written and practical work, portfolio evidence, formal tests and qualification assessment as appropriate.

Assessment information should be used to identify starting points, gaps, misconceptions, strengths and next steps. Judgements should be proportionate, evidence-based and consistent with the subject or qualification criteria.

Feedback should be timely and understandable. It should tell learners what they have done well, what needs improving and how to improve it. Learners should be given opportunities to act on feedback and demonstrate improvement.

Staff should maintain accurate records of attendance, topics taught, work completed, assessment outcomes, progress against targets, interventions and significant barriers. Records must be factual, secure and shared only with authorised people for a legitimate purpose.

Progress should be reviewed at planned intervals with the learner and, where appropriate, parents/carers, the placing school and other professionals. Reports should describe progress from the learner's starting point, engagement, strengths, concerns, support provided and recommended next steps. Any risk of a learner falling behind or not receiving suitable education must be escalated promptly.

8. Personalisation, SEND and inclusion

IWYS will seek to remove barriers to participation and progress. Staff should be familiar with relevant SEND information, reasonable adjustments, communication needs, medical information and agreed support strategies shared on a need-to-know basis.

Adaptations may include smaller task steps, additional processing time, assistive technology, visual timetables, alternative ways to record learning, pre-teaching vocabulary, movement breaks, sensory adjustments, explicit routines, supported reading, reduced distraction or additional adult support. Adaptations should preserve appropriate ambition and promote independence.

Where a learner has an EHCP, staff should work with the placing school or local authority and relevant professionals to support the outcomes and provision specified in the plan, within the agreed placement arrangements. IWYS should raise concerns where the placement or support appears unable to meet identified needs.

Staff should not diagnose needs. They should record observed barriers, discuss them with the appropriate lead and seek advice or referral through agreed channels. Discrimination, bullying, racist or derogatory language, sexism, harassment and disability-related abuse must be challenged and addressed.

Reasonable adjustments and individual support should be reviewed to establish whether they are effective. Learner voice is important in identifying what helps them feel safe and learn successfully.

9. Behaviour, relationships and engagement

Behaviour expectations should be clear, fair, proportionate and consistently applied in line with the IWYS Behaviour Policy. Staff should prioritise prevention, positive relationships, predictable routines, de-escalation and teaching the skills needed for successful participation.

Staff should consider context, communication, unmet need, disability, trauma and safeguarding factors when responding to behaviour. This does not remove the need to maintain safety, boundaries and accountability. Consequences must be lawful, proportionate and consistent with the relevant policy and placement arrangements.

Incidents, patterns of disengagement and successful strategies should be recorded in line with policy. Staff must report bullying, child-on-child abuse, discrimination, threats, exploitation indicators and other safeguarding concerns without delay. Behaviour records do not replace safeguarding records or referrals.

Where a learner cannot access learning safely, staff should follow agreed risk management and escalation procedures, contact the appropriate lead and communicate with parents/carers or placing school as required. Any use of physical intervention must follow the relevant policy, training and legal requirements; it must never be used as punishment.

10. Safeguarding and wellbeing in learning

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff must read and follow Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the IWYS safeguarding and child protection procedures applicable to their role. Staff must know how to contact the DSL/deputy and how to respond to a disclosure or immediate risk.

Learning activities should promote safety, respect, healthy relationships, online safety, equality and help-seeking. Staff should remain alert to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation, self-harm, mental health difficulty, domestic abuse, serious violence and other risks that may affect learning.

Concerns must be reported promptly and recorded factually, including the concern, action taken, decisions and rationale where applicable. Staff must not promise confidentiality or investigate allegations themselves. In an emergency or immediate danger, call 999 and follow safeguarding procedures.

Teaching staff should create psychologically safe learning environments without promising absolute confidentiality. Sensitive topics should be taught age-appropriately, with clear ground rules and a plan for responding to disclosures. Any external visitor or visiting tutor must follow safeguarding, suitability, supervision and site procedures.

Online learning and technology use must be safe and appropriate. Staff should use approved platforms and resources, maintain professional boundaries and follow filtering/monitoring and data protection arrangements where applicable.

11. Attendance, punctuality and re-engagement

Regular attendance is essential for progress, but IWYS recognises that learners may face barriers to attendance. Attendance and punctuality must be recorded accurately and followed up in accordance with the Attendance Policy, placement agreement and commissioning arrangements.

Staff should use welcoming routines and early communication to identify barriers, celebrate improved attendance and agree practical support. Persistent absence, unexplained absence, repeated lateness or a learner missing from provision must be escalated promptly under the relevant safeguarding and attendance procedures.

Where appropriate, IWYS should work with the placing school, local authority, parents/carers and other agencies to agree a realistic re-engagement plan. Any reduced timetable or phased programme must be clearly justified, reviewed and agreed through the applicable placement arrangements; it should not become an informal or indefinite substitute for suitable education.

12. Digital learning and artificial intelligence

Digital resources should enhance teaching, accessibility, feedback or practice and must not be used without a clear educational purpose. Staff should check that online content is accurate, age-appropriate, accessible and lawful to use.

Any use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) must comply with IWYS data protection, safeguarding, acceptable-use and assessment requirements. Staff must not enter identifiable or confidential learner information into unapproved AI tools. AI-generated material must be checked for accuracy, bias, age-appropriateness and copyright concerns.

AI must not replace professional judgement, direct interaction, safeguarding action or reliable assessment. Learners should be taught to use digital tools responsibly and to recognise misinformation, manipulated content, deepfakes, privacy risks and the importance of acknowledging assistance where required by awarding bodies.

13. Quality assurance and professional development

The Head of Provision will use proportionate quality assurance to understand the quality and impact of teaching. Activities may include learning visits, work scrutiny, planning reviews, learner voice, assessment moderation, progress and attendance analysis, review meetings and feedback from placing schools and families.

Quality assurance should focus on improving learning and consistency, not merely compliance. Findings should identify strengths, development priorities, support and timescales. Where concerns arise, leaders should provide coaching, training, mentoring or a clear improvement plan and review its impact.

Staff should engage in relevant professional development, including safeguarding, SEND and inclusion, behaviour and de-escalation, subject knowledge, assessment, online safety and any vocational or practical training required for their role. Visiting tutors should be briefed on IWYS expectations and receive appropriate oversight.

14. Partnership with parents, carers, schools and agencies

Effective learning depends on timely communication and shared expectations. IWYS should provide clear information about the learner's programme, attendance, progress, achievements, concerns and next steps, using accessible communication methods where possible.

Information should be shared with the placing school or local authority in line with the placement agreement, safeguarding duties and data protection requirements. Child protection information must be shared promptly and securely with the appropriate people; data protection must not be used as a reason to withhold information necessary to safeguard a child.

Reviews should include the learner's views and, where appropriate, the views of parents/carers, placing school, social care, health professionals, SEND professionals and other relevant agencies. Disagreements or concerns about the suitability of the placement should be escalated through agreed channels.

15. Equality, accessibility and British values

IWYS expects all learners and staff to be treated with dignity and respect. Teaching must not unlawfully discriminate and should reflect the diversity of the community. Materials should be reviewed for stereotypes, bias and unnecessary barriers to participation.

Where relevant to the curriculum and learners' age, staff should promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. These should be explored through thoughtful teaching, respectful discussion and the daily life of the provision, while challenging extremism, prejudice, racism, sexism and derogatory behaviour.

Staff should create opportunities for learners to develop independence, citizenship, critical thinking, respectful disagreement and an understanding of rights and responsibilities. Political or controversial issues should be handled fairly, in accordance with applicable requirements and the IWYS curriculum and safeguarding arrangements.

16. Monitoring, review and approval

The Head of Provision / Proprietor is responsible for implementing and reviewing this policy. The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if legislation, statutory guidance, the nature of provision or identified quality-assurance findings require a change.

Review should consider learner progress and destinations, attendance, curriculum access, SEND adaptations, learner voice, safeguarding trends, feedback from parents/carers and placing schools, staff development and relevant changes to national guidance.

Approval and review dates should be recorded in the document-control table. Staff should be informed of material changes and receive any training or briefing needed to implement them.

Appendix A: Minimum lesson expectations

Use this checklist flexibly according to the learner, subject, session length and context.

- Before the session: check the plan, learner targets, relevant support/medical information, resources and risk controls.
- Welcome learners and establish a calm, safe start with clear routines.
- Share the learning intention and explain what success will look like.
- Connect to prior learning and check starting understanding.
- Explain and model new knowledge or skills in manageable steps.
- Use questioning and observation to check understanding and identify misconceptions.
- Provide supported practice, then an appropriate opportunity for independent application.
- Adapt tasks and resources without unnecessarily lowering expectations.
- Give specific feedback and time for learners to improve their work.
- Record key learning, assessment, engagement, attendance and agreed next steps.
- Report safeguarding concerns or significant incidents promptly using the correct procedure.

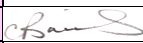
Appendix B: Learning and progress review prompts

Starting point	What did the learner know or do at baseline? What information informed the starting point?
Progress	What new knowledge, skills or qualifications has the learner gained? What evidence supports this judgement?
Engagement	What supports attendance, participation, confidence and persistence? What barriers remain?
Inclusion	Are reasonable adjustments and support strategies effective? Has the learner's voice been heard?
Next steps	What are the next specific learning targets, who will support them, and when will progress be reviewed?
Partnership	What needs to be shared or agreed with the learner, family, placing school, local authority or other professionals?

Appendix C: Key references

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (DfE):** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- **Alternative provision: statutory guidance (DfE; updated 5 February 2025):**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision>
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (DfE):**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- **SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- **Equality Act 2010:** <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- **Education Act 1996:** <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>
- **Information sharing to safeguard children and young people (DfE):**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>
- **Prevent duty guidance:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

Approval

Approved by	Charmaine Baines
Signature	
Date	October 2026