

## Nottinghamshire County Council's Alternative Provision Directory

### *Quality Assurance Framework – teaching, learning and progress*

<b>Alternative Provision:</b>	<b>Prime8</b>	<b>Date:</b> 18.11.2020
<b>Quality Assurance decision:</b> This is a <b>SECURE</b> provision		
<b>Context:</b> <u>Coronavirus Pandemic</u>		
<p>In response to the Coronavirus pandemic the Government took the decision to close schools on 20<sup>th</sup> March to all but the children of keyworkers and those defined as being vulnerable i.e. those who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child</li> <li>• have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and it is determined, following risk assessment, that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment</li> <li>• have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued attendance. This might include children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training'), those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers and others at the provider and local authority's discretion.</li> </ul> <p>From 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 schools began a phased reopening following specific guidance from the Department of Education with a full re-opening for all students in September 2020.</p> <p>To reduce the risk of cross infection during this period, Ofsted adapted their practice for state-funded schools visiting only a small number to discuss how they were managing students' return to education. Following suit, quality assurance visits were undertaken remotely with a focus on the extent to which the practice of Alternative Providers reflected DfE expectations:  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools</a></p>		
<b>Leadership and Management:</b>		
<b>What systems are in place to enable staff to plan and deliver provision that will ensure progress is made in relation to:</b>		
<b>Good academic attainment on par with mainstream schools with appropriate accreditation and qualifications</b>		
<p>Since the last QA visit, Maths and Science specialists have been appointed to support learners in their pursuit of GCSE accreditation in the core subjects. Following the full re-opening of schools, the wider curriculum has been resumed this half term and includes humanities and Asdan accreditation.</p>		
<b>Exam Entries</b>		
<p>The Provider experienced difficulties with exam entries Summer 2020 due to the reluctance of the mainstream exam centre to award a centre grade or include 'guest' candidates in their school's rank order. Through effective collaboration with another local AP students' entries were secured resulting in commendable results in GCSE English, Maths and Combined Science.</p>		

Since the full return the Provider has re-established their previous link with a local mainstream school. However, steps have been taken to mitigate the experience of last academic year through a service level agreement which has the full support of the Executive Headteacher. This will ensure learners have access to a broad range of accredited courses.

One student is finding it difficult to re-engage in education through high levels of anxiety. Weekly visits to engage with the learner and deliver resource packs to support the continuity of courses have been undertaken. Although exam entries have been made, it is anticipated this may impact on the learner's capacity to complete all courses studied. Commissioning officers have been kept fully informed throughout.

The Provider is routinely collating learners' work, including the completion of past papers, covering all key aspects of the syllabus to support teacher assessment if arrangements for terminal exams are disrupted again this academic year.

### **NCC Leadership Support**

The Provider confirmed the frequent e-mails summarising exam arrangements had proved invaluable in guiding staff through the complex processes outlined in guidance published by the DfE, Ofqual and awarding bodies.

Similarly, the Provider commented on how valuable the weekly AP briefings had been, describing them as a 'lifeline' providing an effective solution focussed support network. The Provider would like to see the weekly meeting continue indefinitely.

A senior member of staff attended the EPS Wellbeing for Return to Education webinar training and led the implementation of procedures and support as needed.

The Provider reported finding attendance at Headteacher telekits useful in raising awareness of the most up to date guidance and expectations of school leaders. In addition, it has been particularly useful to read other issues raised through the chat function – reducing feelings of isolation. The Provider commented that despite being mainly focussed on schools, she has found the training to be relevant and good. However, there remains small parts whereby AP leaders do not have the same entitlements e.g. Test kits.

### **The specific personal, social and academic needs of pupils are properly identified and met in order to help them to overcome any barriers to attainment.**

Throughout the pandemic the Provider has prioritised students' emotional wellbeing and mental health through mindfulness activities including significant financial investment in creating Mindfulness areas both in and out of doors. (see images below)

On full opening, the timetable was altered to allow for longer mindfulness sessions in the afternoon which is used to support positive mental health and emotional wellbeing. Regular PSD sessions are planned to address the current situation with flexibility if more time is required to discuss issues of concern.

To support their work in this area staff have undertaken the following training:

**Mindfulness in Schools Project:** the Provider applied, and was selected, for inclusion in the pilot of MiSP. Involving different levels of training over the year, staff are currently training in wellbeing for one self before progressing to Mindfulness in an AP environment.

#### **Mental Health:**

May 20: Level 2 Understanding Mental Health in Children and Young People

Aug 20: Mental wellbeing and returning to school webinar with Helen James, Young Minds

Nov 20: Mental wellbeing in Children and Young People

The Provider has implemented a new procedure to capture feedback from staff. Devised and set up by the DSL, staff complete a feedback form summarising the training and identifying any further action points or training needed. This is then placed on SharePoint for other staff to read.

Staff have prioritised forming and maintaining solid relationships between family/learner through:

- Welfare checks and visits
- Letters home keeping families informed of any changes.
- Acknowledgement of engagement from learners - (Featuring in NCC AP Handsup Bulletin)
- Thank our Children Certificates
- Thank you card to parents / carers

### **Improved pupil motivation and self-confidence, attendance and engagement with education**

Letters were forwarded to all parents in September reinforcing DfE expectations and highlighting the importance of good attendance; this was also published in the COVID section of the website.

The Provider reported that prioritising relationships with families has continued into September resulting in good attendance levels.

Attendance is encouraged through the reward system. However, learners are not penalised in the case of compulsory Covid isolation. Should learners need to self-isolate Prime8 has recruited additional Community staff who can deliver online lessons.

Whenever COVID related anxieties are impacting on attendance, prompt interventions are undertaken by staff revisiting the home to discuss and agree additional strategies. For example, Community sessions are offered where families have concerns over the group setting.

Any anxiety related non-attendance is recorded on the NCC central register and Schools registers and returned weekly (using X code as COVID related absence).

In the case of persistent non-attendance, contact is made with other agencies, including schools and social care as necessary. Work is set for non-attenders via Teams.

The Provider described practice in addressing the attendance concerns regarding one learner; home visits were arranged during which a plan was formulated with agreed timetable adjustments to include an increase in dog walking activities and time on the allotment promoting re-engagement at a pace to reflect student's needs.

Timetabling is flexible and personalised. All learners work from individual starting points, building on existing skills to increase confidence and self-esteem.

Lesson material is accessible to all staff within forward planning. Subject leads are in place to support and to uplift resources onto Teams if barriers in accessing the lesson are experienced. Physical work packs are dropped off if online learning is not possible.

### **Pupil Premium**

Pupil Premium has been applied for – Qtr1 and Qtr 2 which facilitated further recruitment to maintain staff ratios and the appointment of a Community Liaison lead to ensure the smooth running of the Provider's outreach provision. In addition, the range of opportunities has been extended to include:

- An allotment
- Land locally for outdoor activities – E.g. Fishing
- Rental of indoor space in Retford for students needing 1:1 rather than group-based activities.
- Support for families through close/regular contact from keyworkers.

The impact of which is demonstrated by the sustained levels of good attendance.

**Clearly defined objectives, including the next steps following the placement such as reintegration into mainstream education, further education, training or employment.**

Immediately prior to the first lockdown, learners visited a careers fair following which they had benefited from 1:1 support and guidance from Community staff who led a collaborative approach with colleagues from the FE sector and through links with the Chamber of Commerce. Learners were encouraged to participate in online virtual tours and engage with NCC apprenticeship consultants. Students progressed to local FE and training providers.

Close liaison with the family SENCO and effective sharing of information with existing links supported the transition of primary learners to secondary placements.

**Teaching & Learning –**

Since the full return to education, the priority has been supporting learners to re-engage in learning through a holistic approach with a focus on mindfulness. There has been significant financial investment in the creation of a Mindfulness indoor space and, reflecting DfE guidance on the reduced risk of outdoor spaces, a Mindfulness outdoor classroom (see below)

The appointment of a Mental Health Practitioner has facilitated 1:1 calming activity sessions, supporting ARNA learners.

Following the closure of community facilities such as libraries, a new outreach base has been established at Retford Business Centre supporting those learners struggling to access group-based activities post lockdown.

An allotment has also been sourced where learners are supported by Community staff with high staffing ratios, either 1:1 or 2:1.

Learner Ambassadors were involved in the review of curriculum planning prior to October half term and fed back positively on the impact of the daily Mindfulness activities. Following the review, it was agreed that the structure of the day should be changed to include such activities on a more permanent basis. The morning sessions now consist of English, Math and Science with two short breaks. Lunch has been reduced to half an hour and mindfulness activities scheduled for the afternoon, ending with a half hour reflection on the achievements of the day.

Prior to COVID 19 the Provider had planned to adopt BKSB as an assessment tool. However, following DfE guidance, post lockdown assessments have been carried out discretely with quizzes adopting an interactive approach to identify gaps in knowledge.

In addition, the provider engaged in rigorous forward planning, correlated with learning lists placed within the front cover of learners' books and used to identify gaps in knowledge, inform short term planning and reflected in lesson logs forwarded to commissioning officers. Online assessment resources such as Pixi Maths and Doodle English have been purchased and implemented over the Autumn Term.

The RSHE policy has been written by the PSD Lead and uploaded onto the providers website: <https://www.prime8education.co.uk/policies-1/> Links are made to the Asdan PSD Award and includes modules on healthy mindset, healthy relationships including grooming and consent, body image and internet safety. The science policy has been adjusted to include healthy lifestyles including STIs, contraception, smoking, vaping, drinking and drug misuse.

**Blended / Remote Education**

The Provider benefits from the guidance of an external IT consultant based at a local Academy, who recommended Microsoft Teams accounts as an appropriate platform to deliver online learning. The Consultant delivered staff training and remote learning was successfully implemented over the first lockdown. Learning resources were uplifted to the Teams account and has continued so that the provider is able to provide immediate access to high quality resources should any learner have to self-isolate.

Microsoft Teams proved successful over lockdown as it facilitates the sharing of resources between learner and staff with individual E-folders in which to save evidence electronically. Learners without access to a laptop were able to borrow one from the Provider.

The Provider subscribes to Pixi maths; Conquer Maths; Doodle English; Twinkl; Focus e-learning Science; and has long subscribed to Tapestry to collate learners' e-portfolio. Although the Oak Academy was considered, it did not support the degree of personalisation required to meet the needs of learners or the advantage of Teams where learners and staff can interact and share screens and documents.

Although lap tops were provided for those without access, the provider reported some learners prefer the familiarity of physical resources. In such cases, the learner's key worker is responsible for dropping off resources and conducting garden welfare checks and liaising with parents and carers.

### **E-Safety**

Learners follow individual timetables for remote learning and the delivery of core subjects which safeguards against inappropriate communications between peers. Close working relationships between key workers and parents / carers promotes the sharing of any concerns at an early stage.

Records of welfare checks for those engaging in remote learning are retained by the provider.

An Acceptable Use Policy is in place which all staff are required to sign confirming they have read and understood their role and responsibilities. Similarly, a parent/carer agreement is also issued.

Microsoft Teams secure encryption ensures online safety - <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoftteams/teams-security-guide> Support in effective use of Teams is available and accessed when required.

The Provider is familiar with DfE guidance and accesses regular updates such as remote learning exemplar case studies.

Although ed tech resources are aimed primarily at schools, the Provider has found some aspects relevant and included within their practice.

### **Behaviour & Safety**

The provision manager has responsibility for Health and Safety. She has completed the Educare Health and Safety in Education online training. (16.11.2020)

### **COVID-19 Arrangements**

Environmental Risk Assessments based on Government templates are in place for both the base and community sites and are colour coded to reflect the regular reviews and updates. Risk assessments are in place for individual learners.

### **Control Measures**

- Bubbles are in place in base and community sites to prevent cross bubbling.
- Temperatures of staff and learners taken on arrival at base or community sessions.
- Face masks provided for all learners and PPE available for staff
- Face masks are worn in cars with windows open throughout journey
- Regular handwashing and hand gel prompts for learners
- Enhanced daily cleaning with special attention paid to high contact areas
- All pens, materials and resources are sanitised between use
- Classrooms well ventilated with doors and windows open to allow flow of air.
- Low temperature maintained in classroom – 16 degrees

### **Infection Control**

- Track and trace is in place and displayed.  
On confirmation of a positive case:
- PHE informed and advice followed
- Contact was made with those in the bubble and letters were sent as follow up.

- Staff and learners were isolated and tested as advised.
- A deep clean carried out.

### **Risk Assessments**

Risk Assessments are shared with:

- Commissioning schools for Learners who remain on the school roll
- Other APs whenever provision is shared
- Commissioning Officers within EOTAS/ICDS teams
- Close Collaboration is followed with any COVID cases (suspected or positive)

### **Safeguarding**

In addition to the training listed above, there has been Child Protection refresher training following which the Safeguarding Policy was updated to reflect KCSiE 2020 which included an addendum addressing COVID-19 arrangements. NCC and NSPCC guidance informed practice in this area.

The DSL directed staff to read the addendum and the policy as been uploaded onto the Provider's website. Safeguarding and Whistleblowing policies are also available to all staff on SharePoint.

Throughout the pandemic, regular contact made during periods of isolation to ensure welfare of learners and family.

MASH was contacted for advice and referrals made as needed.

Staff members were aware they can make a referral through Safeguarding refresher training.

MASH referrals made by phone followed up by email.

Referrer and Parents/Carers made aware of MASH referral if safe and appropriate to do so.

There is a central record of referrals to support the DSL in their monitoring role and provides an overview of the base and community work.

Attendance at multi agency meetings was prioritised and arranged through secure video links ensuring regular contact with referrers, social workers of ChIN and CP children and any other professionals as needed. Social workers received weekly learning logs.

The Provider maintained frequent contact with Commissioning Officers which was reinforced through weekly AP briefings. In addition, a member of staff volunteers for Notts PCF which enhances communication channels and knowledge of changes within NCC.

### **Behaviour**

The Provider has engaged in online CRB refresher training.

Following DfE Guidance, the Behaviour Policy has been updated and uploaded onto the Provider's website: <https://www.prime8education.co.uk/policies-1/>

Learners and their families have been made aware of behavioural expectations through:

- Signed receipt of letter to parents / carers prior to the return to full opening
- Discussions with learners to reinforce expectations
- Regular PSD sessions
- Starter paperwork for new learners including behaviour expectations

A group meeting for all students was arranged on return in September to discuss expected behaviours as outlined in the Parent/carer letter. Regular reminders are given throughout the day with dedicated time to reflect on behaviours.

Reward charts are embedded in practice, working on a five-point scale, students earn percentage points towards a personalised reward. Reflection time at the end of each day support students in

acknowledging positive behaviours which are reinforced through the opportunity to earn 'bonus points' for meeting new measures. Examples of positive achievement is reflected in the 'Avator Table' and published on the Provider's website.

The Provider gave an example of supporting a student in adopting appropriate behaviours, rightly attributing them to a reaction to current restrictions. In consultation with parents, the timetable was adjusted to include greater 1:1 dog walking time and opportunities for engagement in the Forest School initiative.

**Strengths:**

- Commitment to supporting students' mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Recruitment of mental health practitioner
- Investment and engagement in continual professional development
- Financial investment in environment to support mindfulness
- Flexibility and adaptability in responding to COVID-19 pandemic
- Involvement of students in curriculum delivery
- Effective communication with parents / carers throughout the pandemic
- Level of support provided to families, including delivery of food parcels
- Multi-agency approach to supporting students
- Pro-active approach to implementation of new RSHE curriculum
- Effective and safe delivery of remote education
- Compliance with COVID control measures
- Commitment to securing accreditation of courses
- Effective use of Pupil Premium Funding

**Areas for development:**

- Monitor closely exam entries through mainstream school in the event of any changes to arrangements.

