

# Consultation Document

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Alternative provision for young people  
with additional needs

## *Education Plan*



West Berkshire  
C O U N C I L

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# **INTRODUCTION**

## **Background**

1. Some young people resist or are simply not suited to universal educational opportunities and find themselves marginalised from conventional schools. Some are permanently excluded; others simply disengage. Many have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities; some have social, emotional and mental health difficulties; others have challenging home circumstances. Some or all of these difficulties create barriers to accessing mainstream school.
2. West Berkshire Council and its schools are committed to taking collective responsibility for these students, working in partnership to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them, making sure we keep the young person at the centre of everything we do. The right setting might be mainstream school, special school or alternative education provision, or a combination of these.
3. Making provision for such learners is challenging as each student requires different approaches at different times. All pupils should be helped and encouraged to achieve or exceed the standards of a good education.

## **Why do things need to change?**

4. Like many councils, we have to make difficult decisions about how we spend money. The Schools Forum plays a key role in determining how alternative provision is funded. We can no longer afford to deliver Alternative Provision in the same way. We have explored how we could deliver education to vulnerable pupils differently.
5. We are proposing to change the way we deliver Alternative Provision in West Berkshire. Alternative Provision is currently delivered through the Pupil Referral Unit Service (PRUS).
6. We have built on the good work that our existing PRUS is doing. The PRUS is split into two services, known as the Alternative Curriculum Service and the Reintegration Service. Both are rated “Good” by Ofsted. (See Appendix A).

7. At a high level, we are consulting on a strategic proposal to:
  - Prioritise our resources where we will make the biggest difference to vulnerable pupils/students.
  - Extend the delivery of Alternative Provision by working in partnership with schools and building on their strengths and assets.
  - Contribute to improving the outcomes explained in paragraph 16.
  - Revise the membership and structure of the Management Committee which governs and monitors the Service which delivers alternative education provision.
  
8. We will not work on the detailed operational plans for the new Service until after a final decision has been made about the strategic direction. This is because the proposal may change as a result of the consultation, and a final strategic decision will not be made until January 2017.

## **What is Alternative Provision?**

9. West Berkshire Council is currently responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies to all children of compulsory school age (5-16) resident in West Berkshire. This is called Alternative Provision.
  
10. When a student receives a fixed-term exclusion of more than five days or a permanent exclusion, the school (in the case of fixed-term exclusion) and the local authority (in the case of a permanent exclusion) must provide alternative education for the student from the sixth day. We provide this more quickly for Looked After Children or young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and those in other vulnerable groups.
  
11. Statutory guidance<sup>1</sup> says good alternative provision includes:
  - Good academic attainment on par with mainstream schools –particularly in English, Maths and science (including IT) – with appropriate accreditation and qualifications.
  - That the specific personal, social and academic needs of pupils are properly identified and met in order to help them overcome any barriers to attainment.
  - Improved pupil motivation and self-confidence, attendance and engagement with education.
  - Clearly defined objectives, including next steps following the placement such as reintegration into mainstream education, further education, training or employment.

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<sup>1</sup> Alternative Provision – Statutory guidance for local authorities, January 2013

## Who contributed to this review?

12. A Joint Strategic Review was established to determine the future of Alternative Provision in West Berkshire. The Joint Strategic Review group includes Councillors, mainstream school representatives, Council Officers, the two Headteachers from the current PRUS and the Chair and Vice Chair of the PRUS Management Committee.

## What is the Plan about?

13. Following informal consultation with schools and discussions with the Joint Strategic Review group, we have finalised the plan:

1. We will work in partnership with schools, and schools will work in partnership with each other, to integrate education for students with additional needs.
2. We will ensure there is sufficient provision for those students who cannot attend mainstream school.
3. We will secure provision for those students that the Council may become responsible for – either because they are permanently excluded from school or to avoid them being permanently excluded. This will be achieved by creating a single Alternative Education Provision Service (AEPS).

14. We're committed to enabling every child and young person in West Berkshire to have the best start in life and the AEPS is a key part of our approach to delivering that commitment.

15. The plan is built around:

- Extending the delivery of Alternative Provision by working in partnership with schools and building on their strengths and assets. Some vulnerable students will access Alternative Provision at their mainstream school, rather than on an AEPS site. We anticipate that most, if not all, secondary schools will develop some form of alternative provision.
- Delivering a range of positive outcomes through reshaping the service and working with schools to identify strengths and assets which can be developed to provide local solutions for local children.
- Reducing the number of students that will be accommodated on AEPS sites.
- Reducing the proportion of the budget spent on running buildings.
- Reducing management, staffing and administration costs by removing duplication and integrating service delivery. The current PRUS comprises 2 schools, each with a Headteacher, delivering the service on 6 sites. The AEPS will comprise a single school, with a single Headteacher, delivering the service on 4 sites.

16. The plan will contribute to the Council's strategic priorities and to improving the outcomes set out below:

Strategic outcomes

- Reduction in (or eliminate) permanent exclusion at key stages 3 & 4.
- Increase attendance.
- Improve achievement of academic and vocational qualifications.
- Reduce gap in achievement for children in care.
- Reduction in pupils missing education.
- Reduction in young people not in education, employment or training.
- Reduction in substance misuse.
- Reduction in offending and anti-social behaviour.
- Reduction in teenage pregnancy.
- Reduction in child sexual exploitation.

Outcomes for children and young people

- Intervene and offer support early.
- Improve attendance.
- Improve engagement in learning.
- Improve emotional health and well-being including resilience.
- Progress in learning.
- Attain academic and/or vocational qualifications.
- Are kept safe and feel safe.
- Successful pathway to follow-on provision
- Improve social skills and life-skills.
- Improve employability and progression opportunities.

17. There is a summary of the key points near the end of the document.

## What is the shared vision for Alternative Provision?

18. The shared vision (agreed by the Joint Strategic Review) is to offer outstanding Alternative Provision in which each learner:

- *Achieves their highest possible educational outcomes.*
- *Develops a strong positive attitude.*
- *Makes the best possible positive contributions to the launch pad for their chosen future.*

19. *Our team of staff and governors, working collaboratively with our stakeholders, will provide a relevant and holistic curriculum, underpinned by strong leadership and teaching of the highest quality that inspires learners.* The full vision is at Appendix B.

## What is the government's vision for Alternative Provision?<sup>2</sup>

20. The White paper states that [The Government's]...*vision is of a world-leading system of Alternative Provision where the best teachers work with the children who need them most. Mainstream school headteachers will commission expert provision for pupils with needs and behaviour that have become unmanageable within a mainstream setting. So that mainstream headteachers can commission the right services, local authorities will retain a role in ensuring sufficiency of Alternative Provision in their area...*
21. *Alternative Provision will meet defined needs including significant behavioural problems; complex medical or mental health conditions; and extreme vulnerability due to personal and social issues. We will expect the [Alternative Provision] AP provider to work with the mainstream school to put in place a tailored plan for each pupil to support them to achieve the high quality qualifications they need for adult life.*

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<sup>2</sup> Educational Excellence Everywhere – Department for Education, White Paper, March 2016

## THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

### Why are we consulting?

22. Councils that are considering a significant change to the way they provide Alternative Provision have a duty to consult local people and other stakeholders. The plan we propose qualifies as 'significant change' and that is why we are consulting you.
23. This consultation is important as it will give us views from a wide cross-section of the local community, including families, staff and schools.
24. We fully understand that you may have strong opinions about the proposal. We are flexible, open to ideas and we welcome your thoughts. However, **alternative proposals must be affordable and sustainable, and must be able to generate the level of savings outlined in this proposal. The need to make savings as we move forward is non-negotiable.**
25. The consultation responses will help to inform the decision-making process and will be taken into account when reaching the final decision.

### Who are we consulting with?

26. During this statutory consultation we are consulting with:
  - Local families, parents and carers who use the current PRUS.
  - School staff and Governors.
  - PRUS staff, its' Management Committee and Trades Unions.
  - Councillors and MPs.
  - Staff in other West Berkshire Council services.
  - West Berkshire residents.

### How to find out more

27. You can also ask questions by emailing us at [educationconsultation@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:educationconsultation@westberks.gov.uk). We will respond to you, and also regularly update FAQs on our website, during the consultation period.

## How to have your say

28. Your opinions are important to us, and we are keen to know what you think of our proposals. We are also keen to hear alternative suggestions. You can let us know by completing the online questionnaire. The form is on the Council's "Have Your Say" webpage.

[www.westberks.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/consultations)

29. **Remember: If you wish to suggest an alternative proposal, it must be able to generate the level of savings outlined in this proposal. The need to make savings is non-negotiable.**

30. If you have any queries or require further information, please do get in touch.

- Email [educationconsultation@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:educationconsultation@westberks.gov.uk).
- Write to Education Consultation, c/o the Access, Planning and Trading Team, West Berkshire Council, West St, Newbury, RG14 1BZ.

31. Your feedback is important and no decision will be made until the consultation ends and all comments have been considered. We look forward to hearing from you.

## What happens after the consultation ends?

32. The Council will consider the results of the consultation and consider whether we will change our plans as a result. We will publish the outcome of this consultation on our website. Any comments you make will be made public but we will not include your name or any personal information which could identify you.

33. Once we have reviewed the feedback and made any changes, we will publish a Statutory Notice.

34. There will be a further period of 4 weeks during which comments on the Statutory Notice can be made. We will review feedback and make any changes.

35. A final decision will be made in January 2017, and the new arrangements will be implemented from September 2017.

# THE DETAILED PLAN

## West Berkshire – the local landscape

36. This plan aims to contribute to achieving:

### West Berkshire Council Corporate Plan 2015-2019

Aim	Priority for Improvement
<b>Better education communities</b>	Improve educational attainment. Close the educational attainment gap.
<b>Protect and support those who need it</b>	Good at safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

37. Our role has changed significantly in recent years as schools have become more autonomous. Our core role is to be a champion for children, especially the more vulnerable. Inclusion is at the heart of a school-led system and we encourage schools to accept responsibility for pupil needs. Specialist education provision is managed and supported collectively, and all pupils access education appropriate to their needs. We make sure that schools and other partners are focused on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

38. As at January 2016, there are 25,845 pupils in our schools.

	Boys	Girls	Total
<b>Primary</b>	6,985	6,632	13,617
<b>Secondary</b>	5702	5775	11,477
<b>Special</b>	274	115	389
<b>PRU</b>	50	40	90
<b>Nursery</b>	154	118	272
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,165</b>	<b>12,680</b>	<b>25,845</b>

39. There are 82 schools in West Berkshire:

	Maintained	Academy	Total
<b>Primary</b>	64	2	66
<b>Secondary</b>	4	6	10
<b>Special</b>	2	0	2
<b>PRU</b>	2	0	2
<b>Nursery</b>	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>82</b>

40. Based on the total population of pupils:

- The overall school attendance rate was 96.3%.
- 1,783 (6.9%) pupils were eligible for free school meals (and therefore are from a low income family).
- 1,834 (7.1%) pupils have English as an additional language.
- 3,334 (12.9%) pupils have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

41. Temporary and permanent exclusions data is collected through the school census. The data below shows all exclusions during the calendar year 2015. There were 968 exclusions in this period: 936 were fixed term exclusions. 773 / 936 fixed term exclusions (82.5%) were from secondary schools. 22 were permanent exclusions and all of these (100%) were from secondary schools. 10 were lunch-time exclusions and 9 / 10 of these (90%) were from primary schools. The reasons for exclusions were:

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Nos.</b>
<b>Bullying</b>	10
<b>Drug &amp; alcohol related</b>	33
<b>Persistent disruptive behaviour</b>	337
<b>Damage</b>	17
<b>Other</b>	99
<b>Physical assault against an adult</b>	65
<b>Physical assault against a pupil</b>	158
<b>Racist</b>	21
<b>Sexual Misconduct</b>	6
<b>Theft</b>	5
<b>Verbal abuse against an adult</b>	178
<b>Verbal abuse against a pupil</b>	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>968</b>

## Current capacity

42. The Council and West Berkshire schools/academies are the commissioners of alternative provision in West Berkshire.

43. The council commissions mainly full-time alternative learning for pupils who are permanently excluded from school. It secures provision by either:

- Commissioning places – this includes directly funding places in PRUS, and placing pupils in special schools instead of alternative provision where it is appropriate to do so.
- Procuring Alternative Provision – where the local authority enters into a contract with an independent alternative provider.

44. Schools and academies may commission full-time and part-time alternative provision for pupils both as an alternative to mainstream school and to complement mainstream school (e.g. outdoor activities, or vocational courses). The options for schools to secure provision are to:

- Provide it themselves or enter into an arrangement with another school to do it (i.e. where there is no payment to the other school).
- Procure alternative provision – where the school (or group of schools) enter into a contract and pays an alternative provider or another school to educate the pupil. The provider could be an independent school, independent provider, PRU, alternative learning free school/academy, or another mainstream or specialist school.

45. Provision may be:

- Full-time (long term and revolving door).
- Part-time (long term and revolving door).
- Preventative programmes within schools.

46. Schools use a range of targeted interventions to support students within school. There are also a range of providers providing part-time alternative learning. Most provision is commissioned by schools, often to complement academic studies and these students stay on the school roll. Specialisms and educational focus vary considerably across these provisions. Several have a clear vocational skills focus, others utilise team building and self-esteem development, using sports, physical activity, performing and creative arts, to promote re-engagement with formal teaching and learning.

47. Information about the provision offered by the current PRUS is in Appendix B. The PRUS has its own Management Committee with delegated authority to manage its own budget and staff.

48. The current PRUS is delivered on 6 sites, as shown in Appendix C.

	Site	No of places
<b>Primary</b>	The Oaks, Thatcham	12
<b>Secondary</b>	Badgers Hill, Calcot	60
	Bridgeway, Newbury	
	The Porch, Newbury	
	Kingfisher, Riverside Community Centre, Newbury	
	The Key, Moorside Community Centre, Thatcham	
<b>Post - 16</b>	The Porch, Newbury	12
<b>Total</b>		<b>84</b>

49. Most sites are centred in Thatcham and Newbury, with Badgers Hill located near Reading in the east of the district.

50. The PRUS is also funded (through the Dedicated Schools Grant) to deliver outreach support in schools.
51. Students may come to PRUS for short-term placements (i.e. at The Oaks, Kingfisher, The Key), or for a permanent placement (i.e. The Porch, Bridgeway or Badgers Hill). Therefore, where the placements are short-term, the place at the PRUS (as listed in the table above) could be filled by a number of young people over the course of the school year, as students come and go.
52. There are other providers who can also offer places for students requiring alternative provision. Commissioners of buyers (i.e. schools, the Council) determine the appropriate provider for the student's needs.

## **Future capacity**

53. In considering the blueprint for the future, we have considered:
- A focus on effective assessment and identification of student's needs. This should take place as early as possible and before a young person's behaviour has deteriorated to the extent that permanent exclusion is the only option.
  - Alternative provision is selected to meet students' individual needs, rather than students just being sent to the places that are readily available. Also, in some cases, it will be appropriate to separate students across sites.
  - Information is shared between schools and alternative provision provider and there is ongoing monitoring of progress between the school and the provider. This leads to clear and realistic plans with baselines against which to measure progress (including towards reintegration into mainstream schooling, further education, or employment). Where students have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, these plans will link to Education, Health and Care Plans.
  - Schools should develop strong relationships with alternative providers and share, rather than shift responsibility for the pupils they are unable to support. This could happen either through commissioning and accountability arrangements or by building school clusters, for example through federations and multi-academy trusts. (See the White Paper comments in paragraph 56).
  - Alternative providers are recognised as partners in delivery and valuable sources of expertise.

54. We want to better integrate mainstream schools, special schools and alternative education provision, including PRUs and independent provision, to share expertise across the system and to identify the right placements to meet individual pupils' needs. Some will remain in mainstream school, some will go to special schools and others may be permanently excluded and placed in a PRU or independent alternative provision.
55. There is shared view about the importance of identifying early any significant concerns about a pupil, carrying out assessments promptly and introducing effective early intervention.
56. The plan encourages early intervention to reduce the need for alternative provision and to reduce the number of permanent exclusions, but nonetheless it is likely that demand for AEPS will continue. We plan a flexible, expandable model, which can adapt to the highs and lows of demand, and can offer a variety of provision, including outreach and short-term interventions as well as the traditional short-term and long-term placements on AEPS sites.
57. This approach tracks with the government's White Paper<sup>3</sup>, published in March 2016 (summarised in paragraphs 18 & 19 of this report). The White Paper explains that, in the future:
- We [the Government] will change accountability arrangements so that a pupil's mainstream school will retain accountability for their educational outcomes and will take a lead role in commissioning their provision, including when they have permanently excluded the pupil.*
- As they [schools] will also be responsible for commissioning and accountable for educational outcomes, they will have stronger incentives to take preventative approaches and achieve value for money when identifying the best and most suitable provision for any child that needs it.*
58. In terms of AEPS, the capacity for the future will be as follows. This is a reduction in the number of places for secondary students, from 60 to 36.

	Site	No of places
<b>Primary</b>	The Oaks, Thatcham	12
<b>Secondary</b>	Badgers Hill, Calcot	36
	Bridgeway, Newbury	
	The Porch, Newbury	
<b>Post - 16</b>	Bridgeway, Newbury	12
	The Porch, Newbury	
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>

59. The reduction in capacity means that the amount of accommodation that is required is reduced, and therefore we will no longer use Moorside or Riverside Community Centres.

<sup>3</sup> Educational Excellence Everywhere – Department for Education, White Paper, March 2016

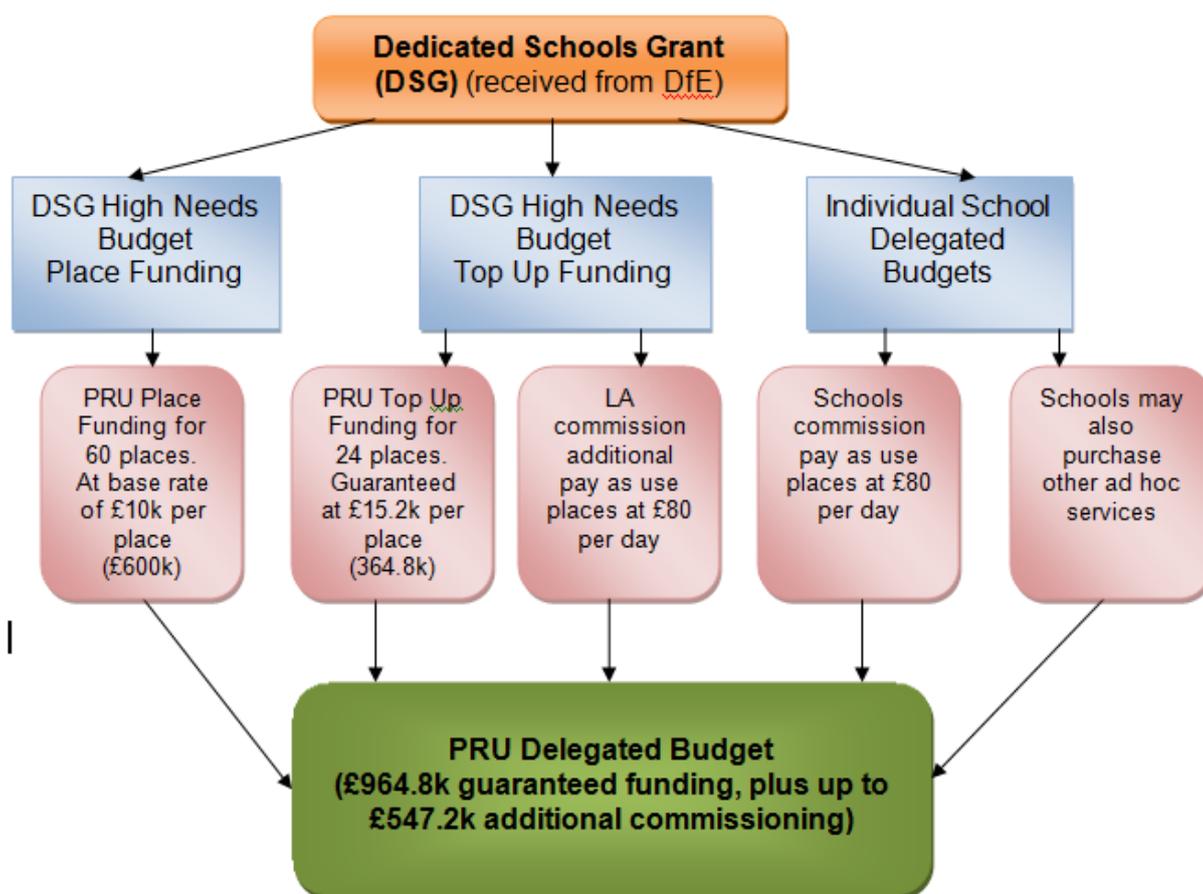
60. Future capacity is based on an analysis of the likely numbers of places we need for Looked After Children, students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and permanent exclusion, in order to meet our statutory duty to these young people. There is then a further allowance for schools to commission and the capacity is based on expected levels of demand.
61. In determining the level of provision in the AEPS, we have considered the alternative provision that schools may establish in their schools, and the potential for a range of interventions and approaches, either supported by AEPS or with alternative education providers.
62. Our aim is to ensure that there is sufficient provision within West Berkshire for those students who need additional help and support. This aim will be delivered in partnership with schools, the AEPS and alternative education providers.
63. The plan provides:
- Further opportunities for schools to be leaders and partners in the designing and commissioning of alternative provision.
  - A greater focus on preventative work in primary schools and transition work between primary and secondary schools, with access to a wider range of support to address behavioural, social and mental health issues.
  - A continued emphasis on the importance of mainstream school attendance and reintegration wherever possible.
  - Closer partnership working between schools on behaviour and vulnerability issues, supported by a skilled workforce.
  - The ability to maintain the important focus on full-time education for students.
64. The plan will not compromise outcomes for young people, particularly the most disadvantaged, as services will be linked to local need. We are re-shaping the service to meet a complex range of policy, financial and operational challenges, including changes to the funding framework, and to develop a delivery model more able to meet the requirements of schools. We will work with schools to identify strengths and assets which can be developed to provide local solutions for local children.
65. The plan will rationalise our provision whilst ensuring that our statutory responsibilities are met.

## Premises and location

66. We believe that services can be delivered without the need to run an expensive network of buildings. We will reduce building related costs, and reduce management, staffing and administration costs by removing duplication and integrating service delivery. This means the AEPS would be able use more of its budget for services to the most vulnerable pupils/students that need additional help.
67. In terms of AEPS and its dedicated provision, the number of sites will be reduced from 6 sites (see Appendix C) to 4 sites.
68. The existing purpose-built primary provision at The Oaks in Thatcham will be retained.
69. Secondary provision will continue to be provided at Badgers Hill, Calcot; Bridgeway, Newbury and The Porch, Newbury.
70. We will retain provision in the east of the district. The site at Badger's Hill is leased from Tilehurst Parish Council. For this site to continue beyond the current lease, the Parish Council has indicated that capital works would be needed. We need accommodation in the east. This could be either at Badgers Hill (under lease from the Parish Council) or within alternative accommodation.
71. Post-16 provision will be delivered across the two Newbury sites: Bridgeway, Newbury and The Porch, Newbury.
72. The provision at Riverside Community Centre and Moorside Community Centre will be de-commissioned. These are 'community' buildings and we will consider the most appropriate use for the buildings going forwards, in discussion with the relevant community.
73. Of course, the proposal also includes provision for students with additional needs within schools and with other alternative education providers, so there would be a network of Alternative Provision in many sites across West Berkshire.

## Funding

74. The cost of Alternative Provision is mostly met from the Government funding received for the high needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This funding is ring fenced and cannot be used for any other purpose than set out in the School Finance Regulations.
75. For each place the AEPS would receive the Base Rate (currently £10k p.a). We will provide 60 places at the AEPS, funded at the Base Rate. Places in the AEPS would be funded through the High Needs Funding Block.
76. Where the pupil/student has additional needs not covered by the Base rate, then a Top-Up payment is made. The Rates for Top-Ups are determined by the Schools Forum. This is a daily rate, which is then multiplied by the number of days that the student is being educated by the AEPS.
77. We will implement a Reserved Quota, securing a guaranteed number of places for the Council to use for Looked After Children, children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and permanent exclusions. We will provide the Top-Up funding for the Reserved Quota, to be met from the High Needs funding block.
78. Where we require additional places for Looked After Children or children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities above our Reserved Quota, and there are Non-Reserved places available, we will pay the Top-Up. If the Non-Reserved provision is full, we will commission places with an alternative education provider, based on the student's needs.
79. For other non-reserved places, the AEPS will receive the Top-Up from the commissioning school.
80. The diagram overleaf explains the way the funding flows.



81. The AEPS may also focus on providing services to schools, including Outreach services. This would provide additional income for the AEPS.

82. The table shows an example of how the number of places could be split between Reserved and non-reserved places, although the Council’s drawdown of its Reserved Quota may be more flexibly applied based on the needs of individual students:

	Reserved Quota	Non-reserved quota
<b>Primary</b>	6	6
<b>Secondary</b>	12	24
<b>Post - 16</b>	6	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>36</b>

83. The implementation of the Reserved Quota provides a guaranteed base budget for AEPS.

84. We will review the level of the Reserved Quota in advance of budget setting for the following financial year and write to the AEPS if we want to make changes (increase/ decrease).

85. The government is exploring a national funding formula and therefore, the way in which AEPS is funded in the future may change. It appears that the commissioners of Alternative Provision places will be responsible for funding and therefore schools commissioning places will need to pay for Top Ups from their budget. Schools funding will be as per the new national formula, with no local flexibility.
86. We have looked at the current levels of income and expenditure and built a cost model for the AEPS. The new cost model also removes the subsidy which currently exists for places in the PRUS. For the AEPS, the cost of placing a student will be the same for the Council and for schools. We are satisfied that the overall structure we are planning is fit for purpose going forward, whilst delivering financial savings. The likely savings are:

<b>Summary of Savings</b>	
<b>Reduction in annual expenditure (compared to 2015/16)</b>	Full year effect - £1,138,878 2017/18 financial year - £664,345 2018/19 financial year - £474,533
<b>Reduction in annual Top Up rate (paid by whoever commissions the place (Council or school))</b>	£4,418 per place (reduction of £23 per school day)
<b>Savings in the High Needs Funding Block will be:</b>	£819,913 2017/18 financial year - £478,283 2018/19 financial year - £341,630

## **Teaching and Learning**

87. AEPS would determine curriculum provision, based on the needs of the students and the needs of the commissioning schools, managing the curriculum provision within the available budget. This could include flexible provision and outreach work.
88. Capacity is based on an outline staffing ratio of one teacher to 6 students, although this could be flexibly applied, based on the needs of the students.
89. Students benefit from personalised time-tabling, and a combination of on-site and off-site activities. Careful planning of the AEPS provision will ensure that vulnerable students are appropriately catered for.
90. We expect the good standard of the current PRUS provision could be maintained, and even exceeded, in the new plan. The AEPS would be subject to Ofsted Inspection.

## **Monitoring and Governance**

91. The AEPS would be accountable to its Management Committee. The PRUS already has a Management Committee and this will continue into the new AEPS Service, but with a revised constitution and membership.
92. It is expected that our secondary schools would have a higher profile on the AEPS Management Committee, due to their enhanced role in delivering local in-house provision for some pupils.
93. Over time, there could be a formal 'commissioning group of Headteachers' who directly influenced the size and costs of the AEPS. This would be particularly relevant when the AEPS is required to operate within a demand-led, market-driven environment.

## Staffing

94. We believe that management, staffing and administration costs can be reduced by removing duplication and integrating service delivery. The current PRUS comprises 2 schools, each with a Headteacher, delivering the service on 6 sites. The AEPS will comprise a single school, with a single Headteacher, delivering the service on 4 sites.
95. An outline staffing structure has been used to establish that the funding rationale (as described in the Funding section) is sufficient to cover the base budget.
96. The AEPS would determine staffing structures based on the needs of the students, within their budget, in the same way as other schools do. We believe that the plan will result in an overall reduction in staffing numbers. Once the plan has been finalised, there will be a formal consultation process with staff and Trades Unions about staffing structures. This is due to begin in January 2017.
97. The line management of the Home Education Service currently sits with the PRUS. We propose that we will manage the Home Education Service in the future, and it would not be part of the new AEPS.
98. The Council's Behaviour Support Service is outside of the scope of the proposals.

## SUMMARY: KEY POINTS OF THE PLAN

99. The key points are:

- West Berkshire Council and its schools are committed to taking collective responsibility for students with additional needs, working in partnership to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them.
- We need to change the way we deliver Alternative Provision in West Berkshire as we can no longer afford to deliver this in the same way.
- Alternative Provision is currently delivered through the Pupil Referral Unit Service (PRUS).
- We will not compromise outcomes for young people, particularly the most disadvantaged, and we will keep the young person at the centre of everything we do.
- We will ensure there is the right provision for those students who cannot attend mainstream school, with a personal focus on their individual needs.
- We will work in partnership with schools, and schools will work in partnership with each other, to integrate education for students with additional needs.
- Together, we will contribute to delivering a range of positive student outcomes.
- We will secure provision for those students that the Council may become responsible for – either because they are permanently excluded from school or to avoid them being permanently excluded.
- We will create the new Alternative Education Provision Service (AEPS), which will be accountable to a Management Committee. The AEPS will comprise a single school, with a single Headteacher, delivering the service on 4 sites.
- We will retain the people, skills and expertise necessary to deliver a good quality AEPS service, building on the quality provided by the existing PRUS.
- We have also taken account of the alternative provision that schools may establish and the potential for a range of interventions and approaches, either supported by AEPS or with alternative education providers. We anticipate that most, if not all, secondary schools will develop some form of alternative provision.
- We will reduce the number of places, buildings and staff at the AEPS compared to the current PRUS. This is because the new plan will be delivered in partnership with schools, the AEPS and alternative education providers. This change will make the AEPS financially sustainable and deliver savings for the Council and schools.
- We plan to directly manage the Home Education Service from September 2017.
- The Behaviour Support Service is outside of the scope of the proposals.

## APPENDIX A - Pupil Referral Unit Service (PRUS)

The PRUS is split into two Services:

**The Alternative Curriculum Service** - a pupil referral unit for students between the ages of 14 and 19. Students are referred to the unit from schools across West Berkshire because they are at risk of being excluded or have been permanently excluded from mainstream secondary schools. Some students have had their secondary schooling severely disrupted for a variety of reasons and are referred directly by the local authority.

The Alternative Curriculum was inspected in February 2015 and graded as a Good school. Ofsted said:

- *The Leadership and management are good.*
- *Teaching is very well led...the quality of teaching is good.*
- *Students behaviour, attendance, and progress is good...and very effectively monitored*
- *Parents and carers...greatly value the commitment of staff and the range of opportunities available.*

Locations: The Porch, Badger's Hill and Bridgeway (see Appendix C)

**The Reintegration Service** - provides short-term placements for students who do not have a place in a mainstream school, the reasons for which include fixed-term and permanent exclusions, but might also be for a variety of reasons such as a student in the care of the local authority arriving in the area without a school place, or a student waiting for a specialist place to become available. The Oaks is for primary-aged learners, Kingfisher (at Riverside Community Centre) covers Key Stage 3, with The Key (at Moorside Community Centre) being for students at Key Stage 4. The Home Education service is a separate part of the service working with students of school age who are unable to attend school for medical reasons, which include mental health issues.

The Reintegration Service was inspected in June 2014 and graded as a Good school. Ofsted said:

- *The headteacher and other leaders work well together in a service that is committed to providing the best possible education for students.*
- *The effectiveness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is reflected in the fact that students develop much better social skills and attitudes.*
- *The focus is always on meeting the needs of students.*
- *Parents and carers are very positive about the service, particularly liking the regular contact so that they know how their children are getting on.*

Locations: The Oaks, Kingfisher, and The Key (see Appendix C)

## **APPENDIX B – The Shared Vision**

### **By 2018 we will be able to say that:**

We offer outstanding alternative educational provision in which each of our learners:

- Achieves their highest possible educational outcomes.
- Develops a strong positive attitude.
- Makes the best possible positive contributions to the launch pad for their chosen future.

### **Delivering the Vision**

Our team of staff and governors, working collaboratively, with our stakeholders, will provide a relevant and holistic curriculum, underpinned by strong leadership and teaching of the highest quality that inspires learners.

### **Our team will:**

- Teach, challenge and encourage our learners to meet and exceed target grades in all their subjects.
- Provide a relevant and holistic curriculum that enables learners to achieve nationally recognised qualifications.
- Ensure high levels of numeracy, literacy and communication skills for every learner.
- Engender a strong sense of personal responsibility and respect for others.
- Make effective use of data to drive self-evaluation and improvement of learner outcomes.
- Be passionate about focusing energies, technology and other resources to create and maintain an engaging learning environment appropriate to each learner and each subject.
- Be passionate about learning and the creation of a positive learning ethos and culture that fosters key life skills, including independence, communication, resilience, flexibility, integrity and self-discipline.
- Place our provision in the top 10% nationally on average data for achievement of value added outcomes.

### **We will rely on**

- All team members – learners, staff, governors and stakeholders, having clear accountabilities.
- Parents and carers being well informed and engaged with our provision.

### **Our culture and ethos**

- Help every learner do the very best they can.
- Inspire students and staff alike.
- Actively engage all our stakeholders.
- Works constantly to meet the needs of current and future learners.

### **Above all...**

We are a vibrant community to which learners, staff and governors are proud to belong.

## APPENDIX C – Map of Alternative Educational Provision Buildings – as at April 2016

