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| **‘Out of School Alternative Education’ Approved Provider List Specification** |
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**Introduction**

Cornwall Council wants to work together with independent, community-based partners, to develop a range of ‘out of school, alternative education provision’ and specialist placements for children and young people currently unable to access full-time, mainstream education.

For the majority of young people, the most effective education is in a mainstream setting (with or without additional support). However, over the past 2 years, there has also been a significant increase in the number of children and young people who need bespoke provision or augmented educational offer to support their wellbeing and school attendance.

Under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, Local Authorities have a duty to ensure there is suitable alternative education for children of compulsory school age who cannot attend school because of illness, exclusion or for any other reason. Therefore, Cornwall Council needs to ensure that provision, including EOTAS provision, is sufficient to meet demand, varied enough to meet a wide range of needs, accessible, safe and delivers good quality educational outcomes. Additionally, if a child is permanently excluded, the LA must provide suitable, alternative full-time education from day 6 of the exclusion. This is for all children, not just those with SEN needs or those an EHC plan.

Currently Cornwall Council spot-purchase individual placements and bespoke provision for young people. However, Cornwall Council wishes to develop to an Approved Provider List (APL). The aim of the APL will be to increase due diligence and ensure that children and young people accessing the alternative provision are safe and are fully supported to reach their agreed outcomes whilst attending high quality provision. This will mean that, from September 2024, Cornwall Council will only be using providers who have joined the APL and agreed to deliver to the quality standards.

This Approved Provider List specification has been developed through engagement sessions with existing community-based providers.

**Our Statement of Vision, Mission and Values**

We are committed to working together with all our partners to secure the best possible outcomes and a brighter future for children and young people through inclusion in education and by providing high quality alternative provision to children and young people who cannot currently attend school. We invite those we support and our partners to hold us to account for this commitment.

*Vision*

All children and young people in Cornwall are safe and healthy, having equal opportunities to achieve brighter futures and closing the gap for the most vulnerable children and young people.

*Mission*

Our mission is to work together to deliver a service that we and those we serve can be proud of, which promotes positive outcomes for all children and young people and enables them to be healthy, safe and thrive in their learning.

*Values*

Our statement of vision, mission and values has been developed through engagement with staff, partners, residents and clients. These values are at the centre of our priorities, approach and professional practice:

* We will always act in the best interests of the child.
* Our first consideration is the lived experience of the child, putting the voice of children and young people into our practice.
* We will put the needs of children first and will act with integrity, honesty, empathy and respect, showing fairness and courage in everything we do.
* We will have a whole family approach, listening to the views and wishes of parents and carers and the child’s wider family.
* We will have open communication and will show respect for the opinions of others.
* We will do all we can to promote, protect and improve the health of children.
* We will strive to improve how we support children and families, delivering the services they need.
* Our priority is to identify additional needs early and provide help at the right time to prevent the needs and risks of children and families getting worse.
* Children who are disadvantaged and those with additional needs will receive extra help to improve their outcomes.
* If children and families do need extra help, they or their trusted professional will be able to access this help quickly and easily.
* We will be open to challenge. We will respond to well-founded criticism with a willingness to learn and to change.
* We are committed to working together, with children, young people and their families and with partners to achieve our vision.

Specification

Cornwall Council are looking to work with a range of providers in the Community Voluntary Social Enterprise (CVSE) sector to provide varied and bespoke provision including, but not limited to; outdoor/leisure centres (climbing/horse-riding), tuition centres (technical/programming workshops and forest schools), individual tutors of arts, music, drama, and therapies, and includes those providers that are either part of an umbrella or national organisation, community-led, private companies, charities and/or private individuals.

The provision may take place in a wide range of venues e.g., community spaces, centres, private homes or outdoor areas, and vary in size from delivery to large groups, down to smaller groups or on an individual basis.

Therefore, providers of the alternative education will be expected to;

* + - * Provide a safe space for child and young people to learn, develop and make mistakes.
      * Be creative, flexible and innovative in the way they provide services to meet the needs of young people.
      * Work in a respectful way with the children and young people they are supporting.
* Be child and young person centred, ensuring a bespoke and tailored approach to meet their individual needs and outcomes.
* Be responsive to the voice and aspirations of the child or young person.
* Provide an inclusive setting that is hierarchy and bullying free.
* Provide skills-based activities which deliver a range of learning opportunities.
* Use positive relationship building with the child or young person’s parents or carers at home.

Commissioning for outcomes

The personalised plans for children in independent specialist educational placements set out the strengths, needs, risks and desired outcomes specific to the child. We are looking for providers to deliver outcomes in a person-centred way to support young people’s educational needs.

Broadly, the outcomes, we want our independent providers to deliver for the children and young people include:

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| A focus on the outcomes of the individual child or young person (as documented within their EHCP if relevant). |
| A plan for educational progress. |
| The development of a feeling of belonging, community and space to find their own identity. |
| Improved physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. |
| Increased self-belief, confidence and self-esteem. |
| Improved ability to self-regulate and manage their emotions. |
| Learning how to build positive, healthy relationships, both within the setting and outside of it. |
| Engagement in positive activities. |
| Working to support the Preparing for Adulthood outcomes (where appropriate). |
| Children and young people feel listened to and able to influence decisions about their lives. |
| Reduced risk of self-harm and in challenging behaviour (where appropriate). |
| Reduction in ‘missing’ episodes and risk of exploitation (where appropriate). |
| Reduction in risk of offending (where appropriate). |

The Trauma Informed Approach

We want to work in partnership with our providers to fulfil our mutual commitment to provide the best possible outcomes for Cornwall’s children and young people.

The core components of this approach and some suggestions for how they might be made for the tangible for the children in our care are detailed below (Sweeney et al, 2016):

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|  | **What this means for services** | **What children and young people say** |
| **Recognition of trauma** | Finding a way to check out if anything has happened to a young person in our care. | ‘I am being seen and believed.’ |
| **Avoidance of re-traumatisation** | Trying to minimise taking control away from the young person, being transparent and talking about it if we have to do this. | ‘They are not like the people that hurt me.’ |
| **Cultural, historical and gender context** | Being sensitive in selection of key workers and treatment to the young person’s specific identity. | ‘They thought about me as a unique person. Me as a whole person.’ |
| **Trustworthiness and transparency** | Being explicit at all times what services are doing and why. | ‘When they say they will do something, they do it.’ |
| **Collaboration and mutuality** | Understanding power imbalances and working to ‘flatten the hierarchy’. | ‘We are working through this difficult stuff together.’ |
| **Empowerment, choice and control** | Enable the development of agency through access to resources. | ‘I am taking control of my life now.’ |
| **Safety** | Developing safe systems- from admin processes through the entire organisation to be trauma informed. | ‘I feel like I can finally begin to trust people again.’  ‘It might be worth seeing if they’re trustworthy.’ |
| **Survivor partnerships** | Peer mentor, peer support and young people led social action groups. | ‘Meeting other people like me makes me feel less alone.’ |
| **Pathways to specialist trauma treatment** | Development of links to specialist, evidence based psychological therapies and medication. | ‘I go somewhere safe to talk through what happened to me.’ |

Our offer to Providers

Cornwall council value partnership working, and will endeavour to be a reliable partner to you and provide:

* A point of contact at the Local Authority to handle any queries, complaints or issues.
* Access to our Education Support Team.
* Links to templates and guidance where appropriate
* The relevant information you need, to be able to provide support for Cornwall’s children and young people, i.e. a pen profile.
* Quarterly meetings to facilitate networking, collaborative opportunities, support and guidance.
* Opportunities for your teams to access training.
* Annual quality assurance, monitoring visits and relevant support.
* Timely and accurate payments in line with the payment terms.
* Fair resolution of any disputes/disagreements.
* Recognition of your achievements.

**Call-off procedure**

Each student has bespoken needs and individual interests. Provision will be sourced based on which services are considered to be the best fit to the individual’s needs and outcomes, and the geographical location to the individual.

When Cornwall Council wants to source provision for an individual it will issue a ‘Service Request’, usually by email, which will include a Pen Profile of the individual detailing their needs, interests and desired outcomes. This ‘Service Request’, may, in the first instance be restricted to providers within a geographical proximity to the individual.

Interested providers will need to respond as soon as possible (and preferably within 3 working days), by issuing a ‘Service Request Response’. The ‘Service Request Response’ should include sufficient information, detailing whether the provider has capacity, which days and/or sessions are available, the offer of provision and a fee related to the offer. More than one provider may be awarded an Individual Placement Agreement (IPA) for the same individual (as the individual may have more than one interest or skill area). Where there are providers in the same geographic area with an almost identical offer, the Cornwall Council EOTAS and SEN practitioners will always opt for the Best Value offer. Where there are no suitable providers, or providers with capacity within a geographical proximity to the individual, Cornwall Council will issue a ‘Service Request’, to all providers on the Approved Provider List.

Providers will be added to the APL once they have successfully passed the Supplier Selection and Award criteria, and Due Diligence checks. Once providers are on the APL, they will also receive annual monitoring visits from the EOTAS team, to ensure they are continuing to meet the quality standards set out and Cornwall Council education requirements. New placements with providers who have not passed the monitoring visit, or where there are concerns, will be paused, and existing placements may also be paused, if the level of safeguarding is of sufficient concern.

The APL will be updated and shared with SEND and EOTAS (Education Other than at School) officers (who may use the information in discussion with parents) to provide sufficient information to make informed decisions. The APL will be maintained on Proactis, Due North only. Schools and parents choosing and purchasing EOTAS provision directly would not be expected to use our system to appoint providers, but they will be given our quality standards to support their own assessment. Whether the APL will be shared with schools and families in future, is a matter we will need to seek legal advice on. Data will only be shared with the permission of providers, and always inline with GDPR.

**Monitoring and Contract Management**

* The Education Effectiveness Officers will carry out the day to day purchasing with approved providers and also deliver the annual monitoring.
* Annual (or more frequent) monitoring visits will take place at times which suit the provision, and do not have a negative impact on the support offered to children and young people.
* Where appropriate, and necessary, contract management of Providers will be undertaken by the Additional Needs Commissioning Team. The contract management approach will be proportionate to the total value of the contract with the provider, (and levels of risk and complexity) and in line with Cornwall Council’s Contract Management Standards.

**Payment Terms**

Payments will be made to service providers within 30 Business Days upon receipt of an invoice as per the terms and conditions of the contract, on occasion where agreed a Provider may invoice per half term and this will be agreed prior to the commencement of the service. Payment will be subject to the satisfactory provision of the service within the agreed contract.

**Appendix 1- Quality Standards**

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**Appendix 2- Annual Monitoring Visits- Draft Criteria**

Annual visits from School Effectiveness Officers or other Cornwall Council representatives will take place, and providers will be expected to demonstrate whether they can fulfil the following criteria for the young people they are supporting. Providers are-

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| * Enhancing the development of communication skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and its application to other areas of learning. |
| * Enhancing the development of initiative and independence, is supported for young people, and where appropriate opportunities to work collaboratively are provided. |
| * Supporting the development of numeracy skills and understanding, are supported for young people and application to other areas of learning (where appropriate). |
| * Ensuring the development of information and communication technology skills (where appropriate) and its application to other areas of learning (where appropriate) is supported for young people. |
| * Supporting development of study skills, including the ability to research and analyse, is supported for young people. |
| * Ensuring systems are in place to regularly record and monitor a young person’s progress and their achievements over time, against expectations for their age/capabilities, and to communicate this information to parents and young person. |
| * Giving young people opportunities to develop their self-esteem, self-confidence and resilience, including an understanding of how to improve their own learning. |
| * Providing young people have opportunities to experience and develop independence, responsibility and to make informed choices. |
| * Ensuring that there is effective promotion and modelling of positive behaviour that identifies and responds to individuals’ needs and views. |
| * Enabling young people to become socially aware and be able to work with others, to solve problems and achieve common goals. |
| * Supporting young people to develop respect for and value their own and other cultures, and to develop sensitivity and tolerance to those from different backgrounds and traditions. |
| * Allowing young people opportunities to distinguish right from wrong, and accept responsibility for their own behaviour, including towards others. |
| * Enabling young people to learn how to stay safe and to understand how to be physically and mentally healthy. |
| * Incorporating British values within all areas of the provision. https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guidance-on-promoting-british-values-in-schools-published |

If you would like this information  
in another format please contact:

**Cornwall Council, County Hall  
Treyew Road, Truro TR1 3AY**

Email: [**equality@cornwall.gov.uk**](mailto:equality@cornwall.gov.uk)

Telephone: **0300 1234 100**

**www.cornwall.gov.uk**