

Service Level Agreement (SLA) Between [Mainstream School Name] and Aspire Schools

1. Introduction

This **Service Level Agreement (SLA)** sets out the terms and conditions between **[Mainstream School]** (hereinafter referred to as "the School") and **Aspire Schools** regarding the placement of students in Alternative Provision, in accordance with the guidance set out in the **DfE document: 'Alternative Provision – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities' (February 2025)** and **'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (latest edition)**.

Aspire Schools is an Ofsted registered school that has its own policies and procedures like any mainstream school and, as such, we follow our procedures and policies, which can all be found on our website.

2. Purpose

This agreement ensures:

- Compliance with statutory DfE guidance on Aspire Schools.
- A clear framework for the responsibilities of both parties.
- High-quality education and safeguarding for pupils placed in Aspire Schools.
- Transparent financial arrangements, including payment terms and cancellation policies.

3. Responsibilities of Aspire Schools (AP)

Aspire Schools agrees to:

- Provide education tailored to individual pupil needs, in accordance with Aspire Schools' aims and purpose, as documented on our website ([Aspire Schools' Curriculum Aims](#))
- Maintain safeguarding standards, ensuring compliance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE). Reporting all safeguarding matters relating to students to the mainstream school.
- Ensure staff receive regular safeguarding-training and meet the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.
- Offer sessions as agreed, whether part-time or full-time provision in a suitable learning environment.
- Provide regular progress reports and/or hold review meetings with the mainstream school — typically at induction, midpoint, and the end of the placement—to discuss the most appropriate next steps for the student.

- Attend meetings or provide reports related to safeguarding or child-in-need matters, as required. For dual-registered students, Aspire Schools attendance is expected in addition to attendance by a representative from the mainstream school.
- If a child is issued with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) while attending Aspire, Aspire Schools will arrange a meeting with the referring school and/or the Local Authority (LA) to assess whether the child's needs can be met within a mainstream setting. Where appropriate, Aspire Schools will work collaboratively to develop and implement a plan to support the child's return to a suitable mainstream provision as soon as possible.
- Aspire Schools will manage student behaviour in accordance with its internal behaviour policy. In the event that a student is suspended, Aspire Schools will notify the relevant mainstream school of the decision.
- Aspire Schools will establish a clear transition or reintegration plan for all students as part of the induction and review process.

4. Responsibilities of the Mainstream School

The School agrees to:

- Provide relevant pupil information, including safeguarding concerns, behaviour records, medical conditions and SEND details at the time of placement and if applicable at any time while the student is dual registered.
- Read Aspire Schools' safeguarding and behaviour policies on our website.
- Attend Child Protection or Child in Need meetings to support families with safeguarding concerns.
- Attend an induction meeting prior to the start of placement.
- Maintain regular communication with Aspire Schools regarding the pupil's progress. Attend review meetings and, where applicable, the Exhibition at the end of a Finding My Voice placement.
- Provide up-to-date information about KS4 exam entrances for all subjects, including current curriculum schemes of work as required.
- Advise Aspire Schools of any access arrangements in place and oversee any updates required, including the writing of form eight or file notes.
- Arrange EHCP annual review meetings and oversee the collection of evidence for EHCP assessments.
- Nominate a mentor who will support the reintegration of pupils into mainstream education and who will provide ongoing support during and after placement, and who is responsible for arranging reasonable adjustments at school to ensure a positive transition.
- Co-ordinate travel arrangements to and from the placement each day the child attends, where applicable.
- Ensure timely payment of all invoices. (See section 7)

5. Referral and Placement Process

- Referrals must be made via Aspire Schools' Referral Form before a placement can be considered.
- Aspire Schools will consider students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) for placements (excluding Finding My Voice placements) where there is a clear exit plan in place and Aspire Schools considers that it can meet the student's needs.
- The School and Aspire Schools will agree on a start date, ensuring that the placement aligns with the pupil's educational and behavioural needs.
- Aspire Schools reserves the right to refuse a placement if the provision does not meet the pupil's needs.

6. Attendance and Monitoring

- Aspire Schools will provide mainstream schools with a weekly attendance certificate via email. Additionally, Aspire Schools is able to make daily attendance information available upon request.

7. Financial Arrangements

- The cost per placement is stated on our website and in our prospectus.
- The school is responsible for payment charges regardless of a child's non-attendance, unless the reason for absence is covered in section 8 below.
- The School is responsible for payment in full within **14 days** of invoice issuance.
- Invoices will be issued at the end of each half term.
- Placement fees include time spent on student induction and ongoing professional liaison and report writing as appropriate to the individual student.
- Following consultation with the mainstream school, Aspire Schools reserves the right to reduce the hours of a dual-registered student. If the mainstream school chooses to take responsibility for the student's education during the periods they are not attending Aspire Schools, Aspire Schools will not charge for these sessions, and the school may arrange alternative educational provision. However, if the mainstream school wishes Aspire School to retain responsibility during these periods, Aspire Schools will complete the necessary reduced timetable documentation for the Local Authority, provide virtual or home learning where appropriate, and assume responsibility for safeguarding the student during these sessions. In such cases, Aspire Schools will charge for the sessions accordingly.
- If a child receives an EHCP while enrolled at Aspire Schools, their fee rate will increase to the EHCP student rate from the date of the draft plan.
- If a child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) includes provision specified in Section F that Aspire is unable to deliver, Aspire Schools' Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO) will contact the mainstream school to determine the appropriate next steps. The mainstream school will be asked to confirm whether they wish to cover an additional charge for Aspire Schools to secure the required provision, or whether they prefer to arrange and provide the provision independently.

- If a dual registered student is unable to attend Aspire Schools but will be able to attend a different educational provision, Aspire Schools may assist with organising this arrangement. However, the new provision will invoice the mainstream school directly for the time the student attends. Aspire Schools will not charge for any periods during which the student is attending the other provision.
- The costs for exam entry will be charged to the 'home' school if they wish Aspire Schools to enter students for GCSE exams. Schools will also be charged for the associated administration and invigilation costs (please contact exams@aspireap.org.uk for more details.)

8. Cancellation and Termination

- The School must give written notice to cancel a placement.
- If the School cancels a placement mid-term, the School remains financially responsible until the end of that term.
- Aspire Schools reserves the right to terminate a placement if:
 - The pupil's behaviour presents a serious safeguarding risk to staff or students. This decision will only be made following discussion with the mainstream school.
 - The School fails to provide required information in a timely manner.
 - Payment is not received within 14 days of the invoice deadline.
- Aspire Schools may need to close for various reasons.
 - Payment for services will remain unaffected unless the closure is caused by things that could have been foreseen or avoided on our part in which case, we will review the invoice and make adjustments accordingly.
 - If the closure is due to circumstances beyond our control (e.g., extreme weather or external factors) payments will still be required as agreed.

9. Safeguarding and Compliance

- Both parties must comply with the Children Act 1989 & 2004, Education Act 1996, and the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance.
- The School must securely send a detailed safeguarding history report on the first day of the pupil attending.
- Any safeguarding concerns must be reported in line with Local Authority safeguarding procedures.

10. Review and Dispute Resolution

- This agreement will be reviewed termly or as required.
- Any disputes will first be addressed through negotiation between both parties, and if unresolved, escalated to Mark Shaw, Chair of Trustees, Aspire Schools.