



West Midlands
SEND and AP
Change Programme

Professionals update

SEND and AP Change Programme

Summer Term 2025

Herefordshire Council
Shropshire Council
Telford & Wrekin Council
Worcester County Council

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Overview of the Summer Term

Summary

Since we last contacted you, we have had a confirmation to an extension of the Change Programme meaning reforms will continue to be tested until March 2026.

As part of our next steps, we want to:

- Develop a Local Inclusion Support Offer (LISO) across the West Midlands, **which means you will see** how we want service provision to look in the future, and the best ways we can develop the curriculum on offer and the staff that provide it through training, advice and direct delivery.
- Continue to shape the Alternative Provision in the three-tier model following Tier 1, Targeted support in mainstream schools. Tier 2, time-limited placements and Tier 3, transitional placements **which means you will see** targeted outreach support to shift interventions upstream away from expensive long-term places.
- Build upon the Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST) **which means you will see** skilled teams led by a taskforce manager within LA's if this has been chosen to be tested in your area.
- Continue improving the ELSEC programme **which means you will see** us working to make sure the service is the highest quality expanding to wave 2 schools.
- The implementation of an Assistive Technology Lending Library dependant on LA needs **which means you will see** scoping of what is already used and ideas on how this can be successful.

Herefordshire

Alternative Provision (AP) plan

From September, we are introducing a new AP Tier 2 intervention provision named the Harvest Project, as part of our commitment to delivering effective early support under the SEND and AP reforms. This provision offers targeted intervention for students requiring additional help beyond the mainstream classroom, with a strong emphasis on early intervention to prevent escalation to Tier 3. Designed for up to eight pupils per day, attending up to two days a week, the Harvest Project will provide a flexible, nurturing environment that includes small group work, tailored curriculum, and outdoor or alternative learning opportunities aligned to student interests.

Operated by Herefordshire Pupil Referral Service, with students remaining on their mainstream school roll, the programme supports pupils with SEMH needs, aiming to reduce exclusions, improve attendance, and enhance engagement. With opportunities for accreditation and a focus on building resilience, self-confidence, and emotional skills, the Harvest Project aims to ensure inclusive, preventative support that positively impacts both individual learners and wider school culture. Funded for one academic year, the provision will commence in September 2025.

Ordinarily Available Inclusion Provision (OAIP)

Our newly appointed Education Inclusion Advisors are now in post, working as part of the SEND and Alternative Provision Change Programme they will be working with schools over the next 12 months. They join us with a wealth of experience of SEND leadership and practice and understand the challenges schools are facing. Their aim is to offer advice, guidance and support to schools to further strengthen the work we already see and improve outcomes for pupils with SEND. Their work will be in partnership with schools, involving visits, case studies, signposting and bespoke training.

Shropshire

Alternative Provision (AP) plan

The new APST lead is now in post and has met virtually with several colleagues across schools, the council and varying provisions to explain the 12 month extension to the SEND and AP Change Programme which is focusing on creating a sustainable and inclusive education system. Within the APST team, we have appointed 3 of the nine new posts including an OT and 2 inclusion mentors. Visits with schools have been booked to offer support for students with identified, or potential, SEMH difficulties. Next steps for the Summer Term include developing the Shropshire Outreach offer and ensuring suitable Alternative Provision settings are available for the children and young people across the county.

Ordinarily Available Inclusion Provision (OAIP)

Shropshire's Education Quality Advisers for SEND and AP have been drafting revised Inclusive Practice guidance documents with the aim of sharing these with settings in July for feedback. We are continuing to develop our CPD offer for schools and settings and this term have delivered induction training for new SENCOs, AET transition training and Early Years SEND Solution circles. The new in-person GSP panels are now in place for CYP of school age and engagement with these is increasing, allowing the panel to offer schools advice, guidance and supportive challenge alongside side funding to promote inclusion. Schools and early years settings have been offered SEND Reviews and these are now being carried out across the county. The IP and APST teams are working together to ensure packages of support for schools are clearly mapped.

Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC)

By the end of the summer term 2025, more than 1800 3–6-year-olds will have been impacted by the ELSEC project, with universal, targeted and targeted plus support being available to meet the needs of each individual child.

The number of children working at an age-appropriate level for communication and language has more than doubled, with staff at each setting having greater capacity to continue to meet the needs of children for years to come.

Settings are now using a combination of interventions including Talk Boost, Concept Cat, BEST and the narrative approach, tailored to the age and stage of the children. Staff now have the skills to continue this amazing work into the next term and beyond.

Settings with a pre-school have all had the opportunity to run 3 Talk Away parent sessions, with positive feedback from both parents and staff. The team are currently rolling out 'Supporting Vocabulary across the day' for all schools and settings.

Telford and Wrekin

Alternative Provision (AP) plan

The Alternative Provision three-tier offer is being well developed across all four LAs, with provision developed, or planned for a September start, to enhance the offer to provide earlier help and support for young people. Tier 1 Outreach from AP settings into mainstream schools is not only supporting individual young people but helping to build capacity within the schools to better meet needs. Tier 2 Intervention places are being added to the offers, with young people reintegrating back into their mainstream settings and helping to reduce the numbers of permanent exclusions.

Ordinarily Available Inclusion Provision (OAIP)

Work by our secondary inclusion specialist, we have been underway looking at the secondary curriculum and transition project. The curriculum offer has been researched for SEND pupils in secondary schools. There have been case studies collected for pupils who have been delivered entry level at Charlton School, considering measurement of impact. She has gathered secure evidence that offering entry levels has a positive impact on pupil outcomes along with self-esteem for example one young person believed he could not sit a GCSE until he was successful in an entry level exam.

4 schools including Southall are now involved in the transition project (HLC, Charlton and Telford Park). Abi has spoken to 7 feeder primary schools inviting them to feedback on the transition project. A common data collection sheet has been created and sent out to primary schools along with a transition activities document which has been created and sent to all schools for feedback. Abi has also spoken to Kick Start and Charlton pupils about their experiences from transitioning to primary to secondary. The next steps include:

- Collect the 'This is me' documents from the secondary school and make adaptive alternatives for none readers.
- Collect feedback from primary schools about the ease of filling in the form. Collective feedback from secondary schools to discuss the value of the information.
- Create a suggested document of how the information can be used to the different teams within a secondary school.

AI in the classroom has been trialled in a specialist school; we hope to progress this throughout phase 3 by expanding AI into mainstream to measure the impact. There has

also been exploration of AI supporting the SEND team has been explored looking at supporting workload and allowing more time for professionals to be out in the field. There have been benefits found from both parts of the AI testing which will continue to be developed throughout the programme.

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Worcestershire

Alternative Provision (AP) plan

3 Tier AP: We have been working alongside our AP Heads and school leaders to create capacity to test a model of earlier intervention for pupils at risk of suspension from their mainstream school. We are beginning to see the impact of this on our rates of suspension and exclusion across the Local Authority and are working with leaders to refine this model of delivery for the next school year.

Ordinarily Available Inclusion Provision (OAIP)

We are working with the University of Worcester to develop inclusive provision through change making leadership. 40 school leaders are on a leadership programme that will enable a clear vision for Worcestershire about ordinarily available inclusive provision in our schools. This is part of the SEND and AP Change Programme, with the DfE looking to us for practice-based evidence to develop the inclusive provision approach across Local Authorities. There are two cohorts working on this programme, with a view to having an ordinarily available inclusive provision approach shared in September 2026 for all schools in Worcestershire.