



Darlington Vulnerable Pupil Panel Protocol 2025-26

This protocol concerns the relationship between Darlington schools / academies, the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and the local authority (LA), working collaboratively to support improvement in behaviour and attendance in Darlington (referred to as the partnership). The panel will be supported and attended by a nominated decision-maker or their named deputy.

Agency / Organisation
CAMHS
Educational Psychologists
School Nurses
Primary Schools
Secondary Schools
Darlington College
Police
Social Care
Early Help
Keeping Families Together
Virtual School for LAC
Home and Hospital Teaching Service
Pupil Referral Unit
LA SEND
Children Missing Education
Elective Home Education

There is an expectation that each organisation’s decision maker will prepare information prior to the meeting. Specifically, it is important that all schools are prepared to make an admission decision for a child, even if the school have not been directly identified in the paperwork prior to the meeting.

The VPP aims to continue to take collective ownership across all schools / academies, other agencies and the local authority around issues resulting in pupils disengaging from education including suspensions and permanent exclusions and to work to identify the potential solutions to these issues.

Normal admission processes and procedures must be used, wherever possible, to admit pupils. The Fair Access Protocol and Vulnerable Pupil Panel Protocol shall only be used when dealing with the most complex cases. The objective is to rapidly secure a school place for children

The Schools Admissions Code (Sept 2021) outlines guidance in relation to in-year Fair Access Protocols to ensure that education is quickly secured for pupils who have no school place and to ensure that schools in an area, irrespective of governance, admit their fair share of pupils. Schools and academies will work with the LA in the development and implementation of a Fair Access Protocol (FAP). All admissions authorities must participate in the FAP to ensure that unplaced pupils are allocated a school place quickly. The FAP to be put in place will be for hard to place pupils. These protocols will operate alongside in-year transfers for other pupils.

In addition to this, in Darlington we will agree actions for other pupils who will be considered by the VPP. These are not pupils who meet the Fair Access criteria as laid down in the Schools Admissions Code, but pupils who are deemed vulnerable for a range of other reasons.

The VPP (incorporating the FAP) will meet three weekly during term time. The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected annually.

The partnership will work closely with the LA with regard to admissions to Rise Carr College (RCC) and access to Home and Hospital Teaching Services (HHTS).

All schools that commission **alternative provision** and/or have pupils on **part time timetables** are also expected to report numbers of pupils and details relating to hours and timetables to the Local Authority on perspective lite at each VPP. For the purposes of recording part time, any pupil receiving 25 hours or less is considered as having a reduced timetable. As a rule, schools are only permitted to provide less than full-time education, including placing a pupil on a part-time timetable, in very exceptional circumstances and the maximum length of a part time timetable is 6 weeks.

The partnership will examine service delivery and options for provisions and promote multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working where appropriate. As part of this the LA carries out annual safeguarding and health and safety audit visits to alternative education providers and arranges twice yearly quality assurance visits that comprise professional discussion and pupil voice feedback. This is for alternative education providers on the Alternative Education Framework which can be found [here](#).

The partnership will monitor and evaluate individual and collective arrangements that can be used to develop more coherent, holistic, and effective delivery of services and strategies.

Aims

The VPP aims to:

- 1) To consider all forms of support make the best possible organisational arrangements for all forms of support for behaviour and attendance in the schools / academies, including alternative provision, therapeutic and other interventions, and all forms of relevant advice and support by analysing and using data and previous case information to inform future approaches and decisions
- 2) ensure that all pupils in Darlington are treated as the collective responsibility of all the schools / academies and partners by having good engagement, challenge and support by relevant decision makers
- 3) promote conditions for sustainable continuous improvement in pupil behaviour and attendance in Darlington's schools / academies by ensuring open communication is in place and by providing professional advice and guidance
- 4) provide a mutually supportive environment for all pupils and staff by adopting a solution focused approach to case resolution and by identifying and sharing good and best practice amongst the education community and partner agencies
- 5) work hard to fulfil pupil, parental and governor expectations for young people, schools and academies – by providing leadership of the highest quality to support and inspire pupils and staff in the partnership
- 6) Encourage the use of inclusive language, restorative and relational practice and respectful, factual and curious professional enquiry
- 7) Seek and value the voice of young people and adopt a whole-family approach where appropriate.

Outcomes

The partnership expects that this collaborative initiative will:

- minimise the amount of time that vulnerable pupils spend out of education
- ensure that schools admit pupils with challenging educational needs on a fair and equitable basis, through objective and transparent processes
- improve opportunities for young people whose behaviour is challenging
- reduce exclusions and suspensions in schools / academies
- reduce persistent absence
- ensure that education is delivered for day 6 to excluded pupils (and on day 1 for Children Looked After)

Support and provision for pupils

The partnership intends to ensure a better alignment of young people's needs in respect of behaviour with the provision available. It will continue the processes of:

- pooling information about available resources
- implementing FAP for relevant groups
- ensuring that schools have the main responsibility for their pupil placements at other providers on their role and to keep the VPP informed by updating the paperwork distributed at the start of the meeting
- considering opportunities for additional provision for pupils at risk of exclusion and / or disaffection
- using centrally held resources to support young people's behaviour and attendance in improving and maintaining the AP list

Other relevant documentation

[The Children and Young People's Plan](#)

[School Admission Code including Fair Access Guidance](#)

www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code

[Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England](#)

www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2

[Elective Home Education Guidance for Local Authorities](#)

[Children Missing Education Guidance for Local Authorities](#)

www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance

[Promoting the education of LAC and PLAC](#)

[SEND Code of Practice](#)

[Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Alternative Provision](#)

[Ensuring a good education for children who can't attend school](#)

Quality Assurance Panel

The quality assurance panel will meet in advance of the VPP to review the referrals made to the panel. This is to ensure that the correct documentation is present and that the referrals meet the threshold of the panel. The panel will comprise of 2 Secondary Heads, 2 Primary Heads, Head of Rise Carr College, Head of Education and Inclusion, Chair/VC, School Admissions Manager and other LA officers as

appropriate. All other head teachers are welcome to attend as observers of the process. Of the 2 Secondary Heads and 2 Primary Heads, one will be a permanent seat and the other will rotate. The permanent HT roles are for the duration of one year, thereafter they will be reviewed by the 11-19 and Primary HT groups, who will nominate a permanent HT to sit on the QA panel for the duration of the year as the permanent Head Teacher.

The QA panel has the following main functions:

- To ensure that referrals to the VPP meet the criteria agreed by the partnership
- To make a judgement on the sufficiency of the evidence provided
- To review sensitive information on behalf of the panel
- To review any S19 referrals and consider if an appropriate educational offer is required
- To communicate outcomes of the QA panel back to referring schools
- Offsite direction (new behaviour units)

If appropriate, the QA panel reserves the right to ask referring schools to provide additional information in advance of the VPP, if not originally supplied.

Suggested addition as requested by the high needs subgroup to be consistent with MAPP:

“Members of the VPP QA panel, from a school or academy trust, should declare an expression of interest if the pupil being referred is from their school or academy trust and not partake in the discussions or the decisions. “

Fair Access Protocol

It is the LA’s expectation that FAP pupils will be placed in a new school within 20 working school days from when admissions receive the request. The VPP meeting may fall on day 15 within this process. Schools are encouraged to take pupils and put them on roll as soon as possible and this will be acknowledged at the next VPP meeting.

Schools / academies should work together collaboratively, considering the needs of the child and those of the school. There is no duty to comply with parental preferences when allocating places through the protocol, but it is expected that the wishes of the parent are considered.

If a parent is unhappy with the panel decision regarding the placement of their child in a particular school, they can appeal for a place in their chosen school through normal independent appeals processes.

Definition of Fair Access Pupils

Fair Access Protocols (FAP) may only be used to place the following groups of vulnerable and/or hard-to-place children, where they are having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, and it can be demonstrated that *reasonable measures have been taken to secure a place through the usual in-year admission procedures*:

- a) children either subject to a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan or having had a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan within 12 months at the point of being referred to the FAP;
- b) children living in a refuge or in other Relevant Accommodation at the point of being referred to the FAP;
- c) children from the criminal justice system;

- d) children in alternative provision who need to be reintegrated into mainstream education or who have been permanently excluded but are deemed suitable for mainstream education;
- e) children with special educational needs (but without an Education, Health and Care plan), disabilities or medical conditions;
- f) children who are carers;
- g) children who are homeless;
- h) children in formal kinship care arrangements
- i) children of, or who are, Gypsies, Roma, Travellers, refugees, and asylum seekers;
- j) children who have been refused a school place on the grounds of their challenging behaviour and referred to the FAP in accordance with 3.10 of the School Admissions Code
- k) children for whom a place has not been sought due to exceptional circumstances
- l) children who have been out of education for four or more weeks where it can be demonstrated that there are no places available at any school within a reasonable distance of their home. This does not include circumstances where a suitable place has been offered to a child and this has not been accepted;
- m) previously looked after children for whom the local authority has been unable to promptly secure a school place

Definitions of Vulnerable Pupils

In addition to the Fair Access categories, we would also add the following categories for consideration at the VPP:

- 1) Children displaying persistently challenging and disruptive behaviour
- 2) Permanently excluded children from both in and out of the borough
- 3) Children with unsupportive** family backgrounds who are at risk of disengaging from education
- 4) Children returning to mainstream schools from Elective Home Education*
- 5) Children who fall into the S19 category of the Education Act 1996

(*EHE pupils are readmitted to their original school when requested **unless** the original school presents a case to the next VPP with a valid reason why the pupil cannot be readmitted. In this instance VPP is the arbiter of this reason submitted, and decision is immediate and final at date of submission) (** taken from the School Admission Code)

N.B. – Looked after pupils or pupils with an EHCP or pupils who are undergoing statutory assessment for an EHCP will not be considered by the VPP for the purpose of school admission, they can be considered for access to services and resources provided by members of the VPP.

The panel will endeavour to ensure a fair and consistent placement of young people across all schools and across all year groups. When making decisions regarding the placement of young people in a school, the panel will consider a number of factors including the following:

- Percentage of pupils taken during the academic year (in relation to their pupil numbers)
- The number of pupils placed in a specific year group by the panel
- The make-up / challenges of a specific year group in a school, which would not be conducive to a successful move to that school
- Specific circumstances relating to the admission of a particular pupil e.g. known history of a serious breakdown of relationship between home and school

The above will be achieved by the use of collated data from the VPP, that will be made available to all partners.

Pupils should be admitted to the receiving school as soon as possible and in any case within 2 weeks of the panel decision being made. Appropriate parties should be involved in the initial meeting.

The placement of individual pupils will be logged on a per pupil / per school basis and reflected in the pupil placement allocation spreadsheet that will be shared at each meeting.

The VPP will aim to achieve consensus on placement decisions. If agreement can't be reached, the Chair will make the final decision considering available information and if required will seek to direct a school (see Appendix 3).

VPP in relation to Day 6 provision for permanently excluded pupils

As soon as a permanent exclusion has been issued the Headteacher must notify the Local Authority on the same day and include a copy of the letter to the parent / carer by emailing the Inclusion Lead Officer dianne.gage@darlington.gov.uk. This notification must be done immediately to allow the 6-day provision process to be followed. Further details of the permanent exclusion process can be found in the guidance [here](#). NB: *Immediate notification is expected for any LAC pupil so provision can be put in place from Day 1 of PEX.*

The Day 6 requirement will be met as follows:

For Key Stages 1 & 2 – Day 6 provision is the responsibility of the Local Authority and pupils will be placed as appropriate.

For Key Stages 3 & 4 – Day 6 will remain the responsibility of the LA with places within the secondary PRU provision.

Wherever the young person is permanently excluded within the cycle of VPP dates, the case will need to be presented at the forthcoming meeting, not only to discuss the case, but also to formally recognise the Day 6 allocation.

Pupils attending Day 6 for permanent exclusion will return to VPP after the Governing Body Disciplinary (GDC) Committee of the school / academy has met to determine whether to uphold the exclusion or direct reinstatement to the school and the appeal period has passed. VPP will then determine the longer-term education pathway for the young person. However, Head Teachers have agreed that VPP will be afforded the opportunity to discuss cases of permanently excluded pupils before the GDC meets to deliberate / consider the exclusion.

Wherever possible, depending on the incident that led to the permanent exclusion, an alternative solution will be sought. It remains the right of a Head Teacher to permanently exclude and recommend to VPP that the severity of the incident does not warrant consideration that the exclusion be withdrawn.

The Inclusion Lead Officer will be responsible to update relevant professionals as to the status of the young person in relation to the permanent exclusion, i.e.:

- paperwork in relation to permanent exclusion in order that Day 6 provision can be accessed
- date of Governing Body Committee (GDC) meeting
- discussions / decisions regarding potential withdrawing of permanent exclusion before GDC
- GDC outcome if permanent exclusion is not withdrawn
- Head Teachers are asked to complete the VPP referral form and a Risk Assessment at the point of the permanent exclusion process to assist entry into the Day 6 provision

During the first 5 days of the exclusion the school / academy is required to use the 'E' Coding. From Day 6 the responsibility falls to the LA to provide education and schools / academies should use an appropriate attendance code, such as Code B (Education Off-site) or Code D (Dual registration).

NB: From September 2022, ALL exclusions must be reported to the LA '**without delay**', regardless of the length of suspension. From September 2023, suspensions are to be logged by schools within the EYES reporting feature. Permanent exclusions must be notified to the Inclusion Lead Officer as soon as possible to ensure 6th day provision is in place.

If suspensions are more than 5 days, please also contact the Inclusion Lead officer
dianne.gage@darlington.gov.uk

VPP in relation to schools referrals for PRU places

Referrals brought to VPP by mainstream schools for PRU placement must be accompanied by a OnePlan/Support Plan. Once the young person has entered the PRU, roll status appropriate to the Key Stage will be agreed by the panel dependent on the individual situation of the young person.

Where placed to the PRU as KS3 and 4 assessment provision, the PRU roll status will be S subsidiary roll status as M main roll status remains with referring school / academy.

Where the child has a placement is not returning to the school / academy, the PRU roll status will be S subsidiary roll as the main roll status remains with the referring school.

When a child is placed in the PRU as an alternative provision, their roll status will be reviewed at least annually, and long-term decision made as to the roll status by the panel.

If parents decline allocation, or the pupil fails to enrol, the case must be referred back to the VPP. If an agreement cannot be made with the parent on a placement, the responsibility for the education of the pupil reverts to the referring school / academy.

Reintegration following permanent exclusion

Excluded pupils will only be reintegrated into mainstream schools when they are ready and additional help will be provided where needed to ensure a smooth transition. Rise Carr Pupil Referral Unit will assess young people's readiness to be reintegrated into school. It is expected that new mainstream school / academy will be identified as early as it possible. The Readiness for Reintegration Scale will be used and shared with the receiving school / academy (See Appendix 2).

Supported Off-Site Placements (*previously Managed Moves*)

Supported Off-Site Placements should only occur when it is in the pupil's best interests and should be voluntary and agreed with all parties involved, including the parents. If a temporary move needs to occur to improve a pupil's behaviour, then off-site direction should be used.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the relevant statutory duties will apply, and the current school should contact the local authority prior to the Supported Off-Site Placement to consider amending the plan.

Supported Off-Site Placements should be offered as part of a planned intervention. The original school should be able to evidence that appropriate initial intervention has been carried out, including, where relevant, multi-agency support, or any statutory assessments that were done or explored prior to a Supported Off-site Placement, sharing information including data on prior and current attainment,

academic potential, a risk assessment and advice on effective risk management strategies. It is also important for the new school to ensure that the pupil is provided with an effective integration strategy.

A Supported Off-site Placement should be seen as a voluntary and timely child-focused intervention. Within a referral for a placement the child's school / academy should clearly identify what they believe a move to a new school / academy can do additionally for the child. The evidence base within the referral must make specific reference to which of the child's needs can be better met in a different school / academy, and the skills set and / or capacity that will be needed within the new school / academy.

Supported Off-site Placements must be time limited. After the initial meeting there must be regular review meetings and the final review at 12 weeks. The Inclusion Lead will be responsible for monitoring and updating VPP as to the progress of the Supported Off-Site Placement.

At the end of the Supported Off-site Placement a decision will be made whether to end the placement because the pupil has not met the required targets or to take the pupil onto the roll of the new school / academy because targets have been met. All meetings should include both schools / academies, the Inclusion Lead, the parent / carer and the pupil. In the case of a pupil with CIN / CP status, a separate initial meeting should also take place between the DSLs of both schools / academies. Progress will be reported and recorded at VPP meetings.

If a Supported Off-site Placement is successful, the pupil will go onto the roll of the new school / academy on the day following the 12-week final meeting. At this point the pupil should be treated as an equal member of the school / academy community.

If the placement is deemed a failure, then the young person would return to their original school / academy. These decisions must be made at the review meeting with parents / carers and both schools / academies present so that clear and consistent messages can be provided as to why the managed move has failed. In exceptional circumstances, a managed move can extend beyond the 12 week period, e.g. 1 Year 11 pupil who has moved; but these would be the exceptions. The extended Supported Off-site Placement will be no longer than 15 weeks if additional time is required to complete an intervention or agreed support. This would be discussed and agreed by all parties at the review meetings.

Outcomes from Supported Off-site Placements need to be reported at VPP and will recorded by the LA Inclusion Lead through the VPP meetings. If a placement breaks down, the host school needs to report this to the LA Inclusion Lead Officer dianne.gage@darlington.gov.uk on the same day to prevent the child becoming a CME.

Where a Supported Off-site Placement is unsuccessful and the pupil returns to their original school / academy, any subsequent permanent exclusion should not be based solely on the behaviours from prior to the placement. Pupils should be given a fair opportunity to reintegrate into their school with agreed targets.

All Supported Off-site Placements should be agreed through the VPP to ensure a clear and transparent approach to pupil placements.

Difficulty in meeting the SEN needs of a pupil should not result in a Supported Off-site Placement.

LAC would not normally be considered for a Supported Off-site Placement. Such a placement being considered for a LAC pupil should always be in consultation and agreement with the Virtual Head and requires an emergency PEP to be held as this is a proposed change to the LAC care plan.

All requests for Supported Off-site Placements must be supported by parental / carer consent.

The Inclusion Lead Officer will monitor and track the performance of placements through VPP and the standard procedure through the review meetings will be followed.

Off Site Direction

The guidance¹ states that placement of children in other mainstream schools is 'off site direction'. There are now legal duties for the MAT or maintained school who should inform the local authority if they intend to set up a **behaviour unit** with the intention of taking children from other schools.

(p26): "Where such units are set up, schools should always discuss their plans with the local authority to consider how they fit with the wider local strategy for alternative provision and the continuum of support available to children".

Managed moves

[Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance](#) (see p22-23)

A managed move is used to initiate a process which leads to the transfer of a pupil to another mainstream school **permanently**. Managed moves should be voluntary and agreed with all parties involved, including the parents and the admission authority of the new school. If a temporary move needs to occur to improve a pupil's behaviour, then offsite direction should be used. Managed moves should only occur when it is in the pupil's best interests.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the relevant statutory duties on the new school and local authority will apply. If the current school is contemplating a managed move, it should contact the authority prior to the managed move. If the local authority, both schools and parents are in agreement that there should be a managed move, the local authority will need to follow the statutory procedures for amending a plan.

Managed moves should be offered as part of a planned intervention. The original school should be able to evidence that appropriate initial intervention has been carried out, including, where relevant, multi-agency support, or any statutory assessments were done or explored prior to a managed move.

The managed move should be preceded by information sharing between the original school and the new school, including data on prior and current attainment, academic potential, a risk assessment and advice on effective risk management strategies. It is also important for the new school to ensure that the pupil is provided with an effective integration strategy.

All managed moves should be recorded through the VPP to ensure a clear and transparent approach to pupil placements.

Dispute resolution process – see Appendix 4

The VPP agreed in their meeting on 15.11.19 to a revision to the protocol for a dispute resolution process relating to in-year transfers and managed moves. The VPP will receive a report on all in-year school to school transfers to enable monitoring.

¹[Alternative provision - GOV.UK](#)

Key Stage 2

Year 5 / 6 pupils

The partnership agrees that wherever possible Year 5 / 6 pupils should remain in their original school. The LA will monitor in year admissions within Year 5 and Year 6 and report on them accordingly.

Key Stage 4

Year 10 pupils

The partnership agrees that wherever possible Year 10 pupils should remain in their original school.

Year 11 pupils

The partnership agrees that there should be no moves of Year 11 pupils within Darlington schools. At this point, schools should seek to create alternative education packages instead, to help those pupils succeed, unless there are exceptional circumstances as to why a move should occur. In the instance when a move of a Year 11 pupil it is necessary, the partnership will agree that it will be on a managed move basis until the pupil has left Year 11.

Referrals to the Home and Hospital Teaching Service

- An application for H&HTS/S19 consideration is completed by the school when a YP has been absent for more than 15 days, whether consecutive or cumulative and unable to attend school as a result of; physical health problems, physical injury; progressive health conditions; terminal illness; mental health problems – including anxiety, *and* school have exhausted all efforts to ensure reasonable adjustments have been implemented.
- Referrals must be backed up by a full assessment carried out by an Educational Psychologists or a Clinical Psychologist, Clinical Psychiatrist or Primary Health Worker (usually based at CAMHs). Should a School Counsellor identify a pupil as being too anxious, the school must ask an Educational Psychologist or CAMHs to carry out a full assessment.
- An assessment from the pupil's G.P or a school counsellor is **not** deemed appropriate.
- Where a YP with physical health needs is referred for a place at HHTS, health information from e.g. GPs is not required, but it is expected that schools / academies will be able to demonstrate that they have considered their OAP (Ordinarily Available Provision) and what strategies and interventions have been trialled in order to support the young person in their home-school setting. Referrals under these circumstances should be backed up by evidence of a graduated response/reasonable adjustments and what impact this has had on the student's access to education, and how return to F-T education at the home school will be considered.

Documentation required for VPP referral

All pupils being referred to VPP will need the following supporting documentation:

- Fully completed VPP passport referral form, including completion of the parent / carer consent
- Current attendance certificate
- Pupil views
- Historical attendance information from previous 2 years (or length of time at the school / academy)

- Suspensions (number, reason, length) for every year in the school / academy
- Internal suspensions (number, reason, length) for every year in the school / academy
- Punctuality information for the last / current year in the school / academy
- School behaviour plans and support plans
- Involvement of any other agencies / services for every year since joining the school/academy
- Academic information (KS2, KS3, KS4 – targets and current progress)
- Evidence of the school's / academy's graduated response to the pupil's needs, directly linked to the Ranges guidance 2018 (include reports / recommendations e.g. EP reports)
- One plan/ support plan

Referrals must be submitted by 5pm on the Thursday the week before the QA Panel meeting to vulnerablepupil@darlington.gov.uk

Standard Agenda Items

- 1) Fair Access
- 2) Referrals not progressed to Panel
- 3) Pupils at risk through persistently challenging and / or disruptive behaviour
- 4) Requests for Managed Moves
- 5) Reviews of Managed Moves and Placement Breakdowns
- 6) Requests for place at PRU / HHTS
- 7) Permanent Exclusions since last VPP
- 8) Re-integration from PRU / HHTS
- 9) Alternative Provision / restricted timetable update

Funding (To be agreed in principle by the VPP subject to School Forum approval)

Funding follows the pupil, and the receiving school invoices the base school for the proportion of AWPU left in that academic year e.g. (x days/190 * AWPU). Schools should invoice the base school if a minimum of 15 days provision has occurred in the academic year at the rate specified above.

Redetermination of Schools Budgets

The operational guidance (appendix 1)² states that in relation to maintained schools LA's **must** deduct from the school's budget in-year the amount within the formula relating to the age and personal circumstances of that pupil, pro rata to the number of complete weeks remaining in the financial year from the 'relevant date'. This means the deduction should cover not just the basic entitlement but also the relevant amounts for pupil-led factors, such as FSM or EAL, where the pupil would attract funding through those criteria. Deductions from an excluding school's budget should be used to support a school who, in year, admits a pupil who has been permanently excluded. In this way, schools would be supported to admit pupils promptly under Fair Access when they have been permanently excluded. The guidance also states that most Academies have provisions in their funding agreement for Local Authority requests for adjustments to their budget, however older agreements may not and therefore any adjustments would have to be agreed between the Academy and the Local Authority.

GDPR and Data Sensitivity

Due to the sometimes highly sensitive and confidential nature of the VPP referral document and/or

2. See sections 25-28 appendix 1 extract of <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-16-schools-funding-local-authority-guidance-for-2025-to-2026/schools-operational-guide-2025-to-2026#redetermination-of-budgets-where-pupils-have-been-excluded>

supporting documents, we would like to remind all panel members that it is their responsibility to ensure ongoing and continued compliance with data protection law. This includes the safe keeping, transportation and secure disposal of all VPP documents after the meeting.

Document holders will be held accountable for any breach of data protection law.

The VPP privacy notice can be accessed [Darlington BC - Education or training](#).

The Use of AI Bots in VPP meetings is not permitted. The meetings should not be recorded, transcribed or disseminated by any means other than the agreed minutes

Appendix 1 - Known triggers (examples to use in the VPP passport referral form)

- Peer provocation
- Work/task frustration
- Poor academic ability
- Noise levels
- Teacher Responses
- Social time incidents
- Lunch time incidents
- External factors
- Medications (ADHD)
- Formal lessons
- Free activities
- Exposing of self esteem
- Not getting own way
- Inability to comprehend instructions
- Task frustration due to motor or sensor difficulties
- Stigma-rejects or dislikes support
- Social relationships
- Inability to cope with physical demands of the day
- Erratic learning patterns, loss of concentration
- Adverse reaction to authority
- Moving around class
- Moving around school
- Unfamiliar adults (supply visitors etc.)
- Name calling
- Being bullied
- Manipulated
- Being ignored
- Peer rejection
- Pupil catalyst
- Late for lessons (misses instructions)
- Poor attendance (missed learning)
- Reprimands
- Just wants to be left alone
- COVID
- (Adverse childhood experience)

Appendix 2 - Reintegration from Rise Carr College - Scale of reintegration

*Attached at end of document

Appendix 3 - Mechanism for the Chair making fair access decisions in the absence of consensus

The following procedure will be used to determine decisions by the Chair during the current academic year or until such time that the panel amend the protocols to insert a new mechanism.

Placement will be determined by assessing in sequence:

- 1) Previously placed fair access pupils in the year group in the current academic year, then.
- 2) Previously placed fair access pupils in the rest of the school in the current academic year, then.
- 3) Closest school by walking distance

In order to be proportionate, the size of the cohort needs to be accounted for. Each pupil in each school is a different proportion of the cohort. The following pupil coefficients will be used for each secondary school. These will only be required when all the schools have placed at least one child.

When allocating fair access places under Chair's action, the Chair considers school's cohorts of children with EHCP and children with a social worker when placing a child under fair access. In order to affect this consideration the chair's formula will award each school a start score of $(EHCP + CWSW) * \text{school weighting} * 0.1$. Children placed into resource bases will not be considered in this formula."

Schools will receive a credit equivalent to a Fair Access placement for each child with an EHCP or who are looked after that are placed "in year" or other than at usual transition points. Below is an example of how school weighting will be calculated. The "live" calculation will reflect current data at the start of the academic year and will be shared after each allocation using the formula.

Calculation of Secondary School co-efficient based on PAN			
School	PAN	Proportion of Smallest PAN (x/80)	Inverse of proportion to calculate the pupil coefficient (1/y)
Carmel	180	2.25	0.4
Haughton	180	2.25	0.4
Hummersknott	240	3	0.3
Hurworth	127	1.5875	0.6
Longfield	180	2.25	0.4
Polam	80	1	1.0
St Aidan's	140	1.75	0.6
Wyvern	140	1.75	0.6

Appendix 4 – Despite resolution process

1.1 The members of the VPP agrees that disputes between members of the VPP will be resolved in the first place by discussions and negotiation. Formal procedures, including voting will only be adopted as a last resort.

1.2 The members of the VPP agrees to follow the procedure below in the event of a dispute between VPP members over the work of the VPP or the actions of a member or members of the VPP. The dispute resolution procedures will only come into force when any such issue has not been able to be resolved through the normal day to day activities and processes of the VPP or its member bodies.

1.3 When any members of the VPP feel that the VPP or member(s) of the VPP has not met their obligations under the protocol, this should first be discussed between the relevant parties.

1.4 If the matter cannot be resolved between the parties, either party has the right to refer the matter to the LA Inclusion lead officer who should attempt informally to mediate between the parties. The informal mediation process should last no more than 10 school-working days from the point of referral.

1.5 In the absence of the LA Inclusion lead officer or where the dispute involves the LA Inclusion lead officer, responsibility for informal mediation should be delegated to a member of the VPP, appointed by the Chair. Where the dispute involves the Chair, his / her place in this procedure will be taken by the Chair of 11-19 Partnership or the Chair of the Primary Forum.

1.6 If the matter cannot be resolved through informal mediation or if the person responsible for the mediation considers the matter to be of sufficient seriousness to warrant it, the LA Inclusion lead officer will appoint an independent third party mediator to investigate and within 10 working days, produce findings and recommendations in the form of a short written report. This report should be produced and submitted to the Chair who will, within five working days, convene a hearing of the matter in front of a Disputes Panel comprising four impartial members of the members of the VPP not involved in the dispute and the Chair. (If the Chair is involved in the dispute, then the Chair of 11-19 Partnership or the Chair of the Primary Forum will take his / her place). The Panel will hear the outcome of the investigation, listen to submissions by both parties and reach a decision.

1.7 The Panel’s judgment will be final. The Panel will have the power to require either party to take or abstain from any particular course of action; in extreme circumstances this may entail the suspension or expulsion of a VPP representative.

Version	Date	Comments
1	07.08.2023	1 st draft with 3 proposed amendments as discussed at VPP 14.07.2023
1	10.08.2023	1 st draft with 3 further proposed amendment to incorporate Alternative Provision changes in line with new QA protocol see page 2 and also page 11
2	26.09.2023	Updated as per majority votes. The other 3 proposed amendments left highlighted in yellow on page 2 and 11.
3	29.09.2023	Approved as circulated at VPP meeting 29.09.2023
4	27.09.2024	Approved as circulated at VPP meeting 27.09.2024
5	05.04.2025	Removed reference to funded support plans and updated funding information
5i	12.06.2025	Further suggested amendments made by Dianne Gage and Eleanor Marshall
5i	02.07.2025	Circulated to VPP for comment EW

Student Name:



Readiness for Reintegration Statements

Darlington Educational Psychology Service and Rise Carr College



Student Name:

Self-Control and Self-Management

Key Themes

The young person is able to regulate their response when faced with challenge, difficulty or an adult agenda, including following school rules and expectations. This may initially require a high level of adult support to recognise these situations for the young person and direct them to agreed regulation strategies; over time the young person will become more skilled at independent regulation.

“I Can” Statements

For these statements a 5 point scale is suggested to frame discussions about a young person’s progress towards a successful reintegration to mainstream schooling. Additional descriptive information should be recorded below each statement to offer additional clarity on scaled scores.

- 1 = can do this on up to 25% of occasions, with a very high level of adult support in place
- 2 = can do this on about 25% of occasions, often with a high level of adult support
- 3 = can do this on about 50% of occasions, adult support is still needed for most occasions
- 4 = can do this on about 75% of occasions, increasing ability to do so independently
- 5 = can do this on about 90% of occasions, often without additional support from an adult

Statement	Progress towards statement				
I can accept an adult’s decision calmly	1	2	3	4	5
I can arrive into a lesson calmly and quietly	1	2	3	4	5
I can inform a member of staff when I am unsettled or dysregulated	1	2	3	4	5
I can follow agreed strategies when I am unsettled or dysregulated	1	2	3	4	5
I can regulate my responses to events in a way that is safe and agreed with school staff	1	2	3	4	5
I can manage my response when routines or my expectations change suddenly or with little warning	1	2	3	4	5
I can ignore requests from my peers to disengage or misbehave	1	2	3	4	5
I can ignore confrontations or attempts to antagonise me	1	2	3	4	5
I can follow rules and expectations when moving around school	1	2	3	4	5
Additional Notes					



Student Name:

Social Interaction and Peer Relationships

Key Themes

The young person is able to communicate appropriately with their peers and adults within school. This will tend to build from 'key' relationships, such as with a single adult who provides a consistent supporting figure within school, or peers who they have pre-existing relationships with. To do this, the young person will need to develop their understanding of social cues, norms and rules, as well as the differences between peer interactions and responding to adults.

"I Can" Statements

For these statements a 5 point scale is suggested to frame discussions about a young person's progress towards a successful reintegration to mainstream schooling. Additional descriptive information should be recorded below each statement to offer additional clarity on scaled scores.

1 = can do this on up to 25% of occasions, with a very high level of adult support in place

2 = can do this on about 25% of occasions, often with a high level of adult support

3 = can do this on about 50% of occasions, adult support is still needed for most occasions

4 = can do this on about 75% of occasions, increasing ability to do so independently

5 = can do this on about 90% of occasions, often without additional support from an adult

Statement	Progress towards statement				
I can initiate an interaction with an adult appropriately	1	2	3	4	5
I can wait until it is appropriate to ask a question or make a comment	1	2	3	4	5
I can work alongside suitable peers in a paired or group task	1	2	3	4	5
I can recognise when I need to apologise for my actions or words	1	2	3	4	5
I can build initial relationships with peers and adults	1	2	3	4	5
I can maintain relationships and friendships with peers	1	2	3	4	5
I can ask for help or support appropriately	1	2	3	4	5
I can use appropriate language when interacting with others	1	2	3	4	5
Additional Notes					



Student Name:

Self-awareness and Confidence

Key Themes

The young person is able to engage in discussions about their strengths and progress to build self-esteem, as well as to identify where barriers lie and how they show resilience by overcoming setbacks. They are able to identify and label feelings and emotions within themselves and others, as well as how others might expect them to behave.

“I Can” Statements

For these statements a 5 point scale is suggested to frame discussions about a young person’s progress towards a successful reintegration to mainstream schooling. Additional descriptive information should be recorded below each statement to offer additional clarity on scaled scores.

- 1 = can do this on up to 25% of occasions, with a very high level of adult support in place*
- 2 = can do this on about 25% of occasions, often with a high level of adult support*
- 3 = can do this on about 50% of occasions, adult support is still needed for most occasions*
- 4 = can do this on about 75% of occasions, increasing ability to do so independently*
- 5 = can do this on about 90% of occasions, often without additional support from an adult*

Statement	Progress towards statement				
I can accept responsibility for my words and actions	1	2	3	4	5
I can engage in discussions about my strengths and progress	1	2	3	4	5
I can engage in discussions about difficulties and barriers	1	2	3	4	5
I can recognise and label emotions within myself	1	2	3	4	5
I can recognise and label emotions within others	1	2	3	4	5
I can understand how other people expect me to respond to them	1	2	3	4	5
I can identify talents, skills and successes within myself	1	2	3	4	5
I can show resilience when something does not go my way	1	2	3	4	5
Additional Notes					



Student Name:

Skills for Learning

Key Themes

The young person is able to successfully engage with learning in an educational setting. They are able to access appropriately differentiated learning tasks with increasing independence, and seek help patiently and appropriately when barriers to learning arise.

“I Can” Statements

For these statements a 5 point scale is suggested to frame discussions about a young person’s progress towards a successful reintegration to mainstream schooling. Additional descriptive information should be recorded below each statement to offer additional clarity on scaled scores.

- 1 = can do this on up to 25% of occasions, with a very high level of adult support in place*
- 2 = can do this on about 25% of occasions, often with a high level of adult support*
- 3 = can do this on about 50% of occasions, adult support is still needed for most occasions*
- 4 = can do this on about 75% of occasions, increasing ability to do so independently*
- 5 = can do this on about 90% of occasions, often without additional support from an adult*

Statement	Progress towards statement				
I can attempt learning tasks independently	1	2	3	4	5
I can use independent self-help strategies when I am unsure how to progress	1	2	3	4	5
I can share appropriately when I do understand the instructions for a learning task	1	2	3	4	5
I can respond to adult requests and agendas within a lesson structure	1	2	3	4	5
I can independently engage with differentiated reading content within my lessons	1	2	3	4	5
I can independently engage with differentiated writing content within my lessons	1	2	3	4	5
I can independently engage with differentiated maths content within my lessons	1	2	3	4	5
Additional Notes					



Student Name:

Approach to Learning and Future Aspirations

Key Themes

There is a joined up sense of purpose to the young person’s reintegration. The young person has a desire to engage with their new setting, and their views, along with parent/carers, school staff and other professionals are carefully considered to identify next steps forward in the young person’s education. The young person becomes an active participant in their new school and its values, ethos and expectations.

“I Can” Statements

For these statements a 5 point scale is suggested to frame discussions about a young person’s progress towards a successful reintegration to mainstream schooling. Additional descriptive information should be recorded below each statement to offer additional clarity on scaled scores.

1 = can do this on up to 25% of occasions, with a very high level of adult support in place

2 = can do this on about 25% of occasions, often with a high level of adult support

3 = can do this on about 50% of occasions, adult support is still needed for most occasions

4 = can do this on about 75% of occasions, increasing ability to do so independently

5 = can do this on about 90% of occasions, often without additional support from an adult

Statement	Progress towards statement				
I can identify long-term education and career aspirations	1	2	3	4	5
I can identify short-term goals and next steps in my personal development and learning	1	2	3	4	5
I can recognise how people outside of school support me with my short and long-term goals and aspirations	1	2	3	4	5
I can interact appropriately with unfamiliar members of staff	1	2	3	4	5
I can understand how school rules apply to me	1	2	3	4	5
I can understand the school routine and what is expected of me throughout the day	1	2	3	4	5
I can identify who I ask for help and support within school	1	2	3	4	5
Additional Notes					