

# Westcountry Schools Trust



## Expectations regarding 'off-rolling' and the use of Alternative Provision

### Inclusion statement

*All WeST schools will have an inclusive culture that supports arrangements to:*

1. identify early those pupils who may be disadvantaged or have additional needs or barriers to learning;
2. meet the needs of those pupils, drawing, when necessary, on more specialist support, and help those pupils to engage positively with the curriculum;
3. ensure pupils have a positive experience of learning and achieve positive outcomes.

### How is 'off-rolling' defined?

*Ofsted (2019) defines 'off-rolling' as the following:*

*The practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil. Off-rolling in these circumstances is a form of 'gaming'.*

### What is not 'off-rolling'?

- There are many reasons why a school might remove a pupil from the school roll, such as when a pupil moves house or a parent decides, without encouragement or coercion by the school, to home educate their child. This is **not off-rolling**.
- If the pupil transfers to the roll of their alternative provision, and this is genuinely in the best interest of the pupil, this is **not off-rolling**.
- If a school appropriately removes a pupil from the roll due to a formal permanent exclusion and follows the proper processes, this is **not off-rolling**. Headteachers have the right to exclude pupils when there are legitimate reasons for them to do so. Used correctly, exclusion is a vital measure for Headteachers to use.
- Dual-registering or dual-coding a pupil in two schools or providers, or using alternative provision while they remain registered at the school, is **not off-rolling** because the pupil has not left the roll of their school.
- Managed moves/transfers can be an effective tool in breaking a cycle of poor pupil behaviour. When Managed moves are used, with the support and scrutiny of the relevant Local Authority (and statutory guidance), with full agreement with the parents, and are used in a pupil's best interests to help break a cycle of poor behaviour, this is **not off-rolling**.

## **What do WeST consider to be 'off-rolling'?**

- Encouraging a parent to move schools or home educate their child as an alternative to exclusion.
- Coercing a parent into to a managed move/transfer to avoid a permanent exclusion.
- Transferring a pupil to the roll of an alternative provider, where it is clearly in the best interests of the school, rather than the pupil.

## **Monitoring of pupil mobility**

*It is expected that all schools will monitor pupil mobility in the following ways:*

- Keep accurate records of pupils leaving the school roll by year group and pupil group (SEND, disadvantaged etc...).
- Ensure that the reasons and destinations for pupils leaving are clearly recorded.
- Analyse patterns and trends that may emerge as to why pupils have left, and if appropriate, plan actions to mitigate (for example – are SEND or disadvantaged over-represented?).
- Report pupil mobility (inc. any patterns and trends) to the governing body for scrutiny at least once per term.
- The WeST CEO and DSSI will discuss pupil mobility data with Headteachers termly.

## **Guidance for using Alternative Provision**

Alternative provision (AP) is education outside school, arranged by local authorities or schools, for pupils who do not attend mainstream school for reasons such as school exclusion, behaviour issues, school refusal, or short- or long-term illness.

## **WeST expectations for the use of Alternative Provision (AP)**

- Leaders must have a clear rationale as to why off-site provision is the best option for the pupils concerned. Parents must be in full agreement.
- Leaders must ensure that appropriate checks on the registration status of the provision have taken place before any pupil starts (i.e. is the AP registered with Ofsted / does it have a URN?).
- Leaders should ensure that safeguarding checks have been made and continue to be made to ensure that the provision is a safe place for pupils to attend. There should be an agreed process in place for communication (and subsequent action) between the AP and the school regarding any safeguarding issues that might arise.
- Leaders should ensure that any pupils accessing AP will benefit from a well-planned and sequenced, well-taught, broad and balanced curriculum.
- Leaders should check that the provision adequately promotes the pupils' personal development.

- Leaders carefully monitor the attendance and behaviour of the pupils who attend the provision. There should be **daily phone calls to the AP from the school** to check whether the pupil is present. It is not sufficient to assume that the AP will contact the school first. Schools must be proactive.
- Leaders must ensure that a representative from the home school visits the AP where pupils are attending at least once every half term.

## **Registration and Alternative Provision**

Pupils accessing AP should be **dual registered** as standard, as the long-term goal is always to reintegrate the pupil back into the host school.

Occasionally a pupil may transfer fully to the roll of the AP where it is clearly in the best interests of the pupil.

It is impossible to provide a hard and fast rule about what is, and is not, an appropriate circumstance in which a pupil transfers to the single roll of an AP. Every situation is different. Schools must judge this on a case by case basis. We have provided two scenarios to exemplify potential inappropriate and appropriate actions.

### ***Example of an inappropriate transfer to single roll at an AP:***

A pupil has been dual registered with an AP successfully throughout Years 9 and 10, maintaining contact and involvement with the home school, with full parental support, at no detriment to the child. In this case there are no grounds for transferring the pupil to single registration at the AP in Year 11. The pupil should remain as dual registered with the home school until the end of Year 11.

### ***Example of an appropriate transfer to single roll at an AP:***

A pupil has a significant mental health condition and is accessing AP. Key professionals and relevant agencies are in agreement that the pupil will be unable to return to the mainstream home school and a full time AP place is recommended, which is supported by the LA. The parent and the child do not wish to return to the home school and are fully in favour of a transfer to single roll at the AP. Contact and involvement from the home school is exacerbating the mental health issues for the child. In this circumstance, it could be considered in the child's best interests to support a transfer to the roll of the AP.