



# Alternative Provision Admissions Policy

Reviewed: 30.04.2026 | Next date for review: 01.04.2027

## Introduction

This policy outlines the admissions procedures for children and young people accessing Alternative Provision at Running Deer Intervention Services.

Running Deer Intervention Services provides alternative education provision for children and young people aged 6-16 at their Waterside site in Berry Pomeroy. Many of the young people referred to Running Deer are neurodivergent; some also have other identified needs including learning difficulties, mental health issues, are survivors of domestic abuse, etc. Many of the young people are at risk of exclusion from school, or have already been excluded, and/or need trauma-informed, therapeutic support in a nurturing environment.

We believe that positive relationships form the foundation of all that we do at Running Deer. We provide a bespoke, personalised package of education and therapeutic intervention to all young people who come to us and believe strongly in working to our young people's strengths, whilst helping them to build confidence and self-belief. We are firmly committed to reducing and removing barriers to learning and participation.

Our aim is to ensure that all placements are appropriate, well-informed, and focused on achieving meaningful outcomes for each young person. We work collaboratively with referring bodies, families, and other professionals to provide a safe, supportive, and effective intervention.

This policy should be read alongside all other Running Deer Intervention Services policies, including but not limited to:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- SEND Policy
- Child in Care and Young Carers Policy
- Relationship Policy
- Transition Policy

## Referral Process

Referrals to Running Deer Intervention Services may be made by:

- Local Authorities
- Schools or Multi-Academy Trusts

- Parents or carers (direct referrals)

There are a variety of reasons why a child or young person may be referred to alternative provision at Running Deer, including but not limited to:

- They are at risk of (permanent) exclusion from a mainstream or special school
- They may face challenges engaging with or attending their educational environment in ways that feel safe, supportive, and aligned with their needs
- They need support with emotional regulation and/or would benefit from creative therapeutic intervention
- They are Educated Other Than at School (EOTAS) and we may be one of several alternative education providers they are working with

Where a referral is made directly by a parent or carer:

- Running Deer Intervention Services will gather initial information about the young person's needs
- Parents/carers will be asked to provide relevant documentation where available (e.g. reports, EHCP, professional involvement)
- With consent, Running Deer Intervention Services may liaise with the young person's school, Local Authority, or other professionals

Please note:

A placement will not usually commence until funding and commissioning arrangements are agreed with the relevant Local Authority, school, or responsible body.

In some cases, privately funded placements may be considered, subject to agreement and suitability.

## **Required Documentation**

All referrals must be submitted using the Running Deer Intervention Services Referral Form, which must include:

- A completed risk assessment (where available; support may be offered if required)
- Clear intended outcomes for the young person's placement
- Relevant background information (education, behaviour, attendance, safeguarding)
- Details of any professional involvement

Where applicable, the following must also be provided:

- Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and most recent Annual Review
- Relational support plans
- Medical information
- Social care involvement and plans

Incomplete referrals may delay or prevent consideration of a placement.

## **Placement Decision**

Before agreeing to any placement (short-term or long-term), as much information as possible is required to determine suitability.

Each referral will be reviewed to ensure:

- The provision can safely meet the young person's needs
- Risks can be appropriately managed
- The placement has a clear purpose with achievable outcomes

Further information may be requested where necessary.

Following review:

- Suitable placements will proceed to the next stage
- Unsuitable placements will be declined, with feedback provided to the referrer

Running Deer Intervention Services reserves the right to refuse placements where needs cannot be safely or effectively met.

## **Pre-Placement Engagement**

Prior to the start of any placement, it is strongly encouraged that parents and carers visit the provision with the young person. This enables familiarisation with the environment, early relationship-building, a shared understanding of expectations, and confirmation that the provision is appropriate for the young person.

## **Outreach Provision**

Where there are barriers preventing a young person from attending the site, outreach support may be offered following assessment.

This may include:

- Home-based or community-based sessions
- Engagement and relationship-building work
- Gradual transition planning

The aim of outreach is to support engagement and, where appropriate, work towards attendance on site over time.

## **Placement Planning and Outcomes**

Young people may be with us for up to 15 hours per week, on a short- or longer-term basis. All placements must have clearly defined intended outcomes, agreed at the point of referral. These may include:

- Improved emotional regulation
- Growth of social connection and communication
- Increased attendance
- Re-engagement with education
- Preparation for transition

There will also be an agreed package of support, which may include some or all of the following:

- Creative, therapeutic interventions, e.g. sandplay, Drawing and Talking, and our bespoke Emotional Curriculum
- Formal education in agreed subjects
- Project-based and cross-curricular learning
- Forest school, bushcraft and green woodworking activities

Progress will be reviewed regularly in partnership with the referring body, parents and carers, and other relevant professionals.

## **Transition and Exit Planning**

Running Deer Intervention Services is committed to supporting positive onward pathways for all young people.

Bespoke transition packages may include:

- Reintegration into school
- Transition to a new educational setting
- Phased timetables
- Multi-agency planning and review
- Continued outreach support where appropriate

We offer ways for children and young people to keep in touch with us after they leave, with an open door for if they ever need to return, depending on what is most suitable for that young person. A key adult will also send a postcard to the young person in their (next) setting to reassure them they are still being held in mind.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Referring Body Responsibilities**

The referring organisation retains overall responsibility for the young person and must:

- Provide full and accurate information at referral stage

- Maintain regular communication
- Participate in review meetings
- Ensure safeguarding oversight is maintained
- Support agreed outcomes and transition planning

## **Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Engage with the provision and attend meetings where appropriate
- Support attendance and engagement
- Share relevant information that may impact wellbeing or behaviour
- Work collaboratively with staff to support progress

## **Safeguarding and Compliance**

All admissions are subject to safeguarding considerations and statutory guidance.

Placements will only be accepted where:

- Risks are understood and can be safely managed
- Appropriate safeguarding information has been shared

## **Funding and Partnership Agreement**

A formal agreement will be in place before any placement begins. Fees will be based on the individual needs of the young person and level of support required. The placement will begin once agreements are finalised and funding has been confirmed.

## **Contact Running Deer Intervention Service**

Waterside, Berry Pomeroy, TQ9 6LH

Email: [ifs@rdcic.org.uk](mailto:ifs@rdcic.org.uk)

Website: <https://www.runningdeer.org.uk>