

Post-16 Support in Alternative Provision

Background

In every part of the country, pupils in schools for excluded children (known as “alternative provision” (AP) schools) are less likely to sustain a positive destination after their GCSEs than their peers in mainstream.

Just over half (54 per cent) of all pupils who completed key stage 4 in state-maintained AP over the last three years were recorded as sustaining a positive destination sixth months after their GCSEs, compared to 94 per cent of their mainstream peers.¹

In 50 local authorities (LAs), 50 per cent or fewer pupils sustain a positive destination. There is no LA where this result holds true in mainstream.²

Survey Response

The Centre for Social Justice and education charity The Difference commissioned a survey in the week commencing Monday 15 June, to explore the post-16 support in place for pupils in alternative provision.

We received responses from 83 respondents, representing a total of 86 APs, of which 78 were state-maintained alternative providers.³ This represents a quarter of all state-maintained alternative provision schools with provision for year 11s.

Section 1: Pupils currently on roll in year 11

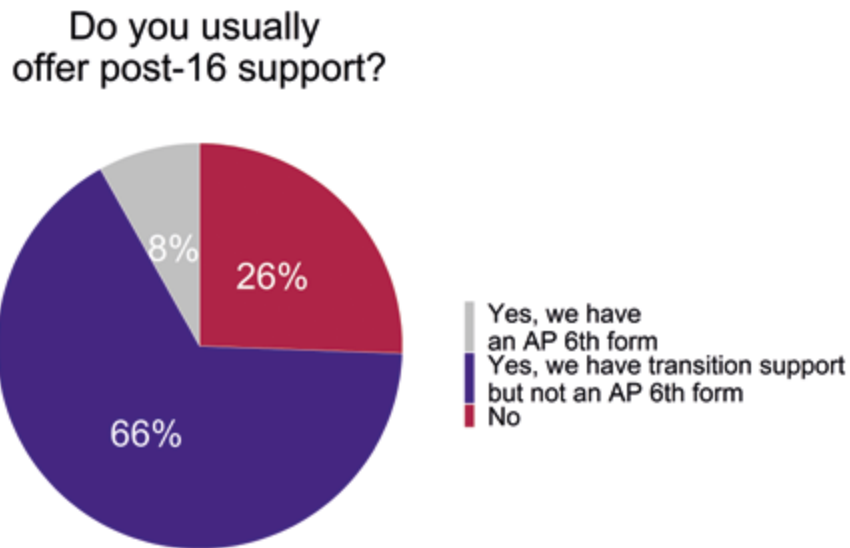
The respondents detailed to us the vulnerabilities of the cohort of pupils in year 11 in AP. An estimated 35 per cent are vulnerable to criminal or sexual exploitation and an estimated 29 per cent have serious mental health conditions.

Our respondents estimated that a quarter of their pupils currently on roll would be immediately not in education, employment or training (NEET) in September.

1. Department for Education, 2019. Statistics: destinations of key stage 4 and 16 to 18 (KS5) students
2. Warming the Cold Spots of Alternative Provision, Centre for Social Justice, 2020
3. For a full breakdown of respondent types, see Annex 1.

Section 2: Current transition support for pupils post-16

Nearly three quarters of all respondents to our survey already offer their pupils post-16 support, however the nature of this support varied from provider to provider.

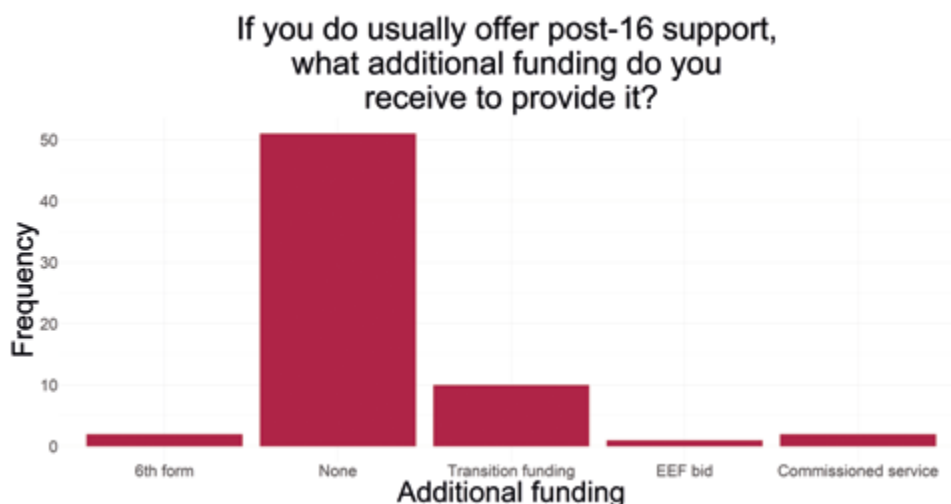


Eight per cent of all respondents offered post-16 support in the form of an on-site 6th form, 66 per cent offered post-16 support but did not have a 6th form, and 26 per cent did not report offering post-16 support.

The type of support provided included:

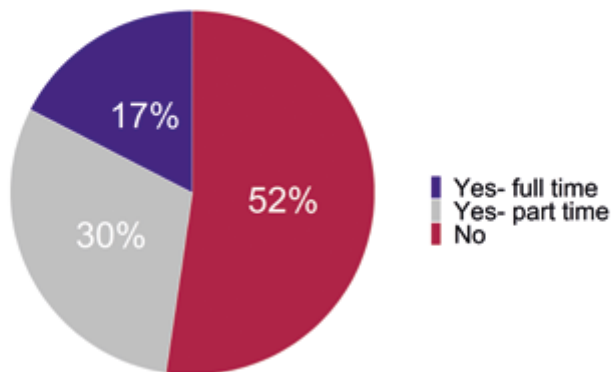
- Transition plans
- Transition coordinators
- Careers Information, Advice and Guidance
- College visits
- Career days
- Their own AP sixth form
- Support creating CVs
- Mentoring
- Interview support
- Monitoring of engagement

When asked how APs funded their post-16 provision at present, the vast majority stated that they did not receive any additional funding. 77 per cent of the APs that detailed their funding arrangements (66 respondents) stated that they received no additional funding for post-16 support.



In several cases, APs stated that they relied upon staff volunteering to offer post-16 support.⁴

Do you have a dedicated transition coordinator (full or part time)?



47 per cent of all respondents said that they had a dedicated transition coordinator, however most of these coordinators worked part time (30 per cent compared to 17 per cent of APs who stated that they had a dedicated full time transition coordinator).

52 per cent of APs said that they did not have a dedicated transition coordinator.

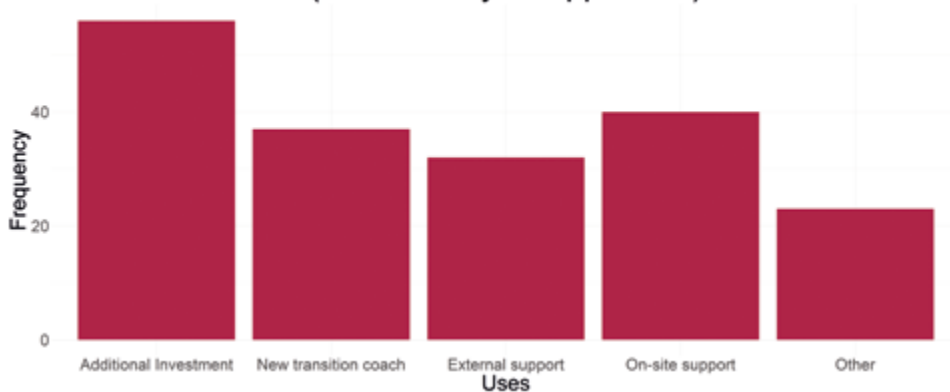
Section 3: Support for pupils post-16 after Covid-19

On 4 June the Department for Education announced a Transition Grant: £750 per pupil (£375 per dual-registered pupil) to pay for support specifically to help students leaving AP transition successfully into education or training in post-16 settings.

Our survey asked alternative providers if this transition grant was something they could use and the type of support that they intend to use the funding for.

The majority of APs said that they could use the transition grant (90 per cent who said that they could vs two per cent who said that they could not, eight per cent were not sure).

Which of these statements reflects how you think you will use this money? (tick as many as applicable)

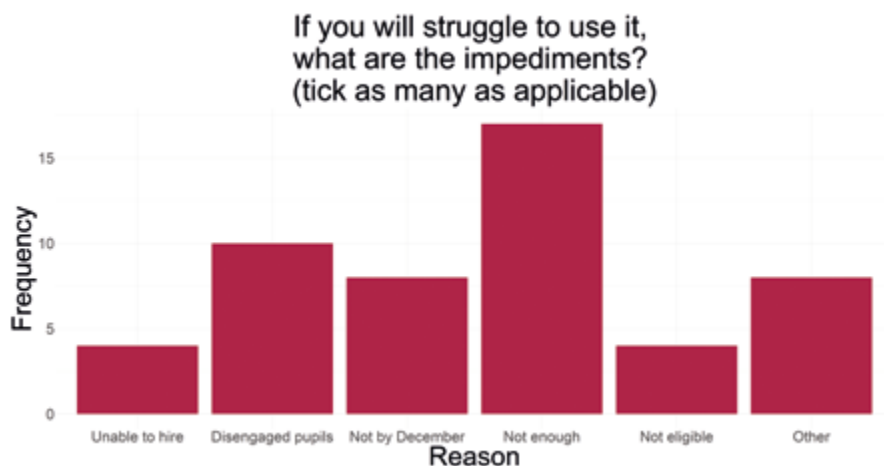


4. It should be noted that throughout, some of the pie chart's percentages do not sum to 100 per cent. This is a result of rounding.

When asked how they thought they would spend the money, 56 said that they would use this money as additional investment for their existing transition support; 37 said that they would get a new transition coach for the 4 months' worth of funding; 32 said that they would commission external support; 40 said that they would provide on-site support; and 23 APs listed other types of transition support on which they planned to spend the transition grant.

These alternatives included mental health and therapeutic support and summer support for pupils in year 11.

We also asked if APs would struggle to use this fund, and if so why. Over half (45) of our respondents reported that they would struggle to use the fund.



Of these 45, four believed that they would be unable to hire someone to provide the support in time; 10 believed that their pupils in year 11 would be disengaged because of the lockdown; eight thought that they could spend the fund, but not by December; 17 believed the fund was not enough; four stated that they were not eligible; and eight cited other impediments.

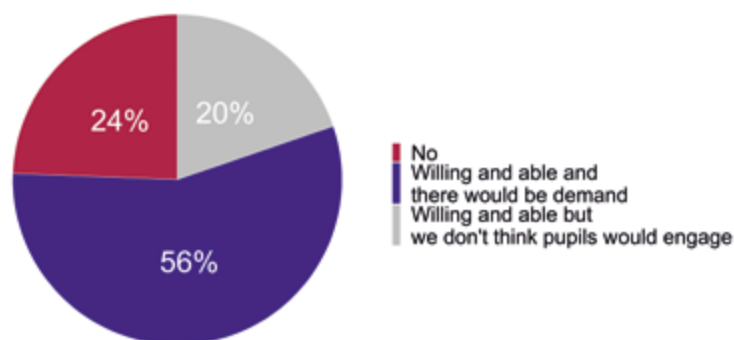
Two APs stated that their initial plans to spend the fund had been rejected although the guidance did not make clear why their idea was not in-keeping with the published guidance.

Section 4: Year 11 resit

76 per cent of all respondents said that they would be willing and able to keep on pupils currently in year 11 for an additional year to sit their GCSEs or level 2 qualifications. However, it should be noted that this comprises 56 per cent of respondents who believed there would be demand and 20 per cent of respondents who believed pupils would not engage with them.

Only 24 per cent of our respondents said that they would not be willing and able to keep pupils for an additional year.

Would you keep your current year 11 cohort for an additional year?

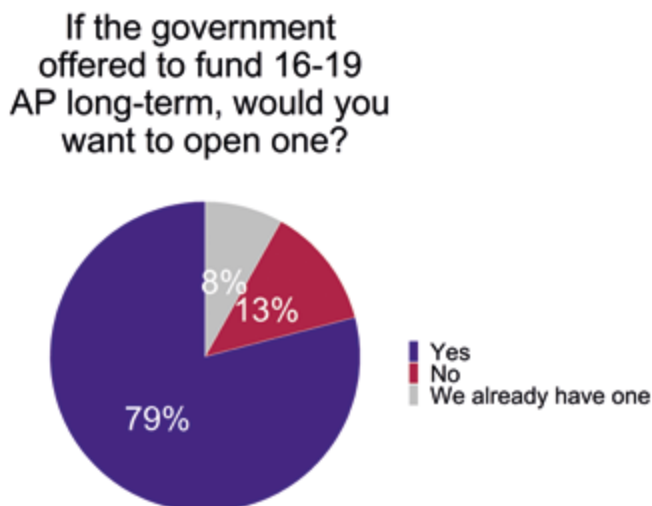


Those that said that they would be willing, able and would see demand to keep year 11 pupils on for an additional year estimated that 40 per cent of all pupils currently in year 11 would return for an additional year.

Section 5: Post-16 AP

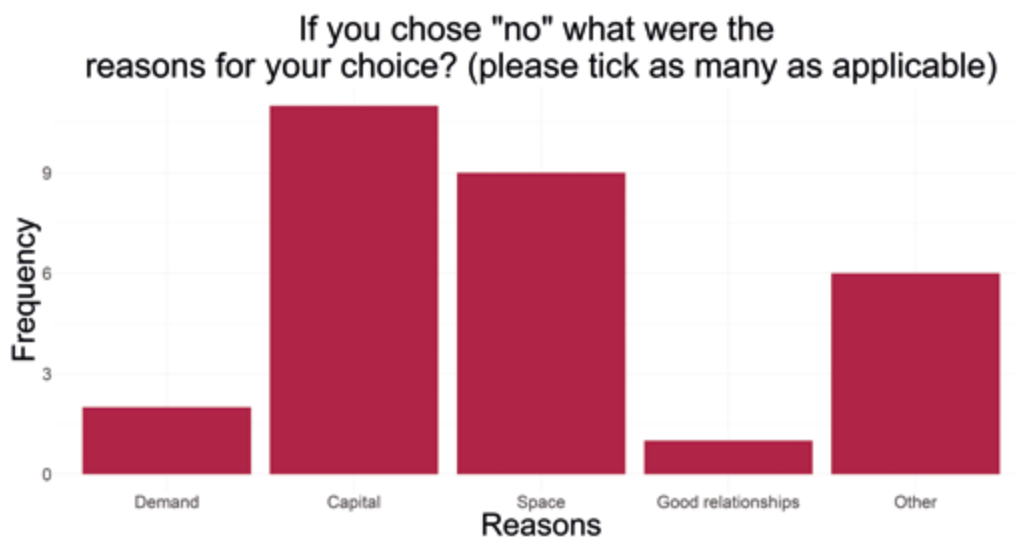
We know that at present 52 secondary state-maintained APs (17 per cent of the total) are currently registered to offer 16-19 education.

Our survey asked respondents if they would be willing to offer education to 16-19 year olds, if the government offered to fund 16-19 AP long-term. 79 per cent of respondents said that if the government offered to fund 16-19 AP long-term, they would want to open one.



Of our respondents, a further eight per cent said that they already had 16-19 AP and so only 13 per cent of respondents said that they would not want to open 16-19 AP long-term, if funded to do so.

The respondents who said that they would want to open a 16-19 AP long-term estimated that 54 per cent of their pupils currently in Year 11 would want to stay on at the AP long-term if they could open one.



The reasons cited for not wanting to open 16-19 AP long-term included a lack of demand (two respondents), the need for additional capital investment (11 respondents), a lack of space (nine respondents); one said that they had good enough relationships with the local colleges and six cited other reasons, including a preference for reintegrating pupils so that they can access college.

Annex 1: Breakdown of respondents:

Respondent Type	Count
Free schools alternative provision	11
Pupil referral unit	31
Academy alternative provision converter	21
Academy alternative provision sponsor led	10
MAT	1
Independent School	2
Other independent special school	1
Registered learning provider	1
Free schools 16 to 19	1
Area inclusion partnership	1
Unregistered	2
Academy special converter	1

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