

Alternative Provision to be a ‘first resort’

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The [‘Timpson Review of School Exclusion’](#) noted the significant variation in the availability and quality of alternative provision (AP) across the country. A key recommendation is the greater sharing of expertise between AP providers and the wider school system.

The report envisages AP being “*used not as a last resort but a ‘first resort’ – offering advice, outreach and short-term placements that help children get back on track and help divert them from the pathway to exclusion*”.

Importantly, it recommends that the DfE funds this collaborative approach to AP via a “*Practice Improvement Fund of sufficient value, longevity and reach*”.

The government has already confirmed its commitment to implement the report’s recommendations. However, the report acknowledges that AP is expensive so the success of this proactive approach is likely to hinge on the amount of cash the DfE decides to assign to this fund.

In the meantime, schools may want to review their current approach to AP and the AP available to them. The report also gives schools the opportunity to open up an early dialogue with other schools, trusts and their local authority to explore what may need to be done in their area to implement the report’s AP ambitions.

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