



Alternative Acres

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information Report

Academic Year: 2026–2027

Welcome

At Alternative Acres, we believe every young person deserves the opportunity to succeed, regardless of the challenges they have faced in education.

We provide a nurturing, farm-based alternative provision for young people aged 11–16 and Post-16. Our unique learning environment combines education, nature, animals and meaningful relationships to help learners rebuild confidence, develop resilience and achieve positive outcomes.

Many of our learners have experienced barriers to education due to social, emotional or mental health needs, autism, ADHD, anxiety or prolonged periods of absence from school. We recognise that learning is most successful when young people feel safe, valued and understood.

Our approach is centred around positive relationships, personalised learning and practical experiences that inspire young people to re-engage with education.

Our Vision

Our vision is to provide an inclusive educational environment where every young person can:

- Feel safe, respected and valued.
- Develop confidence and resilience.
- Build positive relationships.
- Improve emotional wellbeing.
- Re-engage with education.
- Develop independence and practical life skills.
- Prepare successfully for adulthood.



We celebrate every achievement, recognising that progress looks different for every learner.

Our SEND Ethos

At Alternative Acres, we understand that every learner is unique. We believe behaviour is a form of communication and that young people thrive when they feel understood, supported and empowered.

Rather than expecting learners to fit into a traditional educational model, we tailor our provision to meet their individual strengths, interests and needs.

We provide a calm, predictable and nurturing environment where relationships come first. Our staff work alongside learners to develop confidence, resilience and a renewed enjoyment of learning.

Legislation and Guidance

This report has been prepared in accordance with:

- The Children and Families Act 2014
 - The SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 Years (2015)
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
 - The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
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Types of SEND We Support

Alternative Acres has experience supporting learners with:

- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)
- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)



- Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

Many of our learners present with multiple needs requiring a personalised and flexible approach.

Admissions and Referrals

Alternative Acres accepts referrals from:

- Local Authorities
- Schools and Academies
- Education Inclusion Services
- EHCP Consultation Panels
- Other professional agencies

Before a placement begins, we carefully review:

- Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Educational reports
- Risk assessments
- Behaviour support plans
- Medical information
- Previous attainment
- Attendance history
- Professional advice
- Parent and carer information

Where appropriate, transition visits are arranged so learners can become familiar with the environment, staff and animals before starting.

During school holidays we also offer transition sessions for new learners and keep in contact days for our existing learners and their families to help reduce anxiety and support a successful start.



Identifying Individual Needs

Every learner receives an initial assessment period which enables us to understand:

- Educational strengths
- Areas requiring additional support
- Learning preferences
- Communication needs
- Emotional wellbeing
- Sensory needs
- Interests and aspirations
- Independence skills

This information is used to create a personalised learning programme based upon the learner's EHCP outcomes and individual goals.

Our Curriculum

Our curriculum combines academic learning with practical outdoor experiences.

Learning opportunities include:

- Functional Skills English
- Functional Skills Mathematics
- Animal Care
- Woodland Learning
- Bushcraft
- Environmental Projects
- Personal Development
- Employability Skills
- Team Building
- Practical Problem Solving



- Outdoor Education
- Creative Activities
- Independence and Life Skills

Learning is personalised around each learner's interests, EHCP outcomes and aspirations.

Teaching and Learning

Our teaching approach focuses on developing confidence through engaging, meaningful learning experiences.

We provide:

- High staff-to-learner ratios
- 1:1 Support Sessions
- Small teaching groups
- Individual mentoring
- Personalised learning plans
- Flexible timetables where appropriate
- Practical learning experiences
- Outdoor education
- Animal-assisted learning
- Positive relationship-based practice

Teaching is adapted to meet individual learning styles while maintaining high expectations.



How We Support Different Areas of Need

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

We support emotional wellbeing through:

- Daily emotional check-ins
 - Consistent relationships
 - Restorative approaches
 - Outdoor regulation
 - Animal-assisted learning
 - Positive Behaviour Support
 - Calm learning environments
 - Individual mentoring
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Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)

Support may include:

- Predictable routines
 - Visual timetables
 - Structured transitions
 - Reduced sensory demands
 - Clear communication
 - Flexible teaching approaches
 - Individual workspaces
 - Sensory regulation opportunities
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Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Support may include:



- Practical learning
- Movement breaks
- Chunked learning activities
- Visual prompts
- Flexible seating
- Active learning opportunities
- Positive reinforcement

Speech, Language and Communication Needs

Support includes:

- Clear communication
- Visual supports
- Additional processing time
- Checking understanding
- Social communication opportunities
- Adapted teaching strategies

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

Many of our learners have experienced prolonged absence from education.

Our approach includes:

- Gradual transition programmes
- Flexible attendance plans
- Parent partnership
- Consistent staffing
- Reduced anxiety environments



- Small achievable targets
- Relationship-first practice

Our priority is helping learners feel safe enough to re-engage with education.

Student Voice

Learners are encouraged to contribute to decisions about their education.

Student voice is gathered through:

- Daily conversations
- One-to-one mentoring
- Review meetings
- Individual target setting
- Feedback questionnaires
- Activity planning

We believe listening to our learners is fundamental to improving outcomes.

Working with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers know their children best, and we value their knowledge and involvement.

Families are involved in:

- Transition planning
- Progress reviews
- Target setting
- Celebration of achievements
- Planning future goals

Regular communication ensures we work together to support each young person's success.



Working with Other Professionals

We work closely with:

- Local Authorities
- Referring schools
- Educational Psychologists
- CAMHS
- Social Workers
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Early Help Services
- Family Support Services
- Other professionals involved with the learner

Working collaboratively ensures the best possible outcomes for our learners.

EHCP Reviews

Where learners have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), Alternative Acres contributes to Annual Reviews by:

- Monitoring progress against outcomes
- Producing written reports
- Gathering learner views
- Gathering parent feedback
- Working collaboratively with schools and Local Authorities

Preparing for Adulthood

Developing independence is a key focus throughout every placement.



Learners have opportunities to develop:

- Life skills
- Communication
- Confidence
- Teamwork
- Decision making
- Responsibility
- Employability skills
- Problem solving
- Community participation

Our aim is to prepare every learner for further education, employment or training.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Alternative Acres is an educational provision rather than a therapeutic service; however, emotional wellbeing underpins everything we do.

Our outdoor environment, positive relationships, practical learning opportunities and interaction with animals help many learners regulate emotions, reduce anxiety and build self-esteem.

Where additional specialist support is required, we work alongside external professionals and services.

Accessibility

Alternative Acres is committed to making reasonable adjustments wherever possible.

Individual accessibility needs are considered before placement and reviewed regularly to ensure learners can fully access education.



Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Alternative Acres is committed to creating a safe, supportive and inclusive environment where children and young people can thrive.

All staff receive regular safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities under current safeguarding legislation.

We work closely with Local Authorities, schools and partner agencies to ensure learners receive the support and protection they need.

Staff Expertise

Our staff have extensive experience supporting young people with additional needs.

Training includes:

- Safeguarding
- SEND
- SEMH
- Autism
- ADHD
- Trauma-informed practice
- Positive Behaviour Support
- Speech, Language and Communication
- Mental Health Awareness
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- First Aid
- Health and Safety

Staff regularly undertake continuing professional development to ensure our practice remains current and effective.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Alternative Acres promotes equality, celebrates diversity and challenges discrimination.

Every learner is treated with dignity, respect and fairness regardless of disability, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or background.

We are committed to creating an environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected and able to achieve their potential.

Monitoring Progress

Progress is monitored through:

- EHCP outcomes
- Individual learning targets
- Academic achievement
- Attendance
- Engagement
- Independence
- Emotional wellbeing
- Behaviour for learning
- Personal development

Success is measured against each learner's individual starting point.

Quality Assurance

We continually evaluate and improve our provision through:

- Student feedback
- Parent and carer feedback
- Commissioner feedback
- Staff reflection



- Safeguarding audits
- Learning observations
- Policy reviews
- Professional development
- External quality assurance visits

This ensures we continue to provide high-quality education and support.

Compliments, Concerns and Complaints

We welcome feedback from learners, families, schools and commissioners.

Any concerns should initially be discussed with the Head of Provision. If concerns cannot be resolved informally, our Complaints Policy outlines the formal procedure.

Local Offers and SEND Information, Advice and Support

Alternative Acres works in partnership with Local Authorities, schools, families and professionals to ensure learners receive the support they need.

Parents and carers can access additional information about SEND services, Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and specialist support through their Local Authority's Local Offer.

Nottinghamshire County Council

The Nottinghamshire Local Offer provides information about education, health and social care services for children and young people with SEND aged 0–25.

Local Offer: <https://www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk>

Independent information and advice is available from **Nottinghamshire SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)**.

Website: <https://www.nottinghamshire.sendiass.org.uk>



Nottingham City Council

The Nottingham City Local Offer provides information about services and support available for children and young people with SEND and their families.

Local Offer: <https://www.asklion.co.uk/send-local-offer>

Independent information and advice is available from **Nottingham City SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)**.

Website:

https://www.asklion.co.uk/kb5/nottingham/directory/service.page?id=bJONB6Gq_R8

Families are encouraged to contact their allocated EHCP Case Officer or SEND Team within their Local Authority if they require advice regarding assessments, EHCPs, annual reviews or specialist educational provision.

Referring Local Authorities

Alternative Acres welcomes referrals from Local Authorities, schools, academies and other commissioning organisations.

We regularly work with Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council and are pleased to consider referrals from neighbouring Local Authorities where our specialist provision can meet a young person's needs.

We work collaboratively with commissioners, families and professionals throughout each placement, maintaining regular communication, progress reviews and outcome-focused planning to ensure every learner receives the highest quality support.

Key Contacts

Head of Provision

Gemma Robertson

SEND Lead

Gemma Robertson

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Daun Beresford

**Provision Address**

Alternative Acres
Blenheim Lane, Bulwell NG6 8UR

Telephone

07312132515

Email

g.robertson@alternativeacres.co.uk

Website

[Alternative Acres](https://alternativeacres.co.uk/)

<https://alternativeacres.co.uk/>

Review of this Report

This SEND Information Report is reviewed annually or sooner if there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or the services provided by Alternative Acres.