

Lancashire Virtual School Guidance on Direction Off-Site and Managed Moves

The Virtual School at Lancashire County Council adheres to the statutory guidance on Managed Moves and Direction Off-Site which was published as part of [Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement](#) in August 2024.

We also take full account of the [School Admissions Code](#) and [Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked after children](#), both of which are also statutory guidance.

Direction off-site

Where in-school interventions to support behaviour have not been impactful, schools have the right to direct off-site. This will usually be AP (alternative provision), full or part-time, but could also be undertaken in another mainstream education setting.

As corporate parents and those responsible for the education of children who are looked after, we expect to play a part in any request to direct a child off-site and to be involved in reviews that are carried out during the child's time at another setting. The focus of their time off-site should remain on ensuring that a pupil receives a broad and balanced curriculum whilst any inappropriate behaviours which require intervention are being addressed.

Targets during a direction off-site must be individual to the child and must be incremental. They should give the child room to improve in the other setting and enable them to feel the positivity of success. They should reflect on the challenges that the student has faced and the support that can be offered to overcome these challenging behaviours.

As part of the review process, Education Consultants from the Virtual School will expect to see that support has been offered to the student to reform and reframe their more challenging behaviours. In line with the [guidance](#), consideration should also be given to how the student is to be successfully reintegrated back into their home-school.

In order for direction off-site to be most impactful for CLA and in-line with the [guidance](#), we would hope that a substantive member of staff from the home-school visits the child at least weekly. A trauma-informed approach to direction off-site is needed so the learner very much needs to feel that this direction is a supportive measure and not a punitive measure. They often feel the fracturing of relationships more than non-vulnerable learners and schools will need to bear this in mind when making such directions.

Schools should expect the Virtual School to advise against direction off-site if schools are unable to evidence previous intervention work, engagement with the Behaviour Support Team and supportive behaviour plans for our learners or if we feel that the direction is not in the best interests of our learner. It is the expectation that the learner will return to the home-school at the end of the off-site direction and that they will be sustained in that school unless a Managed Move is agreed by all parties. This sustainability of placement will best be achieved by ensuring that the time they are away is used to increase staff confidence and skills in managing the child's needs and having a clear understanding of support arrangements for the child.

A direction off-site should not allow any drift in other areas of the student's education to occur. We would not expect this to happen during an evidence-gathering period for an EHCP for example and in the case of students with EHCPs, we would only expect this to occur if approved by an Interim Annual Review or with the support of SEND colleagues. The Governing Body **must** ensure that the LA is informed in writing of the decision to direct off-site (at least 2 school days before the direction begins). Parents (or corporate parents) can ask for a review of the decision. See [Arranging Alternative Provision - guide for LAs and schools](#)

Managed Moves

A managed move should only be offered as a permanent transfer to a new setting and should not be confused with a direction off-site. It can be the natural progression from a direction off-site but if this is the case, this must be specified to those with PR from the outset.

Managed moves are permanent, voluntary and agreed with all parties involved, including the parents (or those with PR such as the LA) and the admission authority of the new school. If the student has an EHCP, the relevant statutory duties will apply. Because of the needs of the curriculum and differing exam boards and study texts, we strongly advise against any managed moves during KS4. We would also strongly advise against any managed move being initiated during the evidence-building or statutory timeframes in an EHCP request as this could result in drift in the process

or could mean that the child has multiple moves in a short space of time. This is not in the best interests of learners.

During the initial period of the managed move, we would expect to see targets which must be individual to the child and must be incremental. They should give the child room to improve in the other setting and enable them to feel the positivity of success. They should reflect on the challenges that student has faced and the support that can be offered to overcome these challenging behaviours in order that the managed move is a success.

When schools are considering a managed move, we ask you to let your Education Consultant know at the earliest stages so that they can work with you and Children's Social Care to consider whether this is the most appropriate course of action for this learner. Continuing against the advice of the Virtual School and/or Children's Social Care could be considered to be off-rolling.

In-Year Transfers & FAP

Children in the care of the Local Authority are not eligible for the FAP process. The [School Admissions Code](#) states that CLA should be given the highest priority for admission to school and can be admitted as 'excepted pupils'. It is the responsibility of the LA to ensure that there is no drift and delay where our children have no school placement. This includes using the powers of direction in a timely way rather than delay issuing a direction as a result of protracted negotiations.



