Report to the Education and Vulnerable Children Overview and Scrutiny Committee

9 December 2015

Exclusions Report

Purpose of the Report

To update Children & Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the current picture regarding the permanent Exclusions of children who are Birmingham residents and the developing collaborative work between schools, health, the Local Authority and other partner agencies.

Recommendation

That Members note the information contained in this report

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Background and Index

Executive Summary

1. **The Current Picture Of Permanent Exclusions**

The information and implications of the current picture of Permanent exclusions is being shared across the educational community of schools in Birmingham. It highlights:
- The current rate of permanent exclusions is higher in comparison to West Midlands, statistical neighbours and national figures.
- The increase in permanent exclusions of recent years has continued this term.
- The distribution of resources across the city.

2. **Plans For Minimising Permanent Exclusions**

A strategic approach to creating a sustainable model of management for Permanent Exclusions has been adopted. This has focussed upon:
- Developing a 'shared ethos of responsibility' across our schools.
- Informing school leadership
- Informing, empowering and developing the skills and knowledge of staff through a commitment to high-quality, sustainable training.
- A proactive approach to modelling good practice has been adopted to strategically target:
  (a) Educational phases
  (b) The 'geography' of the city
  (c) Small and medium size collaborations
- Emphasising the importance of collaboration between schools, health and other agencies.
- Reviewing current alternative provision for Permanently Excluded pupils.
- Identifying specialist partners and agencies.

Context

The educational landscape across Birmingham has undergone significant changes in the past five years. The factors contributing to the high numbers of Permanent exclusions across the city report to Scrutiny (June 2015) continue significantly influence:

(a) The availability of places in special schools has reduced due to the rising numbers of pupils in this sector. This has resulted in difficulties in identifying suitable re-integration routes to meet the individual needs of some learners.

(b) The lack of consistent consortium arrangements across schools within the Primary phase reduces the potential of 'managed moves' as a strategy to reduce PEx. It is more difficult to work with groups of primary school to agree reintegration placements for pupils

(c) The financial constraints, increasingly affecting schools, have reduced the resources available to provide learning/behavioural support to young people 'in-house'.

(d) The reduction of collaborative arrangements in some secondary networks has adversely affected the sharing arrangements between schools – either for 'managed moves' or after PEx for reintegration.

(e) The increase in numbers being allocated to COBS has severely affected the capacity for preventative in centre places with schools at both Primary and Secondary level.

(f) The reduction in availability of preventative and proactive work in schools has reduced the quality and quantity of support to avoid exclusion

(g) The lack of alternative provision at Primary level is minimal across the city.

(h) The range and cost of alternative provision at secondary level is better established, but with rising costs of placements, schools are considering their options.

(i) The review and re-alignment of specialist services eg Educational Psychologists, CAT.

In parallel with the changes in education, the Health sector has been significantly re-aligned. This has impacted on schools and their communities through changes in specialist services and support resulting in specific needs of children not being supported.

The changing role of the local Authority, the rapid changes in partnership/network/collaboration arrangements across/with schools and the significant number of leadership changes in our schools have further influenced the inconsistences of approaches to Permanent exclusions across the city.

Key Issues

    A. Autumn Term 2015 Data

The numbers of young people and children being permanently excluded and the City's capacity to meet their educational needs continues to cause concern. In the period since the start of the academic year up until Monday 9th November 2015 there have been 81 permanent exclusions. More specifically, the number of permanent exclusions is:

Table One: Permanent Exclusions (Academic Year 2015/16 up to 9.11.15)

Phase	2015	2014
Primary	17	22
Secondary	50	39
Special	5	0
Out of Area	9	12
Total	81	73

This represents a 10% increase overall with increases at secondary and special, and primary and out of area school exclusions down.

Table Two: Breakdown By Year Group (Academic Year 2015/16 up to 9.11.15)

rec	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	14
0	1	2	1	6	5	3	3	15	13	16	14	1	1

There are 12 of the 81 permanent exclusions that are for weapon related reasons.

The total number of Permanent Exclusions from a school as a % of the school population for the academic year of 14/15 was 0.15% which represents an increase of 0.03% over the previous three years (0.12%). Birmingham has a significantly higher P.Ex from a school as a % of the school population rate than the national (0.06% - 14/15), the west midlands (0.09% - 14/15) and the statistical neighbours (0.07% - 14/15). The trend at both Primary and Secondary level since 2011/12 has been that Birmingham has a 0.03% and 0.05% higher P.Ex from school as a % of the school population when compared to West Midlands, statistical neighbours and the national average.

The attached appendices illustrate Birmingham's historical data. This illustrates that Permanent Exclusions are across both LA maintained provision and Academies. This pattern is replicated this year in the permanent Exclusion data for high excluding schools illustrated in Table Four.

Table Three: Secondary Networks (academic Year 2015/16 up to 9.11.15)

Network	Number Of P.Ex.
Central	4
East	12
North	12
North West	8
South	2
South West (Oaks)	9
South West (Edge)	3
Total School – 29	51

There have been a number of actions taken to have an immediate effect on the issues around permanent Exclusions. The Fair Access Protocol Panel has been developed this term. This has led to Head Teachers being instructed to reintegrate 15 pupils into their schools. A further six places have been commissioned from City Of Birmingham School (COBS).

B. Key Developments

There has been a strategic approach adopted to develop " a collaborative approach across the city to reduce the number of permanent exclusions in both the primary and secondary phases. It is vital that the **responsibility is shared** by all stakeholders – the schools, the Local Authority and other partner organisations" (Exclusions Scrutiny Report June 2015).

B.1 Inclusion-Exclusion – Improving The Balance

(a) Strategy Group

A group of senior school leaders, (including Head Teachers, SENCO's), BCC officers, and school governors meet monthly to develop a cohesive understanding of the issues around exclusions. This has provided a focussed and informed pathway into Primary, Secondary and Special Forums and a platform for a full engagement with school networks across the city.

(b) Targeted Conversations

There are eight schools in this period that have excluded the same or higher numbers of pupils in comparison with the same period last year.

Table Four: Schools with high number of permanent exclusions

Number of Schools	Numbers of Exclusions
One	14
One	12
One	9
Six	8

Five	7
Two	6

These high excluding schools are all in the secondary phase and a significant number have experienced a recent change in leadership. They have been visited by a key BCC officer for a professional discussion to discuss individual focus issues.

(c) Developing The Inclusion-Exclusion Conversation

There have been presentations delivered to Primary, Secondary and Special Forums to raise awareness of the unsustainability of the increasing and high numbers of permanent exclusions across the city. These are being developed further through more focussed dialogue between key representatives of the Inclusion-Exclusion improving The Balance Strategy Group and Head Teacher representatives from school networks and collaborations. This will ensure that there are city-wide discussions connecting the Birmingham Education Partnership cohesively.

B.2 Feasibility Study

A comprehensive study of the distribution and use of financial resources across the city has been commissioned. This was initiated in order to develop " a joint commitment on behalf of the Local Authority and schools to develop a more 'mature' relationship based on more clearly defined roles and expectations. Within the model proposed, there is greater scope for schools/groups of schools to commission the services and provision they need. On the other hand, the Local Authority retains an important role in relation to its continuing range of statutory responsibilities.

While this role separation is clear for a number of service areas, there are others where a more collective way forward is required. This is partly due to continuing ambiguities at the national policy level, and partly to the impact of funding constraints. The area of SEND and behaviour is a case in point. Schools vary in their expectations of the range of children for whom they should 'ordinarily' provide, and this has an impact on their thresholds for exclusion and statutory assessment requests. The Local Authority has statutory responsibility for ensuring appropriate provision is made for pupils with statements/EHC plans or for those who are permanently excluded, but the costs of such provision come from a defined quantum of money for education provided by central government (Dedicated Schools Grant). High or increasing spend on children with higher level needs (High Needs Block) can only be found through reductions in the general level of funding available to schools."

The information gained from this study will be used to inform the 'developing the inclusion-exclusion conversations.

B.3 Permanent Exclusion Management Group

This group has been introduced to ensure that Birmingham City Council support the learning needs of all Permanently Excluded (P.Ex) children by meeting its statutory duty for educational provision by:

(a) offering full-time educational provision from day 6 of a permanent exclusion.
(b) securing the active engagement of BCC services and other relevant agencies
(c) informing the reporting systems of the Local Authority.

The composition of the group/team is:

- Head Teacher of City Of Birmingham School
- Head Teacher of Birmingham Virtual School for Looked After Children
- Head of Admissions
- Head of Exclusions
- Head of SENAR
- Special School Representative
- Primary School Representative
- Secondary School Representative

B.4 Including To Succeed Models

(a) Model One - Schools Link Project

The DfE are very interested in developing a knowledge of emotional and mental well-being in/across schools to focus on:

1. Prevention
2. Identification – what should the system do to help
3. Initial and complementary support
4. Getting right access to specialist support.

They have commissioned a number of national project(s) to consider:

(a) A broad base of knowledge/understanding – staff, young people and families.
(b) Improving the evidence base

There are 17 lead projects across the country:

1. Sunderland
2. Sheffield
3. East Riding of Yorkshire
4. Wigan
5. Salford
6. Halton
7. Tameside & Glossop
8. Cheshire
9. Walsall
10. Birmingham
11. Bedfordshire
12. Chiltern/Aylesbury Vale

13. Hertfordshire
14. Gloucestershire
15. Somerset
16. Hampshire
17. Brighton & Hove

In addition to this Birmingham are piloting a parallel project for vulnerable children.

The aims of this national programme are to develop:

- Shared views of strengths and limitations of capabilities of all target groups
- More knowledge of resources to support mental health of target groups
- More effective use of existing resources
- Improved joint working between target groups

The work will follow the CASCADE Framework:

- **C**larity on roles, remit, and responsibilities of all partners involved in supporting CYP mental heath
- **A**greed point of contact and role in schools and CYP mental health services
- **S**tructures to support shared planning and collaborative working
- **C**ommon approach to learn and draw best practice
- **D**evelopment of integrated working to promote rapid and better access to support
- **E**vidence based approach to intervention

Furthermore, a project that is looking at an integrated approach to the use of data is likely to be piloted in Birmingham. This will be led by Health, will link Health, Education and other services and could build upon the work being developed in the Schools Pilot Project.

The Birmingham model has developed this approach to help to develop, test and model a strategic and operational collaborative approach to inclusion across a Primary School Consortium and a Secondary School Network. The Including To Succeed initiative commenced during the Autumn Term 2015 with milestone reporting points at Easter 2016 and July 2016. This will incorporate model one.

(b) Model Two - Including To Succeed Initiative

The resourcing for the initiative will be from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and Schools Link pilot Scheme, Birmingham City Council and schools

Aims

The Including To Succeed Initiative will aim to:

a) develop a shared vision for schools

b) minimise issues contributing to an increase in permanent exclusions
c) develop sustainable expertise for supporting learners with mental health issues through a high quality training programme
d) meet the needs of the staff within and across the schools to support inclusive learning and teaching.
e) meet the needs of the parents/carers to support children's inclusion in education
f) develop and embed. sustainable systems and processes to support inclusive learning and teaching.
g) develop and embed collaborative partnerships across learning communities which integrates inclusive approaches to education, health and well-being.
h) raise awareness of mental health issues across learning communities
i) provide professional support systems to support young people with mental health issues

Collaborative Partnerships

There are two focus collaborative partnerships to work with:

a) Ladywood Consortium – a Primary focus
   The schools included are:
   Barford
   Chad Vale
   Nelson
   St Georges Ladywood
   Summerfield
   Welsh House farm

b) Oaks Collegiate (within the South West Area Network) – a secondary focus
   The schools included are:
   Bartley Green
   Balaam Wood
   Bournville College
   Dame Elizabeth Cadbury
   Harborne
   Hillcrest
   Selly Oak
   Selly Park
   St Thomas Aquinas

The partners to be integrated into the pilot programme will include:

- Primary Schools
- Secondary Schools
- Special Schools
- Birmingham Virtual School for Looked After Children
- Educational Psychology Service
- TESS

- CAT
- SENAR
- City Of Birmingham School
- Birmingham South Central CCG
- CAMHS/ Forward Thinking

Proposed Details Of The Including To Succeed Initiative

There will be:

a) a 'lead teacher' (champion) for each school who will receive :
- Dfe training
- Pivotal Education Licensed instructor training programme
b) a full training programme for all staff in each of the schools
c) Senior leadership training to establish collaborative ethos, protocols and systems
d) A Primary Mental Health Worker allocated to each school for one day per week
e) Educational leadership for mental health issues across schools from the Virtual School for Looked After Team and COBS staff who will receive:
- Dfe training
- Pivotal Education Licensed instructor training programme
f) The Educational Psychologist Team will add enhanced training for champions and VS team and provide two days per week support to each focus collaborative partnership.
g) Pilot of school-based inclusion facility and programme
h) Pilot Social, Emotional and Mental Health Well-Being Curriculum Offer

Proposed Training Programme

a) Training for Senior Leaders.
(i) Simplifying behaviour policy
- Shared vision and values for schools.
- Translating policy into practice.
- Developing consistency in your school.
- Giving staff a structure within which to operate.
- Tools and techniques to distinguish between behavioural issues and overlap with mental health
(ii) Supporting and managing staff

- Shifting mindset and establishing positive culture.
- The role of SLT in behaviour change.
- Managing difficult teachers.
- Recognition for staff doing well.

b) Department for Education Mandatory Training

c) 'Whoosh' Training

This training for all teaching and support staff looks at how to transform learner behaviour by establishing and embedding adults' keystone habits. This training is the catalyst for change and improvement. It doesn't just provide the inspiration, but it gives staff the mechanisms and a concrete plan by which to embed consistent practice across all stakeholders.

- Transformative Consistency
- Consistent, Calm Adult Behaviour
- First Attention for Best Conduct
- Teaching Learning Behaviours
- Scripting difficult interventions

d) Pivotal Curriculum Instructor Training

Train a team (with a minimum of one per school) from schools, the Virtual School and City Of Birmingham Schools to provide future training sessions for school staff teams/groups/individuals in behaviour management, safeguarding and mental health awareness raising and management.

e) School Visits

- Identify and celebrate the best practice that has developed from the initial Whoosh training.
- Talk to focus groups of adults and learners to see where the changes are having most impact and where work still needs to be done.
- Make sure that progress is being displayed clearly to both adults and learners.
- Talk to the head and/or SLT about the impact of policy changes.
- Examine data that the school has been collecting since the start of the project.

f) Training Providers will include:

- Pivotal Education
- Department for education/NHS

Performance indicators

The Including To Succeed initiative will evaluate the following:

a) Pupil attendance
b) Exclusions
c) Behaviour
d) Staff awareness and attitudes, skills and understanding of mental health issue of young people
e) Staff training
f) Collaborative systems and protocols
g) Carer engagement
h) Pupil Voice
i) Staff Voice
j) Senior leadership review pre and post project

Evaluation

Pivotal Education will carry out school visits prior to the project, during the project and after the project to evaluate impact. The evaluation services of a local university is also being currently considered.

Sustainability

The project will become sustainable by :

1. the full engagement of the teams of staff via high quality training
2. Embedding the training programme through the development of skilled licensed instructors
3. A full commitment by school senior leaders to a collaborative approach to systems and protocols underpinning inclusive education
4. A mulit-agency collaborative partnership delivering a high quality , planned and targeted provision for young people.
5. A specialist team of educationalists to support children in schools.

(c) Model Three - Primary School

The school has identified that there are a significant number of children with issues around their emotional and mental well-being. The school staff were full to capacity with their day-to-day activities and recognised that there was not enough specialist expertise in-school and they had real difficulties accessing support. As a result they have formed a partnership with secondary school and another Primary school to employ Place2Be.

Place2Be provides mental health support and counselling in 257 schools reaching a school population of 105,000 children and young people every year. Place2Be's in-school services include support sessions for parents and carers of children receiving one-to-one counselling, and consultation for teachers and school staff to help them to support children more effectively.

In particular they offer
  * One-to-one counselling with a trained counsellor (short- and long-term), tailored to each child's needs
  * Place2Talk, a drop in/self-referral service open to all pupils
  * Group work on issues such as transition into secondary school, bereavement, friendship and self-esteem

And services for
  * Parents, grandparents and carers: counselling and support services
  * School staff: support, consultation and training
  * Partnership working with statutory agencies, voluntary sector partners and community groups

The school have also employed a part-time Family Support worker.

The scheme has only been running for a few weeks. There are early indications that it is reducing low-level issues as well as providing positive support for more severe cases.

(d) Model Three - Primary Exclusion Base

There have been early discussions around establishing a short-term focussed programme for Primary aged pupils. They will follow a full timetable that is enhanced by a therapeutic approach with the aim to ensure that they are ready for reintegration to mainstream as quickly as possible.

The facility will provide a well-equipped, modern learning space, adjacent to a breakout 'chilling' space. It will be staffed by trained specialist teachers and mentors. The pupils will experience a full curriculum experience.

(e) Model Four - Cross-Phase Provision

A development around providing a short-term focussed programme for Secondary/Primary aged pupils. They will follow a normal timetable and opportunities to be part of whole group learning will be integrated on a personalised basis. The aim will be to reintegrate back into the most appropriate provision as quickly as possible. This could mean following a personalised timetable where learning is accessed in a setting based in primary and/or secondary and/or special.

The facility will be a separate base which is modern and well-equipped and staffed by trained specialist teachers and teaching assistants with a Special background. The pupils will experience a full curriculum experience.

(f) Model Five – External Partnerships

There has been a concerted effort to identify a fuller range of partners who can support schools in helping to minimise permanent exclusions. In addition to the partners referred to in the above models other facilitators are being piloted within and across schools. These include Big Community and Dare To Dream.

C. Conclusions

The increase in Permanent Exclusions, when considered alongside the capacity issues across Special Schools, COBS, Primary Phase Schools and the growing numbers of pupils across Secondary Schools and the external pressures to raise outcomes have presented the Local Authority with many challenges.

The work outlined throughout this paper emphasises the drive to model long-term sustainable solutions that support the individual needs of our pupils to maximise the opportunities to include each one in education. The models that are being developed recognise the effectiveness of collaboration within education, with Health and other agencies. The models will seek to share

a range of operating systems within a localised setting that can be applied to single or cross-phase work.

The strategic conversation that is underpinning this modelling will ensure our school leaders are able to make informed decisions for the children in their school, their network/collaboration/partnership and ultimately the children of the city of Birmingham. The models also recognise the challenges of reducing financial resources whilst needing to upskill the expertise within the educational system to manage and support some very difficult young people. The conversations clearly identify the view that a Head Teacher will always be a need to have the option of Permanent Exclusion for a pupil who has 'stepped over the line' – the models will mould how these children are included and catered for in the educational system.

The models aim to reduce the number of Permanent Exclusions through creating a range/menu of focussed interventions. They will be shared with Head Teachers formally at the end of the academic year.

List of Appendices

PERMANENT EXCLUSION STATISTICS FOR 2014/2015 ACADEMIC YEAR
   (including a breakdown for the previous 4 years)