

PEOPLE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS 12 month update

SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION		DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN	Update Notes	TIMESCALE
R1	The Department should utilise area-based teams to identify and support schools and trusts to provide a graduated response to behaviour.	<p>The Department will continue to implement our new area-based teams throughout 2023-24. The main priorities for implementation are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment to all outstanding vacancies • Training the new area-based teams to ensure that they are promoting inclusive practice. • Working with all stakeholders (schools, Academy Trusts, Early Help, Virtual School, Education Team) to enhance the multi-agency and collaborative approach to inclusion across East Sussex. • Evaluation of the impact of the area-based approach. • Using the Graduated Response to Behaviour document with all schools to ensure this is embedded in their everyday practise. This will be monitored by the Team Around the School and Setting in their visits to schools and the Inclusion and Alternative Provision Team through the applications for the Inclusion Partnerships. • Reduction in Permanent Exclusions at both Primary and Secondary phase particularly in Rother, Rye and Hastings. 	<p>The Department continues to hold vacancies due to the vacancy controls in place across Children's Services.</p> <p>Total number of schools that have engaged with bespoke training from Team Around the School and Setting inclusion team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Eastbourne and Hailsham team has provided support for 100% of secondary schools in that area and 40% inclusion support to primary schools. • The Rother, Rye and Hastings team has provided support for 63% of secondary schools in the area and 66% inclusion support for primary. • The Lewes, Coastal and Wealden team has provided support for 78% of secondary schools in that area and 82% inclusion support for Primary. <p>Team Around the School and Setting inclusion team provides a traded offer which is based on the Graduated Response to Behaviour document. The menu of support includes: in school consultations around emerging behaviour needs; audits/analysis and policy support; coaching and training including - Therapeutic Thinking support, internal truancy, managing difficult conversations and Nurture Provision support.</p> <p>There was a 44% increase in complex cases being brought to the Inclusion Partnerships (secondary) in 2023 -2024 academic year. So far, this academic year, there has been a 33% increase in referrals. Of all cases brought to the Inclusion Partnerships (207 since September 2023), 94.2% of them have not been permanently excluded. 100% of secondary schools have made referrals to the Inclusion Partnerships for complex case discussions. The Rother, Rye and</p>	July 2024

			<p>Hastings Inclusion Partnership schools have increased their referrals since June 2024 and this has impacted on the number of permanent exclusions issued.</p> <p>The Department has reported a reduction in overall permanent exclusions since September 2024. To date (23rd February 2025), there has been an overall reduction of 32%. This is mainly due to the significant reduction in secondary permanent exclusions in Hastings. The four main excluding schools have reduced the number by 61%. The primary permanent exclusions have remained at the same level and there have been three permanent exclusions from Special Schools. We are developing a strategic plan across teams for early intervention and support to reduce the primary exclusions and those from Special Schools.</p> <p>The Inclusion Partnership Advisers have worked with over 207 children from January 2024 to October 2024 who have been referred to them through the Inclusion Partnerships or the referral process. Of these, 4.2% have subsequently been permanently excluded.</p> <p>In September 2024, we commissioned the London South East Academy Trust to provide an outreach service to our primary and secondary schools. This will be part of our wider offer of support to schools. We are trialling a taskforce model around our commissioned alternative provision which will aim to ensure that professionals are coordinated in their response to a child who has been permanently excluded from school.</p>	
R2	<p>The Department should continue to encourage schools and Trusts to attend training on whole school relational approaches and develop trauma informed practices so pupils feel safe at school and develop positive relationships. This training should include how to communicate key aspects of these approaches with parents and carers to</p>	<p>The Department will provide a range of training on whole school relational approaches, including through training offered on strategies such as Therapeutic Thinking which is being extended to all secondary and primary schools in East Sussex. This will be included at a range of conferences targeting leaders at all levels in our schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Leadership Conference • Inclusion Conference • Inclusion Partnership Conference • 11-19 Headteachers' Meeting <p>The Department will also continue to offer bespoke training around developing whole school relational approaches and trauma informed practices. This training will be designed in</p>	<p>The Department has continued to facilitate a range of professional opportunities for school leaders across the phases throughout 2024 – 2025.</p> <p>The Inclusion Partnership Conference was attended by 98% of all secondary schools and had a focus on Tier 1 outreach support offered through London South East Academy Trust. The Tier 1 outreach work supports the work from the Inclusion and Alternative Provision Team and the Team Around the School and Setting team, impacting on the number of permanent exclusions.</p> <p>Gary Aubin was the keynote speaker at the 11-19 Headteachers' meeting and provided Headteachers</p>	<p>July 2024</p> <p>September 2024</p>

	<p>ensure continuity and support at home.</p>	<p>collaboration with our school leaders and will address trends and needs identified through the area-based teams and Education Improvement Partnerships and Area Groups.</p> <p>The Department will work with the Early Help parenting team to further develop workshops for parents and carers to access and for schools to be able to signpost them to.</p>	<p>and Senior Leaders (with responsibility for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), with clear evidence-based messages on inclusion.</p> <p>The Primary Leadership Conference programme has had a focus on training leaders in meeting the needs of disadvantaged children and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. They have received training from Marc Rowland and Gary Aubin as part of their leadership development programme. Both are nationally recognised speakers in their fields of expertise.</p> <p>All schools have an allocated single point of contact in the Team Around the School and Setting from the inclusion and attendance teams, who facilitate both statutory support, and inclusion work, across both primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>Early Help Key Work Level 2 continue to work with severely absent cases 50% or below attendance. The impact seen for 2023/2024 is 163 young people had received support. 85 cases had been closed. 15 stepped up to Level 3 and/or Level 4. There are 78 active cases from August 2024.</p> <p>From April 2025, the Early Help Key Worker criteria will move from 50% to 60% threshold for attendance referrals.</p> <p>Parenting support included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two parenting practitioners embedded in Level 2 team since June 2024, providing 1 to 1 parenting support to families on casework and delivering universal parenting support groups that include 'Helping Your Child Reach Their Full Potential'. The Level 2 keyworkers made 19 referrals to the parenting team for Level 2 casework support. 10 open cases, 7 closures and 2 more to allocate. The Level 2 team have developed 'Light Bite' training webinars around supporting attendance. This has been delivered to Level 3 keyworker's and will be rolled out to wider Early 	<p>July 2025</p> <p>July 2024</p>
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R3	<p>The Department should work with schools and Trusts to review and make use of available data to:</p> <p>a) identify pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion and identify available support at Inclusion Partnership meetings; and</p> <p>b) monitor pupils identified by the Attendance Support Team who are absent from mainstream education, either through part time timetables or internal exclusions and assess what alternative support could be put in place.</p>	<p>The Department will use Data Dashboards that are organised into area-based teams to ensure that early identification of pupils who are at risk of multiple suspensions is regularly analysed through the Education Outcomes team.</p> <p>The Inclusion Partnerships will continue to track all children brought for complex case discussions and/or placement at AP to identify patterns and trends. This data will be shared at a strategic level with the area-based teams so that relevant and appropriate support is cascaded across East Sussex and into individual schools.</p> <p>The single points of contact for each school, within the Attendance Support Team will scrutinise all attendance data at a whole school level including monitoring of part time timetables and tracking their timely reintegration. The Attendance Support Team will work with the Alternative Provision Commissioning Officer to identify the appropriate alternative provision support that may need to be put in place.</p>	<p>The data dashboard is to be launched Term 4 of 2025.</p> <p>The pilot of the Locality Multi Service Group was successful and is now scheduled every three weeks, with the focus on children who have received 3+ and/or 15 suspensions in a term. Services interrogate the individual school data and the relevant service in the Education Division link in directly with the school to support and offer advice and guidance on next steps around a graduated response to support the individual young people.</p> <p>All data from the monthly triage meetings and monthly Inclusion Partnership meetings continues to be tracked and shared with the Senior Leadership Team and the Inclusion and Alternative Provision team. The identified trends are the same, and offers of support have been adapted to support with these emerging trends. For example, there are packages of support for individual children on school-based avoidance.</p> <p>The Attendance Support Team single points of contact are allocated to all schools and undertake up to three Targeting Support meetings across the year, dependent on attendance data. They offer: monthly data updates including statistical, geographical and national comparison; advice and guidance and develop traded work with schools dependent on emerging needs.</p>	<p>February 2025</p> <p>Ongoing (monthly)</p> <p>July 2024</p>
R4	<p>The Department should develop training for schools and Trusts to share best practice on how adaptive teaching can deliver the curriculum to support needs of all pupils including SEND pupils and pupils facing</p>	<p>The Department will continue to facilitate a range of hubs across East Sussex that bring together Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Coordinators and leaders of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. These hubs will provide peer support and challenge, training on the effective use of Additional Needs Plans and Personal Education Plans.</p>	<p>The primary and secondary hubs have merged into one hub which is enabling both an understanding of SEND systems and processes in each phase and ensuring consistent and robust transition processes are in place for Year 6 to 7.</p> <p>The Special Facility Leads are undertaking peer reviews of facilities to develop knowledge around facility</p>	<p>Ongoing (termly)</p> <p>January-March 2025</p>

	additional external challenges. This should include developing guidance on assessment to ensure the use of Additional Needs Plans and Personal Education Plans support and address the needs that have been identified.	<p>The Education Improvement Partnerships at primary will continue their work in partnership with the Swale Multi Academy Trust on adaptive teaching. This pilot is currently in place in Eastbourne and Hailsham. This project, if successful, will be rolled out across the three geographical areas.</p> <p>Alliance Partners at primary and External Advisors at secondary, continue to provide school improvement support which will include a sharp focus on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities across the curriculum.</p>	<p>models and practice. Work for the Lead Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator includes mentoring of new Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinators; assessing the impact of curriculum in schools for pupils with SEND outcomes (in line with the Local Authority's priority); continued professional development for schools and involvement in Time Inclusion Grant funding panels.</p> <p>Alliance Partners and External Advisors are focusing on school priorities and meet regularly with Team Around the School and Setting senior managers to update on impact and identified need. The Education Division is then able, to where appropriate, target service support.</p>	
R5	<p>The Department should work with schools and Trusts to promote the benefits of extra-curricular activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Where provided, through Early Help, the Holiday and Food Activity Programme, Family Hubs and Youth Centres, activities which engage pupils throughout the year and incorporates support for families; b) Summer programmes which support transition 	The Education Outcomes Team will continue to work with the Early Help Parenting Team to ensure all schools are aware of, and promote, programmes that run through the school holidays for families and children and young people.	<p>The Department continues to promote Holiday and Food Activity Programmes through the Virtual School Bag.</p> <p>This summer, those children participating in the Holiday and Food Activity Programme, all received some input on the importance of school attendance following a successful input written by the Department which was delivered in August 2024.</p>	September 2025
R6	<p>The Department should work with schools and Trusts to support pupils transitioning into Early Years in primary and KS3 in secondary by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) working with pre-school settings and primary schools to identify pupils who may need additional support when transitioning to primary/secondary school 	<p>Transition at each phase will be a focus for the Department in priority setting across the division.</p> <p>The Department will continue to support and work with the Royal Society of Arts on the Reducing Exclusions Project, with the focus on transition.</p> <p>The Joint Primary and Secondary Board will be updated regularly on the Royal Society of Arts project and the focus of transition. From this, the schools will receive updates from their representatives on the Boards, so all are aware of the approaches.</p>	There is cross service working on transition for September 2025. Parents, schools and settings were surveyed on their views on transition, both within settings and into school, and from Reception to Year 1. There was a high response from parents (379 returns), some of whom were happy to be contacted to have further discussions. An impact of these conversations has been case studies compiled discussing what went well and any barriers. Information from the surveys will be used to implement successful strategies and address common barriers.	<p>January 2025 onwards</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

	<p>and referring them to appropriate support and programmes; and</p> <p>b) communicating successful approaches and support at the point of transition at all phases to ensure continuity of provision.</p>		<p>This work will inform the transition offer across all our early years teams to enable all schools and settings to access the support available.</p> <p>Work began in June 2024 on a school readiness strategy involving partners across health and education to ensure messages are consistent in the understanding of what school readiness is. Regular working party meetings have been taking place monthly since June 2024 which has increased cross-team working.</p> <p>In the Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategic Plan, it has been identified that transition for Special Educational Needs pupils need to be a focus. There are currently 19 projects from September 2024 involving 135 schools and colleges and 3 nurseries. There is a multiagency approach with the initial analysis, showing impact on a number of areas including attendance, behaviour for learning and the child's confidence.</p> <p>The Joint Board have received regular updates on the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) project and have been focusing on transition. The 11-19 Headteacher meeting showcased a number of schools who have demonstrated inclusive practice around transition from Year 6 to 7. The Enhancing Inclusive Practice projects have also seen an impact for children around transition.</p> <p>The Early Years Team are developing one offer for transition, taking into account individuals and the cohort as a whole.</p> <p>We have seen a slight reduction in the number of permanent exclusions of reception age children from 3 to 2 in this time period.</p>	
R7	<p>The Department should encourage schools and trusts to increase the use of youth voice in preventative strategies and responses to children at risk of permanent exclusion by providing training and guidance for</p>	<p>The Department will continue to work with Youth Participation on what successful reintegration from alternative provision looks like.</p> <p>Youth Participation will continue to liaise with the chair of the Inclusion Partnerships and deliver training based on their research project on the child voice around the impact of alternative provision and successful reintegration. The</p>	<p>The Reintegration Panels have been in place since February 2024. Youth Participation was pivotal in the child and parent section of the panel. This has helped to shape the planning for the reintegration of the children from the Pupil Referral Unit and has resulted in none of these children being permanently excluded a second time.</p>	January 2024

	schools and governors on how to embed youth voice into all areas of school policy.	focus is on the impact of going to alternative provision, how it can prevent permanent exclusion and how to ensure the child feels they still belong to the school community.		
R8	<p>The Department should work with schools and Trusts to further develop and embed parental engagement to ensure all stakeholders understand how and why a child is at risk of permanent exclusion, including the parent/carer and the child, and include parents and carers with decisions around alternative provision, including all available options.</p>	<p>The Inclusion and Alternative Provision Team will continue to work in partnership with schools to engage with parents when a child is close to permanent exclusion. This will include ensuring that the parents are informed and asked for their contributions when a child is close to permanent exclusion.</p> <p>The Alternative Provision Directory will be shared at the Joint Primary and Secondary Board, all Headteachers will be aware of the alternative provision that is available in their area and for which profile /age of child.</p> <p>The Commissioning Officer for Alternative Provision will prioritise engaging this for reception, Key Stage one and Key Stage two children. They will focus on getting providers to be on the Alternative Provision Directory for this age group. This will be shared across all primaries through the Primary Board meetings and the Education Improvement Partnerships. Before a child can access alternative provision, the parental view will be sought by schools. This will follow the guidance that is in the suspensions and permanent exclusion Department for Education guidance, September 2023, on engaging with the parents and involving them in the decisions taken.</p>	<p>The extended support practitioners have worked successfully with parents and children who have been permanently excluded. The feedback and case studies show that their work is appreciated by the families and schools, and supports a successful reintegration to school. The extended support practitioners work with all families and children who have been permanently excluded.</p> <p>The Alternative Provision Directory continues to be shared with all schools at the Inclusion Partnerships and is regularly updated. There are currently 31 providers listed which is an increase of 33%, when compared to this time last year. It is available on Czone.</p> <p>The focus has been to find alternative provision for reception, key stage 1 and key stage 2 children. This is also part of the Priority Improvement Plan for 2024 – 2025, Priority 2; embed a three-tier alternative provision system in East Sussex. This is challenging as there are few providers who provide reception or early years alternative provision, and only one who is Department for Education registered.</p>	<p>Ongoing through monthly Inclusion Partnerships at Secondary and termly Behaviour Review Panels at Primary.</p> <p>July 2024</p> <p>July 2024</p>
R9	<p>The Department should embed its multi-agency response, including the use of the new level 2 keywork team in Early Help focused on supporting attendance to:</p> <p>a) promote targeted support, including wider family-based issues, to pupils and families who have been identified as at risk of permanent exclusion and multiple suspensions due to a</p>	<p>The Education Improvement team: the Team Around the School and Setting Attendance Team will liaise with Early Help Level 2 and attend the Inclusion Partnerships to ensure targeted support is shared with schools for children at risk of permanent exclusion and who have a lack of engagement with school.</p> <p>The teams across the education division will coordinate their work with schools through Team Around the School and Setting to ensure the school is equipped to support families and children who have a lack of engagement with school.</p>	<p>The termly Area Strategic Oversight meetings focus on all Education services discussing the emerging priorities across geographical areas and plan where service involvement is able to support in school improvements around inclusion.</p>	<p>Termly</p>

	<p>lack of engagement with the school as a result of persistent absence; and</p> <p>b) promote to schools and families parenting programmes that support interventions and preventative measures in schools.</p>			
R10	<p>To accompany the Alternative Provision Directory, which is to be shared with schools and trusts, the Department should develop guidance on:</p> <p>a) how to make best use of alternative provision, including good communication and ways to provide consistent support once a child reintegrates; and</p> <p>b) how alternative provision, including onsite alternative provision, can be used to prevent permanent exclusion and support pupils with additional needs, including those facing additional external challenges.</p>	<p>The Department will continue to work with schools on further developing the Alternative Provision Directory and accompanying guidance. This will be through regular updates at the Inclusion Partnerships at secondary level and through the Primary Board at primary level. This is in line with guidance on the Alternative Provision Directory which is annually updated.</p> <p>The Team Around the School and Setting use their regular meetings with schools to support and advise schools on setting up alternative provision on site if appropriate.</p> <p>Alliance Partners at primary and External Advisors at secondary, continue to provide school improvement support which will include a sharp focus on Special Education Needs and Disabilities across the curriculum and how on site alternative provision adds to their education.</p>	<p>The Alternative Provision Directory is reviewed regularly through the Commissioning Officer, the PIP priority and the Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee, established from September 2024, reviews the alternative provision in East Sussex to ensure there is a consistency in delivery and a robust quality assurance programme. This is attended by representatives from alternative providers as well as officers from the council.</p> <p>Team Around the School and Setting inclusion team continue to work across county in link schools, to support in setting up alternative provision and nurture provisions.</p> <p>Alliance Partners and External Advisors continue to offer support to Headteachers and have carried out a number of Special Educational Needs and Disability reviews. This is completed at the request of headteachers. On site alternative provision has also become a focus of their visits, if they have this provision in place.</p>	<p>Monthly at Inclusion partnerships</p> <p>Four times a year at the Primary Board. Ongoing</p>
R11	<p>The Department should continue to provide ongoing support and training for governors including whole school training on SEND needs, mental health issues and inclusive behaviour policies, and produce guidance on how to conduct inclusive Governor Disciplinary Committee</p>	<p>The Department will deliver Governor training annually, in line with the updates from the Department for Education suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement, September 2023.</p> <p>Use the youth voice research to inform the training for Governors on how to gather child voice for the Governors' Disciplinary Committee.</p>	<p>Governor training has been held in stages this academic year with a focus on building the skills of governors for the Governors Disciplinary Committee. The first three sessions have been on the Department for Education Guidance, with two follow up sessions on frequently asked questions specifically on the Governors Disciplinary Committee. These sessions have been welcomed and the feedback has been positive with 100% stating the training either met or exceeded expectations. Power point presentations are available on request.</p>	<p>Once an academic year in line with the release of the new Guidance from the DfE.</p> <p>Delivered in January 2024</p>

	Meetings that prioritise youth voice.		Annual Governor training has been provided twice across the academic year to the Governor Network, to update on the new statutory guidance 'Working together to Improve School Attendance'.	Inclusion Partnerships for schools and for Governors in a separate session July 2024.
R12	<p>The Department should develop clear and consistent guidance to share with schools on the benefits of reducing school exclusions, and the support available, including:</p> <p>a) key findings from the RSA 'Rethinking Exclusions' and ISOS projects</p> <p>b) using Primary and Secondary Boards to communicate to schools the benefits of inclusive policies and share best practice for reducing exclusions and agree to a shared responsibility to reducing exclusions.</p> <p>c) on the appropriate use of part time timetables to ensure these are not being used to manage behaviour. Part-time timetables that are in place must be for the shortest time necessary and reviewed regularly with the pupil and their parents.</p>	<p>Inclusion Partnerships at secondary level annual Terms of Reference agreed by all schools. The Terms of Reference are reviewed annually and signed by all schools, so they are relevant and reflect any changes that have happened to the structure and/or process of the Inclusion Partnerships.</p> <p>Findings from the Royal Society of Arts and ISOS projects, as well as any further outcomes, will be shared with all schools through the Secondary and Primary Boards.</p> <p>Data dashboard is shared at the Secondary and Primary Boards of suspensions and permanent exclusions. The focus will be on what the data is saying, where the gaps in provision are and how to address the gaps. This will inform the spending of the alternative provision support funding that is available to each area group at secondary level. It will inform the Education Improvement Partnerships planning for the focus of support for the next academic year.</p> <p>The guidance on part time timetables will be shared with all school leaders so all leaders are clear about when and how they should be used. This will be regularly reviewed through the meetings that Team Around the School and Setting have with the schools.</p>	<p>The Terms of Reference has been signed by 100% of the schools.</p> <p>These findings from the Royal Society of Arts and ISOS projects have been shared through the secondary and primary boards.</p> <p>A data dashboard has been developed in partnership with the chair of the Primary and Secondary Boards to enable suspension and exclusion data to be analysed monthly and both appropriate support and challenge put in place.</p> <p>The Secondary Board was updated in July 2024 on the impact of the alternative provision for the three secondary Area Groups (power point available on request) with London South East Academy Trust and their programme of Tier 1, 2 and 3 provision starting in September 2025. The funding for bespoke alternative provision will not be available from September 2025 for secondary schools.</p> <p>Guidance on part time timetables has been shared in the Attendance Toolkit. In the attendance Targeting Support meetings, part time timetables are discussed and data is reviewed across the year to ensure that they are managed within the guidelines.</p>	<p>November 2023, 2024 and 2025</p> <p>At each Secondary and Primary Board (<i>These boards meet four times an academic year</i>)</p>