

SCHOOLS FORUM – 22 June 2017

Title of paper:	School Exclusions – Multi –Agency Early Intervention Proposal
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Pat and Sarah Fielding, Director of Education
Report author(s) and contact details:	Nick Lee, Head of Access and Inclusion
Other colleagues who have provided input:	Kathryn Stevenson – Strategic Finance Alison Weaver – SEN Advisor
Summary: The overall rates of fixed term and permanent exclusions from Nottingham schools have risen above national rates and those of the majority of our statistical neighbours. The trend is increasing. The financial cost of managing the current approach is unsustainable, as well as failing to produce positive outcomes for increasing numbers of our children and young people. This report outlines a proposal for a multi-agency group to form and develop proposals for an early intervention pathway with the aim of identifying, at an early stage, children at risk of future exclusion. The group will also develop a strategy, based upon evidence of effective practice, to promote interventions that enables lower exclusion rates and reverse the current upward trend, with the long term aim of ensuring more pupils maintain places in their mainstream school and achieve better educational outcomes.	
Recommendation(s):	
1	Forum notes and supports the proposal to develop a multi-agency working group which will produce a fully costed plan for ensuring that an early intervention behaviour pathway is implemented to reduce the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions and reverse the current upward trend. The pathway will cover all key stages in order to ensure a sustainable approach to managing behaviours and/or special educational needs that are currently resulting in exclusion from mainstream schools and academies.

1. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1** The rate of permanent exclusions from Nottingham schools and academies is currently twice that of the national rate and higher than all but one of Nottingham's statistical neighbour group.
- 1.2** The exclusion trend over the previous five years shows an increasing rate and one that is accelerating.
- 1.3** Increased financial resources invested across the city, which has primarily being used to increase the capacity of PRU/Alternative Provision places, has failed to result in a reduction of numbers being excluded or reverse the trend of rising permanent exclusions. The funding that has been allocated to support the costs of Alternative Provision to 2021/22, based upon current spending profile, will be exhausted during 2018/19. An alternative approach to reverse the current trend is essential.
- 1.6** Whilst in certain individual cases positive outcomes are achieved following exclusion from mainstream settings, it is clear that access to quality post 16 education and training is less likely for those pupils who have a history of school exclusion.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The proposal is that a working group drawn from a multi-agency background is formed during June/July 2017 to develop a fully costed action plan to ensure an early intervention approach is embedded across city schools and academies. The Working Group will be headed by the City Council's Head of Access and Inclusion, and include representatives and expertise from primary and secondary schools/academies and PRU, Strategic Finance, Social Care/Early Help/Priority families, Behaviour Support, Educational Psychology, YOT, the Police, Targeted Youth Support, CAMHS, Lifeline Drugs and Explorer Families support agencies.
- 2.2** The working group will draw upon existing planning, evidence and outcomes of those secondary academies that have received the previous devolved funding; in addition to work that is currently being led in the primary phase by Educational Psychology and Behaviour Support to build capacity and effective early identification of pupils requiring specialist provision in the long term. The five year SEND strategy review that is due to commence will be fully referenced in the and aligned to the work of this group.
- 2.3** Drawing upon the, in principle, offer of the new Chief Constable to provide dedicated police officer support to schools, the Early Intervention plan will be able to strategically link issues such as drug misuse, knife crime and gang related activity to the exclusions agenda.
- 2.4** A key element of the plan will be to ensure that early identification and intervention is linked to improved transition planning, particularly at Key Stage 3, where there is currently work being undertaken by the Education Improvement board
- 2.5** A key strand of work will be to ensure that the work of the PRU is supported in developing effective reintegration strategies to ensure that the PRU operates on a "revolving door" model, rather than a final destination for excluded pupils
- 2.6** Project management resource has been identified within the Access and Inclusion Service to enable scoping and initial management of the development of the working group. As the plan emerges, longer term resource implications will be identified and require costed solutions.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** None.

4. OUTCOMES/DELIVERABLES

- 4.1** A fully costed action plan that identifies evaluation methodology, performance indicators and key outcomes.

5. FINANCE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)

- 5.1** At the current level of permanent exclusions, around £2.4m per annum is required from the DSG reserve to supplement the annual high needs budget allocation. As at 1 April 2017, there is £3.827m remaining ring-fenced in the DSG reserve to support the costs of alternative provision to 2021/22. If recent trends continue, this ring-

fenced amount will be exhausted during 2018/19 leaving a funding shortfall in that year.

- 5.2 Proposals and anticipated outcomes identified by the new working group will need to be factored into a revised financial projection. This will feed into the exercise to update the risk register associated with the uncommitted DSG reserve balance.
- 5.3 It is essential that there is a robust business case associated with any new proposals, providing evidence that the additional spend incurred will reduce exclusions and the associated provision costs resulting in an overall saving.
- 5.4 It is anticipated that the costs will be met by a number of funding sources including the SEND strategic review grant, the funding ring-fenced in the DSG reserve for alternative provision costs, and funding that may be provided by partners. The costed action plan will identify the appropriate funding source specific to each element.

6. **LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)**

None.

7. **HR ISSUES**

None

8. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Has the equality impact been assessed?

Not needed (report does not contain proposals or financial decisions)



The final action plan will undergo a full EIA

Due regard should be given to the equality implications identified in the EIA.

9. **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None.

10. **PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

None.