

Funding Inclusion and Early Intervention

Introduction

Gloucestershire like many Local Authorities across the country has seen a consistent rise in the rate of permanent exclusion from mainstream education.

In May 2019 the government published 'The Timpson Review of School Exclusion', which sought to understand the cause of this rise and to make clear recommendations for the government, local authorities and schools to consider.

In the governments response to the recommendations they have said:

- *“We will establish a practice programme that embeds effective partnership working between LAs, schools, alternative provision and other partners to better equip schools to intervene early for children at risk of exclusion and to ensure that the most effective provision is put in place for those who are excluded. We will build on the excellent practice you have seen during the review and recent research commissioned by DfE.”*
- *“We now call on Directors of Children's Services, governing bodies, academy trusts and local forums of schools to review information on children who leave schools, by exclusion or otherwise, and to establish a shared understanding of how the data on the characteristics of such children feeds local trends.”*

These recommendations and the response align with feedback received through Gloucestershire's High Needs consultation which took place in the autumn 2018.

This paper sets out a proposal to deliver the recommendations and the government's response, by transforming the way in which Gloucestershire utilises High Needs funding to support inclusion and thus, reduce rates of permanent exclusion.

The Vision and Aims

Our vision is:

“To ensure that funding is utilised effectively to provide early intervention and support for children and young people with SEND and for those at risk of permanent exclusion”

In delivering this vision we aim to:

- Support and enhance inclusion in the mainstream by ensuring that funding and LA support services are more accessible to schools;
- Develop an inclusive culture across the county that is underpinned by effective collaboration and partnership working; and
- Reduce rates of permanent exclusion across the county
- Ensure that High Needs funding is used effectively; providing value for money; and ensuring the best outcomes for children and young people.

The Proposal

Working with Gloucestershire Schools, the Local Authority proposes a partial devolvement of High Needs Block Funding to schools in order to provide earlier targeted interventions for children to reduce the risk of exclusion and better support their challenging behaviour issues.

The proposal has three core elements:

1. To devolve an agreed amount of funding to each of the Primary Local Inclusion Clusters (LINC)s to provide early intervention and support for children that are at risk of permanent exclusion.
2. To devolve funding to support a tiered approach to behaviour support for secondary schools. Funding will be devolved in two elements: an amount to each secondary school for utilisation within the school setting to enhance existing provision; and an amount devolved for use by a local cluster of secondary schools for collaborative support and intervention.
3. A retained amount by the Local Authority to reform and maintain a specialist Alternative Provision Service that offers vocational and academic qualification routes for KS4 students. This would be accessed in most instances without the necessity for permanent exclusion. It is envisaged that this service will form part of a multi-agency 'Local Offer', which brings together all LA services to support local clusters.

Alongside this we will also be exploring the development of a new SEND funding model that is focussed on ensuring funding is available to provide intervention and support at the earliest opportunity. This will involved the development of a model that enables schools and early years providers to access funding outside of the statutory EHCP process.

1. Primary Arrangements

Rates of permanent exclusion in primary schools have reduced significantly over the last 18 months (fig.1), with only 17 permanent exclusions in 2018/19.

Fig.1

NCY	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0
1	0	2	3	3	4	4	1
2	1	0	3	5	4	2	3
3	1	2	7	2	7	10	2
4	3	7	3	8	3	3	3
5	2	4	5	7	7	3	4
6	7	3	5	6	5	7	4
	14	19	26	31	31	30	17

We recognise that many primary schools are providing a significant amount of support and intervention to ensure that children can continue to access mainstream education. We want to try and ensure that funding is available to support and enhance this work.

We are therefore proposing to devolve funding to Local Inclusion Clusters so that they can:



- invest in development programmes and strategies to build expertise and capacity within their schools and local area;
- Foster and support effective peer to peer support and challenge to ensure high and consistent levels of inclusion across the county
- Access support services and partnership/assessment places, including the LA services and support from specialist Alternative Provision providers.

The LA will ensure that multi-agency support and identification services are accessible to the local inclusion clusters through a coherent and joined up child-centred approach. We will build on and adapt the successful 'Team around the School' model that has been piloted in a number of secondary schools.

Should support from the school and from the LINC not prove effective in allowing the child to access mainstream education, the school will work closely with the Local Authority to agree the most appropriate provision for the child to transition. This would not include permanent exclusion.

How will this operate?

The intention is to operate on a 3 tiered model that comprises:

1. **Baseline Inclusion:** Primary schools will agree a baseline for inclusion in the mainstream – What are the minimum levels of support and intervention that we would expect a primary to provide to a child that is at risk of exclusion? This would be linked to the graduated pathway and what should be ordinarily available inside and outside education
2. **LINC Support:** If the school has undertaken all baseline activity and is still concerned that the child needs further specialist intervention and support the school can make the case to the LINC for additional funding to support assessment, interventions, or short-term placements in alternative provision. This will be agreed through a local school led panel, supported by the Local Authority (LA) and key members of LA services.
3. **Specialist Provision:** If, following the intervention and support provided through the LINC, the child still can't engage in mainstream education, the school will engage with specialist commissioning to agree the most appropriate next steps. At this stage the school will need to have followed the graduated pathway and EHCP process.

Funding will be available to each Local Inclusion Cluster based on an agreed funding formula, to enable access to intervention and support at Tier 2.

In agreeing to this approach we want to set the expectation that no child will be excluded from primary education in Gloucestershire; that we reduce the number of children and young people needing to access the statutory EHCP process to access SEND support and funding; and that we provide support and intervention to ensure that all children can access mainstream education if it's appropriate for them.

2. Secondary Arrangements

A significant proportion of permanent exclusion both nationally and in Gloucestershire takes place in the secondary phase. See fig.2 that shows Gloucestershire data for the last 7 years. As in primary we saw a reduction in permanent exclusions in Gloucestershire in 2018/19.

Fig.2

NCY	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
7	8	6	8	6	6	8	7
8	14	18	18	14	28	17	16
9	25	17	23	33	36	29	32
10	29	23	27	44	25	35	23
11	3	10	12	11	15	19	18
	79	74	88	108	110	108	96

As outlined for primary schools we want to continue to build on the improvements that were seen last year. At the current levels we will still be spending too much money supporting children and young people that have already been permanently excluded and not enough on identifying and support those at risk of permanent exclusion.

To achieve this we are, as with primary, proposing to devolve funding to schools and secondary inclusion clusters so that they can:

- invest in development programmes and strategies to build expertise and capacity within their schools and local area;
- Foster and support effective peer to peer support and challenge to ensure high and consistent levels of inclusion across the county; and
- Access support services and partnership/assessment places, including the LA services and support from specialist Alternative Provision providers.

How will this operate?

There has already been significant consultation and discussion with secondary schools across the county to inform the development of a child-centred tiered model of support. This is much the same as the primary model described above, however, there are some differences in how the secondary model could operate:

1. Funding will be partially devolved to schools and partially to the local clusters.
2. Once the cluster has exhausted the options to support a child or young person to stay in the mainstream, the local cluster will be able to commission a place in a specialist alternative provision service. However we expect this service only to be accessed for KS4 provision.

Using feedback from schools, further work has been done to develop the detail for each Tier. This is described below.

Baseline Proposal

The SLA for Cluster School Partnership Baseline Provision requires each school to offer a combined SEND/Pastoral Team Approach. Students should be assessed using the graduated pathway.

Where the behaviour issues displayed are persistent and disruptive, early assessment and planning are key aspects of baseline support. External services such as The Advisory Teaching Service, Education Psychology Service, Speech and Language Assessment Team or Families First would be referred to and involved as appropriate. Individual or whole class strategies to improve behaviour strategies, based on professional advice, will be implemented.

Where adverse childhood experiences, community or family influences are believed to be contributing factors in displayed negative behaviour, referral to the Community Social Worker and Families First would be made as part of any planned behaviour support.

Baseline School Level Support should be provided for any child who receives multiple fixed-term detentions for disruptive behaviour in class or 1 fixed-term exclusion for persistent disruptive behaviour. It is assumed that schools will invest in upskilling teaching staff in conjunction with principles of Quality First Teaching which will mitigate numbers of children displaying persistent disruptive behaviour and requiring baseline interventions.

School leadership and staff are aware of the impact of Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and equipped to identify and support impacted Children and Young People.

Tier 1 – Cluster support

Once Baseline assessments and interventions have been carried out within the home school, with any required outside agencies engaged and no positive impact has been ascertained, then referral to a Cluster Inclusion Improvement Panel (CIIP) can be made. In addition, referral to a Strategic Behaviour Support Panel (SBSP) can be made where a student commits a one-off serious breach of school behaviour policy putting their place at the home school in jeopardy.

Panel consists of: Cluster Pastoral Leads, Cluster SENCOs, EIS Outcome Coordinator (advice and guidance, including on remit of panel)

Purpose and remit of CIIP: Each home school referral to be discussed at Panel, including nature and extent of behaviour issues, a statement of all prior baseline assessments, interventions, work of outside agencies, My Plan, (My Plan Plus) and My Assessment all to be included in submission paperwork.

Possible Decision by Panel

All decisions, including a provision map, for each student discussed should be produced as an outcome of the meeting and recorded by the CIIP.

- A. Offer further guidance on support to be implemented by the Home School, if what has already been put in place is considered by the panel to be thus far inadequate or inappropriate. A plan of required actions and a review date should be set at which time the Home School may wish to revisit the referral to the CIIP.
- B. Offer access to appropriate interventions using a supported Managed Move within the cluster. A Plan with Actions to support the student to be established at the meeting and the EIS Outcome

Coordinator will coordinate the supported move between schools following the GCC Protocol and recording the Managed Move at GCC.

- C. Offer access to appropriate temporary off-site Alternative Provision from a provider within the LA AP Directory. A plan for the specific goals that are hoped to be achieved and expectation of progress by the AP provider should be made and covered by a Service Level Agreement.
- D. Where a case has previously been heard by the CIIP and all planned actions followed without any positive improvement to a student's behaviour, the case can either be re-planned using variants of the above options or, where options are considered exhausted or unlikely to be successful, referral to the Higher Tier Alternative Provision Panel can be made via the Cluster Strategic Behaviour Improvement Panel Chair.

Tier 2 – Alternative Provision

Where Baseline and Tier 1 support has not been effective, CIIP may refer, via the Cluster Strategic Behaviour Improvement Panel Chair, the student's case to the Tier 2 AP Panel who can either:

- a. Return to home school with recommendations for further supportive interventions
- b. Return to CIIP for Supported Managed Move
- c. Arrange for Tier 2 Alternative Provision (cluster to pay £7000 towards costs from centralised cluster funding; student remains on home school roll until end of Year 11).

3. Specialist Alternative Provision and Support from the LA

To operate the models for primary and secondary schools detailed above, we recognise that schools need access to high quality support that is available at the point of need. There are three areas that will need development:

1. The re-design and development of the existing Alternative Provision service, with a focus on providing:
 - i. A service that offers short term placements for the primary sector, which are focussed on identifying and putting in place plans to address underlying and unmet needs to enable and support an effective transition back into mainstream.
 - ii. A strong vocational and academic programme to meet the needs of KS4 pupils that have been unable to effectively access mainstream education and curriculum.
2. The development of a multi-agency service that is able to provide effective and accessible support and interventions for schools and local inclusion clusters. The 'Team Around the School Model' has been effective in supporting a number of secondary schools this year. We want to explore how we can develop this model to support local school clusters.
3. The development of a wider marketplace of support for local inclusion clusters to access and engage. This should include third sector and private sector organisations that can provide specialist support and outreach services from the LA services and special schools.

4. The model

The diagram below attempts to show how the core elements described above come together.



