

## **Schools Forum**

**7<sup>th</sup> March 2013**

### **Secondary Alternative Provision Allocations**

#### ***Recommendation***

The Schools Forum is recommended to:

- Comment on the positive results of the new arrangements following the closure of the Warwickshire Pupil Reintegration Unit.
- Agree to the proposed revised allocation of funding to ABPs for 2013/14 based on an FSM ever 6 years allocation.
- Agree to the de-delegation of 7.8% of ABP funding to pay for the education of pupils with complex and acute needs in 2013/14 as described in the paper.

#### **Introduction**

1. Members of the Forum will recall that in March 2012 there was agreement that the budget which had been previously allocated to the PRU should be redirected to other alternative provision routes, which resulted in the total Secondary PRU budget being allocated to Area Behaviour Partnerships (ABPs). The allocation agreed at that meeting was for one-year and it was recommended that revised and updated allocations are brought to the Forum for agreement.
2. The purpose of this report is to describe the impact of the use of this funding on the numbers of pupils who become permanently excluded from school, and the quality of provision for excluded pupils and those at risk of permanent exclusion
3. An underestimated consequence of the closure of the PRU is that pupils with complex and acute needs coming to Warwickshire from other Authorities or elective home education have not been allocated a school place. Arrangements for their educational provision are being made by the Lead Improvement Manager for Vulnerable Children (formerly described as the Virtual Headteacher)

#### **The new approach to meeting the learning needs of pupils at risk of exclusion or who have been excluded**

4. The PRU was closed on 31 August 2012. This is no longer a destination for any pupil in Warwickshire
5. Where alternative provision is considered appropriate, schools now contract with approved providers rather than referring a pupil to the PRU. WCC has established a Framework Agreement for Alternative Education Provision identifying five full time alternative education providers and 26 part time alternative education

providers. This contract became live on 1st September 2012. Currently there are 171 pupils in part-time or full-time alternative provision.

6. Funding has been used to support early intervention practice in schools. ABPs have invested devolved funding into schools own provision such as Learning Support Units. This represents a shift in the use of funding from crisis management to early intervention.
7. ABPs have re-launched the managed move process to ensure that any pupil currently in a Warwickshire school requiring a fresh start remains in mainstream education.

### **The impact of the new approach**

8. These new approaches have led to a significant reduction in the numbers of pupils being permanently excluded. In 2011/12, 32 permanent exclusions took place in Warwickshire schools and academies. This was significantly lower than the previous year when 87 permanent exclusions occurred. Indeed this is the lowest number of permanent exclusions since at least 2002/3. The decreasing trend is continuing in 2012/13 with only 9 children being excluded in the autumn term compared with 13 pupils in the corresponding term in 2011/12
9. ABPs are currently reporting a fall in the number of fixed-term exclusions. Although fixed-term exclusion data for 2011/12 is not yet available, early indications suggest that fewer pupils have been excluded as schools have developed improved strategies to manage poor behaviour.
10. Evidence from Ofsted and Warwickshire's own monitoring suggests that arrangements to support pupils in alternative provision are effective. A report written in January 2013 and commissioned by WCC summarising the findings of monitoring visits carried out to all alternative providers where pupils are placed, found the provision to having a significantly positive effect on pupils:

*"It is clear that the programme of Alternative Educational Provision is making a positive difference to the lives of a number of students. There are clear examples of students being re-engaged with learning, feeling more positive about themselves as people and as learners. Many now see future positive destinations as a realistic choice; they believe that they can achieve."*

An Ofsted report of the use of alternative provision by one school in the central area, carried out in February 2013, as part of a national survey, commented positively on the progress that pupils are making:

*"Students feel well supported and achieve well. Many are successful in gaining vocational accreditation at Levels 1 and 2 through their alternative placements"*

11. There is evidence that the use of alternative provision is increasing the proportion of pupils who progress to further education, employment or training. In November 2012, 34 of the 48 Year 11 pupils (71%) on the roll of the PRU continued into positive destinations. Almost all these pupils were in full-time in alternative

provision in 2011/12. This compares favourably with 2011 when 26% of pupils achieved positive destinations and 2010 when 57% achieved positive destinations.

12. The principle of devolving funding to ABPs continues to receive strong support from headteachers who demonstrate their firm commitment by, for example, ensuring that their staff attend ABP panel meetings. Schools continue to participate fully in strategies such as managed moves
13. Members of the Forum will recall that in March 2012, the agreed allocation methodology which determining ABP budgets was based on Free School Meals Ever 3. Officers have evaluated this methodology and examined the potential of using the Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) and advise that Free School Meals Ever 6 should be used which aligns with the distribution of other DSG funding. A recalculation of the allocations compared to the current allocation is included as Appendix A.

### **Pupils with complex and acute needs**

14. Since September 2012, 23 pupils, all of whom could be described as having “complex and acute needs”, have come to live in Warwickshire having moved from another authority or have sought a school place after a period of elective home education. Nineteen of these pupils are in year 11, three in year 10 and one in year 9. None of them has a statement of special educational needs.
15. Normally these pupils would be subject to the Authority’s In Year Fair Access Protocol. However, the needs of these pupils are so great that that a placement in a mainstream school is highly likely to be unsuccessful.
16. The Lead Improvement Manager for Vulnerable Pupils has taken responsibility for these pupils and they are registered on the local authority’s alternative provision census.
17. All “complex and acute needs” pupils have tailored education packages which may include alternative provision and/or one-to-one tuition. Most have their wider needs supported by colleagues from the education social work service and a parent support advisor.
18. The cost of this provision, as presented to the Access to Education Steering Group on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2013, was £5,648 per week. This cost covered the education of 13 young people at the time and is expected to rise throughout the year as more pupils come to Warwickshire and packages of provision are arranged for those who have been presented but whose needs have not yet been fully assessed. On the basis that there is an estimated average of 12 such pupils at any time, the overall cost for the year is forecast to be £187,687. No funding has been assigned to cover this cost. Currently the Lead Improvement Manager for Vulnerable Pupils finds appropriate provision and monitors the attendance progress of all pupils along with a cohort of 21 former PRU pupils. The cost of the oversight of pupils with complex and acute needs is currently paid for by the “Virtual Headteacher” budget, which was agreed by the School Forum in March 2012.
19. Members of the Access to Education Steering Group recognised that the funding

for this provision should come from the devolved ABP budget. Amongst its members, this group includes WCC officers, a primary Headteacher and the chairs of the four ABPs and is chaired by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Families.

20. It is proposed that for 2013/14 ABPs provide funding for the education of pupils with complex and acute needs by allocating 7.8% of their budget (totalling £187,687) to the Lead Improvement Manager for Vulnerable Pupils. This figure should be reviewed during the year with a revised proposal for 2014/15.
21. It is also proposed that responsibility for these pupils remains with the Lead Improvement Manager for Vulnerable Pupils and the cost of overseeing their provision is met from the £100,000 “Virtual Headteacher” budget

### Conclusion

22. The approach of devolving PRU funding to ABPs has contributed to a substantial reduction in the numbers of pupils who are permanently excluded. Evidence shows that the new approaches are having a beneficial impact on pupils at risk of permanent exclusion
23. It is recommended that we continue to allocate funding to ABPs in 2013/14 at the same rate as in 2012/13 and that allocations should be determined on the basis of Free School Meals Ever 6.
24. It is also recommended that 7.8% of this funding be allocated to the Lead Improvement manager for Vulnerable Pupils to cover the anticipated cost of provision for pupils with complex and acute needs.

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
<b>Report Author(s)</b>	Steve Pendleton	<a href="mailto:stevependleton@warwickshire.gov.uk">stevependleton@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Head of Service</b>	Sarah Callaghan and John Betts	sarahcallaghan@warwickshire.gov.uk johnbetts@warwickshire.gov.uk
<b>Strategic Director</b>	Wendy Fabbro	wendyfabbro@warwickshire.gov.uk
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Cllr Heather Timms	cllrtimms@warwickshire.gov.uk