

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny
Date:	February 12 th 2008
Subject:	Exclusions and the PRU
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Director of Schools and Children's development
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Christine Bednell
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Exclusions data Meeting Pupil Needs Compact Report from the first term of the Helix

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the position on exclusions up to July 2007 and the current provision with regard to the Pupil Referral Unit

Recommendations: For information only

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

The data shows that permanent exclusions have increased slightly on the very good 2006 performance. Fixed term exclusions have remained comparatively high.

Options considered

Background:

Exclusions were the subject of the Meeting Pupil Need review and the subsequent Compact that was signed by all partners. The original compact (attached) set out the actions that needed to be taken including the further development of the PRU.

Current situation:

All of the actions have now been completed – the last phase of this was the opening of the Helix in October 2007(report attached). The most effective element of the Compact has been the formation of a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT), this is a multi agency group that meets weekly to support schools in managing pupil behaviour with the aim of offering support before they are excluded. The team meet every Wednesday between 4-6 and all services commit this to their diaries. Most weeks they will hear three or four cases. There remains a real challenge to manage behaviour effectively without resorting to exclusion and there is significant evidence from schools that behaviour is becoming more challenging. This is particularly noticeable in primary schools.

Analysis shows that many pupils who are currently being excluded are pupils who have come into school other than at the normal points of entry either coming from abroad or from out of borough schools (possibly because they were already at risk of exclusion).

A new initiative has been started in all High Schools to reduce fixed term exclusions with schools being funded through the LAA to run internal seclusion units rather than give fixed term exclusions we have agreed a target to reduce fixed term exclusions by 400 over the next two years with the second year funding being dependent on achieving the first years target of 250.

We believe that internal seclusion is a more effective methodology since it allows students to be in school and studying and is actually seen as more of a punishment than a day at home.

We also believe that by effectively reducing the tariff we will over time have an impact on the permanent exclusions.

We are also developing a pilot Year 7 / Year 8 transition project with a group of pupils attending the Helix in the last 6 weeks of the Summer Term and then being supported in the first few weeks of the Autumn Term when they transfer to High School.

The current situation at the Pupil Referral Unit (Harrow Tuition Service) is that there are currently 15 pupils in the primary provision and will be full when they reach 16. In the secondary provision we have 26 currently on roll with 2 more due to start next week. They are now full.

Financial Implications

There are no immediate financial issues as all this work is funded by grant or DSG. In the long term we will need to consider as part of our School Organisation whether we need to develop a full time Pupil Referral Unit particularly for Primary and Key Stage 3 pupils where there is no alternative provision.

Performance Issues

We continue to monitor performance carefully and are confident that the recent actions taken will reverse the trend slight upward and we will achieve our targets.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Bharat Jashapara	<input type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 1 February 2008		
Name: Helen White	<input type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 1 February 2008		

Section 5 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Heather Clements, Director of Schools and Children's Development

Background Papers: