

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Special Education Needs (SEN) Provision Task and Finish Group – Scoping Document

Title of review	SEN Provision Task and Finish Group
Scope	
Reason for review	<p>The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced wide-ranging changes to the organisation and arrangement of special education needs (SEN) provision. Since the introduction of this legislation there have been claims that the number of children with SEN, allocated to inappropriate forms of educational provision, has increased. It is contended that children with moderate needs are too readily admitted to schools offering specialist SEN provision when their education and development would be better served in mainstream educational establishments with SEN support. The claims maintain that the consequence of this trend has been a detrimental impact on the principle of inclusion and the broader educational and development needs of all pupils in the county.</p> <p>This review will examine these claims in greater detail to assess if they are substantiated by evidence in Herefordshire.</p>
Links to the corporate plan	<p>The review contributes to the following objectives contained in the Herefordshire corporate plan and other key plans and strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life; and • Secure better series, quality of life and value for money.
Summary of the review and terms of reference	<p>Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess the introduction of the new legislative requirements and impact on SEN provision in Herefordshire. • To test claims that children are too readily admitted to inappropriate forms of SEN provision. <p>The review will look at: SEN provision in Herefordshire and the relationship between special and mainstream schools; local and national policy informing the placement of children in appropriate facilities; trends and statistics relating to SEN and comparisons with national and regional figures; the contention that inclusion is being undermined in favour of specialist facilities and that children are being placed in the wrong environment.</p> <p>Terms of Reference:</p> <p>The task and finish group will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a detailed understanding of SEN provision across Herefordshire; • gain an awareness of the legislative context for SEN provision, including guidance and codes of practice (and local

	<p>interpretation). Including local policies and practices;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine the introduction of new legislative requirements included in the Children and Families Act 2014; • develop an understanding of the processes around Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans) and assessments of need in educational provision; • examine trends and statistics relating to children with EHC Plans and consider national and regional comparative data; • examine how the Council co-ordinates EHC Plan assessment /SEN provision with Academies and Free Schools • develop an understanding of and assess Herefordshire’s Local Offer; • examine evidence to establish whether Herefordshire children with SEN are being allocated to an appropriate educational setting; and • test the contention that children with moderate needs are allocated to specialist SEN schools which are not appropriate to their level of need. <p>Membership (to be determined):</p> <p>Group leaders will be contacted to fill any remaining vacancies following initial recruitment of members on the committee.</p>
What will NOT be included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examination of any individual cases concerning EHC Plans or allocation to SEN Provision.
Potential outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assurance that children with SEN are allocated to appropriate educational settings; • Assurance that the development and educational needs of all children in Herefordshire is met by local SEN policy and practice; and • Assurance that the Local Offer provides good access to information for parent to raise awareness of EHC Plans and SEN Provision.
Key Questions	<p>To consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the number of children in specialist SEN schools increased since 2014? Is this in proportion to population growth in the county? Is it consistent with regional/national trends; • Has the number of children with SEN in mainstream schools increased? Is this in proportion to population growth in the county? Is it consistent with regional/national trends; • Has the proportion of children with EHC Plans increased, what has been the trend since 2014; • What have been the consequences of the transition to EHC Plans under the Children and Families Act 2014; • How is the appropriate SEN provision for a child assessed? Does an assessment carried out in an EHC Plan determine the educational establishment to which a child with SEN is allocated; • Does the information contained in the Local Offer raise awareness of appropriate provision for children with SEN to their parents;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are parents aware of the Local Offer and does it enable them to understand EHC Plans; the allocation to SEN provision and consequences of such allocation; and • How will the Council work with Barrs Court Academy Trust to ensure that pupils enrolled in the new special free school are allocated appropriately?
Cabinet Member	Cabinet member young people and children's wellbeing
Key stakeholders / Consultees	<p>Internal - Children's Wellbeing officers</p> <p>External – teachers from SEN specialist schools – SENCOs from mainstream schools</p> <p>Parents of children with SEN</p> <p>Members of governing bodies.</p>
Potential witnesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headteacher of SEN school • Teachers from special schools/SENCOs • Author of article concerning Herefordshire SEN provision • Parents
Research Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends and statistics relating to EHC Plans and SEN provision; • Legislative requirements introduced under the Children and Families Act 2014; and • The Local Offer.
Potential Visits	
Publicity Requirements	Following the conclusion of the task Report back to the children and young people scrutiny committee.

Outline Timetable (to be determined): (following decision by the children and young people scrutiny committee to commission the Review)

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Timescale</i>
Confirm approach, Terms of Reference, programme of consultation/research/provisional witnesses/meeting dates	Committee meeting – 16 July 2018
Present final report to Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	

Group Members	
Chair	
Support Members	
Support Officers	J Coleman M Evans

Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) referrals Task and Finish Group – Scoping Document

Title of review	PRU referrals
Scope	
Reason for review	The cabinet member has suggested that the current level of referrals to the PRU should be reviewed by the scrutiny committee
Links to the corporate plan	<p>The review contributes to the following objectives contained in the Herefordshire corporate plan and other key plans and strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life; and • Secure better services, quality of life and value for money.
Summary of the review and terms of reference	<p>Summary:</p> <p>The review will look at: pupil referral units in Herefordshire; current referral levels; recent trends in permanent exclusions and referral levels including comparative data nationally and regionally; national and local policy.</p>
	<p>Terms of Reference:</p> <p>The task and finish group will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an understanding of the structure of the Herefordshire Pupil Referral Service and the Hereford Integrated Behaviour Outreach Service (HIBOS); • learn about policies and guidelines (and local interpretation) which support schools to determine when referrals to the PRU are appropriate; • learn how the Council works with HIBOS (a multi-Academy Trust) to address concerns regarding referral levels; • assess trends in the level of permanent exclusions and pupil referrals to determine any recent increases. Compare such trends against regional and national statistics; • engage professionals in the sector to determine the reasons behind recent trends; • investigate any impacts on referral numbers resulting from changes to the educational landscape e.g. academies and free schools; and • consider statistics relating to the success of pupils who transition from the PRU to mainstream schools in Herefordshire. <p>Membership (to be determined):</p>

	Group leaders will be contacted to fill any remaining vacancies following initial recruitment of members on the committee.
What will NOT be included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of individual cases.
Potential outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To determine current trends around referrals to the PRU and if an increase has been recorded; • To understand the reasons behind any recent trends in referrals; and • Gain assurance that effective co-ordination between the Council, the PRU and local schools exists to address increases in referral numbers.
Key Questions	<p>To consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the current level of referrals; are there any discernible trends in the level of recent referrals; • Where are referrals originating; is there an even distribution across maintained schools, academies and free schools; • How does the Council coordinate/liaise with the PRU and schools (maintained and non-maintained) to ensure there is alignment and consistency; • How long do pupils remain at the PRU and how successful are transition arrangements for pupils leaving the PRU; how many return to the service; • What thresholds/policies/guidelines are in place for schools to follow to undertake referrals for those pupils not permanently excluded; and • Has there been any impact upon referral numbers as a consequence of academies and free schools in Herefordshire?
Cabinet Member	Cabinet member young people and children's wellbeing
Key stakeholders / Consultees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal – education officers concerned with additional needs. • Headteacher/representative from management committee – PRUs • Headteachers from schools with high permanent exclusion/referral rates • Management Committees at PRUs • Governing Bodies at maintained schools • Parents of permanently excluded children or at PRU
Potential witnesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Teacher from PRU • Management Committee members • Governing bodies members
Research Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics relating to permanent exclusions and referral numbers; current data and previous years to determine any trends; • Comparative referral data – national and regional; • Policies and guidelines issued to schools to manage permanent exclusions and referrals.

Potential Visits	
Publicity Requirements	Following the conclusion of the task Report back to the children and young people scrutiny committee.
Outline Timetable (to be determined): (following decision by the children and young people scrutiny committee to commission the Review)	
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Timescale</i>
Confirm approach, Terms of Reference, programme of consultation/research/provisional witnesses/meeting dates	Committee meeting – 16 July 2018
Present final report to Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	

Group Members	
Chair	
Support Members	
Support Officers	J Coleman M Evans