

REVIEW OF BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT IN HEREFORDSHIRE SCHOOLS

Report By: Director of Children's Services

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To update the Committee with regard to progress made in the action plan following the review.

Financial Implications

2. The recommendations contained in the original report had some potential financial implications although this would be expected to be contained within current budget.

Background

3. Following a Scrutiny review of behaviour and discipline management in Herefordshire schools, a report was considered and accepted by the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee on 19th March 2007. The report was considered by the Cabinet Member (Children's Services) and an action plan was then developed and agreed with the Cabinet Member (Children's Services). The action plan, attached at appendix 1, contains activities to be carried out by the Cabinet Member and Council officers as appropriate.
4. While the action plan is broadly on track with most actions completed, attention is drawn to the following areas for your information:
5. Recommendation 7.1 – the consultation with schools carried out in 2006 as part of the review will need to be repeated next term. It is anticipated that the original questionnaire will be sent out to all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, in the same schools. This will enable us to compare and contrast the original data with new information. This action has been discussed and endorsed by union representatives.
6. Recommendation 7.3 – the web-based Children Resource Directory (CRD), which is already in place, will be up-dated. Services providing support to address challenging behaviour are included in the CRD.
7. Recommendation 7.4 – the use of leaflets to provide information that is often subject to change may not be an effective use of resources. Better use of the web-based information may be a better option to offer parents and carers about what is available as it can be updated regularly. There is a suggestion that this action is merged with 7.3.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from D. Longmore, Manager of School Inclusion, tel 01432 260816

8. Recommendation 7.5 – another high school has set up a Learning Support Unit (LSU). LSUs are specialist, on-site centres offering targeted support for students with a range of difficulties, especially challenging behaviour.
9. Regarding the final recommendation added by the committee, there have been several discussions with union representatives about addressing the stressful challenge to school staff posed by students with aggressive behaviour. Accordingly, the Local Authority have encouraged schools to submit data via the health and safety reporting system. The union representatives are also looking forward to receiving the data from the next consultation with school staff outlined above in Recommendation 7.1.
10. A general point worthy of note is the position regarding exclusions from school. At the time of writing (26.06.08), the number of permanent exclusions for this year academic year was 13 (12 from High schools and 1 from Primaries) as compared to a total of 31 in 2006/7. There has been a significant fall in the use of fixed term exclusions also. With just a few weeks left until the end of this academic year, this is a tremendous achievement and indicates the excellent work that Herefordshire schools are doing in dealing with challenging behaviour.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT The Committee notes and supports the progress made in the action plan.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None