

MEETING:	SCHOOLS FORUM
DATE:	10 JUNE 2011
TITLE OF REPORT:	FUNDING FOLLOWING THE STUDENT FROM PUPIL REFERRAL UNITS (PRUS)
REPORT BY:	Head of Additional Needs

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To agree on a mechanism to allow ‘funding to follow the student’ when transferring to a different school after being on the roll of a PRU.

Recommendations

THAT Schools Forum:

- a. confirms its endorsement of the principle that funding will follow a student to their new school if they are permanently excluded and are admitted to a different Herefordshire secondary school or the school is in receipt of a pupil through the managed moves programme. This would apply to all secondary schools including academies.
- b. supports the local authority collection of the funding from the pupil’s former school in order to fund the PRU provision as agreed by the Schools Forum in March 2011 and, where the pupil is allocated a place on the roll of a different school, the transference by the LA of the same level of funding to the receiving school.

Key Points Summary

- Where it is appropriate, it is desirable that students who are permanently excluded or need to move to a PRU for other reasons are offered a second chance at a different secondary school. For some of these students, being offered this chance is the catalyst to making a positive change to their lives.
- This chance might be offered prior to the student moving to a PRU or after a period of attendance at a PRU, when it is judged that they are likely to have the greatest chance of a successful re-integration into a different school.
- The principle proposed is that finance should follow the student so that appropriate support can be put in place in a timely manner, and the “receiving school is not disadvantaged.

- Although the county's schools work in partnership and see this as part of their collective responsibility to the young people of Herefordshire, requests to take students are not necessarily evenly spread across all schools.
- The aim of the proposal is to reduce the financial burden to those schools receiving to offer pupils that second chance. Therefore, the funding collected from the pupil's former school to support the PRU provision would be 'passported' to a pupil's new school from the point at which they are placed on the roll of the new school until the end of Year 11.
- The proposal is that this applies to all secondary schools including academies.

Alternative Options

Should the recommendations on the first page of this report not be supported, the following options could be considered:

1. No additional financial support would be available for schools receiving students and schools continue to be expected to fund the necessary support from their existing delegated budget.
2. The former school is only required to fund the £3000 per annum for a limited period after the transfer to the new school, e.g. for 12 months or 24 months after the pupil transfers to the new school.
3. The same charging scheme could also be introduced for primary pupils subject to managed moves in order to prevent permanent exclusion.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. It is in the best interests of some students to be offered a fresh start at a new secondary school if they are permanently excluded or are transferred because they are close to the point of permanent exclusion.
5. For the schools receiving these students, the current arrangements create a financial burden for a period of time, in addition to the time taken to address the pastoral needs of vulnerable students.
6. Requests to support students in this way are not necessarily evenly spread across all schools due to the distribution of schools geographically and the distribution of vacant places within the school system. This means that some schools might be asked to accept more students than others. The transfer of the funding offers those schools the resource to support students who transfer to them in this way.

Introduction and Background

7. This paper forms a supplement to the papers on the funding of PRUs presented at the July 2010, January 2011 and March 2011 Schools Forum meetings and the background given in those papers remains relevant.
8. At the March 2011 meeting, a model to fund the statutory 25 hours of provision for PRU pupils was arrived at. This required that a charge of £3,000 per PRU place per year would be made to secondary schools, as from April 2011. This charge will be proportionate to the remainder of the financial year.
9. The charge also applies to intervention places on a pro-rata basis.
10. In April 2011, the Home and Hospital Teaching Team became the PRU for medical short stay

provision. The charges do not apply to PRU pupils entering the medical short stay provision as this is funded directly through DSG. .

11. A further recommendation of the same meeting was in support of the principle that 'funding should follow the student' where a pupil can be offered a fresh start at a new secondary school. This recommendation is re-stated in Recommendation (a). above.

Key Considerations

12. The number of permanent exclusions in Herefordshire is low compared to other local areas and was reduced from 23 pupils in 2006/7 to 17 pupils in 2007/8 and has remained at 18 pupils since then.
13. Herefordshire has a successful 'managed moves' programme with the Social Inclusion Officer working closely with Schools, PRUs and parents/carers. In this way, there have been no permanent exclusions of primary pupils over the past three years.
14. The LA is well placed to transfer funding to a pupil's new school as it will be collecting the same amounts for PRU placement.

Community Impact

15. Pupils who are able to successfully re-integrate into another local secondary school are more likely to maintain greater contact with their peers than if they transfer to a PRU.

Financial Implications

16. There would be a small impact on individual school budgets due to the transference of the funding as described.
17. There would be a reduced demand for places at PRUs (and therefore cost to DSG) if more pupils were able to reintegrate. PRUs are intended to be short stay schools. In practice, a significant proportion of pupils are currently re-integrated.

Legal Implications

18. None known

Risk Management

19. There is a risk that the responsibility for excluded pupils might change in legislation, guidance and regulation that follows the Education Bill and that local arrangements might need to change to reflect this.

Consultees

PRU Headteachers

BESD Strategy Group

Relevant LA Officers

Head teachers at HASH

Executive head for BESD and Head of Brookfield Special School and Specialist College

Appendices

None

Background Papers

Children & Young People's Directorate Leadership Team – RADAR - Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions June 2010

School-based Intervention Project – Herefordshire 2009-11

Herefordshire Schools Forum Tuesday 23 February 2010 Agenda Reports Pack

Herefordshire Schools Forum Tuesday 9th July 2010 Agenda Reports Pack

Herefordshire Schools Forum Tuesday 31st January 2011 Agenda Reports Pack

Herefordshire Schools Forum 2nd March 2011 Agenda Reports Pack

Government White Paper 'The Importance of Teaching' (DfE;2010) Chapter 3