
Select Committee on Lifelong Learning – 10 November 2005

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Permanent Exclusions during Academic Year 2004-05

Purpose of Report

1. This report updates the Committee on the number and nature of the permanent exclusions that took place in Dudley during the academic year 2004-05.

Background

2. Permanent exclusions are reported to the Council as part of Quarterly Corporate Performance Monitoring Reports. The Locally Selected Measure (LSM) relating to permanent exclusions is 'DELL A&I 010'; the definition for this LSM is '*The number of pupils permanently excluded during the year from all schools per 1,000 pupils at all maintained schools*'.

In addition to this LSM the Directorate of Children's Services also reports all permanent and fixed term exclusion data to the DfES 3 times a year.

3. Over the last four years Dudley's permanent exclusions have increased from 35 in 2000/01 to 91 in 2003/04. During the academic year 2004/05 the rate of increase slowed down significantly to a figure of 92:

- 8 primary pupils = 0.27 per 1,000,
- 81 secondary pupils = 3.8 per 1,000
- 2 special pupils = 3.1 per 1,000
- 1 x PRU pupil

The actual rate of permanent exclusions across all sectors for 2004/05 was 1.84 per 1,000 pupils, compared with the target LSM of 1.59 exclusions per 1,000 pupils.

4. Early indications show that Dudley does not compare particularly well with its statistical neighbours, all of who have invested heavily in high-cost preventative mechanisms. In comparison with our geographical neighbours, the picture is mixed with some neighbours showing a sharp rise in permanent exclusions and others maintaining a relatively low number. The data from statistical and geographic neighbours are still to be confirmed; the verified statistics will be reported to the March 2006 meeting of this Committee.
5. On a more positive note, the number of permanent exclusions from special schools remained stable at two exclusions. The figure for children looked-after by the local authority is down from last year's figure of nine to five and is an indication of the support given to this very high profile, vulnerable group of children. However, it remains a corporate goal to achieve zero exclusion for the group. Boys were shown to be five times more likely to be excluded than girls during 2004-05.
6. There has been no significant rise in any of the standard specific reasons for exclusion. Bullying remains low as a reason for exclusion and exclusions as a result of drugs and alcohol went down from eight to seven. 'Persistent disruptive behaviour' continued to be the most prevalent reason for permanent exclusion (23).
7. The following table provides a summary of permanent exclusions by ethnic origin:

	2004/05	PLASC 05 Total Population	% of School Population	% of all excluded pupils
Bangladeshi	0	83	0.16	0
Black-African	1	174	0.34	0.57
Black-Caribbean	1	411	0.82	1.0
Black-other	0	47	0.09	0
Indian	2	873	1.73	2.1
Mixed Race	5	1561	3.1	5.4
Other	0	336	0.67	0
Pakistani	0	2104	4.2	0
Unknown	1	1216	2.4	1.0
White	82	40723	81	89

8. The foundations of a 'Preventing Exclusions Strategy' have been laid in the last 12 months and it is expected that the upward trend in permanent

exclusions witnessed over the last few years will start to decline during 2005/06. Specific developments within this strategy include:

- An agreed exclusions protocol is now in place and is now being built upon to take account of a wider spectrum of hard-to-place pupils.
 - The Framework for Intervention, a holistic behaviour management process, has been introduced into 12 primary schools.
 - The role of the Pupil Referral Units has been extended to enable them to work proactively with children at risk of exclusion.
 - The Behaviour Improvement Programme has been introduced into three clusters of schools, via the 'Excellence Cluster', with an additional £750,000 being provided to support behaviour and attendance issues.
 - The reporting of exclusions by schools to the Directorate and the DfES is now made on a termly basis.
 - The work of the Key Stage 3 Behaviour and Attendance Consultant has been embedded into the Secondary Strategy.
 - Work is currently taking place with headteachers to develop a Parent Contract Policy in line with DfES proposals.
 - The Directorate of Children's Services has opted to take part in the in the Key Stage 2 Behaviour and Attendance Strategy pilot with effect from April 2005.
9. The 'Preventing Exclusion Strategy' as outlined above sets out to reduce exclusions by supporting consistent and appropriate procedures and practice of behaviour management, providing additional support for pupils at risk of permanent exclusion and enabling quality assured access to a range of alternative providers for 'at-risk' Key Stage 4 pupils.

It is anticipated that these measures will have a significant impact on the rate of permanent exclusions in Dudley.

Finance

10. The costs associated with this report are met by base budgets, including school budgets, and external grants.

Law

11. 'The main statutory provisions relating to Exclusions are contained in sections 64 - 68 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. DfES Circulars 10/99 and 11/99, 'Social Inclusion: Pupil Support'.

Equal Opportunities

12. Specific teams and individuals within the Directorate of Children's Services support and deliver initiatives and developments that enable the inclusion of this group of vulnerable children and young people.

Recommendation

13. It is recommended that the Committee notes the content of this report.



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Background Papers

None