

CYP Scrutiny Commission - Outcome from school exclusions

Substantive Review

Reviewed national policies and guidelines

Reviewed local policies and practices

Conducted site visits

Interviews & focus groups

Stakeholders consulted

Hackney Learning Trust

2 Focus groups and 6 interviews of children excluded from school

2 focus groups with parents (SEND and Turkish Speaking)

Visited 7 alternative providers (PRU and others)

Visited and or heard evidence from 3 other local authorities

Other contributors - HackneyQuest, Islington Law Centre, The Garden Sch.

Emerging conclusions 1

1. The transformation of schools across Hackney has been successful with high levels of achievement among young people. Some young people have found it difficult to maintain school placements:
 - a. Narrowing of curriculum
 - b. Zero tolerance behaviour policies
 - c. Rising number of young people SEND (diagnosed and undiagnosed)

2. Schools have a protective influence over children and young people
 - a. Adult oversight keeps children safe
 - b. Children form supportive social networks with their peers
 - c. School place keeps children closer to other statutory support services

Emerging conclusions 2

3. In recognising their protective influence, schools should be supported to become more inclusive:

- a. Behaviour policies
- b. Curriculum
- c. Better supporting children with SEND
- d. Emotional health & wellbeing (WAMHS) and pastoral support
- e. Support for children at risk of exclusion (Re-engagement Team)

4. Children who experience school exclusion feel traumatised - this should inform a more a therapeutic approach in recognition of:

- a. Loss of social and emotional support networks
- b. Cut off from school ties
- c. Challenging family relationships
- d. Education and future aspirations are broken /unclear

Emerging conclusions 3

5. Voice of child is not as strong as could be expected in exclusions policy and practice.

- a. Meaningful involvement - enable children be involved and to participate
- b. Children do not understand exclusions process
- c. Current process often left children confused, frustrated and angry

6. Parent face a 'perfect storm' when their child is excluded:

- a. Ongoing need to support their child through exclusion
- b. Fear of being judged as a failure by local agencies
- c. Lack of independent informed advice
- d. May be dealing with own health, wellbeing or personal issues

Emerging conclusions 4

7. Although not the focus of this review, the Commission observed a number of key interventions that could help to reduce school exclusions:

- a. Positive behaviour management systems - A local special school does exemplary work in this field which can inform wider approach to behaviour management
- b. The Reintegration Programme has good results in preventing exclusions in primary settings. Holistic support can help get the right help to young people at risk of exclusion and rebuild relationships between school and family.

Emerging conclusions 5

8. Young people who have been excluded often have multiple and complex needs, as such, there will always be a need for alternative education provision (AP).

Remembering that this group of young people are among the most vulnerable in the community...

- a. Ensure that there is a local AP landscape of sufficient range and quality that can meet local needs
- b. Help parents and children make a positive and informed decisions about AP - and that the chosen provider meets their needs
- c. That the outcomes for young people should further inform the commissioning of AP

Emerging conclusions 6

Contd...

- d. That AP is more firmly embedded within the network of statutory and other support services
- e. There is effective transitional support for young people moving on from AP to other settings

Next Steps

Finalising the conclusions and recommendations

Consulting with contributors to the review

Consulting with Hackney Learning Trust

Consulting with members of the Commission