

Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission Responses to Questions on Outcome of School Exclusions (from 16/1/23)

- 1. A number of serious case reviews have highlighted the acute safeguarding risks (e.g. criminal exploitation) for children have been permanently excluded from school. These risks led the Commission to recommend that an independent multidisciplinary safeguarding assessment be undertaken at the point of all permanent school exclusions.**
 - a. Is the CHSCP aware of any developments undertaken in local schools in this respect?**
 - b. Has CHSCP been consulted or involved as to how such a process can be implemented?**

Planned:

- A planned pilot, due to be shared at a meeting with schools, is underway between safeguarding partners. It is being led by Young Hackney/Youth Justice (prevention and diversion team) and Hackney Education, to offer an 'exclusion alternative' pathway which will begin with a multidisciplinary safeguarding assessment
- Currently:
- Team Around the School termly meetings allow for a thorough assessment of children who the school are concerned about, from a multidisciplinary perspective, as well as encouraging early intervention and planned and purposeful support.
- A protocol for suspension and exclusions developed by Children, Families and Educational as a directorate and that foregrounds a safeguarding first approach is currently being redrafted and should be distributed to schools this term, which will advise that a team around the child meeting is called immediately to ensure a multidisciplinary response, which will include an assessment of risk.
- At the point of exclusion, a multi agency information sharing process is triggered, identifying key information as well as involved professionals, and drawing a professional network together around the receiving setting to support immediate risk assessment and planning.
- Hackney Education has implemented an annual process of a deep dive analysis of exclusions, alongside social care and Young Hackney and Youth Justice, one of the outcomes of which will be to contribute to the continuous development ensure training offer to schools is relevant and strong

2. A further safeguarding concern was raised by the Commission in its review of school exclusions was in relation to Alternative Provision and ensuring that these settings received information from local services which may impact on

the safeguarding of children in their care (e.g. information from gangs unit), particularly when these were located outside of the borough. Does the partnership feel confident that this issue has been addressed?

- Hackney has three commissioners, (i) New Regents College, (ii) the SEND service and (iii) individual schools/settings who organise placements independently. Each has responsibility for quality assurance and due diligence.
- Information from local services is shared with alternative provisions through the respective quality assurance frameworks. For New Regents, this is through direct regular contact with the commissioned settings. As the borough's PRU details about safeguarding and information about initiatives such as the VRU is communicated as soon as it is received. It is usually disseminated by the Head of Educational Wellbeing and Safeguarding.
- The SEND services also commissions settings to provide alternative provision. As per above, the Head of Educational Wellbeing and Safeguarding share such information with this team, school improvement advisers and headteachers.

3. (Recommendation 9 iii) - A concern that the Commission identified within its exclusion work was that there were information exchange issues between schools and AP with schools not always sharing important information b) delaying passing on pupil information. Is Hackney Education confident that schools are passing information on (about excluded children) in an effective and timely manner?

- Schools share information as soon as possible as per the guidance typically, and this will trigger a multi agency information sharing process which ensures a full picture of the child and their circumstances are established to inform planning. Where we experience delays in sharing information, this is largely out of borough schools and every instance is followed up by our Exclusions Officers along with a reminder around due process and timelines.

4. (Rec 9 i). In what ways have local Alternative Provision been brought into the wider family of Hackney schools - to enable the sharing of information and good practice? a. In what ways have officers tried to support AP engagement in local practice and development forums? b. Has Hackney Schools Group Board engaged with local AP providers?

- Last year officers from school performance and improvement incepted network meetings. Alternative provisions such as ELAT, EET Group, Shoreditch Trust, Blue Marble Training, Circle Collective and Access Creative College, alongside Hackney schools and Colleges are members of Project Hackney and commit to driving this forward. This is a collaborative project designed to:

- increase the number of students choosing to continue their post 16 education within Hackney
- create a more inclusive and comprehensive 16-19 offer in Hackney
- strengthen the links between the local authority, Hackney based schools, colleges, work-based learning providers, employers and other agencies.
- It meets twice each year and is supported by an implementation Group composed of KS4/5 and careers leaders whose focus is on curriculum and progression; developing and implementing specific projects and initiatives. This forum meets every term.

Network Forum Developments

- KS4/5 networks allow teaching and non teaching staff across Hackney secondary schools (including some out of borough schools), to network, share best practice and receive subject specific support. Alternative Providers have attended careers collaborative meetings, and have presented at our KS4/5 symposium, heads of sixth form meetings and summer conference.
- There is a termly AP network meeting via the NQLAP (North London Quality Assurance Partnership) in which APs from the four participating boroughs (Hackney, Camden, Waltham Forest and Islington) attend to share good practice and latest local and national developments in AP.

5. It is in the interests of the children, parents and Hackney Education that there is a range of high quality Alternative Provision sites within or close by to Hackney that meet the needs of children who cannot be educated in mainstream education.

- **How is the authority ensuring that the range of local provision is there to meet the needs of children?**
- **With the move of the PRU to new Nile Street premises, is there an extended KS3 and curricula offer to excluded children? How many children are being supported on site at the PRU as opposed to in Commissioned AP?**
- There are currently 20 KS3 students on roll at NRC, 12 of whom have been placed as a result of permanent exclusion from a mainstream secondary school.
- A specific Key Stage 3 thematic curriculum is in place for this cohort which covers a range of subjects including English, Maths, Computer Science, RE, Art, PE and PSHE. A number of interventions are in place, including Accelerated Reader and Maths for students who are under-achieving in these subjects. Additional reading lessons have also been incorporated into the curriculum this year in line with the college's focus on reading.
- Through Project Hackney, members are committed to ensuring that gaps in provision at Post 16 are addressed and the curriculum is broadened (where

appropriate); to ensure that the Hackney Post 16 offer is inclusive, provides choice and opportunity.

- -Within the termly meetings schools, colleges and AP's share insight about curriculum design and curriculum offers available, to encourage borough wide planning, less duplication and hubs of excellence.

6. The Commission recommended (at recommendation 11) a number of common standards which should be provided by AP to children placed by Hackney into their care. Can the officers update the Commission on progress for this recommendation?

a. Are officers confident that all children placed in AP, are in settings which are rated good or better by Ofsted?

- Quality assurance ... framework implemented under (i) above and being piloted for (ii) above.
- The NQLAP team uses a detailed quality assurance framework across all APs being commissioned via NRC. Additional capacity from a Hackney Education officer to support NRC with their cycle of visits is now in place. Every AP is visited every two years and is aligned with each AP's Ofsted inspection cycle. Only registered settings, judged to be at least good by Ofsted or NQLAP are currently being used to place students by NRC.
- A pilot keeping in touch (KIT) visit model is currently being discussed with a number of Hackney Education staff and schools/settings that are currently being commissioned by Hackney's SEND team. Officer capacity and agreement with APs and school is still being planned as some of the schools and settings initially identified for a visit have recently been inspected by Ofsted e.g. The Complete Works and Side by Side were judged to be Good in their last Ofsted inspections in September and November 2022 respectively.

b. What assurance can be provided to the Commission that those children attending AP sites (whether in Hackney or elsewhere) have equal and unfettered access to the same advice, information and support as pupils in mainstream settings? For example:

- **WAMHS service?**
- **CAMHS workers in schools?**
- **Young Hackney?**
- New Regents College has allocated WAMHS and MHST support in line with Hackney mainstream secondary schools. This is the equivalent to a qualified CAMHS worker being on site for 1.5 days per week at the moment and will be increased to 2 days per week once additional recruitment has taken place this term.