

Report of the Strategic Director Children's Services to the meeting of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny be held on 21 November 2018

M

Subject: Pupil Referral Units

Summary statement:

Local Authorities are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who - because of illness or other reasons - would not receive suitable education without such provision. Full-time education for excluded pupils must begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion. Local Authority maintained provision for this purpose is known as a Pupil Referral Unit. Local Authorities have to establish management committees to run PRUs and they have a delegated budget.

Funding arrangements for PRUs are in line with the regulations for school finance and they receive base funding per place and a top-up from the local authority based on services provided to meet the needs of the individual pupil*.

In Bradford and district there are five PRUs:

- Park Primary (in BD5 West Bowling) for pupils in key stage 1 and 2, aged 5-11 years;
- Ellar Carr (in BD10 Thackley) for key stage 3 and 4 pupils aged 11-16 years;
- Central (on two sites one at Jesse Street BD8 Fairweather Green and Aireview BD18 Saltaire) for key stage 3 and 4 pupils aged 11-16 years;
- District (BD4 Bowling) for key stage 3 and 4 pupils aged 11-16 years;
- TRACKS (BD18 Shipley) a key stage 4 provision for young people with social anxiety and social and mental health needs;

In addition there are two hospital schools that provide education for children and young people staying in hospital; these are Education in Hospital Airedale and BRI.

*Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance January 2013

Michael Jameson
Strategic Director Children's Services

Report Contact:
Marium Haque
Deputy Director Education and Learning
Phone: (01274) 439255
E-mail: Marium.haque@bradford.gov.uk

Portfolio:

**Education , Employment and Skills
Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

This report is for information about the Pupil Referral Units in Bradford and in particular District PRU which was placed into Special Measures in March 2017. Admissions to the PRUs are not through the schools admissions process; the Local Authority must make provision for those pupils who are permanently excluded – and in Bradford this is in our PRUs. There are also places in our PRUs which are commissioned from the Behaviour and Attendance Collaboratives (BACs) which were established in 2007, and there can be individual referrals made to the PRUs from schools. There are three secondary BACs – South, Central and the Three Valleys, who meet weekly to discuss how they can manage and meet the needs of young people who are at a high risk of exclusion. This can be through managed moves to other schools, both maintained and academies or where there may have been a number of previous unsuccessful interventions or managed moves this could be a referral to a PRU. For TRACKs PRU referrals are made through CAMHs (Child and Adolescent Mental Health services) as this is a unit for young people with social anxiety and mental health needs.

*TRACKS – Trust, Respect, Achievement, Confidence, Knowledge, Success

District PRU was originally set up in 2008 as a ‘Virtual school/provision’ commissioning places for young people who could not access mainstream provision and for those who were permanently excluded. In September 2014 it opened at a fixed site on Anerley Street and was funded for up to 160 places.

2. BACKGROUND - DISTRICT PRU

- 2.1 District PRU – as a ‘virtual provision’ commissioned places from over 20 different providers and on multiple sites including Independent schools and other Alternative Providers such as Bradford College, Keighley College, Leeds City College as well as JAMES, Prism, Ummid and All Star Entertainment.
- 2.2 It was previously inspected in January 2013 and was judged to be good overall and in all areas.
- 2.3 In March 2017 it was inspected and found to be inadequate and requiring Special Measures to improve and subsequently given an academy order.
- 2.4 An Ofsted monitoring visit took place in November 2017 as they were concerned about safeguarding at the unit and safeguarding was judged to be ineffective and insufficient progress had been made since the inspection in March 2017.
- 2.5 Since the Ofsted inspection and this monitoring of District PRU there have been a number of further reports and audits, some commissioned by the Management Committee and LA, and undertaken by LA officers, which continued to raise serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, teaching and learning and leadership and management.
- 2.6 A number of actions have been taken to improve provision and to enable the PRU to be in a position where an academy transfer can be agreed with an appropriate

- sponsor; the LA meet very regularly with the DfE about the District PRU. We are expecting an announcement about an academy sponsor very shortly.
- 2.7 From September 2018 District PRU will deliver provision for Year 10 and Year 11 students - up to 80 places at Anerley Street which includes 25 places at Keighley College as these partnership arrangements have been effective.
- 2.8 There have been changes to the Management Committee, since October 2017, with a new chair, an experienced Bradford Secondary School Headteacher. They have challenged the leadership of the PRU, commissioned external consultancy support to mentor leaders, commissioned a safeguarding review, and sought to clarify the finances of the PRU and budgetary controls.
- 2.9 As a result of a joint LA Safeguarding scrutiny visit February 2018 and the Safeguarding review of March 2018, the LA wrote formally in early June 2018, using the School Staffing Regulations 2009/2680 to the management committee of the District PRU to ask them to take urgent action to tackle the leadership and management concerns.
- 2.10 As a result of this, the management committee have taken a number of actions to make rapid improvements to the leadership and management of the PRU.
- 2.11 An LA Scrutiny committee was set up on 12 June 2018 to hold the leaders of the PRU and the management committee and the LA to account, for making rapid improvements to the provision; this meets regularly.
- 2.12 In addition a number of SLAs have been set up with Ofsted registered, independent schools that deliver alternative provision. These schools are subject to Ofsted inspection, so are suitable to purchase Alternative Provision places for young people.
- 2.13 The LA is able to commission up to 50 places from the independent providers for 2018/19. The current numbers agreed with providers' total 36, there is agreement that they would be able to increase numbers if required. This will be reviewed on an on-going basis throughout the year so numbers may increase with individual providers.
- 2.14 The places will be funded from the High Needs Block at a cost of up to £500,000 (£10,000 per place) to the local authority. The rate of £10,000 place funding is set nationally by the DfE and is the standard cost for alternative provision. The providers will also receive top-up funding from the home school of a young person who requires a place.
- 2.15 District PRU, therefore, will no longer be providing and commissioning 160 places.
- 2.16 There is currently an acting interim Headteacher in place, who was previously the Assistant Headteacher and SENCo, and the Management Committee have also secured some additional leadership support through a consultant.
- 2.17 An experienced Achievement Officer has been allocated to the PRU from the LA School Improvement Services who gives regular support and challenge to leaders

in the PRU and they have had support from an Inclusion Officer.

- 2.18 Building works have taken place over the summer to make a separate visitor and student entrance, and this has helped to improve safety.
- 2.19 A number of other improvements have been made not only to on-site safety, but also safeguarding practices the curriculum, teaching and learning and leadership and management.
- 2.20 Early morning calls and collection continues to work well and is having a significant impact on attendance.
- 2.21 There is a more intensive focus by all staff on safeguarding students.
- 2.22 As a result, behaviour has improved and there are reduced incidents of inappropriate and aggressive behaviours and the high levels of anxiety previously displayed by a number of students and attendance has improved.
- 2.23 The acting Headteacher is leading on making improvements to the quality of overall provision and the management committee are holding the leaders and managers to account. The Achievement Officer has made a very positive contribution and this has been clearly acknowledged by the Headteacher and the management committee
- 2.24 The LA scrutiny committee, as result of the evidence presented to it, has judged that the PRU is now making good progress towards the removal of Special Measures and has improved considerably since the last Ofsted monitoring visit.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

None

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 Bradford Council received £65.88m High Needs Block (HNB) funding within our Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation in 2018/19. Bradford Council currently funds places at the PRUs from this HNB allocation at £10,000 a place. This includes:
 - 50 places at Bradford Central PRU, of which 10 places are assigned for support for pupils permanently excluded (where the Council will also pay the Pupil-Led Need top-up above the cost of the place).
 - Up to 160 places in total across Bradford District PRU (80 places) and independent Ofsted registered alternative providers. There are some transitional arrangements in place with regard to the funding of Pupil-Led Need top up (the cost above the place-cost) at Bradford District PRU. In light of the pressures on the High Needs Block we are reviewing future funding arrangements with schools.

4.2 The Council expects to continue to consolidate the changes that were made in 2018/19 in the funding of alternative provision, namely, the cessation of the funding from the High Needs Block of the top-up element for non-EHCP placements in PRUs. The Council will continue to work with schools, in particular the primary phase, to develop local agreements regarding the movement of funding following permanent exclusion. The Council will also wish to review with the Schools Forum, on an on-going basis, the HNB's commitment to place-funding for non-EHCP provision at the PRUs.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

Not applicable – this report is for information only

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

No legal issues arising.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Not applicable – this report is for information only

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

Not applicable

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Not applicable

7.6 TRADE UNION

Not applicable

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

For information for ward members regarding the location of the PRUs in their wards.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

The Local Authority would always challenge any school which permanently excludes a Looked After Child.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

Not applicable

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

This report is for information only

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That an update report on the progress of District PRU be presented to the Committee by April 2019.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – numbers of fixed term and permanently excluded children and young people.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None