



Scrutiny Review – School Exclusions - Part Two

Members of the Review Panel

**Councillors: Pat Egan
Councillor Bernice Vanier
Councillor John Oakes
Councillor Errol Reid
Ms Felicity Kally (Parent Governor Representative)**

www.haringey.gov.uk
January 2009

1. Summary

- 1.1 This review looked at the current provision provided at the Pupil Support Unit., It also examined good practice on what should be provided and considered whether the Council complied with it.
- 1.2 Haringey was at the forefront nationally in terms of its commitment to fully inclusive schools. For instance Haringey had been engaged in work with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCFS) prior to the production of the White Paper. 'Back on Track' which set out the Government's strategy for modernising alternative provision for young people.
- 1.3 The Panel were pleased to note that both the DCSF and Ofsted recognised that Haringey's Pupil Support Centre formed part of the continuum of support available to children and young people, which not only complied with the requirements of the White Paper but was an example of good integrated practice. A copy of the latest inspection by Ofsted which rated the Pupil Support Centre as good is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.4 The Panel was impressed with work ongoing, not only to ensure compliance with the requirements, but to ensure compliance remained good and improved further.

2. Reasons for the review

- 2.1 Following the successful review into the action which could be taken to prevent schools from having to exclude pupils, a further review into the alternative education provision to pupils excluded for more than six days was undertaken.
- 2.2 In the meantime the Government published its White Paper entitled "Back on Track which set out fundamental and far reaching changes. Consequently it was clear that there would be little value at this time in undertaking a detailed scrutiny into alternative provision. However once the Government has finalised its proposals there may well be scope for a full-scale scrutiny review into this issue. Until then it was agreed to look just at what is presently provided at the Pupil Support Centre.

3. Background

- 3.1 Haringey has a statutory duty to provide appropriate education for all children and young people as well as supporting their health, safety and welfare. Education outside of mainstream schools is generally known as "alternative provision". and, as part of this, most local authorities establish and maintain schools – or units – for educating pupils who cannot be educated in mainstream or special schools.

These are normally called Pupil Referral Units although Haringey's is known as the Pupil Support Centre (PSC).

- 3.2 The Government's policy as described in "every child matters" and set out in the Children Act 2004 is to improve the outcomes for all children and young people. Many of the children and young people who attend the Council's PSC are vulnerable or disadvantaged. The Centre, therefore, has a key role to play in improving learning, behaviour attendance and attainments.

4. Haringey's Pupil Support Centre

- 4.1 The Council's Secondary Pupil Support Centre can provide for up to 100 pupils and is currently located on two sites. The site at Commerce Road is mainly for Key Stage 4 pupils and pupils undergoing assessment. The one at Coppets Wood is for Key Stage 3 pupils and pupils with fixed-term exclusions where the secondary school has commissioned the Centre to be the provider.
- 4.2 As of March 2008 there were 84 young people who attended the Centre. The net unit cost per year of keeping a child at the centre is £14,694 (gross £16,264) which compares with the national average cost for alternative provision, of £15,000 (and £4,000 for mainstream place).

5. Evidence and Findings from the review

Haringey as a Leading Authority

- 5.1 The Panel were delighted to be informed that as a leading edge authority Haringey had been awarded one of the 12 national grants and this had resulted in the Authority being awarded £2.85m capital funding. The money was to be utilised on providing accredited training in behaviour management for all staff in schools and partner agencies.
- 5.2 The Government plans to produce a toolkit on commissioning alternative provision and database of providers which should be available in 2009. Issues relating to quality assurance had not yet been clarified but the DCSF together with GOL were using Haringey as one of three exemplars of good practice in developing the toolkit for quality assurance.
- 5.3 Both the DCSF and Ofsted recognised Haringey's commitment to fully inclusive schools and to a Pupil Support Centre, which forms part of the continuum of support available to children and young people. This not only complies with the requirements of the white paper but is an example of good integrated practice.

- 5.4 Haringey has already received a grant from the Building Schools for the Future programme to refurbish its alternative provision to provide a smaller Pupil Support Centre, based at the Commerce Road site and to make extended provision in all secondary schools.
- 5.5 The Panel were pleased to learn that Haringey complied with best local authority best practice in relation to planning and co-ordination, supporting pupils, staffing, education provision and accommodation. Particular aspects that they wished to comment on are set out below.

Alternative Provision

- 6.1 Haringey maintains a database of alternative providers used by schools, both as part of the 14-19 curriculum provision and new career pathways. It also has a data base of the alternative provision by schools for learners with additional needs related to Special Educational Needs or behaviour. Schools use the Haringey Quality Assurance procedures for ensuring the provision is appropriate. During 2008/09, the Council's intention is to ensure that every young person attending alternative provision has the opportunity to leave with a nationally recognised accreditation.
- 6.2 Haringey is also working closely with other London boroughs to ensure that alternative provision from out borough are, where appropriate, accessible by Haringey learners and are quality assured at the same high standard used in Haringey.

Training

- 7.1 As mentioned previously funding has been secured for a training package on behaviour management which will be rolled out over the next 3 years. The first stage will be for every school and external partners to set aside one day for needs analysis. A training package consisting of SEAL training and other parts of a bespoke package would be the minimum quality standard of delivery. Following this it was expected that around 100 people would be identified to participate in four 3 hour sessions concentrating on a specific aspect of training need which had been identified and was relevant to their organisation. Thereafter anyone identified and wishing to be a lead behaviour specialist would undertake a masters accredited training course.
- 7.2 BSF money would be used in secondary schools to enhance or build accommodation which could be used to keep young people engaged. The aim for primary schools was to have no permanent or fixed term exclusions. Pupils would be kept in their own school in special 'nurture' units although in one primary school in each network there would be a behaviour management centre for pupils to attend. Such centres would be responsible for ensuring that all schools in their

partnership network received training and had a high level of expertise at a local level.

- 7.3 The Panel noted plans for a Haringey Website with links to quality assurance diplomas for alternative provision.
- 7.4 In the future the whole 'well being and healthy schools agenda' would be part of the inspection of schools and there would be penalties for exclusions. Haringey was already looking at the cost of exclusions of Haringey pupils attending out borough schools. Further work would be carried out with partners especially the police and the PCT on the well being agenda and in respect of access to PCT mental health services. A joint bid with the PCT had also had been submitted for mental health training issues.

Accommodation and Staffing

- 8.1 Proposals were being drawn up to allow for greater flexibility for pupils to move in and out of the one site Pupil Support Centre at Commerce Road. This provision was likely to be available following the opening of the new Centre in 2010. It was hoped that the previous image of the Pupil Support Centre would change as the new building was launched.
- 8.2 Schools would not be expected to exclude pupils until alternative strategies and interventions had been tried. Access to the Centre was likely to be through the Common Assessment Framework Panel.
- 8.3 The proposed new design of the Commerce Road site will incorporate space and light as well as improved ICT facilities. It will also provide a range of small multi therapies and multi agency rooms so that services such as Speech and Language Therapy and Child and Adolescent Mental Health can be available.
- 8.4 The Panel were pleased to note that in addition to the Centre's staff there were currently 22 volunteers recruited from the community who acted as mentors. These volunteers were given the appropriate training and some had moved on to be more fully involved.

Recommendations

- 1. That the Children and Young People's service be commended on:-
 - (a) the quality of provision currently provided at the Pupil Support Centre and in being recognised nationally as a 'leading edge' Authority of such provision
 - (b) being fully compliant with the provisions set out in the Government White Paper 'Back on Track'
- 2. That the Director of Children and Young People's service consider:-

a) ways to ensure that quality assurance can be embedded and made stronger

b) ensuring that further work is carried out with partners especially the police and the PCT on the well being agenda

c) how the good practice that has been developed can be further promoted with Haringey seeking Beacon status.

(d) ways of ensuring that the Pupil Support Centre had a good and positive image.

3. That Overview and Scrutiny Committee give consideration to a further review on the quality of provision in 2/3 years time after the opening of the new Centre in 2010.