

6th Day Provision – School Forum 22nd June 2023

6th Day Provision for Primary Exclusions

Context

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to arrange suitable full-time education for the any pupils that have been permanently excluded from schools. This education has to begin from the sixth day after the first day the permanent exclusion took place. (Suspension and Exclusion Guidance May 2023)

The current mechanism in place for discharging this duty at the Primary Phase is through provision provided by Mayfield Chestnut and delivered at St Margaret Clitherow campus.

The provision being provided by Mayfield is well regarded and the arrangements have provided the necessary flexibility to ensure the duty can be discharged.

Following a meeting with Mayfield and the Local Authority it is necessary to review the current level of provision and resources that are being made available to ensure that the provision can have the necessary impact for children and their families.

In the last academic year there were 11 permanent exclusions from the primary phase. In the year to date there have been 14. In the YTD, 10 of these children have been provided a 6th day place at the Mayfield provision.

Current costs and delivery of the provision

The current provision has been used by 15 children across the academic year 21/22 and 10 in the year to date.

The overall budget provided to Mayfield school is £122,892

The provision available to children is 6 FTE places and the provision has worked closely with the LA to maximise it's use.

The provision available to children is enhanced by close links to Chestnut Primary SEMH provision and the staff expertise and skill set is aligned to specialist provision at this centre.

The delivery of the provision at the St Margaret Clitherow campus enables a separation to take place from Chestnut school however it limits the ability to use staff flexibly and has led to a sense of separation for staff. It is also causes operational issues if there is absence or escalation of needs.

Considerations

The local area has recently worked to co-produce a new way of working that has

been placed within our Local Area Belonging Strategy. The strategy aims to work together to reduce the number of children and young people experiencing both suspensions and exclusions.

In the primary phase there is an early indication that the number of exclusions are reducing. There were 9 exclusions in the Autumn term but Spring and Summer term to date have seen a marked reduction with 1 exclusion in the Summer term as of 15th June 2023. This compares with 4 in the summer term 21/23 at the same point.

However there are currently children within the 6th day primary provision and there is likely to be a reduced number of excluded pupils that may need to access a provision.

There are some immediate and longer term reflections that are important for School Forum to consider: -

1. Is the current model of delivery aligned to the vision of local area to ensure that children can be supported in mainstream provisions wherever possible?
2. Is the current model of delivery too closely aligned to the specialist SEMH provision for primary phase and as such do some schools consider this as a route to a specialist placement?
3. Is the model of delivery removing children from their school community at a young age and making transition back to school more challenging?
4. Would the money spent on 6th day provision be more helpful in an outreach model with a robust commitment to not exclude or work collaboratively to meet need in the primary phase.

Short Term Proposal

To overcome the current operational issues with Mayfield School the current contract needs to increase by £27k this year. This would provide the centre with an additional staff member who could lead on re-integration back to mainstream school and provide additional cover within the setting to support meetings needs.

Long Term Proposal

The Local Authority in partnership with schools co-produce a full options appraisal for the long term provision required to meet children's needs at the primary phase. Including a review of the data, costs and impacts for children.

This could include:-

Retaining existing services

Scoping the viability of a new provider/provision

Agreement of a different approach to meeting needs locally.

This is returned to School Forum in November 2023 for consideration enabling time for any re-commissioning of provision if the need is determined.

Rachael Williams

Divisional Director Education Learning and Skills