

Appendix 1

Alternative Education Provision (AEP)

Children's Services

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Alternative Education Provision

Purpose of this report: To provide an update on the recent activity and the next steps

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Context (1)

This is part of a Children's Service review of a range of services including: children's centres, youth activities and alternative education.

Given that alternative education is provision for some of our most vulnerable learners this was set up as separate project

This provision is funded through the High Needs Block governed by the Schools Forum

Context (2)

In 2019, Central Bedfordshire has 42037 school aged children of which (in the academic year 2018/19):

- 100 accessed alternative provision following exclusion, this includes children excluded in previous school years,
- Up to 130 were engaged with services because they were at risk of exclusion,
- 30 children and young people accessed 1:1 tuition commissioned by the Local Authority,
- 367 children and young people were supported by the medical needs, hearing impairment and visual impairment teams.

Who are our vulnerable learners?

By vulnerable learners we mean children and young people who need some extra support to help them learn and those who sometimes struggle in mainstream schools and colleges – this may be due to:

- A hearing or visual impairment
- Lack of skills to manage their own behaviour (at risk of exclusion)
- An illness/injury that prevents them attending a mainstream school for a period or time (medical needs)
- Pre or post-16 young people identified with special education needs or disabilities (SEND)

Our Vision - What we want to achieve

To make sure:

- Our most vulnerable learners have access to timely and appropriate provision that meets their needs
- We reduce the need for children to be excluded from school
- Schools, parents/carers and other professionals understand the clear referral processes into any alternative provision, for example: tuition; alternative settings; vocational pathways
- We have a more innovative and flexible approach that meets the needs of these children and their families.
- Our children are happy and able to achieve their potential

What we have done (1)

Reviewed the following services and provision:

- Visual Impaired, Hearing Impaired and Medical Needs Teams are now part of the CBC SEND team
- Brokered the delivery of alternative education provision for 15 post-16 young people with complex needs
- Provided tuition for vulnerable learners

What we have done (2)

Reviewed the following provision:

- Jigsaw is an in-house service within the Access & Inclusion team– the provision is for up to 6 excluded primary school children and in school support for up to 100 children at a cost of £460,000 per year
- The Academy of Central Bedfordshire (ACB) – the provision offers vocational and academic pathways for 90 excluded secondary aged young people and those at risk of exclusion

How did we do this?

Engagement with stakeholders including:

- Two successful workshops were held in late 2018 and in early 2019 with over 80 attendees from many schools, settings and providers to discuss the current provision and what is needed now
- A review of the current need and future level of need through data analysis
- Engagement with other key partners including schools, health and parent/carers organisations to work collaborative on the future of the provision

What are we doing now? (1)

Visual, Hearing & Medical Needs teams brought in house in July 2019

The Medical Needs team:

- Provides tuition at home for a child with an illness or injury that keeps the pupil away from school whilst recovering; an illness or injury requiring regular hospital attendance; a chronic condition that causes frequent absences from school; or a mental illness requiring therapeutic support
- Provides high quality teaching as a way of supporting reintegration back into school.

The Hearing Impairment and Visual Impairment teams:

- support schools with children who are hearing or visually impaired.

These three teams supported 367 children and young people last academic year.

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What are we doing now? (2)

- Jigsaw provision in Houghton Regis for up to six children who have been permanently excluded from primary schools.
- An in-school support service has been established for up to 100 children with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- A package of training and support has also been developed for direct working with families as well as school staff.

What are we doing now? (3)

The Academy of Central Bedfordshire (ACB) - an Alternative Provision Free School (secondary) provides:

- A range of academic and vocational programmes for our secondary aged young people who have been, or are at risk of being, permanently excluded from school
- In academic year 2018/19 year, CBC commissioned 90 places and schools directly commissioned the other 30 places
- The setting was inspected by Ofsted in July 2019 and judged *good*

What are we doing now? (4)

Spot purchasing of one to one tuition for children and young people who are in need of additional support to access their learning and will not achieve their potential. This includes:

- Those at risk of becoming not in employment, education or training (NEET)
- Looked after children who required additional support
- Children/young people with identified special educational needs

What are we doing now? (5)

Develop EBP are an organisation which provides a brokerage, and ensures placement for, post 16 learners with complex needs, who are at risk of becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Post-16 vocational education or training for those young people identified with special education needs or disabilities (SEND) is also brokered.

- The contract has been continued for 2 years

Jigsaw – Next Steps

- Jigsaw will be re-located into two behaviour hubs, one in the north and one in the south of Central Bedfordshire linking to the two social care locality teams.
- The service will be extended to allow up to 10 children at risk of being excluded to attend the centre closest to their home. The aim is that no primary school aged child will be permanently excluded
- The in-school support team will be incorporated into the SEND Service and increase the amount of support available

ACB – Next Steps

- There will be a 140 place provision in September 2020 with the LA commissioning 90 places and schools commissioning 50 places
- We are working with the Governing Body to revisit the vision and purpose of the setting from September 2020 to reduce permanent exclusion and offer more creative vocational pathways for all young people in Central Bedfordshire

Tuition for vulnerable learners – Next Steps

- Finalise the review of the current arrangements and publish a tender to procure a framework through which all tuition will be sourced, giving better value for money and more robust monitoring of the provision
- This will be procured throughout November to be in place for the next financial year and the outcomes for children and young people will be monitored.

Brokerage & Delivery of Post-16 provision - Next Steps

- A full review identified that this service needs to source additional alternative education opportunities.
- Following market testing, it became clear there were no other providers of this service in Central Bedfordshire.
- A direct award has been made and discussions are underway to extend the current contract whilst developing the market with additional providers.

Conclusion

Over the next six months, the project will focus on the following areas:

1. Reviewing the project to make aspects of the service 'business as usual'
2. Publishing the identified pathway and vision by March 2020 and feeding back outcomes from the workshops to schools and partners.
3. Ensuring children who are permanently excluded, or at risk of exclusion have access to high quality provision that supports both their learning and personal development.

On-going engagement with providers and head teachers

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