



Policy and Scrutiny

Open Report on behalf of Debbie Barnes, Executive Director of Children's Services

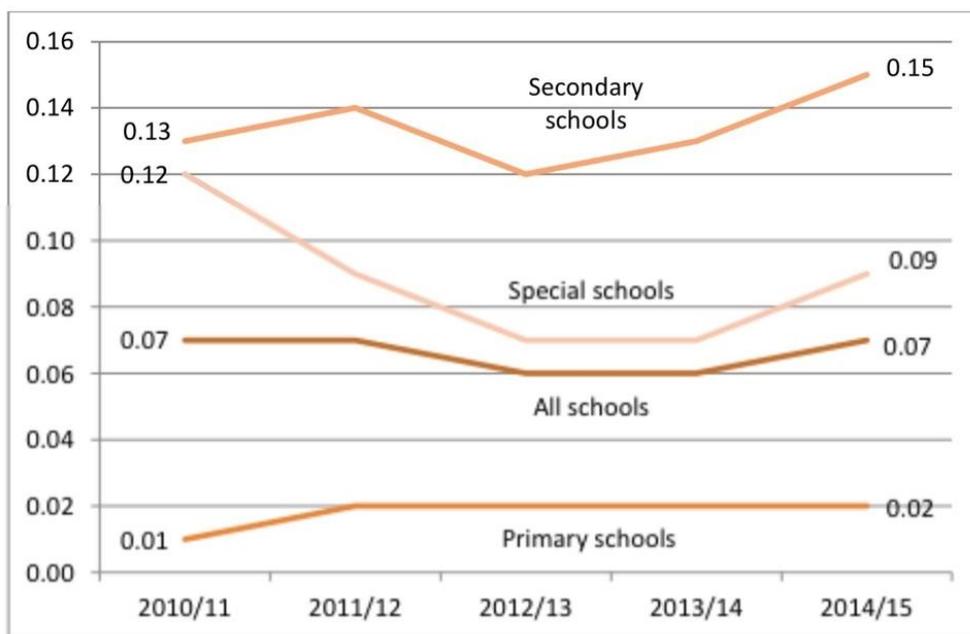
Report to:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Date:	21 October 2016
Subject:	Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy – Six Monthly Update

Summary:
 This report updates the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy, including plans for the Lincolnshire Teaching and Learning Centre (LTLC) and the mobilisation of the Behaviour Outreach Support Service.

Actions Required:
 The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider the content of the report and to provide feedback and challenge as required.

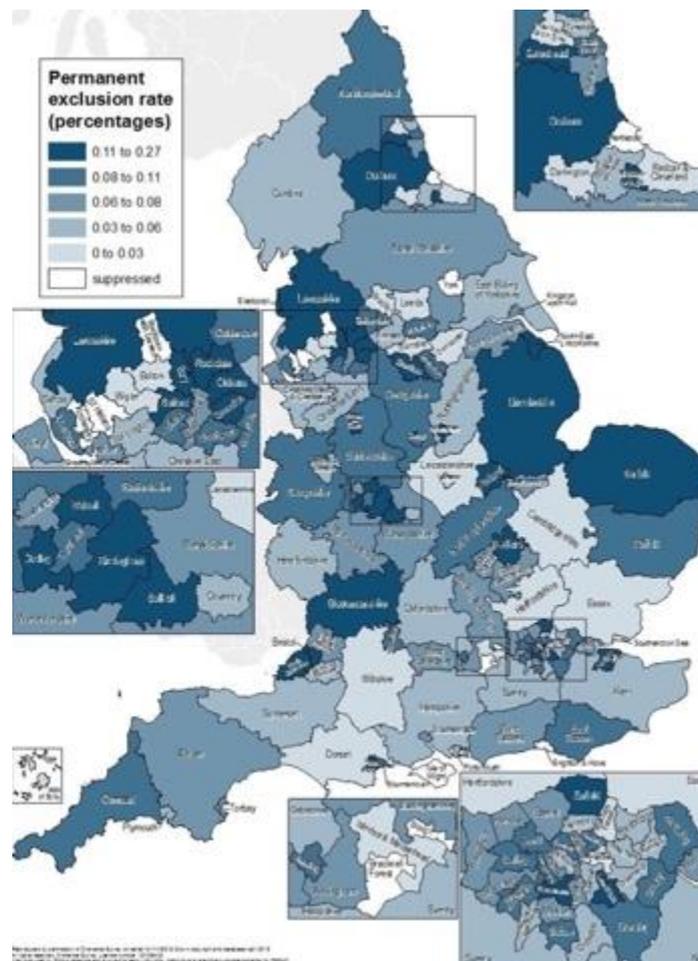
1. Background

The Department for Education's (DfE) most recent statistical release confirms that the number and rate of permanent exclusions in England is rising.



The percentage figures correspond to an average of 31 permanent exclusions per day in 2014-15, across all settings, compared to an average of 26 per day in 2013-14. The longer term trend has been downward since 2006-7 so this represents a significant reversal.

During 2014-15, a period which pre-dates the introduction of the Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy, Lincolnshire maintained its position amongst the top rank of highest excluding Local Authorities.



The Strategy was introduced to schools in January 2016 to address this situation. At its heart is the *Lincolnshire Ladder of Behavioural Intervention* which enables schools to access pre-exclusion placements for pupils within the LTLC when they can demonstrate that they have followed the *Ladder* – that is, when they have provided school-based support through a solution-focused Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) and engaged specialist help for pupils from the Behaviour Outreach Support Service (BOSS).

Two key steps within the *Ladder* – BOSS support and pre-exclusion placement – have only been available since September 2016. However, schools have been using the LA's model PSP since January, guided by Pupil Reintegration Team (PRT) caseworkers whose roles were redefined to focus on the preventing

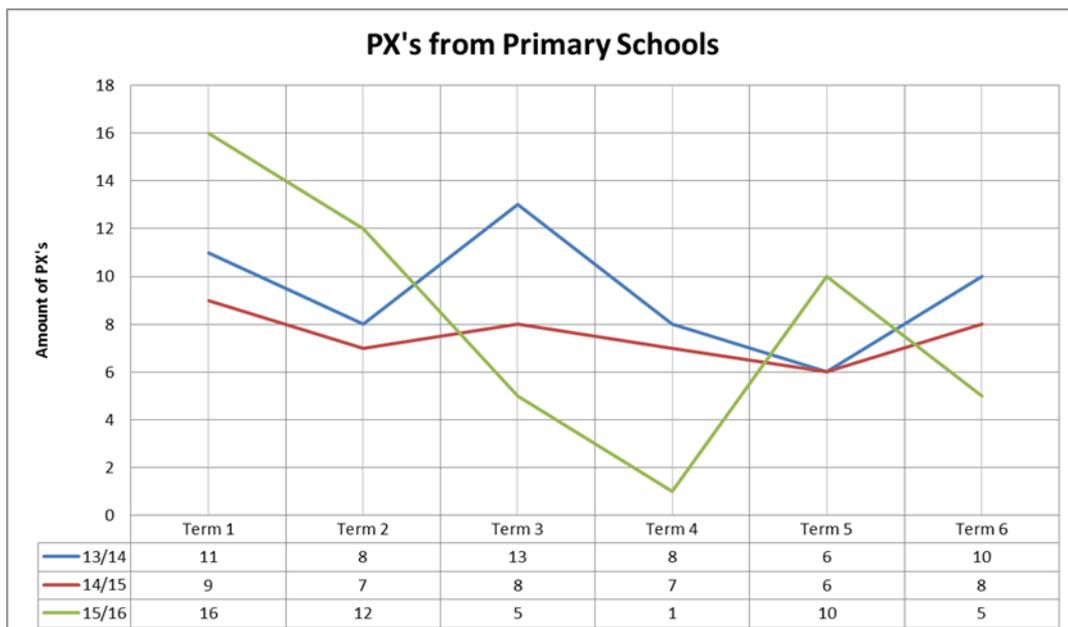
exclusion agenda. To date, the PRT has actively supported the planning of 224 PSPs for pupils at risk of exclusion with the vast majority of these successful.

This element of the strategy – which involves teaching social and emotional skills through intervention rather than sanctioning children for lacking them - has had an immediate impact on rates of exclusion. The 'progress update' below illustrates that rates of permanent exclusion are falling in Lincolnshire, bucking the national trend.

Other measures to be introduced during 2016-17 include:

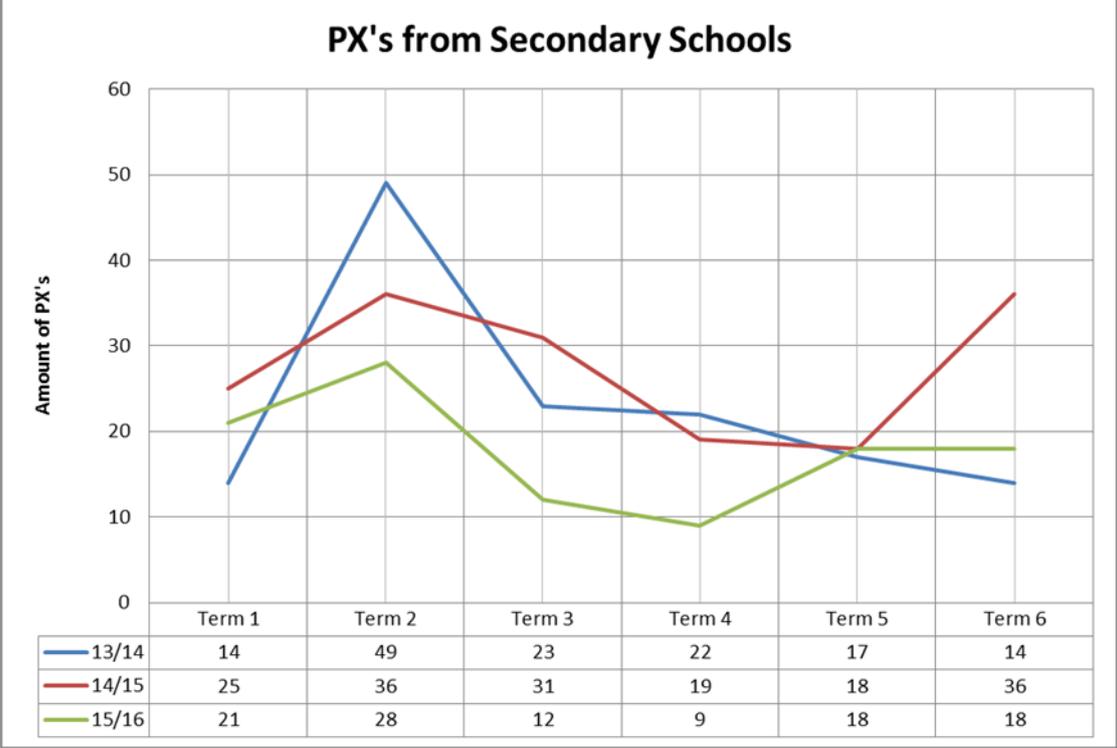
- governor exclusions training, updated to reflect Inclusive Lincolnshire
- support for parents wishing to challenge decision and training on Inclusive Lincolnshire for Independent Review Panel
- the termly publication via school ecourier of school-level exclusion data
- a managed move protocol, organised around locality Fair Access clusters
- an LSCB model drugs and banned items policy
- a 23 school restorative pilot, commissioned by BOSS
- further training for solutions-focused coaches, to strengthen PSP support
- online support for solution-focused coaches and face-to-face follow up
- the publication of an Inclusion Toolkit, to further strengthen evidence-based PSPs
- BOSS support for transition of pupils in and out of LTLC
- school visit post-exclusion to undertake risk assessment and challenge
- school alert process for unsound exclusions
- sharing of best practice via case-study area of Inclusive Lincolnshire microsite

Progress Update



Permanent exclusions from primary schools reached an unprecedented high at the beginning of 2015-16 but fell dramatically thereafter with a Term 5 spike

interrupting the descent. Whilst this makes it more difficult to conclude that the trend is irresistibly downward, it is worth noting that there has been just one permanent exclusion from the primary sector this term, compared to 16 at this point last year.



Permanent exclusions from the secondary sector were lower during 2015-16 than in previous years, 36% down on 2014-15. As with the primary phase, the new academic year has begun with rates lower than in previous years with 10 permanent exclusions since the start of term.

The data is clearly encouraging. However, given that the LA's goal is to achieve zero exclusion as we ask schools to work within the inclusive infrastructure now available to them, all permanent exclusions are open to challenge. Those that we have seen relate to incidents which Headteachers have deemed so extreme as to warrant an immediate exclusion. It is hoped that a successful restorative pilot (see 'BOSS Service' below) will begin to change the culture and give Headteachers the confidence to allow pupils to learn from any dangerous or anti-social behaviour and to make amends. The notion of a 'suspended permanent exclusion' has also been introduced by the PRT to give Headteachers confidence to allow pupils a second chance.

The BOSS Service

The BOSS is provided by Family Action and the service commenced at the beginning of September to work directly with teachers, pupils and where appropriate families. The BOSS service operates in a fully integrated way within

the *Ladder* and also alongside the LTLC to support the effective transition of pupils in and out of the centres.

Staff within the BOSS service have been recruited from a broad range of professional backgrounds to ensure a mix of skills within the teams in each of the quadrants across the county. In addition, during their initial induction period, they received intensive training to support the *Inclusive Lincolnshire* vision of strengths-based, solution focused and restorative support for children and young people at risk.

In addition to the main BOSS service, Family Action has contracted Restorative Solutions CIC to deliver a restorative practice (RP) pilot across 23 identified schools to determine whether the use of RP reduces exclusion. 'Restorative champions' within each of the identified schools are attending a full three day training programme during September and October after which it is intended that the schools, supported by Restorative Solutions CIC, will implement a whole school approach to the use of restorative approaches. This will be evaluated at the end of the year with a view to roll out across the county.

The Lincolnshire Teaching and Learning Centre

The LTLC is currently a five site pupil referral setting across Lincolnshire. The sites are placed in Mablethorpe, West Ashby, Lincoln, Boston and Grantham. The age range for the setting is Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to 16. In September 2016, the setting took in house key Stage (KS) 4 students who had previously been on a programme of study in alternative provision. The pupil admission number is 250 with currently 110 students in KS4.

The Leadership structure for the setting, up until April 2017, comprises Executive Principal, Gill Kelly and her team made up of an Associate Principal, two Vice Principals, an Executive SENCO and a Business Manager. Each centre is led by a Head of Centre and there is at least one Lead Practitioner in each centre whose role is to develop teaching and learning within their centre as well as leading subjects across the whole setting. From April 2017 the Associate Principal, Vicky Hall, will take up the substantive post of Executive Principal. The setting went in to Special Measures in February 2015 and is still working hard to come out of this category.

In each centre a 'care team' made up of two specialist TAs supports those children who have been withdrawn from class or need time out during a crisis. The team works with a child during the recovery phase (post-incident) to enable a period of reflection before reintegration back into class. In addition, a pastoral team of TAs conduct home visits and attend social care and TAC meetings. They encourage good family relationships and work with the child to hear their voice. They also conduct admissions meetings.

Since April 2016 a strong relationship with LCC's pupil reintegration team has been formed with the objective of screening referrals for pre-exclusion placements within the LTLC and reintegrating pupils back into the mainstream when they are 'school ready'. The goal is to ensure all children receive the support they need to access a curriculum and experience success in their learning.

LTLC follows a primary curriculum up to KS3, with cornerstones topic based projects being the foundation for KS1 and KS2 with KS3 following a topic based curriculum designed by centre staff. The autumn term's curriculum is centred around Japan. KS4 students follow Btec and GCSE courses which are mapped to their ability.

With regard to the pre-exclusion offer that Inclusive Lincolnshire encourages schools to embrace, the first and to date only panel meeting screened four referrals – three from primary and one secondary. Two of these were successful with pre-exclusion intervention underway for those young people. It is encouraging to note that unsuccessful schools did not respond by permanently excluding the pupils referred. They were offered consultancy SENCO support from LTLC and further BOSS support and they continue to support the pupils within their mainstream settings.

2. Conclusion

Zero exclusion remains the aspiration and all of those involved in Inclusive Lincolnshire will focus relentlessly on achieving that goal over a two year period. It must be understood, however, that the vision represents a real challenge to some deep seated beliefs and behaviours and that the policy context is not conducive. We have seen this reflected in the national exclusions data.

It is also important to note that in other LAs where zero exclusion has been achieved, it has been through fair access protocols (FAP) and fines for permanent exclusion, rather than through the promotion of genuinely inclusive practice. We are trying to achieve our goal a different way in Lincolnshire, the right way – but this takes longer than a quick mechanistic fix. Solution-focused support for young people at risk, helping them to harness their strengths and to be future-focused, and a restorative approach when they make mistakes - these are central to our vision, but they depend on awareness-raising, CPD and ultimately culture-change. We do have evidence that the direction of travel is positive for Lincolnshire's most vulnerable and troubled children, but there remains a way to go.

3. Consultation

a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

n/a

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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