



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 July 2017
Subject:	Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy – Six Monthly Update

Summary:

This report informs the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy.

Actions Required:

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is invited

1. to seek reassurance about the progress made against the Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy and provide feedback and challenge as required.
2. to receive an update on the progress of the Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy in six months' time.

1. Background

The Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy (December 2015) was introduced to address the problem of a rising and unsustainable rate of permanent exclusion from Lincolnshire schools. The scale of the problem, which resulted in our county being consistently the highest excluder of primary aged children nationally and nearly the highest of secondary, has been well documented in previous reports.

The strategy introduced the notion of a 'Ladder of Intervention' and that Ladder was launched in January 2015/16. In September of 2016/17 a step within the Ladder, specialist behaviour support for pupils at risk, went live through the launch of the Behaviour Outreach Support Service (BOSS). In addition, schools were given access to 'intervention places' within what is now Springwell Lincoln City Academy (SPLCA), formerly the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC), when they could demonstrate that they had followed the Ladder.

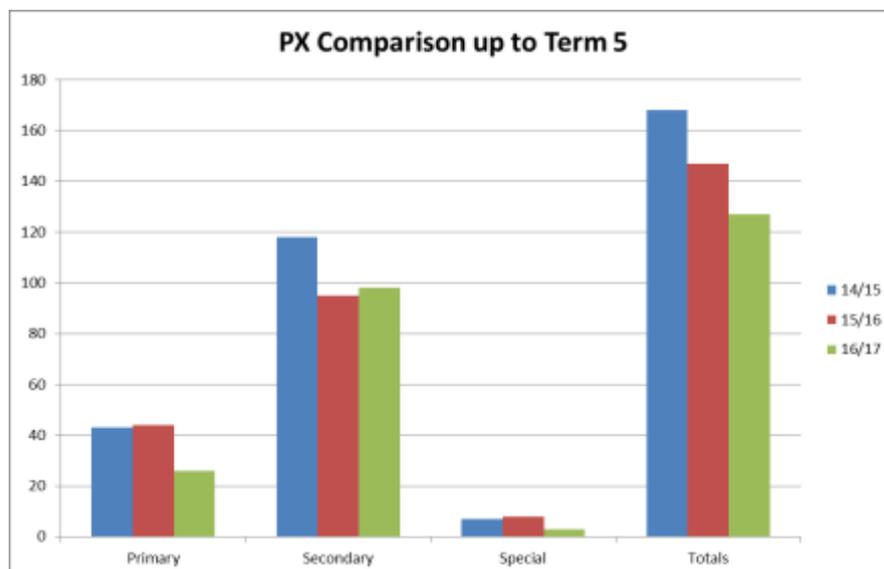
At the end of a full academic year, it is now possible to evaluate the early impact of the Ladder. The key indicators identified within the *Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy* document have been used to structure this review, as follows:

Key Indicators (*Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy, Dec 2015*)

- a) The reduction in the number of permanent exclusions
- b) Children and Young People reporting positive experiences of Behaviour Support
- c) Schools and services are certain about respective roles and pathways to access support
- d) Early intervention services are co-ordinated and delivered in the most effective way to prevent an escalation in need
- e) School based practitioners have been supported to develop their practice and skill base in relation to supporting vulnerable learners

2. Progress Update

a) The reduction in the number of permanent exclusions



With term 6 not yet complete, this table compares terms 1 to 5 of the last three academic years. If the figures for term 6 remain as they are at the time of writing, with just three weeks of term remaining, then primary exclusions will have fallen by over half from 49 in 2015-16 to 24 in 2016-17.

In relation to the secondary phase, the step change occurred between the years 2014-15 (165 exclusions) and 2015-16 (106 exclusions). That significantly reduced figure remains about the same in 2016-17 with 103 exclusions at this point, very close to the end of the year.

This is encouraging in so far as the 2015-16 progress has been sustained. However, a key priority for 2017-18 must be to build on this position by targeting for support and challenge the small number of vulnerable secondary schools that account for a disproportionate number of secondary exclusions.

b) Children and Young People reporting positive experiences of Behaviour Support

BOSS is striving to ensure that the voice of children and young people underpins the service. Young Inspectors are currently working with pupils open to the service to gather their views about it so that there is a degree of independent scrutiny, led by young people, for young people. The initial stage of this work is due for completion by the end of the academic year. Meetings with Young Inspectors and pupils have been scheduled and their feedback will inform future developments within the service. Feedback from Young Inspectors to date includes:

- *J really enjoyed having an independent person. J said that he had made a conscious decision to turn his behaviour around. He felt BOSS mediated between him and school to rebuild relationships.*
- *D said BOSS intervention had helped him behave better in school. "No behaviour points". He found information about college courses and positive future helpful and was now on track.*
- *"You did not ruin my life"*
- *J received an award in assembly and also received a voucher for his achievements. He now feels very happy at school.*

In addition, BOSS is fully committed to the participation charter.

The step before BOSS involvement is the Pupil Reintegration Team (PRT) and school-led, and the PRT will be introducing an evaluation tool from September 2017 to capture the views of stakeholders, including pupils, about their experience at this level of intervention. Findings will be shared as part of the next report.

c) Schools and services are certain about respective roles and pathways to access support

A key strength of the Ladder is its clarity. Anyone familiar with the document will know where to find the Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) which forms the core of step one, how to refer to BOSS and then onto panel for intervention placement, should that be necessary. Referral forms are straightforward and available online at www.lincolnshirechildren.net.

The role of the PRT is pivotal in the referral process and this means that schools are contacted directly should there be any evidence of misinterpretation or insufficient evidence that the Ladder has been followed. Such feedback is always accompanied by an offer of support – for example, a meeting with the school's pastoral team to share examples of effective PSPs and to identify pupils who might benefit from such support (repeat fixed term exclusions being a good indicator of this.)

The only secondary schools that have not been visited by a member of the PRT are those that have not yet needed to access Ladder resources. PRT caseworkers are engaged in school visits daily and carry an average caseload of 65 pupils. Indeed, demand for their input has grown exponentially as the team focuses on

early intervention and engages with pupils and families who would not in the past have become known to the Local Authority (LA). The team has subsequently been expanded by two caseworkers, an additional practice supervisor and enhanced business support.

There have been presentations on the Ladder to a wide range of stakeholders. All Headteacher briefings since Spring 2015/16 have been utilised with the exception of the most recent when it was agreed there was no longer a need for this level of awareness-raising. Other audiences include SENCOs (Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinators), through the graduated approach briefings, LSCB (Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board) events, governor briefings, LCC (Lincolnshire County Council) staff briefings, SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) team briefings and Independent Review Panel training. In addition, 'Schoolnews' is regularly utilised for updates.

These updates have included adaptations to the Ladder, made in the light of stakeholder feedback. For example, the intervention place was previously referred to as a pre-exclusion place. Schools and indeed a parent noted the negative connotations of that name and it was duly changed in all paperwork. Timescales have also been flexed so that the Ladder is more responsive. For example, concerns were raised about young people in crisis, perhaps in response to a traumatic life-event. Headteachers felt it unreasonable to expect a 16 week PSP to run its course before being able to access BOSS support. The Ladder has been adjusted accordingly. It is clear, therefore, but not rigid and there is no question that it will continue to adapt and evolve in response to user-feedback. The current focus is on the intervention offer and adjustments we might make to this in the light of a full year's experience.

d) Early intervention services are co-ordinated and delivered in the most effective way to prevent an escalation in need

Senior BOSS workers liaise with TAC (Team Around the Child) coordinators in each locality to ensure the service delivers an holistic approach, taking into account environmental factors and multi-agency plans. The team has established regular meetings to map need and share practice. Senior BOSS workers now attend TAC forums, making presentations and offering advice and guidance to the wider professional arena.

Both PRT caseworkers and BOSS workers also have regular contact with social workers regarding individual cases and attend TAC, CIN (Child In Need) and CP (Child Protection) meetings as appropriate. There is a strong link with the Working Together Team and through this, packages of support for individual pupils, whole schools or specific teams are jointly planned.

Fundamental to the success of the strategy is the partnership between BOSS and the PRT. Excellent communication ensures that timely support is available for pupils, teaching staff and schools. To date, BOSS has received 329 referrals, via the PRT, and every referral has received a response in two working days (48 hours).

Senior BOSS workers, outreach workers and the PRT communicate about a range of issues on a daily basis.

BOSS aims to deliver services as per the timescales below. However, as already established, there has to be flexibility within any truly responsive structure so these stages, like the Ladder itself, can be flexed.

Week 1	Initial meeting with school/pupil – Booking review date.
Week 2, 3	Information gathering, assessment, planning & BIP (Behaviour Improvement Plan) creation. Boxall profiles. Observations, pupil portraits. Communication screening, risk assessments. Meeting key staff in schools. Restorative assessments and interventions.
Week 4	Share the BIP with school, parents, pupil
Week 5, 6, 7, 8	Implementation
Week 9	Review Meeting <i>or</i> Plan Closure <i>or</i> Continue with updated BIP for another 4 weeks.
Week 10, 11, 12, 13	Implementation
Week 14	Plan Closure

e) School based practitioners have been supported to develop their practice and skill base in relation to supporting vulnerable learners

The PSP has been a powerful tool for promoting evidence-based inclusive practice. When PRT caseworkers are supporting PSP intervention, as is frequently the case, they are able to signpost services and to share best practice. In addition, a bank of high quality PSPs continues to grow as a rich resource. These are redacted and published on the Inclusive Lincolnshire microsite.

LCC's *Inclusion Toolkit* also informs PSP planning. This was produced through collaboration with the psychology service. Enthusiastically received by Headteachers and SENCOs, the Toolkit outlines some key evidence-based interventions for individuals, clearly linked to their presenting vulnerabilities, whilst also offering guidance on the creation of inclusive whole school cultures.

There is within BOSS a universal offer as well as targeted support for pupils 'at risk' and this is all about increasing schools' capacity to meet a diverse range of need. Training can be accessed by any school, whether a pupil is open to BOSS or not. This training offer therefore sits outside the Ladder. To date, BOSS has delivered

81 training sessions for schools during the course of the academic year. These have included sessions on attachment awareness, emotions coaching, restorative approaches, social stories, circle of friends and nurture groups. There has also been extensive support for individual teaching and pastoral staff.

The goal of the service is ultimately to make itself redundant through capacity-building of this type and in all targeted work with pupils at risk there is a strong element of CPD (Continuing Professional Development). This stems from the fact that, whilst the worker creates the behaviour support plan (BIP), school practitioners are involved in its delivery. In this regard, BOSS operates similar to the Working Together Team.

Even on those occasions when the direct work is undertaken by BOSS, thought is given to how this might also develop the skill base and knowledge of school staff. A good recent example is a transition programme delivered to 18 vulnerable Year 6 pupils. Four sessions were delivered prior to the secondary school transition visit and two follow up sessions were delivered afterwards. School staff, who observed the entire cycle, were provided with a copy of the resources and will deliver the programme themselves next year.

2. Conclusion

Significant progress has been made in relation to all of the key indicators identified within the *Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy*. The priority for 2017-18 will be to work with the sector to ensure that secondary exclusions decrease further. This year has seen a consolidation of the progress made when the Strategy was launched in 2015-16. The challenge ahead is to build on that.

3. Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

Not Applicable

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

Not Applicable

4. Background Papers

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy (04/03/2016)	http://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=124&MId=4567&Ver=4
Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy – Six Monthly Update (21/10/2016)	http://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=124&MId=4572&Ver=4

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