



Insight+

INCLUSIVE PRACTICE - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**THE VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE INFORMING
EFFECTIVE APPROACHES FOR SECONDARY
SCHOOLS & THEIR LEARNERS**

Research

Who: 102 interviewees

When: April – August 2021

Where: Derby City

Why: To identify recommendations for change in inclusion approaches, to improve practice and outcomes.

How:

1. Gather information around the educational experiences of young people.
2. Identify the approaches being taken towards inclusion by interviewing key stakeholder representatives.



CURRENT APPROACHES

- Inconsistency – relating to the offers of support available to young people
- Process change - already being undertaken and is in its infancy
- Desire for improvement – every stakeholder was looking for developments and change

FORWARD THINKING

“We need to be able to reject what has been done, just because it’s always been done that way and look at how we truly become inclusive”.



Themes and Recommendations

“In 2021 we are still seeing inconsistency across schools, and this has a profound impact on a young person’s life. And it is getting worse. Where you live and are educated still determines your chances of success and it shouldn’t.”



1. CHALLENGE

- a. Inclusion Advocates
- b. Restorative pathways
- c. Standards for onsite Alternative Provision

2. SUPPORT

- a. Transition mentors
- b. Key Stage 3 provision
- c. Formalised partnerships

3. APPROACH

- a. Quality training
- b. Moving the focus
- c. Transparency of information

CHALLENGE: 1A INCLUSION ADVOCATES

70% OF YOUNG PEOPLE FELT THEY HAD NO OPPORTUNITY TO TALK ABOUT THE CHANGES TO THEIR EDUCATION WITH STAFF AT THEIR SCHOOL

50% OF PARENTS/CARERS FELT THEY HAD ONLY BEEN INFORMED OF ISSUES ONCE THE SITUATION HAD REACHED THE POINT OF EXCLUSION

70% OF YOUNG PEOPLE FELT THAT THEIR THOUGHTS, OPINIONS OR VIEWS WERE NOT LISTENED TO.

JUST 1% OF SINGLE STATUS YOUNG PEOPLE FELT THEY HAD BEEN REALLY LISTENED TO.

“Too many professionals are making decisions that are not explained to the child and their parents in an accessible way.”

“I would have liked to have trusted someone enough to open up to, but I was scared of what people would have thought of me”.

“I didn't really know what was going on at the time”.



INCLUSION ADVOCATES

Senior level personnel to guide young people and their parents/carers through the exclusion processes and challenge and support schools around approaches to inclusion.

The advocate shall be the broker between the young person, family, and the process in which they find themselves – providing a valuable asset and one that would set Derby apart.

personnel who can represent a child's views and be the broker between the young person, family, and the process in which they find themselves – providing a valuable asset and one that would set Derby apart.

CHALLENGE: 1B RESTORATIVE PATHWAYS

66% OF SCHOOLS CITED A NEED FOR TURNAROUND SUPPORT

1% OF LEARNERS WHO HAD SUPPORT, FELT THAT THEY HAD BEEN FULLY INVOLVED IN PLANNING THEIR SUPPORT, UNDERSTOOD WHAT IT WAS AND HOW TO ACCESS IT.

86% ACKNOWLEDGED WHY THEY HAD BEEN EXCLUDED AND HAD DEVELOPED A MATURITY AROUND THIS.

"There is a need to re-educate teachers on consequences (there are more options than exclusions) and look at the presenting issues based on trauma and other influences."

"...I even wrote a letter of apology, and they didn't even read it, just put it on the table..."

"I very much wanted to stay at my previous school, and I would LOVE to return. I had best friends at school, but I don't have friends here"



RESTORATIVE PATHWAYS

Providing a way to address issues and repair damaged relationships and provide closure.

Dual roll registration for all learners placed within a PRU setting (except in extreme circumstances) should be encouraged.

The ability to raise a 'right to return/restore' should be an offer available to all learners, except in the most extreme of circumstances.

A restorative approach would require both student and teacher to identify the ways in which change was needed – each working to improve the situation.

CHALLENGE: 1C STANDARDS FOR ONSITE ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

25% OF SCHOOLS SHARED EXAMPLES OF TURNAROUND SUCCESS VIA ONSITE AP, WHERE LEARNERS WERE ABLE TO RESTORE THEIR MAINSTREAM EDUCATION.

FOR THE MAJORITY OF SCHOOLS, ONSITE AP BECAME A LONGER-TERM PACKAGE.

90% OF PARENTS/CARERS STATED THAT THEY HAD NOT BEEN PART OF DEVELOPING PLANS FOR THEIR CHILD WITH THE SCHOOL - IT WAS A PROCESS 'DONE TO THEM'. LACK OF COMMUNICATION CITED AND INCONSISTENCIES WITH STAFFING.

"...schools have inclusion units, but they are led by non-teaching staff and not specialists".

"It can be difficult to decide who will teach within our AP ...but we have specialists who can and people with varied backgrounds of different key stages."

"But wherever the children are educated, they have the full complement of subjects, support for post 16 transition and specialist teachers leading learning".



STANDARDS FOR ONSITE ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

Managing expectations for onsite provision.

The first standard and of utmost significance is expertise and this means using qualified teachers to educate learners and the wrap-around care being provided by staff with relevant training and expertise.

Use the same staff to teach subjects across the whole school, no matter where the learners are situated.

"Other places offer work packs, one classroom and unqualified staff and are constantly re-branding provision to make it clear they are changing, but little in reality does".

SUPPORT: 2A TRANSITION MENTORS

'RELATIONSHIPS WITH TRUSTED SUPPORT WORKERS THAT CONTINUE BEYOND THE PLACEMENT IN AP CAN HELP YOUNG PEOPLE TO MAKE POSITIVE TRANSITIONS POST-16 WHERE THEIR ENGAGEMENT CAN BE FRAGILE'. – DFE ALTERNATIVE PROVISION: EFFECTIVE PRACTICE AND POST 16 TRANSITION JANUARY 2017

35% OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE NEET AT POST 16 FOR A YEAR, ARE THOSE WHO WERE EXCLUDED IN KEY STAGE 3 OR 4 - PREVENTING NEET IS EASIER THAN MOVING SOMEONE FROM NEET INTO EET.

10% OF PARENTS/CARERS ARE MORE CONCERNED THEIR CHILD MAY BECOME INVOLVED WITH CRIMINAL ACTIVITY.

"...but I don't know what the hell I am doing after May until September, staff say different things and its confusing..."

"I had someone I could go to when I was getting angry and stuff, but then she left and then the other teacher left, and when I was angry, I couldn't go to that teacher cause she was gone and then I had no one".



TRANSITION MENTORS

Supporting young people to develop the resilience to succeed within the post 16 landscape.

There should be a shared responsibility and funding framework for this piece of work.

Transition Mentors would work alongside Careers Leaders, on-site AP and city wide AP's to support young people to identify, secure and sustain progressions.

SUPPORT: 2B KEY STAGE 3 PROVISION

66% OF SCHOOLS CITED THE NEED FOR 'TURNAROUND' PROVISION AT KEY STAGE 3.

87% OF HEADTEACHERS FELT WORK AROUND BOUNDARIES AND RULES WAS NEEDED.

75% OF HEADS DISCUSSED THE DEPENDENCY ON DIAGNOSIS TO ACCESS MORE SPECIALIST SUPPORT AND DESCRIBED THE PROCESS AS 'BUREAUCRATIC', 'PAINFUL', 'SLOW' AND 'FAILING'.

"I have students who need 'turnaround' provision for 6-12 weeks and the ability to reintegrate after that – where is this?"

"We all need A/P at KS3 – that can turn a child around and get back into mainstream – need cost effective solutions".



KEY STAGE 3 PROVISION

Key Stage 3 Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) provision: specialist provision for schools to support those in need.

Capacity issues within Local Authority were viewed to be preventing young people from getting the 'right support at the right time' and the dependency on an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), was raised continuously.

Derby is in need of a Key Stage 3 offer and to look at more evidence based thresholds to access support, prior to a formal assessment taking place.

SUPPORT: 2C FORMALISED PARTNERSHIPS

"We are often the best informed, but don't have the strongest voice amongst the services".

"...it would be good for people like me, who support the family, to know what the plan is, why it is happening in this way and then I can support it".

"There is a need for real community level work – this needs looking at – issues in schools are not separate from those in communities".

"I have a responsibility that is wider than the school gates"

"VCS organisations provide stability to families and this helps keep children in schools. They are community based and know the areas and issues... every service needs to be valued as highly as another".



FORMALISED PARTNERSHIPS

Between all key agencies: supporting the community and voluntary sector to have a voice and be heard. A respectful way of working.

Consideration around formalising a cross cutting partnership of services is advised; providing equitable input to meetings and making a considered list of who should be present for discussing/reviewing cases. This presents an opportunity to provide an equity of representation within networks.

APPROACH: 3A QUALITY TRAINING

100% OF SCHOOLS INTERVIEWED MADE STATEMENTS AROUND THEIR WILLINGNESS TO SHARE THEIR EXPERTISE, LEARN FROM OTHERS OR BOTH.

"There needs to be a celebration of schools where we can visit and look and learn from what each other is doing and have eyes opened to the possibilities and be ready to accept that others may have a better approach. There is so much to learn from each other".

"...more inclusion for the classroom – so that any learner can step into any classroom and access the lesson fully".

"I felt that every teacher hated me at school. I could have had a lot more support offered and I would have liked that".



QUALITY TRAINING

Sharing expertise & identifying talent – share skills to develop others, identify gaps and engage with specialists.

Adopting a shared vision of inclusion by establishing a 'shared language charter'.

The skills of the city AP staff could be utilised further, aiding not just skills development, but also an awareness and respect for the PRU provision itself.

The city is encouraged to look further at sharing expertise – identify great staff – teaching and non-teaching - showcase talent and use the voice of young people within this.

'Celebrate Success and Address the Rest'.

APPROACH: 3B MOVING THE FOCUS

As outlined in the 2018 study by the Department for Education, 'Investigative research into alternative provision', schools are using one of two approaches:

- i) change or support the child, or
- ii) change the school environment to minimise behaviours that can lead to exclusion.

The majority of schools within the city fell into the first category; the focus was ultimately on changing the child and not on changing the existing classroom practice.

"I was put in a room one to one for a whole year and I got used to it, so wasn't great at mixing with people then".

"A young person who has had 5 moves – this young person's view on their education has never been captured".

"They [school] saw me as a naughty kid and didn't talk to me as a person and then any lessons I would just get detentions".

"We could issue FTE for behaviours here, but what good does it do having a young person at risk supposedly at home, but in reality out in the community – they are better staying here, on site and we can look further at the situation and find out more".



MOVING THE FOCUS

Look at changing practice, not just the young person.

The proposal is that by changing some of the approaches taken within a teaching environment, through training and development, there would be less dependency on other strategies, and these would be reserved for those most in need.

By working to remove barriers for one learner, inadvertently other students may benefit, for whom concerns were not initially the focus.

APPROACH: 3C TRANSPARENCY OF INFORMATION

92% OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS RAISED THE LACK OF TRANSPARENT INFORMATION BEING PROVIDED AS A CHALLENGE.

Parents/carers expressed exasperation that key information had not been shared, and many felt ill equipped to do this themselves as they couldn't understand how to or didn't feel able.

10% OF PARENTS/CARERS WERE CONCERNED THAT THEY DON'T KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT HOW THEIR CHILD IS DOING ACADEMICALLY.

"Primaries wrapping them up for their primary experience and then letting them head into a large school knowing they won't cope; we are not always prepared"

"...just the number of roles and services out there – so many and all with different processes and systems and sometimes to see the differences is hard..."



TRANSPARENCY OF INFORMATION

Be open and prepare others to aid the success of the learner.

Information sharing at any point of transition is crucial if a school is to succeed in supporting a child.

The transition portal for year 6-7 must inform; allowing for more needs to be discussed prior to moving, enabling time to be spent on preparation. Otherwise, children who could have, with some support, succeeded, will require more intensive input at a higher cost – financially and emotionally - than would have been needed with the knowledge exchange.

Alternative Provision must also inform parent/carers about students' academic progress as well as behaviour.

INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION
MAKING

70%

**of young people felt they had NO OPPORTUNITY TO
TALK ABOUT THE CHANGES to their education
with staff at their school.**

INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING

90%

**of parents/carers stated that they had not been
part of developing plans for their child with the
mainstream school.**

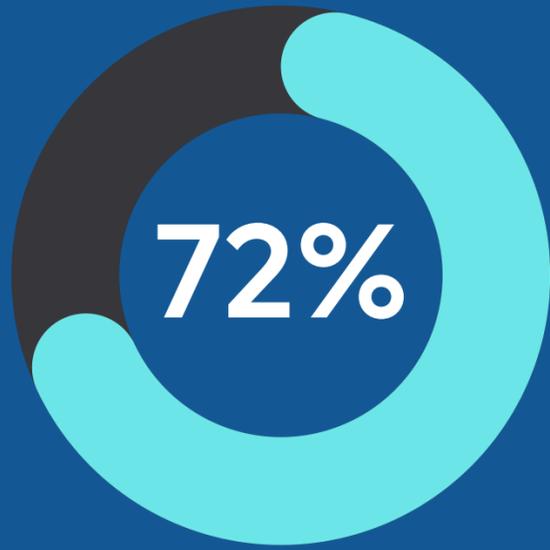
It was a process 'done to them'.



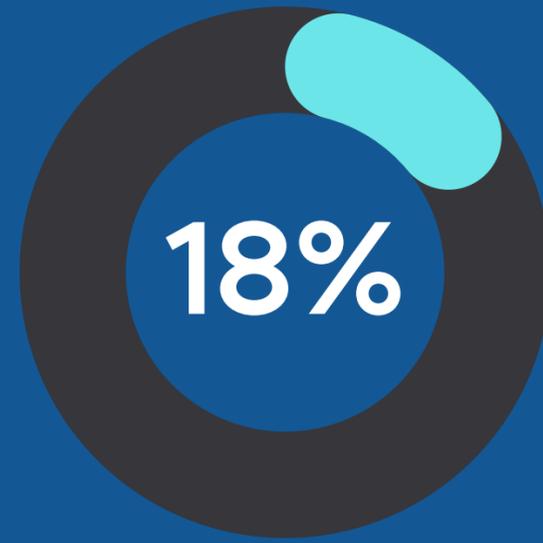
of AP young people felt that their experience of settling into the setting was positive



of parents / carers felt that the new provider (Kingsmead / Derby Pride Academy) has had a positive impact for their child



OF SINGLE STATUS
LEARNERS HAD LEFT OUT-
OF-SCHOOL ACTIVITY
CLUBS AS A RESULT OF
ATTENDING ALTERNATIVE
PROVISION



OF LEARNERS FELT THE
LACK OF FREINDSHIPS
IMPACTED SETTLING
INTO THEIR
ALTERNATIVE
PROVISION

'Having one good friend helps a sense of belonging and is a positive indicator for mental well-being. When a pupil moves to a new class/school, making a friend in the first month is a best predictor for later success'

(Allen, K. and Boyle, C. (2018) Pathways to belonging. Contemporary research in school belonging, Leiden: Brill Sense)

"I HAD MATES AT MY SCHOOL, STILL DO, BUT DON'T HAVE ANY REALLY GOOD ONES HERE".

"I HAVE ACQUAINTANCES IN THIS SCHOOL, NOT FRIENDS".

"I DON'T REALLY FEEL LIKE I BELONG ANYWHERE".

NEXT STEPS:

1. Refer to the full report
2. Consider the recommendations
3. Review the action plan within the report

+ Additional information for consideration:
'In Their Words'

A document that amplifies the voice of the young people interviewed and is provided as supporting evidence.

ACTION PLAN - CHALLENGE PROVIDING RIGOUR TO THE PROCESS IN PLACE

Recommendation	Input	Impact	Timescale	Responsibility
Inclusion Advocates (Secondary specialist)	IA involved in exclusion cases alongside the 'In Year Fair Access and Exclusions Manager' (YFA&EM) to actively support families and transition.	<p>Process of exclusion held to account – ensuring rigour</p> <p>Process is accessible for young people and parents/carers</p> <p>Considered and supportive processes in place</p> <p>More stable placements</p> <p>Appropriate use of city wide PRU provision</p>	Recruited for July 2022, induction and then commence September 2022	To sit within Education and Skills – managed by YFA&EM
Restorative Pathways	<p>All young people to be dual registered</p> <p>Young people have a 'right to return/restore' mainstream education</p> <p>Schools undertake audit of practice & approaches - preparation to restore education</p> <p>Compliment Early Help pilot around transitions back to mainstream from AP</p>	<p>Reduces feelings of rejection and retains families onboard</p> <p>Young people more engaged with the process</p> <p>School more likely to be able to stabilise learners and reduce Permanent Exclusions</p> <p>Additional resource for reintegration</p> <p>Appropriate use of city wide PRU provision and capacity available</p>	September 2022 - pilot phase with 12 learners to be initiated	<p>To work alongside the Fresh Start and Fresh Start Plus process</p> <p>Early Help offer and Inclusion Advocates to support</p>

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On-Site Alternative Provision Standards	<p>(+ Consider AP review)</p> <p>LA to identify an appropriate audit tool around on-site AP.</p> <p>Seek pilot schools to self audit provision.</p> <p>Schools to be issued with a self-audit toolkit: how is the AP viewed What is provided Who are the delivery team Identify gaps</p> <p>Develop an action plan with the LA.</p> <p>Share learning with all secondary schools and develop cross city approaches.</p>	<p>LA has a clearer understanding of what the Derby offer is.</p> <p>Schools are confident in their offer and it is part of the 'whole' school.</p> <p>Young people and parents feel confident in the offer.</p> <p>Staff across school more engaged with inclusion and approaches.</p> <p>Learners have a robust and equitable offer to their peers.</p> <p>Improved onsite provision</p> <p>More schools able to support students through Fresh Start and Fresh Start Plus, less dependency on a few schools and ease dependency on city wide PRU provision</p>	<p>Preparatory work January 2022 to commence audit</p> <p>September 2022 standard launched</p>	<p>Secondary Strategy Group appoint lead.</p> <p>Review self-audit with schools and conduct audit and support schools to implement standards.</p> <p>+ Early Help team</p>
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'IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IS NOT ABOUT INCREASING EDUCATION BUDGETS; BUT ABOUT SYSTEMATIC AND SUSTAINED TRANSFORMATION OF EDUCATION DESIGN, CULTURES AND VALUES'
(SCHUELKA, 2018: 7)

Thank you to all 102 individuals who consented to be a part of this research and who were generous in the provision of their time to be interviewed. Including:

- Voluntary and Community Organisations
- Secondary School leaders
- Support services
- Local Authority representatives

Special thanks are extended to:

- Derby Pride Academy & The Kingsmead School for facilitating access to their learners.
- All the young people themselves for being so open and honest regarding their personal journeys.
- Their parents and carers for sharing their own experiences.

'As educators we must be proactive in seeking out the knowledge and skills to enable every one of our students to be successful learners. I believe that when one child fails to learn, it may have a small impact on a school, but it represents 100% failure for that child and is unacceptable'. (Hattie, 2016: 2019)





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