

# **District Inclusion Partnerships (DIPs)**

**and**

## **Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)**

### **Briefing paper**

**March 2009**

#### Related documents

Back on Track (2 documents) DCSF

District Inclusion Partnerships (Alison Greenwood)

Behaviour and Attendance Strategy (DCSF link to Partnerships guidance)

Steer Report February 2009 - Alan Steer

Strategy for Change Part 1 (Staffordshire County Council March 2009)

Draft Policy to support Pupils Educated in PRUs (AG)

Management Committees Roles and Responsibilities (DCSF)

Progress since September 2006 (Alison Greenwood, Education Inclusion Manager)

- Pathfinder LA : contributed to DCSF developments prior to Back on Track publication.
- School Partnerships - there are 8 fully functioning School Partnerships (will be mandatory from September 2009).
- Data re attainment - DCSF collecting from January 2009 - we have data ready for collection.
- Alternative Provision - contracts / SLAs / QA - commissioning group formed. All contracts / SLAs with Alternative Providers are being reviewed.
- 4 Inclusion Officers - line managed by Education Inclusion Manager. Undergoing training and development re inclusion and education. Awareness raising sessions carried out so far. Fixed term exclusion data analysis and restorative justice.
- Permanent exclusion data - permanent exclusions have dropped significantly and remain below the national average.
- Fixed term exclusion project - led by Sandra Swift (SENS) has produced detailed analysis of data and provided each district with their own analysis to inform developments and target setting in line with Behaviour and Attendance Design Principle 5.
- Attendance - data collected / Tamworth Project.
- Devolved budget - budget devolved to Partnerships for third year. Increasing responsibility being taken by schools re inclusion. Many examples of good practice. AWPU from schools go to PRU or DIP.
- Tuition service - successfully incorporated into PRU management in 4 districts. Other PRUs are in the process of taking over responsibility.
- Generic database for all DIPs has been developed and is being piloted in 2 districts. This will ensure that data for each DIP can be accessed centrally more easily.
- Stafford PRU in the last 33 for DCSF Pilot Back on Track bid out of 150 submissions. We were unsuccessful unfortunately but was an achievement to get into final cohort.
- Established Management Committees - this work was carried out by Nick Daws - SID and DCSF guidance was used. The Chairs of the Management Committees are also the Chairs of the DIPs
- Strong links with SID re Partnerships and PRU issues.
- Negotiation with NACRO Regional Manager re alternative provision and changes to current contract.
- PRUs to be in first roll out for Learning Platforms.
- PRUs to have EMS / ONE system for improved data sharing.
- 'Information passport' (ref Back on Track) in place for referral into DIPs. Will need more development when final guidance is produced.
- Management Move Protocol established - data is good.

- Fair Access Protocol established and working - data is good only 4 schools had to be directed in 2 years out of 22 referrals to Fair Access Protocol.
- Strong link with Admissions Department.
- Invited to speak at conferences re Staffordshire model February 2009.
- Links with Connexions re outcomes - further development needed.
- PRU premises - new premises for 2 PRUs seeking a third in line with DCSF guidance re premises for PRUs.
- Successful process in place for CIPC - instant access to education, eg Shaping Futures, Westmorland Avenue, The Alders.
- All high / middle schools part of a committed partnership, eg examples from e-mails from heads.
- All DIPs chaired by Head or Deputy, minuted and database.
- Improved recording of provision via PRUs and Inclusion Officers.
- New SIP - challenging PRUs and link with Inclusion Manager.
- Part of Lynda M work on LSUs - Wolgarston / South Staffs.
- Chairs of DIPs meet regularly to discuss inclusion issues and manage devolved budget.
- Continued work re evaluating all Alternative Providers commissioned by DIPs. Met all managers re issues raised by DIPs.
- Visits to new Alternative Providers - ongoing discussions re commissioning alternatives re BSF / PRU agenda.

In considering those pupils who are being educated other than at school, responsibilities placed on Staffordshire County Council as a Local Authority are laid down in Section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996:-

“Each Local Education Authority shall make arrangements for the provision of suitable full time or part time education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them”.

‘Suitable education’ may be provided by a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) defined in Section 19(2) as:-

“a school established ... and maintained by a Local Education Authority which:-

- (a) is specially organised to provide education for such children; and
- (b) is not a county school or special school”.

Staffordshire has 6 PRUs

<b>PRU</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>HT</b>	<b>Chair of Management Committee</b>	<b>OFSTED grading</b>	<b>Note</b>
CEDARS	Newcastle / Moorlands linked regional Stoke base for CAMHS	Mike Fenton	Mark Heuston, HT Clayton High	Good with outstanding leadership	Successful relocation to Knutton
Stowe	Lichfield	Sue Kulas	Eric Lunt, Deputy HT King Edward's Lichfield	Satisfactory	Planned closure of Stowe site. Relocation upon vacated Rocklands site - Easter 2010. New HT commenced Sept 2009
Chaselea	Cannock two bases one at Cannock Y/C one at Aelfgar	Pauline Bury	Chris Hilton, HT Kingsmead	Good	Recent OFSTED
Kettlebrook	Tamworth	Kirsty Rogers	Stuart Tonks, HT Wilnecote	Satisfactory	Staffordshire have a core group supporting this PRU and new head
Burton	Burton 3 bases	Gareth Caldwell	Tony Downey, HT Robert Sutton	Outsatnding Leadership and out of Special Measures	New appointment commenced Sept 08. Came out of Special Measures within 12 months with outstanding leadership
Stafford	1 base in Stafford outreach base being established at Wightwick for South Staffs	Jane Spensley	Phil Smith, HT Blessed William Howard	Good with outstanding leadership	New head took this PRU out of Special Measures quickly

Each PRU is integrally linked to the District Inclusion Partnerships.

<b>District</b>	<b>Chaired by</b>	<b>PRU</b>
Stafford	Dr Rowena Blencowe HT Stafford Sports College	Stafford
South Staffs	Christine Brown, HT Ounsdale	Stafford
Cannock	Michael Astley/Tracey White ASSISTANT hEADS Hagley Park/Cannock Chase	Chaselea
Lichfield	John Edwards, HT Queenscroft	Stowe
East Staffs	Christine Burns, Deputy HT John Taylor	ARC (Burton)
Tamworth	Stuart Tonks, HT Wilnecote	Kettlebrook
Newcastle	Lyn Jackson, HT Chesterton	CEDARS
Moorlands	Ian Hamilton Westwood College	CEDARS

## **Paper re Behaviour and Attendance Policy Group: LA support and challenge to District Inclusion Partnerships (DIPs) and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)**

1. The message from the National Strategies PRU school improvement partners (SIPs) and SIP managers' conference of the 11 February 2009 was that the DCFS and OFSTED have an expectation that students referred by DIPs to PRUs will make at least expected progress and quickly return to mainstream. Also that most students will attain outcomes in line with national expectations for their age. This is in line with the white paper 'Back on Track' of May 2008 and the Steer Report of February 2009.
2. This paper reflects on current developments in PRUs and DIPs and makes recommendations as to how the LA might help further promote improvements consistent with the national drivers indicated above. The action plan within Alison Greenwood's 'District Inclusion Partnership (DIPs) and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) Briefing paper' March 2009 identifies objectives which link with the recommendations in this paper.
3. The Steer Interim Report 4 on behaviour and attendance, of the 6 February 2009, is in 3 sections.
  - (a) how school behaviour and attendance partnerships might be developed so as to maximise their effectiveness;
  - (b) the impact on pupil behaviour of consistently applied school policies on learning and teaching; and
  - (c) the links between behavioural standards, special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

### **Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships**

4. The first section in the Report thus considers the role of what Steer calls behaviour and attendance partnerships, which in Staffordshire we call District Inclusion Partnerships (DIPs). The Report, para 13, notes:

Generally these partnerships are relatively recent in existence and therefore are embryonic in nature. It is clear that at present there is a great variation in practice
5. We believe that the LA guidance to DIPs has anticipated many of the recommendations in Steer and that the DIPs operate close to the model envisaged by Steer as good practice. For example the District Inclusion Partnerships Policy document states that DIPs should operate in line with the 5 (National Strategy), design principles, see Appendix 1 of this document. The Steer Report also makes this recommendation, with the reservation that the principles will need to be revised in the future to include the partnership wider role in commissioning extended services. Nevertheless, the importance of the five principles as they currently exist is highlighted by them being restated in appendix 1 of the Report.
6. Steer para 16 notes:

Partnerships currently tend to concentrate on behaviour, rather than behaviour and attendance issues. There also appears to be little focus on staff training.
7. From LA officer membership of PRU management committees and LA strategic core groups supporting PRUs we know that attendance is increasingly an important item on their agendas. This is especially so for monitoring the performance of students receiving alternative provision outside of the PRU. Both Burton and Kettlebrook PRUs employ a member of staff whose

prime role is to monitor the attendance of students on alternative education programmes provided by private training organisations or the college. CEDARS and Chaselea PRUs ensures that students receiving external provider services have their attendance and punctuality closely monitored within established welfare support systems. In respect of training, at least 3 DIPs and PRUs, Burton, Kettlebrook and Chaselea, are providing mainstream teacher buddies to teachers in PRUs. A subject leader from Abbot Beyne High has provided training to staff at Burton PRU on cross curricular literacy. The head of Chaselea PRU has provided training on behaviour for learning to current NQTs at Kingsmead High School and will offer, at the secondary heads district meeting, to provide whole school staff training to secondary schools in the district.

8. Thus, there is evidence that DIPs are already addressing weaknesses identified by Steer. Causal factors have included the encouragement and strategic guidance provided by the LA. The LA therefore, is arguably well positioned to continue to provide DIPs with the strategic support required towards them more fulfilling a more comprehensive future role envisaged by Steer.

Working together, schools can share good practice, particularly in the area of staff training. They can also explore the possibility of making joint staff appointments, or jointly buying in specialist services where individual institutions would find this prohibitive. Sharing a school counsellor, or a parent support adviser, schools can extend the range of support they can offer children and families to the benefit of everyone. I believe that such actions are in full accord with current policy on school workforce reform.

9. Para 17 identifies existing good practice:

. . . . where partnerships are working well there are some common factors that have made them successful.

- The existence of trust among the head teachers involved and their acceptance of a responsibility to contribute to the well being of all children in the community.
- The ability of partnership members to challenge each other.
- A sense of ownership of the partnership by the schools involved.
- A commitment by the schools to personalise their provision and their practices to prevent unnecessary school exclusions.
- Close working relationships with other agencies, local behaviour support teams and the police.
- The presence of external support and facilitation. The importance of there being external support for the partnership cannot be over estimated. The best partnerships had consistent high quality support from Local Authority and National Strategy consultants who worked with the head teachers to set the agenda, provide critical challenge and link the partnership with other local agencies.
- Intelligent use of data to identify need and to influence practice.
- Clear structures and practices that are transparent and accepted as equitable by all members of the partnership.
- Joint partnership decision making on the use of funding related to partnership working.

10. As already stated, we believe that the District Inclusion Partnerships Policy paper of June 2008 makes a strong contribution to providing that framework for 'clear structures and practices' called for by Steer. To ensure that the features of good practice identified above underpin the practice of DIPs we recommend that the performance of the DIPs be monitored against the self review framework which forms appendix 1 of the District Inclusion Partnerships Policy paper. Steer asserts that the partnerships themselves are best positioned to do this. However, the moderation of an LA officer would provide support and help ensure that the evidence underpinning judgements was consistent across the DIPs in Staffordshire. The LA officer would provide the necessary support and 'critical challenge'. The LA should ensure each DIP secures comprehensive data on students to enable (i) baselining and target setting and then (ii) tracking of their progress. The DIP should therefore require of alternative providers and the PRU half termly monitoring reports of students' progress to enable the DIP to monitor of the effectiveness of any provision it has commissioned.
11. Clarity and consistency in their operation and in the evaluation practices of their provision would position DIPs for a further step in their development envisaged by Steer in para 24:

... the work of the Behaviour and Attendance partnerships should contribute to the local Children and Young People's Plan and ... this plan should identify how the Trust will support the partnership. To enable this to take place the Behaviour and Attendance partnership should report annually to the Children's Trust Board. This would support accountability, enable the spread of good practice and guide the strategic thinking of the Children's Trust.
12. There are already tentative moves towards representation of at least one PRU management committee, Chaselea, on their district Children's Trust Board. This has been facilitated by a district partnership officer, Graham Hunt, who is a member of the management committee.
13. Steer envisages that behaviour and attendance partnerships will have an increasing role in managing the support to, and being accountable for, the welfare and progress of vulnerable learners. The Report, para 24, states for example that:

The partnerships in future will wish to be making staff appointments and commissioning services from external suppliers. They will be undertaking tasks previously performed by the Local Authority, or other organisations. They will need to participate in a clear and 'light touch' accountability system. For these and other reasons partnerships will need to have a formal position within the education system.
14. Involvement in their District Children's Trust may enable the DIPs to commission support from a wider range of external agencies enabling them to better meet the more complex needs of some students.
15. Steer recommends that in time, for greatest coherence and efficiency, behaviour and attendance partnerships should amalgamate with co-existing local school partnerships such as 14-19. The children's trust should be the body to which a schools' partnership reports, and that the children and young people's plan (CYPP) should guide its work and evaluation.
16. The scenario of the paragraph above may be brought about impending legislation. However, in preparing DIPs for their possible future role the behaviour and attendance group may wish to consider how the LA could help foster initial development of district children's trust - DIP/PRU partnerships through thorough monitoring and analysis of DIPs' current practice. This would provide clear information to decision makers formulating the strategy for the closer working of DIPs with their Children's Trust Board within the CYPP, provide a baseline for the DIPs negotiate future performance targets with their Children's Trust Boards, and help ensure that there is a consistency in DIP procedures and sharing of good practice across the

county, (see recommendations of paras 29 and 30 below). The approach would be consistent with OFSTED guidance that LAs should:

... evaluate and take full account of the impact of provision and services on the outcomes for children and young people before any strategic reorganisation of services  
(OFSTED 2006 *Inclusion: does it matter where pupils are taught?* Page 4)

## Learning, Teaching and Behaviour

17. The second 'interconnected' section of the Steer Report considers the role of teaching and learning in schools to best promote good behaviour and attendance. Steer notes that the 2008 Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education states:

The quality of teaching and learning is a crucial influence on behaviour. For example, in most of the secondary schools in which behaviour is inadequate, teaching and learning are also inadequate, with inconsistent management of behaviour as a contributory factor. In the secondary schools where behaviour is outstanding, teaching is almost always good, or outstanding.

18. The comments that Steer makes in respect of schools promoting behaviour for learning apply equally well, of course, to PRUs.
19. All PRUs were provided with a school improvement partner (SIP), Dave Smith, from September 2008. A focus on teaching and learning is always within the termly (SIP) discussion with headteachers. Consistent with Steer's recommendation that schools should have a written policy on learning and teaching, the SIP has helped senior leadership teams (SLTs) to frame their strategy for improvement of teaching and learning in strategic documents such as the school development plans (SDP) and self evaluation forms (SEF). The SIP provides expert evaluation of the progress that PRUs are making in respect of implementing improvements to teaching and learning. His termly reports on each PRU's developments are forwarded to the LA and to the chair of the management committee. The SIP reports may also identify where the PRU needs external support. These enable the LA to include PRUs in plans for deployment of school improvement resources such as education improvement professionals (EIPs), National Strategy subject consultants, advanced skills teachers, (ASTs), etc.
20. In supporting PRUs which have gone into a category, or which have been judged to be vulnerable, the LA has focused on improving teaching and learning through providing subject support consultants, advisers and (ASTs), and support from an (EIP) to PRU SLTs in monitoring the impact of provision. An LA strategic core group is set up chaired by the district strategic improvement manager (DSIM) and includes the headteacher, EIP, and chair of management committee. It meets half termly to monitor the impact that external support is having in relation to an action plan drawn up by the LA. The core group liaises closely with the PRU's management committee.
21. Each PRU has a management committee constituted in line with national guidance. Members include a parent representative, the headteacher, an LA representative, and community members which may include a headteacher of a district secondary school who may also chair the DIP, representative from connexions, the youth service, district partnership board, 14-19 district panel.
22. Thus each PRU benefits from challenge and support from a management committee of key stakeholders, a SIP and the LA. This enables the PRU to operate an effective service for the DIP.

23. To get best value from arrangements we recommend that the LA provides the SIP with a clear guide to the main agenda for each term's meetings with PRUs so that a common core of issues is addressed which drive the Staffordshire agenda for improvement of teaching, learning and assessment in all of the PRUs.
24. Steer recommends that each school has a teaching and learning policy which embraces developments such as social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) and assessment for learning, (AfL). Para 40 states:

Where schools have most successfully developed high standards of learning and teaching their policy documents have included at least the following expectations.

- Consistent practice in pupil assessment to ensure effective teacher-pupil communication.
- The engagement of pupils in the assessment of their work.
- Consistent practice in classroom management strategies.
- The use of data to monitor individual learning progress and initiate intervention where necessary.

25. Many Staffordshire PRUs regularly acquire information on students' attitudes to learning and their level of attainment in core subjects through the use of PASS and GOAL. They use SIMMS assessment manager to record data and analyse students' progress. PRUs such as Burton and Kettlebrook are currently in an initial phase of implementing AfL strategies which engage students in their assessment. Thus, current developments in PRUs' teaching and learning practices reflect the expectations indicated in para 40 of the Report above.
26. One of the National Strategies design principles discussed in para 5 above, namely

The educational, personal development and welfare needs of pupils are identified early and assessed before the partnership arranges additional support as a co-ordinated package and monitors progress towards agreed educational objectives

indicates that a DIP has an important role to play in providing the PRU with baseline information with each student that they refer to their PRU. This information should enable the PRU to quickly provide a personalised curriculum and learning pathway for students. The protocol in the District Inclusion Partnerships Policy paper of June 2008 explicitly states what information schools should provide to the PRU via the DIP. HMI monitoring of Burton PRU stated categorically that this expectation on schools from the LA should be 'non negotiable'. We therefore recommend that the LA more closely monitors DIPs' practice to ensure schools comply with the protocol in all cases. We further recommend that the 'agreed educational objectives' should include an *exit strategy* and a *learning pathway*.

27. The exit strategy, for students on dual roll with a school as well as for those on single role to the PRU, should state when, and to which school, the student will return to continue full time mainstream schooling. This should typically be no later than two terms. The learning pathway should indicate the provision and progress the student is expected to make so that s/he can successfully return to school. Burton PRU has developed learning pathways for its students which have been judged 'innovative' by monitoring HMI. In working with the DIP to successfully support students back into mainstream provision the PRU will support the DIP in fulfilling a second of the National Strategy criteria:

Schools agree local targets to meet required outcomes and the partnership manages its own performance and processes.

28. It is unlawful for DIPs to refer students with a statement of SEN to their PRU as a permanent destination. HMI monitoring of Burton PRU emphasised that the PRU should not accept students with a statement of SEN. In respect of other students who are on the SEN register but who are not statemented Steer recommends in para 85 that:

.. local authorities ensure they have an appropriate range of provision for addressing the full range of SEN arising in their area, so that children with SEN do not find themselves spending unnecessarily long periods of time in PRUs, when they would benefit more from an appropriate placement in either a special school or a specialist unit in a mainstream school.

We recommend therefore that the LA, as part of its monitoring of DIP practice recommended in para 15 above, conducts an audit of provision for students with SEN and of all alternative provision in each district. This could provide a county wide menu of alternative provision matched to the full spectrum of student learning needs. This would be a resource for all DIPs to help them in commissioning the mix of provision for their vulnerable learners and it could facilitate cross district DIP partnerships.

29. There is a national database of Providers of Alternative Provision<sup>1</sup>. However, the DCSF states that inclusion on the register does not constitute a mark of quality assurance or endorsement. Inclusion on the register is not, therefore, an indication that DCSF has 'approved' a provider or the provision it offers. The LA will only want to recommend alternative provision to DIPs that it is confident meets quality assurance standards; for example, that all provision leads to a nationally recognised qualification. Recent , (October 2008), DCFS guidance<sup>2</sup> is clear on this point:

the local authority remains accountable for the quality of education and should, therefore, satisfy themselves that the quality of provision is of high standard and should establish robust systems to monitor the arrangements on an on-going basis.

30. Importantly therefore, the review should evaluate provision by private trainers and colleges. We further recommend that the review of provision includes the curriculum and teaching in PRUs to help complete the picture of provision for vulnerable learners. The audit would consider curriculum offer, learning pathways provided, and teaching and learning strategies. It would complement the SIP analysis of PRU performance and would further clarify the support that the LA should provide both PRUs and DIPs to promote action on priorities for development.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschol/alternativeprovision/>

<sup>2</sup> Guidance for Local Authorities and Schools - PRUs and Alternative Provision

<http://publicitions.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00758-2008>





## Steer Recommendations

1. The status of Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships and their relationship to the Children's Trust should be clarified so that there is clear accountability and so that in each area the partnerships contribute to the Children and Young People's Plan and are supported effectively by other children's services. The Behaviour and Attendance Partnership should report annually to the Children's Trust Board.
2. To support the further development of the Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships, the existing guidance should be reviewed so that it sets out clearly the key characteristics one would expect to find in all partnership arrangements.
  - (a) The active engagement of all member schools and other bodies within the partnership reflecting their ownership of the partnership.
  - (b) The inclusion within the partnership of the local Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), or PRUs if they exist, together with other major providers of Alternative Provision.
  - (c) Engagement of the partnership with primary schools and further education.
  - (d) Alignment of the Behaviour and Attendance Partnership with the local Safer School Partnership. There should be full engagement with the police so that each partnership has at least one allocated SSP officer. It is crucial that police forces make this support available.
  - (e) Engagement with extended services.
  - (f) Clear protocols for pupil managed moves and for the placement of 'hard to place' pupils. These protocols to be operated by all members of the partnership. Guidance to schools should detail the legal rights of partners.
  - (g) A focus on behaviour and attendance and on effective early intervention.
  - (h) The use of 'pooled' resources to enable the partnership to buy in specialist support.
  - (i) The transparent use of data so that the partnership can monitor its performance and identify strategic objectives.
  - (j) A staff training programme related to Behaviour and Attendance.
3. All existing school partnership arrangements should be reviewed by their members in consultation with the Children's Trust so as to create greater coherence, increase effectiveness and reduce bureaucratic workload.
4. Guidance should be issued to schools on best practice when operating managed moves.
5. The Building Schools for the Future programme needs to take more account of the need to provide schools with the space and accommodation they need to offer partnership extended services.
6. The National Strategies should be asked to consider how best they could act as facilitators in promoting partnership working between schools on behaviour and attendance issues, including helping the partnerships to raise standards of training and to extend the range of support available.
7. Consultations on how to most effectively implement these recommendations should take place with all the professional associations and other stakeholders.