

Report to:	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	26 April 2018
Lead Member/Officer:	Lead Member for Education, Children and Young People/ Head of Education and Children's Services
Report Author:	Principal Education Manager
Title:	Behaviour Management in Denbighshire Schools

1. What is the report about?

This report summarises the trends in permanent and fixed term exclusions from 2015-16 academic year. It also includes the latest available national statistical data from the 2015/16 academic year. The Welsh Government (WG) will publish 2016/17 exclusions data in July 2018.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

Determination if the problem of short term exclusions is confined to certain schools and if so the reasons behind this in order to improve performance and ensure that the county's pupils are supported to achieve their potential, gaining the right skills to thrive.

3. What are the Recommendations?

Scrutinise and comment on the information contained within this report.

4. Exclusion rates 2015-17

Reducing both permanent and fixed term exclusions is a key priority for Education and Children's Services to ensure improved education provision and outcomes for all children and young people in Denbighshire. All secondary schools use similar behaviour policies with consistent sanctions. A decision to exclude a learner should be taken only:

- in response to serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and
- if allowing the learner to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the learner or others in the school.

Permanent exclusions from maintained schools and referral units.

The percentage of pupils permanently excluded from Denbighshire schools and referral unit in 2015-16 was 0% which is the same as the previous 3 years and is below the North Wales and Welsh averages of 0.2 %. Denbighshire is ranked equal 1st in Wales and North Wales for this indicator in 2015-16

Fixed-term exclusions (5 days or less) from maintained schools and pupil referral units.

Denbighshire had the highest rate of fixed-term exclusions of 5 days or less in 2015-16 at 69.3 in Wales (Rate per 1000 pupils). This has increased significantly during the last three years from 31.3 in 2012-13. If schools have to exclude pupils they are encouraged to use short term exclusions of less than 5 days rather than exclusions over 5 days as these have a detrimental impact on pupils learning.

Gwynedd had the lowest rate of fixed-term exclusions of 5 days or less in 2015-16 at 20.9, the Wales average is 30.9. Caution should be taken when comparing differences in exclusions between local authorities. Differences in behaviour management practices in local authorities can affect their number and rate of exclusions. (Appendix 1)

Fixed-term exclusions over 5 days from maintained schools and pupil referral units.

There were 0.9 per 1000 pupils fixed term exclusions from Denbighshire schools in 2015-16, this has decreased from 1.6 in 2014-15. This is also below the North Wales (2.2) and Welsh averages (1.4).

Rates of fixed-term exclusions over 5 days from maintained schools were highest in North Wales. Rates of fixed-term exclusions over 5 days are lowest in Ceredigion (0), and highest in Conwy (2.5).

Caution should also be taken when comparing differences in exclusions between local authorities. Differences in behaviour management practices in local authorities can affect their number and rate of exclusions. Caution should also be taken when comparing 2015/16 to previous years as this is the first year that pupil referral units have been included in the figures. (Appendix 2 and 3)

Behaviour Support Service (BSS)

The core purpose of the service is to assist and advise schools in the effective management and support of children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The recent Estyn inspection of the LA judged the behaviour service to be good. The service provides a highly skilled, flexible team who can respond quickly to a school's need for support and intervention. The core purpose is delivered through:

- quick and effective specialist support and interventions delivered in school for pupils (1:1 and small groups)
- advice and training in a variety of forms to school staff on strategies and interventions to support pupils
- Supporting with reintegration following placement at the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) -handover of strategies and follow up visits/outreach support to measure whether there is a sustained impact.
- Support with transition from Primary to Secondary school.

Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)

Denbighshire's Pupil Referral Unit is registered as Ysgol Plas Cefndy. The main site is based at Ysgol Plas Cefndy in Rhyl with a primary satellite provision at Ysgol Brynhyfryd in Ruthin. The PRU offers a variety of specialist provision for children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, from Key Stages 1-4. Children referred for a placement must be known to the service through the outreach teams except in emergency. All referrals for places come through the BSS Referral Panel.

The primary PRU provision offers short term bilingual interventions with the main aim being to support pupils to maintain their mainstream placement and also reduce exclusions. The Primary PRU offers the following programmes delivered by experienced teaching staff and support staff:

- Dino School - 10 week programme for one half day per week (Friday morning) for Foundation Phase pupils. This programme can also be delivered on the mainstream school site by a member of the team
- Stepping Stones - part time programme of 4 half day sessions per week (Monday –Thursday) for 1 term for KS2 pupils.
- Pebbles - part time programme of 4 half day sessions per week (Monday – Thursday) for 1 term for Foundation phase pupils.

Actions to reduce exclusions from schools.

The local authority through the BSS is working with schools to consider providing more on site provision for behavioural issues to retain pupils in learning and reduce 5 day or less exclusions. The LA has a consistently good track record of managing learners who are at risk of disengagement and permanent exclusion through managed move protocol to another school, bespoke learning packages and PRU provision. As a result, there have been no permanent exclusions in recent years. Schools are exploring alternative provision and practice, exclusions should not be used if alternative solutions are available these could include:

- access to significant European funding from the TRAC project until 2022 to provide bespoke learning in and out of schools for our most vulnerable pupils. There are currently over 200 secondary age pupils from Denbighshire receiving support from this project.
- support for pupils who are not responding to schools' actions to combat disengagement and disaffection and are in need of longer-term intervention are provided with BSS support programmes in school.
- providing restorative approaches, which gives pupils the opportunity to redress the harm that has been done to a victim.
- provision for internal exclusion which can be used to modify behaviour, access to support services and will take away some privileges for example break and lunchtimes.
- the managed transfer process allows the school to arrange for a pupil through the local authority to move to another suitable school to take over the learner's education.

- the Education Provision in College (EPIC) provides good support for Key Stage 4 learners by providing access to alternative provisions. Learners are supported on either EPIC or Skills for Further Study, both run by Coleg Llandrillo and supported by the service's EPIC Coordinator.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

This report contributes to the Corporate Priority of supporting young people to have the skills to work and flourish. Members need to be aware of the performance of schools and the LA against national indicators.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

N/A

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment? The completed Well-being Impact Assessment report can be downloaded from the [website](#) and should be attached as an appendix to the report

*A prosperous Denbighshire
A resilient Denbighshire
A healthier Denbighshire
A more equal Denbighshire
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
A globally responsible Denbighshire*

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

N/A

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

N/A

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

The local authority (LA) will continue to challenge Headteachers and managers in schools to ensure that schools are taking appropriate action to improve behaviour.

Ensure continued improvement against the reduction in local authority, 14-19 Learning Pathways Grant and ESF TRAC funding.

11. Power to make the Decision

Scrutiny's powers with respect to reviewing performance and policy objectives is outlined in Section 7.4.2(b) of the Council's Constitution.

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