Sheffield City Council

Report to CYP&FS Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

3rd September 2018

Report of: Dawn Walton, Director of Strategic Commissioning and Inclusion Services

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Subject: School Exclusions

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Author of Report: Joel Hardwick, Head of Commissioning: Inclusion and School Services

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Summary:

The Committee has requested a report on the current position in Sheffield regarding school exclusions, our understanding of the issue, and the strategies we are employing to reduce them.

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Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	x
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

The Committee is asked to consider the Local Authority's current approach to reducing school exclusions.
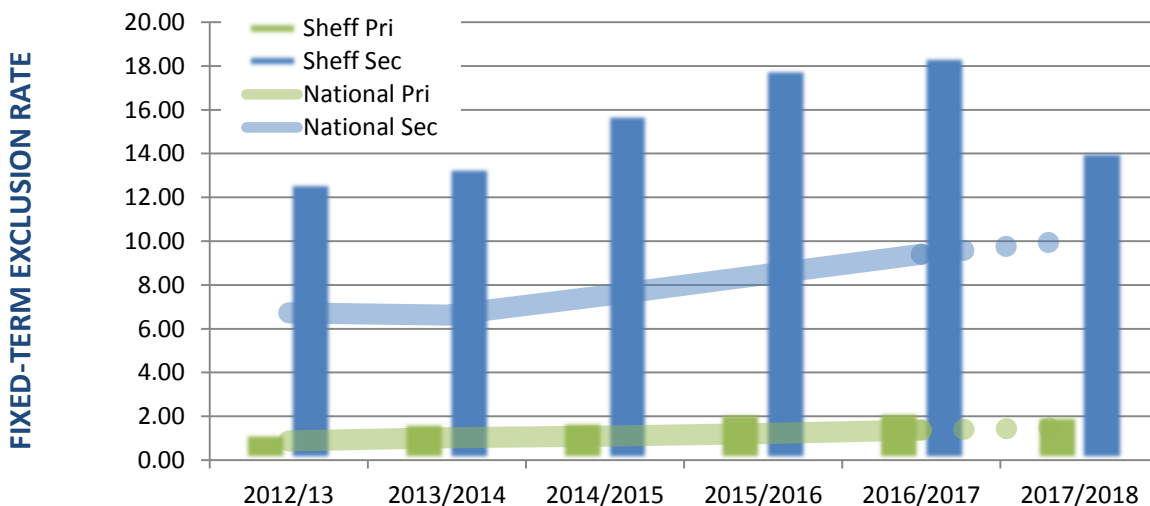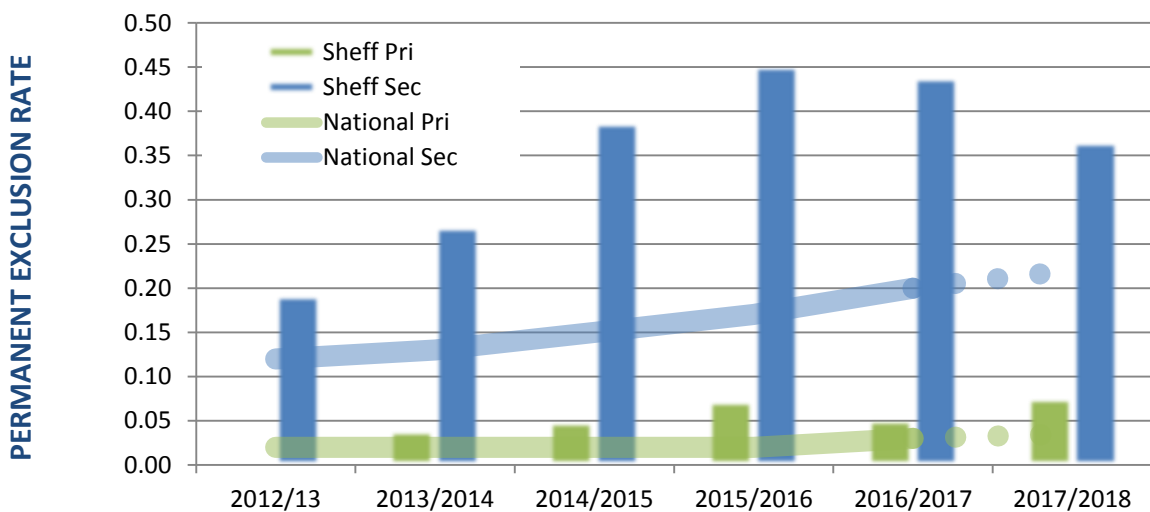
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Background Papers:

Category of Report: OPEN

Report of the Director of Strategic Commissioning and Inclusion Services

SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS IN SHEFFIELD

1. **The current position in Sheffield & the national context**

1.1 There are two types of exclusion, permanent exclusion is where a pupil will not return to the school, fixed-term exclusions are short-term and the pupil returns to school. The decision to exclude a pupil rests with a school and their governing body; families have a right of appeal to the governing body. Statutorily the Local Authority duty is to ensure education provision for permanently excluded children from the 6th day after they have been excluded.

1.2 Despite the increasing school-age population and the continued reports that schools are facing increasingly complex and challenging cohorts, Sheffield has managed to reduce permanent exclusions in the last two years (see chart below) and fixed term in the last year. Whilst this reverses the national trend up to 2017, the charts show that Sheffield Schools remain above the national average.

National average for 2017/18 not published – dotted line shows continuation of recent trend

1.3   The most common cause of permanent exclusion is persistent disruptive behaviour. Physical assault, on an adult or pupil, is the next most common cause. Those trends mirror the national picture.

1.4   In terms of contextual factors in 2017/18: 40% had an identified special educational need; 73% are male; 60% are white British or mixed white British; and, localities in the north and east of the city have a higher rate than other parts of the city.

2.   **What are we doing to continue reducing exclusions and support pupils who have been excluded?**

2.1   There are a number of new streams of work that have started over the last 12-18 months to put in a place a more coordinated, citywide approach to providing greater levels of support and earlier intervention. There is a focus on whole-family support and ensuring broader support linked to the key types of SEN that are most common in children at risk of exclusion, particularly Social, Emotional & Mental Health and Communication & Interaction:

    i. **Joined up framework & commissioning** across different funding streams and partners
        - Early Help Gateway, Primary & Secondary Inclusion Panels (see below), and Locality SEND model increasingly joining up, clarifying distinctions, and supporting improvement
        - Inclusion Panels operate at Primary and Secondary level and consider individual children at risk of permanent exclusion. They are chaired by a Headteacher, include senior representatives of all the support services including MAST, Education Psychology, Social Care, CAMHS, Speech & Language. They are a route to access some of the support described below and provide peer support and challenge and a mechanism for developing and sharing good practice. An action plan is formulated for each case presented.
        - shared action planning and good practice across localities linked to £2.1m Locality SEND funding building capacity across schools
        - establishing the performance monitoring tools to enable the city to judge the success of interventions at pupil/school/locality/city levels, highlight good practice and where improvements are needed, and help assess the sufficiency of our offer
        - work is underway to map all support, provision, and commissioning for vulnerable young people across the Council and its partners under common headings ('early help', 'targeted support')

    ii. an improved **early help** offer

        - Early Assessment: Early assessment of support needs.
        - Clear Pathways: The pathway following the 2 year old review and the language and communication assessment tool within the private and voluntary sector nursery provisions is beginning to roll out

- <u>Streamlined Support</u>: Streamline access to support including reallocation of MAST resources towards single point for schools, Vulnerable Learner Review offer, and increased support for reintegration
- <u>Specialist Support</u>: Improved access to specialist support and service provision including sleep hygiene, triple P parenting, other parenting work with VCF sector, restorative practice and other offers

iii. a developing menu of **targeted support**
- a coherent citywide nurture offer across primary and secondary
- an outreach support offer from the Sheffield Inclusion Centre
- targeted support around autism through Mossbrook/Rowan outreach
- enhanced speech & language offer through inclusion panels
- using the intelligence through the panels to develop new alternative provision offers

iv. **positive pathways** for pupils once an exclusion has taken place
- bespoke plan and support for reintegration for key stage 1 to 3 pupils
- development of pathways into post-16 for key stage 4 pupils
- Speech & language and CAMHS support to Sheffield Inclusion Centre

v. Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board & Director of Children's Services **monitor schools** and express concern to schools - concerns regarding schools with high exclusion rates have also been raised with the Regional Schools Commissioner, Ofsted and the Department for Education.

3   What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?

3.1   The work described in the paper is already meaning that both schools and families have access to better support, enabling more pupils to successfully sustain a place at their local school. It should also mean that excluded pupils have improved routes either towards reintegration into school or into positive post-16 pathways.

4.   Recommendation

4.1   The committee is asked to consider the report and note the ongoing work to drive improvement in this area.