



CHILDREN AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE, 18 DECEMBER 2019

| | |
|---|--|
| Subject Heading: | Attendance and Exclusions |
| SLT Lead: | Robert South, Director of Children's Services |
| Report Author and contact details: | Trevor Cook, Assistant Director for Education Services Tel: 01708 431250 Trevor.cook@havering.gov.uk |
| Policy context: | School Attendance and Exclusions Overview |
| Financial summary: | There is no financial summary/implication to this report. |

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Communities making Havering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Places making Havering | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Opportunities making Havering | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Connections making Havering | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SUMMARY

To be consistent with Havering's vision to ensure a good start for every child to reach their full potential during their educational journey.

This report updates members of the Committee on the progress made to improve School Admissions & Inclusions arrangements, across all Havering's Schools / Academies and Alternative Provisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the content of the report, and they continue to receive updates on attendance and exclusion arrangements.

REPORT DETAIL

Permanent Exclusions (PEX) - The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide pupils who have been Permanently Excluded an education from day 6 of the PEX. The Inclusion Team work with schools / academies to avoid PEX where possible and offer other alternative pathways to support pupils and set them back on track to achieve.

Schools / academies are expected to work with children and their families to prevent unnecessary transfers happening.

In Year Fair Access Protocol – The Local Authority has a Statutory Duty to provide a Fair Access Protocol. This is managed by the Team who:

- Assess the real needs of vulnerable young people who are not on the roll of a school and ensures an appropriate placement is identified quickly and pupils/young people are on roll within 10 school days of a Fair Access Panel meeting;
- Seek to find an alternative placement or support for those on roll of a school where it can be demonstrated that they are at risk of permanent exclusion;
- Fairly share the admission of vulnerable students across all schools / academies (where the panel agree that another mainstream school place should be identified);
- Arrange such admissions openly through a process which has the confidence of all;
- Records the progress and successes of the young people placed through this panel.

The Admissions & Inclusions Team, coordinates the inclusion of children aged 5-16 into school / academies and alternative provisions to prevent exclusions where possible and offers alternative pathways to support pupils and set them back on track to achieve the best possible outcome from their education. This is a strong partnership arrangement with the Early Help Attendance, Behaviour and Traveller Support Service.

School Attendance

The Attendance, Behaviour and Traveller Support Service, an Early Help Education Service monitors pupil attendance where the attendance of pupils falls below the acceptable level in school. This involves working closely with parents to overcome barriers to school attendance whether it be medical, social, and emotional or for any number of reasons. Whilst there are legal routes open to local authorities where parents do not ensure that their children receive a suitable education, these legal sanctions are generally a last resort after a period of working alongside parents and professionals to reduce/remove any barriers to good school attendance. The Early Help Attendance Behaviour and Traveller Support Service are located in the MASH service every day and perform the school welfare checks for students. Children Missing Education (CME) are monitored and tracked through the Attendance Service as a statutory function.

The Five Year Trend

Levels of overall absence and PA (persistent absence) has reduced in Havering in the past 5-year period, and only remain slightly higher than London and national averages. However, unauthorised absence was slightly below London average in both primary and secondary schools over the 5-year trend which is a very positive step in the right direction. This indicates that lower PA rates and lower authorised absence by schools are contributing to reducing overall absence rates, therefore increasing overall attendance levels within our schools and academies. During the last academic year, The Attendance, Behaviour and Traveller Support Service led on an attendance project with the key aim of sharing outstanding practice within schools and academies across key stages with a focus on challenging the rationale for authorising absence; this resulted in an Attendance Summit that was attended by thirty of our Schools and Academies.

The key measures around attendance/absence are set out by the following indicators:

- Overall Absence
- Authorised Absence
- Unauthorised Absence
- Persistent Absence at 90% and below

The definition of Persistent Absence or PA is any student with an attendance level below 90% the figures are based on the overall population of the school; this would be made up from the indicators as above. The information is taken via school census data on attendance/absence each year the average figure is collated from national data and Havering schools.

Primary School Absence Data in Havering (Summary Past 5 years):

| | 2018/19 | 2017/18 | 2016/17 | 2015/16 | 2014/15 |
|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Overall Absence | 3.9% | 4.2% | 4.2% | 4.2% | 4.3% |
| Authorised Absence | 3.1% | 3.3% | 3.4% | 3.5% | 3.6% |
| Unauthorised Absence | 0.8% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.7% | 0.7% |
| Persistent Absence | 8.3% | 9.0% | 9.2% | 9.9% | 10.7% |

Secondary School Absence Data in Havering (Summary Past 5 years):

| | 2018/19 | 2017/18 | 2016/17 | 2015/16 | 2014/15 |
|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Overall Absence | 5.1% | 5.5% | 5.5% | 5.5% | 5.5% |
| Authorised Absence | 3.9% | 4.1% | 4.2% | 4.0% | 4.4% |
| Unauthorised Absence | 1.2% | 1.4% | 1.4% | 1.1% | 1.1% |
| Persistent Absence | 12.9% | 13.6% | 13.8 % | 12.4% | 14.9% |

Traded Services - The Admissions & Inclusions Team and the Early help Attendance, Behaviour and Traveller Support Service operate a traded service where buy back from schools / academies contributes towards the team's functions and fully funds Two Education Welfare Officer posts; improving capacity. Schools benefit from a wide range of services and training packages to improve schools working practice, thus improving the academic achievement for the pupils of Havering.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

Dedicated Schools Grant could be affected if The Attendance Service did not continue to act with due diligence and accuracy especially around safeguarding of vulnerable pupils.

By not administering and tracking Children Missing Education in line with statutory guidance this will result in the Local Authority not meeting its statutory requirements.

If high needs pupils are not identified and supported the implications are that the Local Authority's High Needs Grant will be negatively affected.

Legal implications and risks:

There are no apparent legal implications in noting the content of the Report. .

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no HR implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

Equalities AND Social implications and risks:

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- (i) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are: age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.