

School Exclusion and Attendance

Education, Children and Families Committee

8 March 2012

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To explain trends and patterns in school exclusion and attendance and to outline the strategies to improve attendance and reduce the need for exclusion in the City of Edinburgh.

2 Summary

- 2.1 Statistics for exclusions and attendance have been analysed and a range of strategies have already been or are being put in place to improve attendance and reduce exclusions. In doing this our aim is that all of our children and young people have the opportunity to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens who make positive contributions to their communities.
- 2.2 Exclusions in Edinburgh are lower than national statistics and reducing. A wide range of support is in place in schools to meet the needs of children with additional support needs and this is having an impact. School attendance in Edinburgh is stable and in line with national statistics.

3 Main report

Exclusions

- 3.1 In 2010/11, Edinburgh was placed 15th out of 32 local authorities with an overall exclusion rate of 35 pupils per thousand, lower than the national average rate of 40 per thousand pupils.
- 3.2 The overall temporary and permanent primary exclusion rate was 13 per thousand pupils, slightly above the national rate of 11 in 2010/11. The four year data shows a drop in the rate per thousand pupils in Edinburgh from 14 in 2007/08 to 13.
- 3.3 The overall temporary and permanent secondary school exclusion rate was 55 per thousand pupils, well below the national rate of 72 in 2010/11. The four year data shows a drop in the rate per thousand pupils in Edinburgh from 67 in 2007/08 to 55.

- 3.4 In Edinburgh the overall number of permanent exclusions was 21 for 2010/11. It is not possible to form a valid comparison with other local authorities at this time as different authorities appear to be recording in different ways and Edinburgh is in discussion with Education Scotland about the national picture of recording.
- 3.5 It is important to note that our children and young people who are permanently excluded from one school are robustly tracked and monitored regularly by the inclusion coordinator to ensure they are re integrated into another school quickly or have their needs addressed effectively through alternative education packages. This includes working in partnership with other services, colleges, training providers and the voluntary sector.
- 3.6 The four year data shows a large reduction in permanent exclusions from 38 in 2007/08 to 21.
- 3.7 During the first six months of this new session 2011 – 2012 overall there were 524 pupil exclusions. This is a reduction in the number of exclusions in comparison to 899 for the same period of session 2010 - 2011.
- 3.8 Strategies currently in place to reduce exclusions are as follows:
- a) Tracking and monitoring by the Inclusion Coordinator of all vulnerable youngsters and failure to readmit pupils linked to Hospital and Outreach Teaching Service, and Early intervention;
 - b) A whole staff training programme on Restorative Practices in collaboration with the Scottish Government;
 - c) Authority policy and procedures to support alternatives to exclusion;
 - d) Hosting and conditional places in mainstream schools;
 - e) GIRFEC Child Planning approach, to enhance and develop partnership intervention, for pupils at risk of exclusion;
 - f) Monthly reports showing trends and patterns in exclusions are provided to senior managers to inform practice;
 - g) Proactive working across services between police, youth justice, education and Head Teachers using the pre-referral screening and intervention support for pupils who are offending in school and the community;
 - h) Regular monitoring at Heads of Service level of vulnerable children case studies.

Attendance

- 3.9 In 2010/11 the percentage attendance in local authority mainstream schools ranged from 91.3% to 95.2%. This range of variation in attendance rates is consistent with preceding years.
- 3.10 The overall national average attendance rate for 2010/11 was 93.1%. In Edinburgh the average rate of attendance was 93.0%

- 3.11 In the primary sector in Edinburgh the attendance rate was 94.5%, slightly lower than the national figure of 94.7% for 2010/2011.
- 3.12 The four year data shows performance in Edinburgh declining from 94.9% to 94.5% against a decline in the national figure from 95.1% to 94.8%.
- 3.13 Attendance in the secondary sector in Edinburgh, at 91.0%, was slightly lower than the national figure of 91.1% for 2010/2011.
- 3.14 The four year data shows performance in Edinburgh steadily improving from 90.7% to 91.0%.
- 3.15 In the special sector, performance in Edinburgh was 90.1%, in line with the national average of 90.0%
- 3.16 The four year data shows a mixed picture for Edinburgh with the 2010/11 performance (90.1%) lower than in 2007/08 when it was 90.8%. The national figure declined from 91.2% to 90.0%.
- 3.17 Strategies to improve attendance and manage absence already in place are:
- a) Weekly monitoring of pupil attendance <50% by Inclusion Coordinator informs discussion with Senior Education Welfare Officer and investigation/update by school Education Welfare Officer;
 - b) The provision of monthly reports which are shared with a wide range of senior managers including Head Teachers showing trends and patterns in attendance and absence to inform practice;
 - c) Range of support offered to vulnerable youngsters with attendance <5% e.g. phased return, flexible timetable, base time Intensive Family Support Service/Integrated Community Support Service, Early Intervention, Hospital and Outreach Teaching Support, Education Welfare Service;
 - d) Ensuring persistent non-attenders are part of the Area Attendance Advisory Group Referral Process and the Area Attendance Order Review Group – the outcome of this may be prosecution. Edinburgh is reviewing cases for prosecution at the moment;
 - e) Quality Improvement Team use guidance provided by the Inclusion team to review attendance and exclusion information with HT's during primary and secondary school support and challenge visits;
 - f) Operation Disenchant, targeted work in the community by Education Welfare service liaising with Police, Schools and Services to Communities in a multi-agency approach to engage with young people not in school, as part of a city wide strategy.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report at this time.

5 Environmental Impact

5.1 There are no adverse environmental impacts arising from this report.

6 Conclusions

6.1 The Key Factors identified in improving School Exclusion and Attendance are:

- 1) Ensuring that all schools have in place policy and procedures informing the management of pupils' attendance and alternatives to exclusion;
- 2) A regular review of statistics centrally and in schools to inform the tracking of pupils at risk;
- 3) Strengthening support in schools;
- 4) Consistent monitoring and evaluating of statutory practice in school;
- 5) Parental engagement.

7 Recommendations

7.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the content of this report.

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| Appendices | 1) Exclusion and Attendance Trends and Patterns Data |
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| Wards affected | All |
| Single Outcome Agreement | Supports National Outcome 4- 'Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.' Supports Local Outcomes – 'Children and young people are successful learners.' 'Young people are confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.' |
| Background Papers | |

Exclusion and Attendance Trends and Patterns Data

Exclusions (per 1000 pupils) - Primary

| | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Edinburgh, City of | 14 | 12 | 11 | 13 |
| National Average | 15 | 13 | 12 | 11 |

Exclusions (per 1000 pupils) - Secondary

| | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Edinburgh, City of | 67 | 57 | 69 | 55 |
| National Average | 106 | 91 | 82 | 72 |

Exclusions (per 1000 pupils) - Total

| | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Edinburgh, City of | 43 | 36 | 41 | 35 |
| National Average | 57 | 50 | 45 | 40 |

Failure to readmit exclusions

| | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Edinburgh, City of | 38 | 21 | 27 | 21 |

% Primary Attendance

| | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Edinburgh, City of | 94.9 | 94.9 | 94.8 | 94.5 |
| National Average | 95.1 | 95.2 | 94.9 | 94.8 |

% Secondary Attendance

| | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Edinburgh, City of | 90.7 | 90.8 | 91.1 | 91.0 |
| National Average | 90.9 | 91.1 | 91.2 | 91.1 |

% Special Attendance

| | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Edinburgh, City of | 90.8 | 89.8 | 89.7 | 90.1 |
| National Average | 91.2 | 91.3 | 90.6 | 90.0 |