

**PLEASE DISCARD THE PREVIOUSLY ISSUED REPORT  
AND REPLACE WITH THIS VERSION**

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY 23 JANUARY 2002 AT 10.30 AM**

**Agenda item**

**5 (iii)**

**FIXED TERM EXCLUSIONS**

**Report of the Director of Children, Schools and Families**

Author: Nick Powley, Education Access Manager, Operations Division

Telephone: 01992 555933

**1. Purpose of the report**

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with further information about fixed term exclusions.
- 1.2 That a small Member Topic Group be established to carry out a programme of visits and report back in March 2002.

**2. Summary**

- 2.1 The report provides details of:
  - The number of fixed term exclusions expressed as a percentage of the school population by District Council area in 2000/01. (Appendix 1)
  - Fixed term exclusions of 5 days or more showing multiples and permanent exclusions in 2000/01. (Appendix 2)

**3. Conclusions**

- 3.1 The Committee will wish to note this data and the trends that it demonstrates.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Committee sets up a Topic Group to consider the issue of fixed term exclusions and that the topic group should report back to the committee in June.

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## 1. Background information

- 1.1 In accordance with the Education Development Plan, a project group on fixed term exclusions was set up and has met on three occasions.
- 1.2 The project group met on 5 November 2001 and considered data on fixed-term exclusions. It considered the decision of the Strategic Management Panel that Members might meet with the representatives of a number of schools, selecting a balance which covered a range of schools, as follows:
  - low excluding with challenging circumstances
  - high excluding with a high ethnic minority profile
  - relatively high excluding with declining results at Key Stage 3 over a period of three years
  - low excluding schools with improving results.
- 1.3 The Strategic Management Panel considered the issue of fixed term exclusions on 27 September 2001 and requested:
  - that further research be undertaken into exclusions in relation to the ethnicity of the school population.
  - information about fixed term exclusions as a percentage of the school population by District Council area.
- 1.4 DfEE Circular 10/99, 'Social Inclusion: Pupil Support', states that '*schools must maintain discipline and good conduct to secure an orderly environment so that teaching and learning can take place. Schools will therefore need to adopt a range of strategies, including exclusion, to ensure they are providing a sound learning environment for all pupils.*'
- 1.5 The decision to exclude a child for a fixed-period should not be taken lightly since it will deprive the child of his/her education for a period of time. DfEE Circular 10/99 notes that a decision to exclude a child should be taken only in response to serious breaches of the school's discipline policy and once a range of alternative strategies have been tried and have failed.
- 1.6 While considerable progress has been made in reducing the number of permanent exclusions, with a reduction between 1998/99 and 2000/2001, the number of fixed-period exclusions has risen.
- 1.7 Support is available through the Education Support Centres for pupils who are at risk of exclusion. Feedback from schools is that this support is well received and that generally they want more of it. Advice and guidance on the management of pupil behaviour is also provided by Educational Psychologists and Behaviour Support Advisory Teachers, who work with ESC staff in local Behaviour Support Teams. There is, however a need to develop a clear and focused strategy for supporting

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schools in order to address the increase in fixed-period exclusions. The scrutiny process will be instrumental in this process.

- 1.8. Grant Maintained Schools were not required to report fixed-period exclusions to the LEA until 1 September 1998. It is, therefore, not possible to draw any reliable conclusions in relation to the increase of fixed-period exclusions before the 1998/1999 academic year.
- 1.9. Information relating to fixed-period exclusions has been monitored in relation to the length of exclusion, the number of exclusions received by each child and the ethnicity of the child as well as the overall number of exclusions. The data is also monitored by District Council area and by individual school.

### **2. Analysis of attached data**

- 2.1. The analysis of fixed term exclusions by District Council area at Key Stage 3 in 2000/01 (Appendix 1) shows:

- A variation between the number of exclusions as a percentage of the school population in District Council areas from 1.54% in East Herts to 4.64% in Stevenage
- the average percentage of exclusions as a percentage of the school population for the County is 3.28%.
- those areas of high deprivation do not necessarily have high rates of fixed term exclusions.
- A variation between the number of exclusions as a percentage of the school population in District Council areas from 1.54% in East Herts to 4.64% in Stevenage
- the average percentage of exclusions as a percentage of the school population for the county is 3.28%.
- those areas of high deprivation do not necessarily have high rates of fixed term exclusions

- 2.2. The analysis of fixed term exclusions of 5 days and more, broken down into Key Stages 3 and 4 (Appendix 2) indicates that:

- there is a significant variation between exclusion rates at different schools.
- in some schools a small number of children are involved in a disproportionately large number of fixed term exclusions.
- the highest number of permanent exclusions in Key Stages 3 and 4 was 7 in one year, whilst there were no permanent exclusions from other schools.

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Background material referred by the author when compiling this report:

DfES Circular 10/99 : Social Inclusion : Pupils Support

Fixed Term Exclusions : Strategic Management Panel, 27 September

If you require further information about the issues referred to in this report, please contact  
Nick Powley, telephone number 01992 555933