

EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - THE USE OF RE-INTEGRATION TIMETABLES BY SCHOOLS IN OXFORDSHIRE

Report by Deborah Bell – Head of Service Learner Engagement

RECOMMENDATION

The Education Scrutiny Committee is RECOMMENDED to consider and note this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Members are invited to receive, accept and endorse this report. Members are also invited to consider the following recommendations for future action:-
 - To promote the new OCC guidance to schools on Reintegration Timetables.
 - To challenge the use of Reintegration timetables by schools disproportionately for pupils with SEND, even as an alternative to exclusion, as part of the drive for inclusive practice in all schools for all children.
 - To present this new Reintegration timetable data to Headteachers, SENCos and Chairs of Governors during Autumn term 2019.
 - To consider the availability of appropriate alternative provision, as informed by development work that Members will be aware of.

Introduction

2. In principle, the Department for Education non-statutory guidance pertaining to school attendance legislation does not allow for pupils on roll at publicly funded schools, academies and free schools to have their full-time educational entitlement compromised. However, exceptions are permitted based on the needs of the pupil (not the school), for a short period of time (recommended maximum 6 weeks) and with explicit parental consent.
3. The use of reintegration timetables appears to be more widespread in Oxfordshire than elsewhere, hence Members request for further information to scrutinise.
4. Oxfordshire County Council expects all schools in the county to report each Reintegration timetable on commencing and ending. Whether all Reintegration timetables are reported cannot be stated with security.

Reported Reintegration Timetable numbers 2017-18 and 2018-19

	Number of reintegration timetables opened			
	2017/18		2018/19	
Number of students with reintegration timetable	432		490	
Primary	115	27%	127	26%
Secondary	230	53%	324	66%
Special	52	12%	20	4%
All through	28	6%	14	3%
Other	7	2%	5	1%

Academy - all phases	316	73%	432	88%
LA maintained - all phases	116	27%	67	22%
Primary - academy	58	50%	83	65%
Primary - LA maintained	57	50%	44	35%
Secondary - academy	219	95%	317	98%
Secondary - LA maintained	11	5%	7	2%
Special - academy	4	8%	4	20%
Special - LA maintained	48	92%	16	80%

	Reintegration timetable opened in			
	2017/18		2018/19	
SEND Support	154	36%	243	50%
EHCP	178	41%	103	21%
Any SEND	332	77%	346	71%
Child in need plan	22	5%	30	6%
Child protection plan	35	8%	19	4%
Looked after child	6	1%	13	3%
TAF	140	32%	110	22%

	Reintegration timetable opened in			
	2017/18		2018/19	
Permanent exclusion 17/18	16	4%	6	1%
Permanent exclusion 18/19	14	4%	19	4%
Fixed term exclusion 17/18	197	46%	142	29%
Fixed term exclusion 18/19	112	30%	216	44%

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5. When a pupil is on a Reintegration timetable, the parent or carer is responsible for the child when they are not in school.
6. This consequentially must be considered from a safeguarding perspective as well as from an achievement and attainment perspective.
7. Oxfordshire County Council has issued new reintegration timetable guidance for schools and shared on Schools News. The guidance is also available on the Learner Engagement web pages.
8. To support pupils and parents' safety and access to full time educational entitlement, the County Attendance Team follows up on each reported Reintegration timetable when it reaches 6 weeks in duration to enquire of school about plans for the pupil's full-time return. Lack of plans results in local authority challenge.
9. Best practice settings have a lead Governor for Inclusion who receives a termly report breaking down all pupils not receiving their full-time entitlement (as well as those removed from roll with reasons and destinations). This allows for strategic challenge of operational practice. Headteachers report to Governors examples of best practice and share headlines on this cohort.
10. Schools continue to receive full time funding when the pupil is attending part time. The practice is most frequently reported by schools as being used to prevent exclusion, most frequently with pupils with special educational needs particularly social, emotional and mental health needs.
11. Alternatives to Reintegration timetables are commissioned alternative provision, internal exclusion or external exclusion. Alternative provision (options available in Oxfordshire are updated and available for schools' attention on the OCC web pages from September 2019) require budgetary commitments. Exclusion is the least desirable outcome for schools and families. Internal exclusion also comes with budgetary commitment and is not identifiable from data available to the local authority.
12. The Children's Trust and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board are concerned about the use of Reintegration timetables and receive regularly reports on reported numbers.
13. The September 2019 Ofsted inspection framework may render greater inspectorate scrutiny of this practice as 'off-rolling' is a new feature of the framework. The reality of this will emerge over the forthcoming months.
14. Members are invited to receive, accept and endorse this report. Members are also invited to consider the following recommendations for future action:-
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Equalities Implications

15. Disproportionate use of Reintegration timetables with pupils with any SEND.

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Background papers: School attendance - Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities July 2019.

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