



EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 15TH MAY 2023

SUBJECT: HOW EFFECTIVE IS OUR WORK TO REDUCE EXCLUSIONS

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND
CORPORATE SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an update for Members regarding the work of the Local Authority (LA) in relation to reducing exclusions.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Guidance for schools in relations to exclusions is provided by Welsh Government Document 'Exclusions from schools and pupil referral units' (2015). Schools are the responsible body for issuing exclusions. The Local Authority (LA) has developed guidance as part of the Inclusion Compendium that reinforces a supportive partnership approach in meeting emotional, behaviour and wellbeing need and addressing exclusions.
- 2.2 The LA has developed processes and procedures in consultation with schools and the process of data collection is robust.
- 2.3 Analysis of data enables targeted discussions and support to schools where there are concerns.
- 2.4 Despite the approaches taken the number of permanent exclusions across secondary schools remains too high and the rates of fixed term exclusions and number of days lost are too high across primary and secondary schools (Appendices 1-6).

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members are asked to:
- a) consider the information contained in the report and to offer views and comments;

b) endorse the approach to be taken in regard to reducing exclusions.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Members are asked to endorse the approach of the LA in reducing exclusions and supporting the wellbeing of children.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 The LA's approach to meeting pupil's needs is based on principles of inclusion and wellbeing, and the need to provide a responsive, whole school and inclusive approach. This approach provides the foundations to supporting schools to focus on early intervention and building capacity across schools through a range of professional learning available thereby enabling a supportive approach to meeting need and a reduction in exclusions.

5.2 In accordance with the Additional Learning Needs and Tribunal Wales Act (2018) it is recognised that the majority of children will have their needs met in mainstream schools and that schools should develop robust and comprehensive provision to ensure that needs are met. This aligns with the principles of the development of the Curriculum for Wales and the Whole School Approach to emotional and mental wellbeing.

5.3 In accordance with the Exclusions from Schools and Pupils Referral Units guidance it is recognised that there are circumstances where exclusion is necessary and in a very few cases pupils may require alternative provision to meet their needs.

5.4 Specific LA guidance, aligning with Welsh Government Guidance regarding exclusions, outlines a supportive partnership approach in addressing exclusions and identifying solutions.

5.5 The LA approach to gathering and sharing data with / across schools has evolved. Schools collect their own data, however the LA approach to sharing this across secondary and primary schools enables schools to further consider their responses at a whole school and individual level. Termly data monitoring and evaluation reports are provided to Education SMT outlining the areas for development.

5.6 The following are identified as areas of strength:

- The LA has a robust process for engaging head teachers and schools in relation to exclusions issued.
- Data collection is a strong feature. The development of Power Bi enables thorough analysis and reporting of data including rates of fixed term exclusion per thousand, exclusions for vulnerable groups including CLA, ALN and those in EOTAS provision and timeliness of provision.
- Analysis of data enables targeted discussions and support to schools where there are concerns. LA officers are identified as leads for each case of permanent exclusion and ensure there is detailed information available to support decision making at an individual pupil level.
- Pupil voice is a strong feature of the process and has enabled more robust planning for next steps.

- 5.7 The pandemic has resulted in the need to reframe presenting needs. Both pre and post pandemic the most significant presenting issues at secondary schools relates to physical assaults against pupils. Post pandemic this number has risen. There is evidence of increased levels of low incidence high frequency persistent disruptive behaviour, reduced engagement, increased anxiety, and reduced resilience which is observed in different ways. Across primary schools the level of persistent disruptive behaviour has increased, however, the two highest incident categories of exclusion (assault against staff and against pupils) have decreased.
- 5.8 In the period 2018/2019 to 2021/2022 the number of permanent exclusions has increased with a total of 36 in 2021/2022 (Appendix 1) with 10 mainstream secondary schools issuing permanent exclusions. There have been 2 permanent exclusions across primary schools in the period 2018/2019 to 2021/2022.
- 5.9 In the same period the number of fixed term exclusions at secondary school has increased however there is a minor decrease at primary. These compared to the pre pandemic figure (Appendix 2).
- 5.10 Overall for the same period the number of fixed term exclusions of 5 days or less has increased, over 5 days has increased, number of days lost and number of pupils receiving fixed term exclusions have increased (Appendix 3).
- 5.11 The percentage of fixed term exclusions issued for males has increased as has the exclusions issued for pupils with ALN. Exclusions issued for pupils who access FSM or who are looked after has decreased in the period 2018/2019 to 2021/2022 (Appendix 4).
- 5.12 Validated data for the Autumn term 2022/ 2023 indicates a significant increase in permanent exclusions for this period compared with the previous two years and an increase in fixed term exclusions for the same period (Appendix 5 and 6).
- 5.13 The pandemic has impacted on the LA and schools' ability to work together to embed the approaches and guidance in the Inclusion Compendium linked to wellbeing and behaviour in schools although it is recognised that this remains relevant and comprehensive. The LA continues to provide relevant training opportunities to schools in relation to wellbeing and behaviour. The approach to developing schools' internal provision varies across the LA and embedding the Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing is at different stages across schools.
- 5.14 In comparison to the rate of exclusion the engagement with the current managed move process is limited with only a few pupils being considered. LA officers are working with Secondary Head Teachers to explore opportunities to reinvigorate or redesign the managed move process enabling head teachers to take ownership of the process and work together even more collaboratively. Head Teachers are exploring how to develop this approach and working with the LA will agree the way forward. The approach will aim to support children to have another opportunity in a mainstream setting and access further intervention and a fresh start. LA officers are also revisiting schools' provision for behaviour and wellbeing and exploring the professional learning offer. Officers are also exploring developments in line with the EOTAS strategy and a review of the functions of the behaviour support team.

5.15 Conclusion

- 5.16 Overall the number of permanent exclusions across secondary schools remains too high and the rates of fixed term exclusions and number of days lost are also too high. The number of children in vulnerable groups receiving exclusions is a concern.
- 5.17 LA officers will continue to work with Secondary Head Teachers to develop a revised agreement regarding managed moves and with all schools to develop the approaches to addressing needs in relation to behaviour, wellbeing, and engagement with an aim of impacting on exclusion rates. LA officers will revisit the implementation of the Inclusion Compendium to support schools with a more proactive approach to addressing needs and explore the development of an LNS model of support between schools.
- 5.18 Support to targeted schools through a team around the school's model will be developed thus enabling scrutiny of approaches used by schools to develop provision, and impact on outcomes, engagement, and attitudes to learning.
- 5.19 Further work in developing an assessment centre to ensure that pupil's needs are appropriately identified, and intervention is in place to address needs working in partnership across the disciplines is an important focus going forward.
- 5.20 Developing the role of the school improvement partners thus ensuring triangulation of information regarding exclusion is an area for development.
- 5.21 Comprehensive briefing notes will be provided to Governing Bodies on their roles and responsibilities in line with the Welsh Government exclusion guidance.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 In considering the recommendations the following assumptions have been made:
- The majority of children will have their needs met in mainstream education and the LA is committed to supporting schools to ensure that all children have access to high quality teaching and learning experiences to meet their needs.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report is provided as information, informing Members of the work in this area and therefore an Integrated Impact Assessment has not been completed.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 The report reflects with views of the consultees.

11. STATUTORY POWERS

11.1 Additional Learning Needs and Tribunal Act (Wales) 2018
Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
Education Act 1996
Equality Act 2010
Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014)
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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Consultees: Christina Harray, Chief Executive
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director, Education and Corporate Services
Dave Street, Corporate Director Social Services
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair Education Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Jo Rao, Vice Chair Education Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Achievement
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy
Jane Southcombe, Finance Manager
Nicola Hooper, Finance Officer
Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
Sarah Mutch, Early Years Manager
Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Manager
Adelaide Dunn, Lead for Wellbeing and Equity (EAS)
Nicola Chapman, HR Service Manager
Ceri Jenkins, HR Manager
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Permanent exclusions 2018/219 – 2021/2022

Appendix 2: Fixed term exclusions 2018/2019 – 2021/2022

Appendix 3: Fixed term exclusions issued, days lost and numbers of pupils.

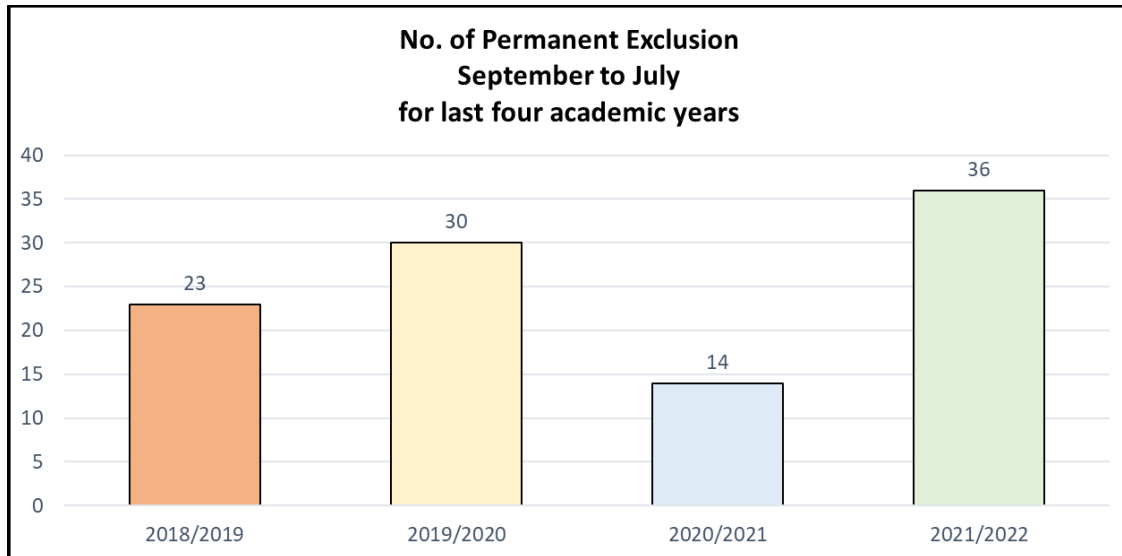
Appendix 4: Fixed term exclusion by characteristic

Appendix 5: Permanent exclusion for Autumn Term 2022 /2023

Appendix 6: Fixed term exclusions for Autumn Term 2022 /2023

Appendix 1: Permanent exclusions 2018/2019 – 2021/2022

Total number of permanent exclusions for all provisions (Secondary, Primary, 3-18, EOTAS and Special School)

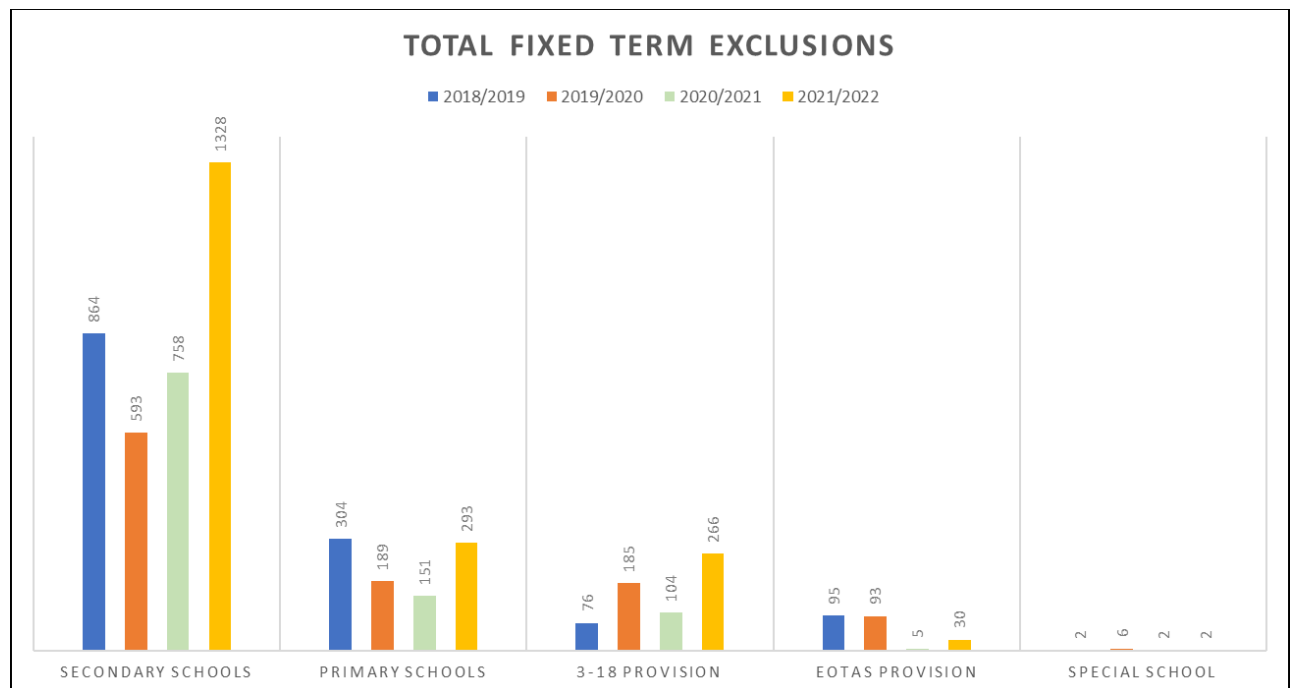


Appendix 2: Fixed term exclusions 2018/2019 – 2021/2022

Total number of fixed term exclusions by provision.

	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
Secondary Schools	864	593	758	1328
Primary Schools	304	189	151	293
3-18 Provision	76	185	104	266
EOTAS Provision	95	93	5	30
Special School	2	6	2	2
TOTAL	1341	1066	1020	1919

Please Note: The two columns highlighted (2018/19 and 2021/22) represent two full years not directly impacted by Covid-19 and school shutdowns.



Appendix 3: Fixed term exclusions issued, days lost and numbers of pupils.

Total fixed term exclusions (FTE), number of days lost and number of pupils for all provisions (Secondary, Primary, 3-18, EOTAS and Special School)

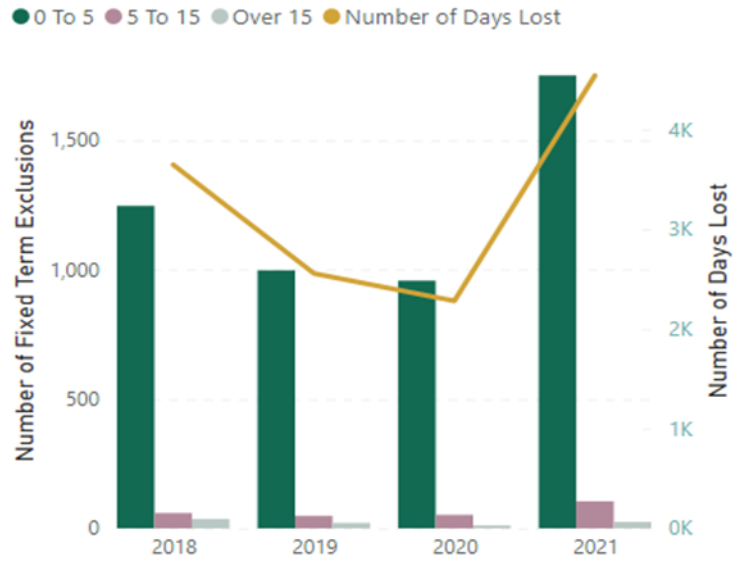
Number of Fixed Term Exclusion	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
5 days or less	795	550	701	1214
Over 5 days	69	43	57	114
Secondary Schools	864	593	758	1328
5 days or less	291	176	147	285
Over 5 days	13	13	4	8
Primary Schools	304	189	151	293
5 days or less	74	182	102	262
Over 5 days	2	3	2	4
3-18 Provision	76	185	104	266
5 days or less	86	87	5	25
Over 5 days	9	6	0	5
EOTAS Provision	95	93	5	30
5 days or less	0	2	2	2
Over 5 days	2	4	0	0
Special School	2	6	2	2
Number of FTE 5 days or less	1246	997	957	1788
Number of FTE over 5 days	95	69	63	131
TOTAL	1341	1066	1020	1919

Number of Pupils	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
Secondary Schools	452	321	419	621
Primary Schools	136	84	67	114
3-18 Provision	43	82	58	100
EOTAS Provision	45	40	5	20
Special School	1	3	1	2
TOTAL	668	526	549	857

Number of days lost	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
Secondary Schools	2522	1512	1836.5	3506.5
Primary Schools	613	405	264.5	565
3-18 Provision	182	265	168	438
EOTAS Provision	311.5	309.5	7	104.5
Special School	17.5	66	4	5

TOTAL	3646	2557.5	2280	4619
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Number of Fixed Term Exclusions

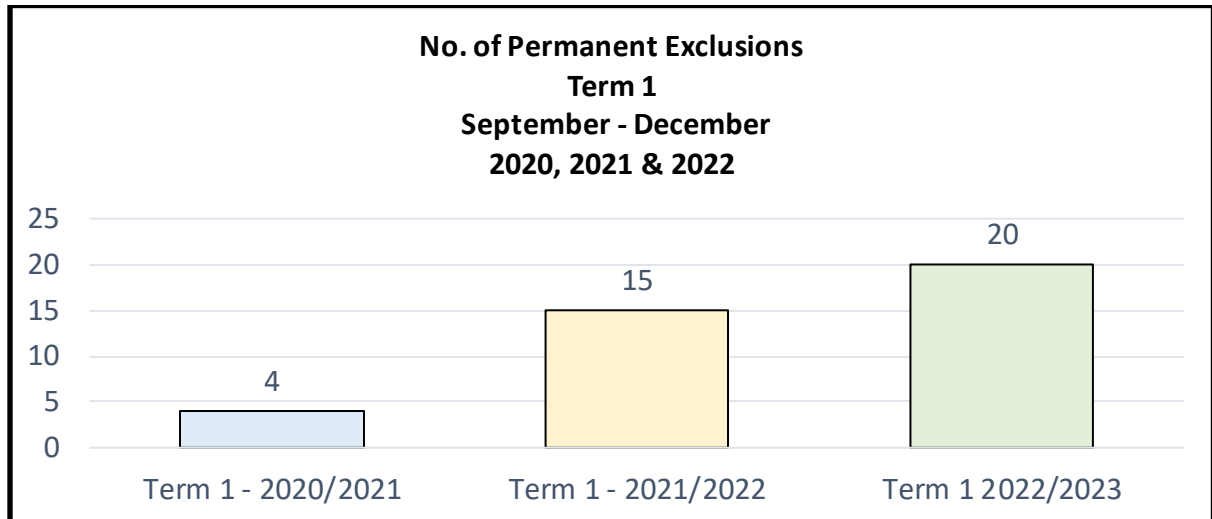


Appendix 4: Fixed Term Exclusion (FTE) by characteristic

Year	% FTE issued by gender	% FTE issued by ALN	% FTE issued by FSM	% FTE issued for CLA
2021/2022	66.96% M	30.90%	52.53%	6.31%
2020/2021	72.55% M	33.33%	45.49%	5.78%
2019/2020	72.05% M	33.11%	49.72%	4.88%
2018/2019	73.9% M	39.14%	39.97%	4.7%

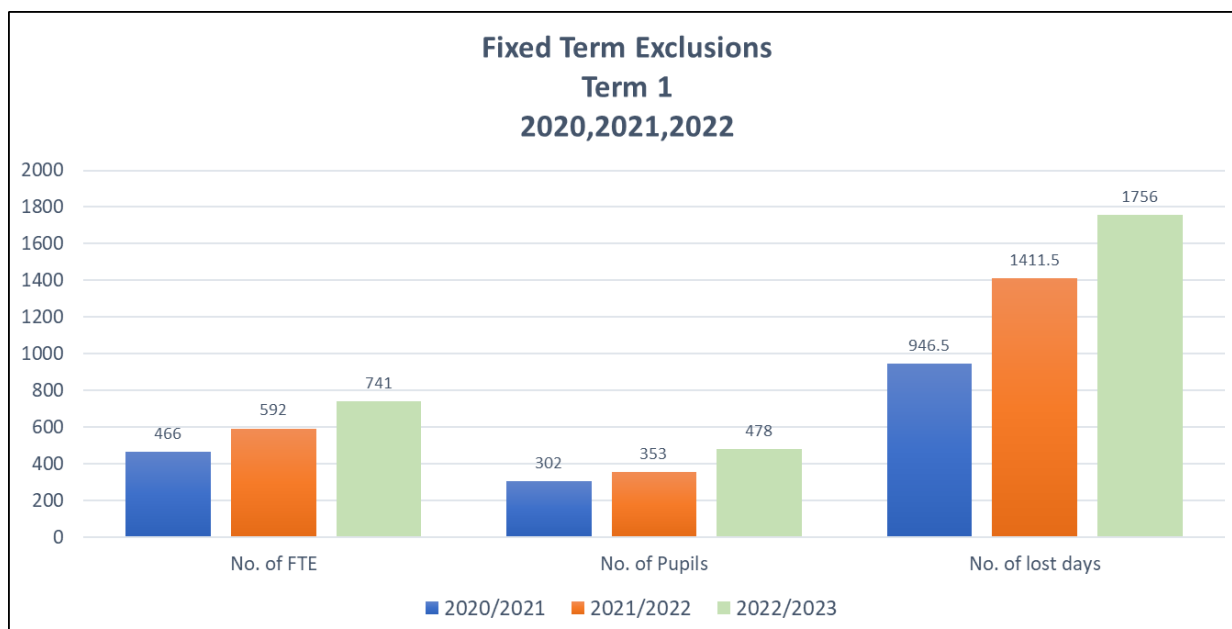
Appendix 5: Permanent exclusion for Autumn Term (Term 1) 2022 /2023

Total number of permanent exclusions for all provisions which include Secondary, Primary, 3-18, EOTAS and Special School.



Appendix 6: Fixed term exclusions for Autumn Term (Term 1) 2022 /2023

Total fixed term exclusions (FTE) in the Autumn term for 2020/2021 – 2022/2023 (Number of FTE, number of days lost and number of pupils) for all provisions which include Secondary, Primary, 3-18, EOTAS and Special School.



TERM 1	2021	2022	2023
Secondary	366	383	546
Primary	51	86	85
3-18	42	114	82
EOTAS	5	9	24
Special Schools	2	0	4
TOTAL	466	592	741

Graphs illustrating exclusions by characteristic for Autumn Term (Term 1) 2022/2023

