

Behaviour, Inclusion and Wellbeing Strategy (Education)

2021

Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Introduction	4
What we mean by inclusive education	6
Wellbeing Strategy	7
Key priorities and objectives.....	9
Appendices	14
Appendix A: Behaviour, Inclusion and Well-being Charter.....	14
Appendix B: Guiding Principles: a decision making framework for promoting inclusion.....	14
Appendix C: Training	14
Appendix D (i): Examples of Transition Passports	14
Appendix D (ii): Transition Plan for children in Primary Behaviour Provisions	14
Appendix E: Primary Behaviour Continuum.....	14
Appendix F: Secondary Behaviour Continuum	14
Appendix G: Behaviour, Inclusion and Well-being Strategy Implementation Evaluation	14
BIWAB membership:.....	14

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Thanks also to all those who have taken the time to read the Strategy so carefully and thoroughly and to provide feedback on draft versions. This has undoubtedly improved it.

Most importantly, sincerest gratitude to the young people and staff from the Avenue Centre for Education and Active Support Education for sharing their experiences and for their comments and insights on the Strategy and what is needed in order to promote our vision for inclusion in Luton.

Note: 'Parent' is used throughout but this includes carers or those with parental responsibility

Inclusion is not a strategy to help people fit into the systems and structures which exist in our societies; it is about transforming those systems and structures to make it better for everyone

Diane Richler, past president, Inclusion International

Introduction

Children and young people (CYP) who present with behaviour difficulties and underlying social, emotional, mental health (SEMH) or additional learning needs are at increased risk of exclusion from school. In addition, certain groups of children continue to be disproportionately excluded from school. The academic and social outcomes for children who struggle to regulate their emotions and behaviour and who have been excluded are overwhelmingly negative. School exclusion places young people at further vulnerability to a wide range of long-term life challenges including poverty, family breakdown and criminality ⁽¹⁾.

*A child whose behaviour pushes you away is a child who needs connection before anything else, **Kelly Bartlett***

Whilst Luton is still above the national average in terms of permanent exclusions, the number of permanent exclusions, in the town, has declined since September 2018*. Similarly, whilst levels of exclusion are not at their highest recorded nationally, the Timpson review (2019) concluded *'there is more we can do to support schools to understand and respond to individual children – particularly children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), children in need of additional help and protection and children who are disadvantaged – who may need additional support, and who might otherwise find themselves at risk of exclusion'* ⁽²⁾. The higher exclusion rates of pupils with SEMH and additional needs reflect challenges faced by schools and staff in identifying and meeting the needs of these children. When SEMH difficulties become a significant barrier to a child or young person's learning this becomes a special educational need (SEN) however identifying these difficulties as such can be problematic for some schools as they may operate separate systems for managing SEMH and SEN. Schools report this task is aggravated by reduced school funding and limited scope to buy in specialist support ⁽¹⁾ For many children at risk of exclusion, multiple, layered and inter-related factors, at individual, family, school and societal levels are at play. This complexity of factors has implications for the preventative and supportive interventions required to promote inclusion and pupil well-being, as well as for the training and the guidance required by school staff, review panels and others to address the likely multifaceted combinations of vulnerabilities.

1. School exclusion: a literature review on the continued disproportionate exclusion of certain children, May 2019, DfE

2. Timpson Review of School Exclusion, May 2019

Luton has a long established, positive culture of inclusive education and the purpose of this strategy is to develop it further in the current context of a greater emphasis on parental choice, working in ‘coproduction’ and the importance of including and promoting the voice of the child, ensuring there is quality local provision to include all our children. In it, we set out our vision, commitment, priorities and guiding principles to address the challenges of preserving our culture of inclusion within this new context; to identify and meet the needs of our most vulnerable children in order to ensure they can receive the right help, at the right time in order to develop the resilience needed to overcome some of the adversities they face. In line with our overall strategic ambition for our children and young people, we want all Luton children to grow up feeling valued, safe, and respected and with a strong sense of belonging in their school or alternative provision. We want young people to transition successfully to further education settings or skills and employability based training to enable them to feel they are able to make valuable contributions to society and to have a good quality of life.

*Every child deserves a champion – an adult, who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best they can possibly be, **Rita F Pierson***

Luton’s Behaviour, Inclusion and Wellbeing Strategy has been produced as a recommendation from the 0 – 19 Behaviour Review (2016). It aligns with the Education Strategy 2020, the [Luton SEND Strategy 2020](#), [the Effective Support for Children and Young People in Luton Guidance 2021 vision and practice framework \[link to be added\]](#), and our town wide vision for Luton 2020 – 2040; a place to thrive. It also echoes contextual safeguarding approaches to understanding and responding to young people’s experiences and vulnerabilities.

*Rates of exclsion in Luton compared to national (and numbers for Luton)

	Fixed term exclusions %			Fixed term exclusions number			Permanent exclusions %			Permanent exclusions number		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
EHCP												
Luton	9.0	7.2	6.8	87	75	75	0.00	0.19	0.27	0	2	3
National	15.9	16.0	16.1				0.16	0.16	0.15			
SEN Support												
Luton	15.0	12.2	11.3	723	564	520	0.44	0.41	0.35	21	19	16

National	14.8	15.1	15.6				0.35	0.34	0.32			
No SEN Provision												
Luton	4.5	4.1	3.6	1418	1329	1153	0.11	0.11	0.10	34	35	32
National	3.1	3.4	3.6				0.06	0.06	0.06			

What we mean by inclusive education

Inclusive education means different and diverse students learning side by side in the same learning environment. It values diversity and the unique contributions each student brings to the classroom. The importance of inclusive education is defined in its positive outcomes for all children – both with and without disabilities or other disadvantages, and we subscribe to the understanding that inclusive education increases social and academic opportunities for all.

Vision

For all Luton schools and educational settings to have the capacity in terms of staff training and understanding of support needs to offer outstanding, quality first education that meets the full range of needs, complemented by additional, specialist, local provision for those children with the most challenging and diverse needs.

Luton's vision for inclusion is underpinned by the beliefs that:

- no matter how diverse their way of learning, how adverse and disadvantaged their life experiences or how challenging their needs, every child has the right to feel included and that their needs are understood.
- certain children need greater understanding and support in order to make progress, develop resilience, to feel that they belong and to thrive.
- all children can learn and achieve given equitable opportunities, effective teaching and appropriate resources
- all children should be given a fair chance to succeed. Fairness is not giving everyone the same thing; it is giving each person what they need to succeed.
- all children including those who present with challenges have the right to be in the same educational space with their peers for the majority of the school day.
- permanent exclusion is rarely the right outcome for a young person
- fixed term exclusions add to the sense of rejection and diminishes a sense of belonging for many young people and therefore should be rarely applied
- all students should feel their contributions, efforts and achievements are recognised and valued even when these are not as high as others.

- to achieve inclusive education school staff and Governors have the training, support, flexibility, and resources to nurture, encourage, and respond to the needs of all students so that certain children are not disadvantaged by their needs.
- working to achieve equity and inclusion is a collective endeavour.

Mission

To secure a continuous evaluation and examination of our processes, systems, policies and practices to ensure we are doing all we can to build capacity at every level – classroom, school and community, in order to better understand and remove the barriers to inclusion. To challenge inequality, join-up services and celebrate difference, striving for a Luton where people, communities and services work together for better outcomes for our most vulnerable children and young people.

Wellbeing Strategy

One of the key findings of the Timpson review was that while there is evidence of excellent inclusive practice in schools across the country there is too much variation in exclusion practice. ***This strategy aims to develop a consistent, equitable, town-wide approach*** to inclusion for all children with additional needs, but especially for those with SEMH and those known to be at increased risk of exclusion, so that a CYP and their family can expect the same high quality provision in any Luton school.

This approach will focus on the following areas:

- Supporting the leadership of schools to develop ethos to promote inclusion as everyone's responsibility and to challenge negative language and practices that may serve to exclude and marginalise pupils.
- Supporting schools to develop behaviour policies that support attachment-aware, trauma-informed, relationship-based approaches to behaviour management and inclusion and with a strong emphasis on developing children's resilience.
- Supporting school staff to be skilled in deescalating emotional situations with students and in restoring relationships that have ruptured to avoid conflict and exclusions

- Supporting the development of 'student voice' to help schools listen to students whose behaviour puts them at risk of exclusion and to work with them and their families in order to understand their needs and perspective.
- Supporting schools to be ever curious and using this curiosity to understand why a child is exhibiting problems/vulnerabilities in school
- Supporting schools to recognise CYP who display significant difficulties regulating their emotions and behaviours as having SEN and to support SEN and behaviour departments in schools to work closely together to acknowledge this overlap so that pupils do not fall through gaps and that needs are identified as quickly as possible.
- Ensuring systems for moving and re-integrating excluded CYP or those at risk of exclusion are transparent, equitable and regularly reviewed.
- Support to schools from partner agencies are clear, transparent, equitable and with an emphasis on prevention and early intervention.
- Supporting transition at every stage for CYP with SEMH and additional needs as this is a major area of vulnerability. Sharing of information with the right people is key to successful transition and work around transition will be prioritised, carefully planned and joined up.
- Provision for those pupils who need alternative education will be of the highest quality and their ongoing needs frequently reviewed.
- Ensuring safeguards are in place to protect children against informal exclusion, 'off-rolling' and receiving multiple fixed period exclusions that can see CYP lose long periods of education.
- Ensuring that attendance issues are referred to the Education Welfare Service in a consistent and timely way to prevent entrenched patterns of long term persistent poor attendance.
- Ensuring that schools work closely with the ALPS team to support pupils who cannot attend school for medical reasons. That timely referrals are made to internally trained professionals who support emotional well-being and resilience such as pastoral leads, school counsellors and therapists and Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) and outside agencies such as CAMHS, CHUMS and the Child & Educational Psychology Service to try and prevent medical referrals for anxiety and mental health and that there is a multi-agency plan in place to support these pupils back into school.
- As a result of the COVID 19 global pandemic (2020 – 2021), more parents have felt there are positive benefits to home education and have as a result elected to home educate their children. We will ensure effective monitoring of elective home education so that parents feel supported in their decision to electively home educate their child/ children. For parents who find they are unable to provide a suitable education, support will be available to help them apply for school places. Children can be referred to the Missing Education Coordinator as a last resort if there are social care safeguarding concerns related to elective home education for children and in particular, vulnerable

children. Information about elective home education will be available and accessible for parents.

- There is effective liaison between the Council's social care and education teams to consider how best to support vulnerable pupils (not open to statutory services) who are causing concern in respect of poor attendance/missing education and/or who are exhibiting behaviour which puts them at risk of permanent exclusion.
- Ensuring a commitment to the strategy and preserving our culture of inclusion in Luton by building strong partnerships and consensus of approach across the plurality and diversity of all our schools.

Key priorities and objectives

To deliver our vision for inclusion seven key priorities and objectives have been developed. These are used to inform schools' behaviour, inclusion and well-being policies and plans in Luton, and to develop the key performance indicators against which success is measured.

1. To gain **commitment** from all schools to develop truly inclusive practices so there is consistency of approach across the town:
 - All schools sign up to Luton's Behaviour Inclusion and Well-being Charter and display the Charter in their schools (see Appendix A).
 - All schools' behaviour and inclusion policies address issues relating to fairness; considering what the individual needs of a child are rather than adopting a blanket approach to discipline and behaviour management. All schools promote a shared responsibility approach for behaviour, inclusion and well-being
 - All schools refer to the Primary and Secondary Behaviour Intervention Continuum Models (set out at Appendix E and Appendix F) to ensure timely strategies are put in place to support students and prevent the escalation of poor behaviour.
2. To use a set of **guiding principles** to support all decision making processes related to inclusion and exclusion (see Appendix B):
 - Schools making decisions about the potential exclusion of children and young people use the guiding principles to ensure comprehensive and robust consideration has been given to all aspects of inclusive practice before making decisions
 - Educational panels making decisions about children and young people who have been excluded or who are at risk of exclusion refer to the guiding principles to consider their responses

3. To develop greater **awareness** about barriers to inclusion and identifying social, emotional and mental health needs including the impact of early attachment experiences and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
 - All schools provide regular training for all staff including Governors (at least every two years) about the impact of early attachment experiences, trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on children's social and emotional well-being and risk of exclusion (see Appendix C)
 - Understanding attachment theory, belonging and the effects of trauma and ACEs on development and learning will form part of teacher training provided by Luton based teacher training providers.
4. To prioritise **preventative** work (focusing on: 'quality first teaching' - a style of teaching that emphasises high quality; inclusive teaching for all pupils in a class; transition planning and communication; actively promoting belonging; developing resilience; early identification of need, intervention and support; promoting relationship-based approaches to managing behaviour and development of a range of internal provision to enable a graduated response).
 - All schools prioritise quality first teaching and recognise this as a key element of inclusion. There is evidence of appropriate differentiation in lessons so these are accessible for all
 - School behaviour and inclusion policies place a clear emphasis on the importance of relationship-based approaches to managing behaviour and use de-escalation and restorative practices consistently. School staff and Governors receive regular training on these elements of practice (see e.g. [Brighton & Hove's guidance for developing attachment aware behaviour regulation policies](#))
 - All schools have ongoing plans to promote a strong sense of school belonging for pupils and develop systems and processes for identifying vulnerable pupils and offer specific intervention for those pupils who are struggling to gain this.
 - All schools have training on how to develop and increase pupil's resilience.
 - All schools have a range of internal provision for pupils. Internal provision is self and peer audited/ reviewed on a regular basis (at least yearly) to ensure high levels of effectiveness.
 - All schools have a dedicated transitions lead(s) who understand and promote the importance of this role. They have knowledge and understanding about [evidence based/ researched informed practice](#) that supports effective transition for vulnerable pupils.
 - All school / FE staff are aware of who their transition lead is and respond to any requests for support or information they make

- Schools adopt an approach to [transition](#) that asks not only is the child ready but also, are the parent(s) ready and is the school/ college or FE setting ready; recognising that this is not simply a within child issue but a systemic one
 - Good schools and FE settings express an interest in gaining e.g. the [Flying Start Gold Award for Transition](#)
 - All schools provide high quality (detailed, comprehensive) information about children transitioning to other schools and colleges and attend transition meetings about children who have SEMH needs, including information about past experiences that could put them at greater risk, e.g. all exposure to/ experience of domestic abuse
 - Good schools and colleges / FE settings ensure all children have a transition passport at points of transition from one school or educational setting to another (see Appendix D (i))
 - Pupils with SEMH needs have robust transition plans in place and these involve the child, parents and professionals involved with the child or family
 - All schools provide specific intervention for pupils at risk to develop resilience during transition phases and seek support from SEND Services support professionals or [see resources](#) for example
 - Schools receiving pupils transitioning from a behaviour provision recognise that these pupils are at considerably greater risk of exclusion and consider needs early. Planning involves specialist outside agency professionals (See Appendix D (ii))
 - All schools closely monitor pupil attendance and refer cases to the Education Welfare Service and other support services in a timely manner to prevent patterns of poor attendance and entrenched emotionally based school avoidance.
 - FE settings consider the support needs of at risk students leaving them to go to university or a work based placement and signpost students to support agencies and with student consent liaise with employers and others to share knowledge and understanding of support needs.
 - As part of the overall approach, schools and educational settings to use all the Council's resources, including the active travel team to advise on cycling and walking options to provide options for children and young people. This in turn could link back to behaviours and healthy eating providing a whole Council approach to achieving the aims of the strategy
5. To provide equitable and creative **re-integration** opportunities (taking a 'never give up on a child' approach, ensuring timely processes, using restorative approaches, town wide, fair and transparent systems and protocols for exploring and learning from exclusion data, managed moves and in-year fair access systems).

- All schools subscribe to Luton's '[in year fair access protocol](#)' in order to support those pupils at risk of exclusion from school or those who have been excluded from school
 - Exclusion data (including fixed term and permanent exclusion) and data related to managed moves is presented and analysed by the manager of the Alternative Learning and Progression Service at termly Behaviour Inclusion and Wellbeing Board (BIWAB) meetings. Learning from this data and analysis is considered and shared and strategies and intervention to address issues arising are formulated. Particularly careful consideration is given to those pupils with a) identified SEN need, b) those with EHC Plans and c) on identifying patterns that may represent racial inequality
 - Schools have effective oversight of all pupils on their roll referred for medical tuition so they can be supported to return to mainstream education at the earliest opportunity. Early intervention is supported by effective and timely referrals and liaison with CAMHS in respect of [pupils struggling with anxiety and mental health](#).
 - Schools ensure care plans are in place for those children who are not in school and receiving medical intervention including mental health intervention.
6. To ensure **alternative provisions** (APs) and specialist settings are of the highest quality and outcomes are ambitious
- The Alternative Learning and Progression Service (ALPS) invites alternative providers to tender to join its Approved Providers List. Only those providers which meet the Quality Standards (including a Section 11 or 175 safeguarding audit) are added to the Approved Providers List.
 - ALPS uses a quality monitoring and evaluation framework that includes pupil outcomes. Baseline measures are a requirement and there is explicit reference to the setting of ambitious targets. Evidence for intervention when outcomes are not achieved is required.
 - ALPS monitors their students with six-weekly review meetings in addition to termly contract monitoring as part of the formal quality assurance process. Students return to school through the in-year fair access protocol through a 'managed move'. The decision about readiness for return to school is a shared one taken at a Pupil Placement Panel (made up of relevant persons e.g. Head teachers and Behaviour Leads in schools, ALPS advisers, parents and students, outside agencies such as Youth Offending Service, Educational Psychology Service and Social care)
 - There are robust processes in place to consider the appropriateness and quality of specialist settings for CYP with SEN and Education, Health and

Care Plans (EHCPs). All requests are considered at the Special Provision Allocation Group (SPAG) and placements are regularly monitored by the CYPs' SEN Assessment Officer (at least annually).

7. To establish robust systems for **evaluating** the impact of the inclusion strategy
 - ALPS present a termly report to BIWAB on fixed term and permanent exclusion data (a key impact measure of effectiveness of the Behaviour, Inclusion and Well-being Strategy is a decrease in exclusion rates)
 - Representatives from BIWAB offer support to schools from outside agency support staff where there are high exclusion rates
 - There is an annual survey of schools and educational settings to evaluate the implementation of Behaviour, Inclusion and Well-being Strategy (see Appendix G).
 - There is annual data collection about how, when and where schools are using the BIWAB Guiding Principles to inform practice and decision-making and report to BIWAB. Best practice examples are shared with schools
 - There is annual data collection about staff training on attachment, trauma and ACEs
 - There is annual analysis of schools' behaviour and inclusion policies to reflect emphasis on relationship based approaches to behaviour management. Best practice examples are shared with schools
 - There is termly training for school/ educational professionals on the Behaviour, Inclusion and Wellbeing strategy
 - Parents and children and young people are surveyed about their experiences related to exclusions and results and learning shared with BIWAB and schools.

Appendices

Appendix A: [Behaviour, Inclusion and Well-being Charter](#)

Appendix B: [Guiding Principles: a decision making framework for promoting inclusion](#)

Appendix C: [Training](#)

Appendix D (i): [Examples of Transition Passports](#)

Appendix D (ii): [Transition Plan for children in Primary Behaviour Provisions](#)

Appendix E: [Primary Behaviour Continuum](#)

Appendix F: [Secondary Behaviour Continuum](#)

Appendix G: [Behaviour, Inclusion and Well-being Strategy Implementation Evaluation](#)

BIWAB membership:

Alternative Learning and Progression Service (ALPS)

Avenue Centre for Education (ACE)

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

Children and Families Service

Early Help Service

Education Service (Service Director, School Improvement Service, Senior Education Officer, Educational Psychology Service, Special Educational Needs Service)

Elected members (portfolio holder, Education); (Chairperson)

Flying Start & Children's Centres

Further Education representation (Barnfield College)

Public Health

Schools' neighbourhood area head teacher schools representation (Nursery; Infant, Junior, Primary; Secondary; Special)

School Nursing Service

Youth Offending Service (YOS)