

Children and Education Select Committee

16 November 2018



Surrey Alternative Learning Provision

Purpose of report: To outline the current Surrey Alternative Learning Provision (SALP) offer and how it is utilised by Surrey County Council and partners, with a particular focus on our work in reducing exclusions, to provide context of this vulnerable group and the range of services offered, including coverage of provision, length of time children utilise them for and whether the provision is being used to best improve children's outcomes.

Introduction:

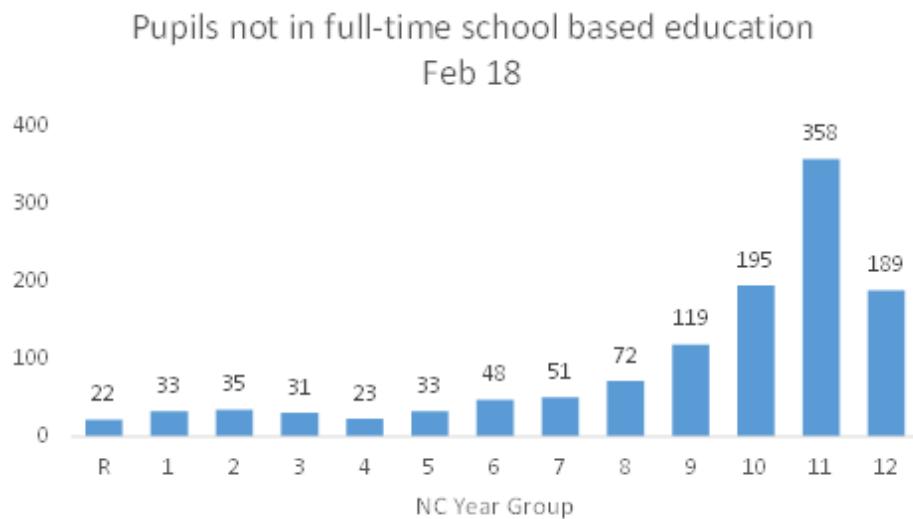
1. Alternative Provision is for children of compulsory school age who do not attend mainstream or special schools and who would not otherwise receive suitable education.
2. Children can require Alternative Provision for a wide range of reasons, including:
 - Behaviour which results in a permanent or fixed-period exclusion, or an off-site direction by a school;
 - Health reasons – including physical or mental health needs; and
 - Where a child is awaiting placement in a mainstream or special school.
3. Since 2010, there have been a number of national reviews into Alternative provision; details and links to these are contained in **Annex 1**
4. Common themes from these reviews outlined the need to;
 - Build skills and incentives for schools to develop effective strategies and interventions to address poor behaviour, at all levels, to prevent escalation to exclusion;
 - Develop a shared understanding of the purpose and expectations of Alternative Provision, at a local level;

- Strengthen accountability and quality assurance arrangements to deliver better outcomes for children in Alternative Provision;
- Promote greater use and sharing of data on Alternative Provision performance to inform commissioning decisions; and
- Promote stronger information sharing between local authorities and education settings about children's needs at strategic and individual placement levels, to ensure decisions about commissioning and placement transitions are as effective as possible.

Alternative Provision in Surrey

5. Characteristics of the cohort

6. Local authorities have a duty to provide Alternative Provision for children of compulsory school age, and nationally almost half (47%) of children in Alternative Provision are aged 15 to 16 (year group 11). Surrey data follows the same trend with a higher proportion of pupils in Alternative provision in key stage 4 (years 10&11).
7. Pupils in Alternative Provision are recorded as part of our Pupil Missing out on Education (PMOOE) Dataset. Pupils on this list include all pupils who are receiving less than 25 hours education per week. These pupils could either be attending a college course, work experience, be on reduced timetables to support reintegration, awaiting admission or attending alternative provision.



8. The above graph shows the number and National curriculum (NC) year group for Pupils Missing Out Of Education in February 2018, which was a total of 1209 pupils.

9. The PMOOE data is monitored every half term by the Education Welfare Service and each half term pupils are added and removed as they come in to and move out of the dataset. Throughout the year, some pupils may move in, out and back in again depending on their specific journey – it is therefore challenging to report on exact figures and characteristics. Instead, Education Welfare Officers hold the responsibility of monitoring this cohort and any pupils who are of concern are discussed at a multi agency area case review group each month so that a tailored support plan can be secured.

10. It is a statutory requirement that pupils who have been permanently excluded receive provision from the local authority on day 6, which is facilitated by our Short Stay Schools or where necessary our Access to Education service. Prior to day 6, the responsibility remains with the school.

11. Exclusions data for Surrey and trends analysis is contained in **annex 2**

Local Authority Commissioned Alternative Provision

12. In Surrey, we commission 10 short stay school providers across the county, these include three which are specifically commissioned to meet the health needs of pupils unable to attend school. Details of the Short stay schools are provided in **Annex 3**. The majority of provision for pupils in Surrey is focussed on secondary school aged pupils, with the exception of our primary short stay schools for pupils who have been, or are at immediate risk of, permanent exclusion. This is in line with our drive to improve inclusion and reduce exclusion for primary aged pupils and to keep them both local and in mainstream provision wherever possible.

13. Our **Access to Education** Service (A2E) and Medical Access to Education service (MA2E) offers one to one and group tuition for pupils unable to attend school. This tuition is provided either in the home or in local community hubs. In October 2018, A2E were supporting 159 pupils across the county, as outlined below;

Area	Count of Students	Percent of Students
NE	43	27%
NW	21	13%
SE	50	31%
SW	45	28%

Grand Total	159	100%
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14. Surrey Online School (SOS) is an initiative partnering Surrey County Council & Tute Education. SOS provides live online lessons as well as mentoring support (GCSE package only) to a range of pupils (KS2-KS4) across the county. Since starting in September 2015, SOS has delivered over 750 placements to in excess of 50 schools and council services.

15. In addition to the above, each area is allocated 11-19 funding which is referred to as Surrey Alternative Learning Provision (SALP) network funding. The funding is distributed to each quadrant who use their SALP executive board to determine how it is used in their localities.

School and community commissioned alternative provision

The below is an example of some of the SALP funded projects in each area (secondary schools only), however, in addition there are many additional third sector ALP projects which can be procured by the schools.

16. NW Surrey; The NW SALP Board divide their SALP network funding by schools and this is used for internal projects or to commission places with local community providers, for example; STEPS, which is an Alternative Provision programme for 14-16 run by Surrey Care Trust and based in Woking.

17. NE Surrey; The NE SALP funding is divided in to the three boroughs. One Borough funds an ALP, another commissions East to West a third sector organisation who provide pastoral care and support student wellbeing to each of the secondary schools.

18. SE Surrey; In the SE, there are a total of 53 places commissioned and managed by the SE SALP network.

- Springboard is a key stage 4 (14-16 year olds) provision run by East Surrey College and offers 24 places.
- Route 4 is based at the Warwick School and offers 16 places to pupils in Key stage 4
- The Link is based at the Ashcombe School and offers 13 places to pupils from key stage 4.

19. SW Surrey; the SW SALP board divide their SALP network funding in to 3 projects offering a total of 38 places;

- The Well Project has a total of 12 places for key stage 4 and four additional places for year 9 pupils.

- The Alternative Learning Centre (ALC) based at Weydon School in Farnham has 12 places for pupils in either key stage 3 (12-14) or key stage 4 (14-16)
- The STAR project has 10 places for pupils from either key stage 3 or 4.

20. Funding for AP

Funding for Alternative Provision comes from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to local authorities. The high needs funding allocation within the DSG is used to fund Alternative Provision placements and also supports provision for 0-25 year olds with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

21. Outcomes for pupils who attend Alternative Provision –

We do not currently have a mechanism by which to monitor and evaluate the outcomes for pupils who attend Alternative Provision. This is impacted by the complexity and diversity of the education landscape in Surrey, which has led to an inconsistency in how outcomes are both measured and collated. Whilst we do collate key stage 4 results from our Short stay schools, this does not accurately reflect the progress they have made whilst at the provision.

22. Governance of Alternative Provision

There is no single governance structure for Alternative Provision in Surrey. This is due to the commissioning arrangements held by both the local authority and schools themselves.

Schools who commission Alternative Provision are responsible for the Quality Assurance and governance of the arrangement for each pupil.

23. However, Each Short Stay School/Local Authority commissioned provision has a management committee, each SALP network has a SALP executive Board and the A2E service has an Area Lead who reports in to the Principal Lead for Professional Standards (Teaching and Learning)

Surrey practice and initiatives

24. As part of the focus led by the High Sheriff, we have been undertaking discussion groups with Headteachers, specialist teachers, excluded pupils and third sector providers to better understand the challenges around reducing exclusions and what Alternative provision needs to look like.

25. This has culminated in a short film of the experiences of primary aged children who have been Permanently Excluded and the impact on their families which will be used as part of a training programme, initially for school governors.
26. In January, we are planning a conference for schools and governors to present findings from the Shrierval year of the High sheriff around exclusions and hear from our link inspector from HMI on the challenges of Inclusion and the impact on performance in schools.
27. As part of the SEND transformation work we are developing a behaviour pathway which will aims to strengthen the inclusion of children and young people, educational outcomes, emotional wellbeing and progress towards independent living through a graduated response to behaviour and Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health, reducing the numbers of exclusions and demand for specialist interventions (such as EHCP) or placements.

It aims to create a behaviour pathway that integrates key aspects of the SEND, CAMHs and Family Resilience graduated responses.
28. It will provide a proper graduation of support through a plan/do/review process reflecting a Levels of Need framework which integrates educational need with other domains of need enabling a blended offer of wraparound services where appropriate. To be effective, this new joint behaviour pathway will need to be supported by clear and evidenced decision making, quality assurance and monitoring, positive (restorative) relationship building and appropriate challenge.
29. Following discussion with Secondary Phase council, we have commissioned a review of Surrey Short Stay Schools (SSS) and Surrey alternative learning provision (SALP).
30. This review aims to map and evaluate the current models of alternative learning to ensure all Schools are able to access high quality Alternative Provision for Vulnerable Learners.
31. This holistic assessment of provision will lead to recommendations to ensure access to Alternative Provision places is equitable and fair across the community of schools and their local provision offer.
32. The scope of this project will include SSS provision and Area's use of SALP funding to reduce exclusion from school. The desired outcome is that areas will be able to demonstrate the correlation between co-ordinated reductions in exclusion, with the use of SALP funding - which is not currently evident.
33. All schools and commissioners have a responsibility to ensure that when pupils on roll access an Alternative or Off Site provision that the pupil is safe, learning and achieving. The current Surrey Quality Assurance Framework for Alternative Provision was published in

2015 and is in the process of being reviewed and updated. (**annex 4**) This document sets out the key principles of Alternative Provision and provides both schools and the Local Authority with an assessment tool for measuring the effectiveness of delivery of alternative provision.

34. Every Permanently excluded pupil during 2017/18 Academic year was tracked in respect of key events during their education history. This exercise has helped us to understand specific trigger points, school moves, requests for EHCP and fixed term exclusions referrals to outside agencies etc. This will be developed further to follow their progress post exclusion and will result in an important piece of longitudinal study to inform future commissioning.
35. Early indications evidence that there are distinct points where earlier intervention could have led to a different outcome and we will be drawing on this research to better inform our commissioning needs and decision making processes.

Conclusions:

36. Alternative provision is a largely uninspected and unregulated sector nationally. Beyond pupil referral units and other full-time provision, there is no requirement for the majority of alternative providers to register with any official body and therefore there are no consistent arrangements to evaluate their quality. Despite this lack of regulation and accountability, some students spend a significant proportion of their week away from their school or unit attending an alternative provision.
37. We are addressing this in Surrey as part of a review in to the provision available for Vulnerable Learners to ensure services and resources are effectively aligned with identified needs.
38. The current SEND and Family resilience transformation work will be designing and embedding clear graduated pathways of support. This will ensure families, professionals and schools can secure appropriate resource and intervention at the point additional needs are identified.
39. Alternative provision is driven by the numbers of pupils who are unable to access education due to often unmet and complex needs. The current SEND and Family resilience transformation programmes will support the improvement in access and inclusion, through several activities aimed at targeting earlier intervention and local community resources.
40. We cannot currently be confident in the effectiveness of Surrey Alternative Learning Provision in respect of the impact on pupils due to the inconsistency in how each area SALP operates and the lack of coherent and collated data regarding outcomes.

41. The recently commissioned review into SALP and our Short stay schools will evaluate the different models of practice in each locality to develop a set of recommendations in order to ensure effective provision which maximises the impact on outcomes.
42. The Exclusions focus led by the High Sheriff has provided a welcome opportunity to better understand the current challenges regarding inclusion but also holds dependencies on other aspects of the support system to really effect change. For example, CAMHS, SEND, Early Help and family resilience.
43. The longitudinal research into the journey of the excluded child will be pivotal in helping us understand how best to support pupils with additional needs during key transition events and at the earliest point possible.
44. The needs of vulnerable learners must continue to be central to the current transformation across SEND and Family resilience and the anticipated graduated pathways proposed will facilitate access to earlier identification and support.

Recommendations:

45. That Officers return to the Childrens Education Select Committee to provide a further update and conclusion on the activities outlined in this report in the spring term of 2019.

Next steps:

Identify future actions and dates.

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Sources/background papers:

- Annex A - Recent National Reviews in to Alternative Provision
- Annex B - Exclusions Data
- Annex C - Alternative Provision commissioned in Surrey
- Annex D – Quality assurance framework - alternative provision