

**Title:** Pupil Referral Units

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**Intended audience:** Internal  Partner organisations  Public  Confidential

## Purpose or recommendation

The report is to inform Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel: what PRU's are, why we have them and outline the current context and performance of the PRU's in Wolverhampton.

## Background and context

Children and young people educated in alternative provision (AP) or a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) are among the most vulnerable. They include pupils who have been excluded from school or who cannot attend mainstream school for other reasons: for example, children with behaviour issues, those who have short- or long-term illness, school phobics, teenage mothers, pregnant teenagers, or pupils without a school place.

Each LA has a duty under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 to provide suitable education for children of compulsory school age who cannot attend school for a variety of reasons.

### Pupil referral units (PRUs):

PRUs are one type of AP. They are local authority establishments which provide education for children unable to attend a mainstream school. There were around 400 PRUs in operation across the country on at present.

All PRUs have a teacher in charge, similar to a mainstream school's headteacher. They also have a management committee, which acts like a mainstream school's governing body. Since April 2013, PRUs have been given greater control over their budgets and staffing. They have similar freedoms to mainstream schools, AP academies and AP free schools.

### PRU's In Wolverhampton:

There are currently four PRU's in Wolverhampton:

**Kingston Centre** (Primary PRU) which is based on the Northern House Academy (New Park School) site – the centre was placed in special measures in January 2015 and became a sponsored Academy with Northern House on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016.

The school is therefore currently "unclassified" with regards to Ofsted judgments.

**The Braybrook Centre** (Key Stage 3) - based on the Parkfields Site. Braybrook Centre is a Key Stage 3 Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) with up to 42 places for young people who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD).

- ✓ The Centre is currently judged to be Good by Ofsted.

**Midpoint Centre** (Key Stage 4) - based on the Parkfields site. The Midpoint Centre is a Key Stage 4 Pupil Referral Unit for young people who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

Alongside classrooms and laboratories for Math's, English, Science, ICT and Personal, Social and Health Education, the Centre has specialist facilities for brickwork, hair and beauty, motor vehicle, technology and small animal care. Students are supported in their learning by classroom assistants and the Centre has two behaviour mentors and a behaviour manager to address behaviour issues.

- ✓ The Centre is currently judged to be Good by Ofsted.

**The Orchard Centre** (Home and Hospital PRU) - based on the Parkfields site. The Orchard Centre provides education for pupils experiencing medical, social, emotional or psychological ill-health or trauma which makes it difficult for them to attend school regularly or, in some cases, at all.

The PRU is in three parts:

- Hospital provision is available for up to twenty full time pupils ranging from Reception to post-16. This takes place in the hospital school room at New Cross Hospital or at the bedside if required. Two full time staff are allocated to this provision with support from other staff as necessary.
- Home tuition is available for pupils from Reception to Year 11 and referrals come from physical and mental health professionals

These two areas of provision are known as External Services. Teachers and Teaching Assistants are employed in this provision. In addition, Moms to Be are supported through this area and the Orchard Centre. The number of pupils varies on a weekly basis but potentially up to 50 pupils can be supported through this service.

- The third part of the provision is The Orchard Centre with a capacity to take 90 full-time pupils from Years 7 to 11. All pupils admitted have emotional, medical or psychological needs and receive SEN support or have an Education, Health and Care Plan. (EHC)

Most pupils, except a few who have never had a secondary school place or who are new to the City, are dual registered with a mainstream school. This means that they remain on the roll of their school as well as being placed on the roll of the Centre and the mainstream school will continue to be responsible for their education.

- ✓ The Centre is currently judged to be Good by Ofsted.

## **Financial implications**

The cost of implementation and monitoring of the Council's actions to challenge and support schools to improve their end Ofsted outcomes has been included in the approved revenue budget for the Schools Standards service.

The cost of educational failure is however significant for the school, for the community and for the City in economic terms - It is therefore evident that the role of the LA in supporting raising standards in schools has financially significant implications for the Council and for the City.

## **Legal implications**

Under Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 the Council has a duty to contribute to the development of the community by securing efficient primary and secondary education and promote high standards in the city.

Recent improvements in attainment and in the performance of schools suggest that the Council's duties are being discharged.

## **Equalities implications**

Some pupils and some schools face greater challenges in achieving educational success; there are therefore profound Equalities implications to the LA and to schools in ensuring that every child and young person achieves their full potential and every school provides good educational outcomes.

A coherent and effective strategy to support schools is in place and Ofsted regularly audit all of this work.

## **Environmental and Corporate landlord implications**

There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report

## **Human resources implications**

Where the Headteacher, staff or governors require support or training there can be significant HR implications.

The wider social costs of educational underachievement or failure have been previously referred to.