

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Contact Officer: Maggie Bovair, Head of Inclusion Services

1 Purpose

1. To inform the Schools Forum of the progress that has been made by MK Secondary Behaviour Partnership to progressively reshape the nature of provision supporting pupil behaviour management.
2. To inform the Schools Forum of the outturn position of the Partnership for 2011/12 and the agreed budget for 2012/13.
3. To inform the Schools Forum of specialist provision for pupils with similar needs in the primary phase.

2 Recommendations

That the Schools Forum notes this report and makes any recommendations as appropriate.

3 Financial Impact

This paper outlines the spending plan for the MK Behaviour Partnership for 2012/13. The budget plan is attached as Annex 1.

The outturn position for 2011/12 is shown in Annex 2.

Background information gives a brief context within which proposed financial planning decisions have been made.

4 Background

The reconfiguration of alternative education provision has been taking place since September 2008. This has included the development of three locality based Personalised Education Centres (PECs) which have legal standing as PRUs and link to families of schools within their defined area. One of the PECs, known as IPEC has been commissioned from Countec. This commission ends on 31st July 2012. A new provision, North PEC maintained by the LA and based on the Stephenson Academy site will open on 1st August 2012. It will have a similar budget, capacity, staff structure and aspirations as the other centres.

Places with alternative providers of education for KS4 students are commissioned centrally by the Partnership and shared equally between each of the PECs.

The Medical Service, known as The Bridge has been operational since April 2009 but originally considered to be a part of the Central PEC. In September 2010 it was established as a separate element of the partnership, based at the Wellsmead site. It has a staffing model agreed between the Local Authority and the Behaviour Partnership, a separate leadership team and DfE number. Nevertheless it shares the same purpose and aspirations as the other PECs.

The Primary PRU has now been in the new purpose-built centre for two years with expanded provision to 18 places and an increased capacity to support reintegration into local schools. Currently, there is a working party of officers and head teachers considering the framework for primary behaviour support with a significant focus on the future development of the PRU. The intention will be to confirm the operation of the PRU from September 2012 as well as the deployment of any centrally retained resource to support schools in improving outcomes for children who are at risk of exclusion (subject to review following changes announced in the DfE's School Funding Reform).

There are a number of other initiatives that complement this specialist primary provision. This includes a programme of training relating to restorative practice. More than thirty schools are fully committed to this approach. It is intended that the most accomplished schools will become training schools in restorative practice for those who are developing this approach. Also, the LA is completing the first year of fully funded nurture groups (there are 3) providing resource to other schools for very young children with attachment difficulties.

5 Issues

The Local Authority and the Behaviour Partnership have reviewed a range of governance models for the PECs and Medical Service in an attempt to optimise the effectiveness of services. This has led to a vision of future development that includes the secondary special school for BESD and The Stephenson Academy in a coherent continuum of provision. This will create a single provision, with one DfE number that encompasses the academy and each of the PECs enabling strengthened leadership and shared resources. This is in line with recommendations from the DfE for the future development of alternative education. The model of leadership and management has been endorsed by the MKBP steering group, and has gained support from the MK secondary schools.

The Partnership has balanced its budget, declaring a small underspend for the financial year 2011/12 that is significantly below the recommended 5% threshold.

Base budgets for 2012/13 have been agreed for the PECs and the Medical Service by the Partnership and the Local Authority. These will be adjusted annually.

The oversight of the Primary PRU has been reviewed by the PRU's management committee. Staffing has been increased so that there is capacity to meet the needs of permanently excluded pupils who have entitlement to full time tuition from the 6th day following their exclusion and to support reintegration into mainstream at an appropriate stage.

The current consultation on the Government's funding reforms has a significant section on funding alternative education. The MKBP steering group is in discussion with DfE representatives to establish if the current funding mechanism can continue. This exceptional arrangement has existed for four years whereby alternative education budgets for secondary-aged pupils are delegated to a lead school to commission provision on behalf of the partnership. Proposals for the funding reform in the primary phase will lead to the creation of a formula for the PRU. The details are still being agreed.