

BRIEFING	TO:	Schools Forum												
	DATE:	18 th September 2026												
	LEAD OFFICER:	Niall Devlin, Service Director – Education and Inclusion CYPS												
	TITLE:	Placements at Aspire												
1. Background														
1.1	Rotherham’s approach to reducing exclusion and enabling inclusion is based on a 3-Tier mode. The 3-Tier alternative provision model promotes a continuum of support as part of an integrated system of early intervention and graduated support. Tier 1 Outreach Tier 2 Turn Around/Step Out provision Tier 3 Day 5 (Provision for permanently excluded pupils)													
1.2	This is underpinned by the approach that we have interventions not destinations.													
1.3	As part of developing this model, a test and trial period of offering time limited KS 2 and 1 placements at Aspire has been undertaken to evaluate outcomes for identified pupils.													
1.4	Pupils identified as experiencing SEMH challenges in school have been offered, through referral at Primary Inclusion Panel, a 12-week intervention placement at Aspire with the intended outcome of a successful return to their mainstream school.													
2.1	The current model of support follows the 3-Tier continuum as there is an expectation that pupils are supported at Tier 1 by SEMH outreach services, prior to a referral and recommendation at Primary Inclusion Panel that a period of support via a time limited placement at Aspire (Tier 2) would be appropriate.													
2.2	If agreed, a 12-week placement is arranged, with a clear focus from the outset on transition back to the ‘home’ school. The progress of the placement is monitored via Aspire’s internal monitoring, regular review with the ‘home’ school and at Primary Inclusion Panel. The two-year outcomes data is as follows: 2024-2025 18 places offered with 12-week dual registered duration (3 places not taken up, parent refusal and PEX prior to placement) 83% male 17% female 67% KS2 33% KS1 <table><tr><td>Y1</td><td>Y2</td><td>Y3</td><td>Y4</td><td>Y5</td><td>Y6</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr></table>		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	4	2	3	4	3	2
Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6									
4	2	3	4	3	2									

Onward destinations:

93% maintained school place

6% special school place through EHCP

1 PEX

2025-2026

17 places offered with 12-week dual registered duration

76% male 24% female

59% KS2 41% KS1

FS2	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
1	2	4	5	2	1	1

Onward destinations:

94% maintained school place (1 awaiting special school through EHCP)

6% parent chose EHE

- 2.3** The test and trial period has shown that tier 2 provision has had a positive impact on children's educational outcomes. It has also been suggested that a fixed cutoff of 12 weeks is not always in the child's best interest and that some child may benefit from a further four weeks (to support transition back to the child's school). The period of test and trial has been subsidised to date through Aspire's base budget. This is funding they receive to discharge statutory duty in respect of permanently excluded pupils and thus cannot be used on an ongoing basis to fund the entire cost of this provision.
- 2.4** We would like to build on the success of the test and trial and ensure the long-term viability of this provision. It is proposed to make a nominal charge of £50 per day for time limited placements as a contribution towards the actual cost of funding these and to extend the placements to up to 16 weeks to aid more robust transition back to the 'home' school as a result of learning during the test period.
- 2.5** There are a small number of children where future placements are already agreed through Primary Inclusion Panel. All existing placements agreed will be honoured on the current terms, with charges coming in for future placements agreed and starting after the implementation date.
- 2.6** Although the rate of permanent exclusions across the borough has remained stable across 2025/26 when compared to 2024/25, there has been an increase at Primary from 6 to 14 evidencing the ongoing need for this provision.
- 2.7** The intended outcome of maintaining the provision is that there is an option available to schools to commission a short-term placement at Aspire to support reintegration back to school. A potential risk to implementing a charge to the provision is that this disincentivises schools from using the provision as a preventative measure and they move directly to a permanent exclusion to avoid the charge.
- 2.8 Options:**
1. Agreement that a recharge of £50 per day can be made to the 'home' school by Aspire PRU for students accessing the provision. This is less than the actual cost of the provision but is a contribution that allows for long term sustainability of the model. This cost is far less than the cost of other externally commissioned AP and so represents a more affordable option for schools- Recommended Option.

	2. Agreement that schools agree to pay for the cost of tier 2 provision through the schools block. 3. No funding mechanism is agreed and the provision ceases. This represents a risk to schools and pupils as it limits options for pupils at risk of permanent exclusions.
3. Key Actions and Timelines	
3.1	September 2026- Schools Forum decision taken September 2026- Communication regarding any agreed funding arrangements to Primary School Leaders. April 2027- new funding arrangements come into place
4. Financial Implications	
	This proposal is intended to establish a more sustainable funding mechanism for the Aspire Tier 2 intervention model. By shifting part of the cost of inclusion support to those schools generating demand it creates a financial incentive for schools to continue utilising outreach and early intervention support before progressing to a Tier 2 placement. <u>Impact on schools budgets</u> For schools accessing the provision, the proposal will result in a direct charge of £50 per day for future placements. Based on a 12-week placement (approximately 60 school days), the cost would be around £3,000 per placement (£4,000 if extended to 16 weeks). The financial impact on individual schools will be limited to those accessing the service. <u>Impact on Aspire PRU</u> For Aspire PRU, the proposal will generate an income stream that contributes towards the ongoing delivery costs of the programme, reducing reliance on its core budget to subsidise these placements. It would improve the financial sustainability of the PRU. <u>Impact on the Authority's High Needs Budget</u> The proposal does not create any additional financial pressure on the Local Authority's High Needs Budget. However, by supporting earlier intervention and successful reintegration into mainstream education, the model has the potential to mitigate future pressures arising from permanent exclusions, alternative provision placements and more costly specialist provision.
5. Recommendations	
5.1	That Schools Forum note Option 1 as the preferred option- a recharge of £50 per day will be made to the 'home' school by Aspire PRU for students accessing the provision.