

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Improving Lives Select Commission
2.	Date:	6 November 2013
3.	Title:	Proposed Restructure of RMBC Pupil Referral Units
4.	Programme Area:	Children and Young People’s Services

5. Summary

This report was submitted to Cabinet at its meeting of 16 October 2013, which agreed the recommendation as set out in paragraph 6 (1).

In recent years, there has been a changing landscape for the national Alternative Provision sector. The Charlie Taylor Report on Improving Alternative Provision made a range of recommendations to re-shape provision and better meet the needs of those children on the periphery and outside of mainstream education. In acknowledging the principles of the report, the Local Authority, in partnership with schools, conducted a review of existing pupil referral unit provision in Rotherham and at the same time has had to take account of the implementation of the Schools Funding Reforms 2013-14.

The existing pupil referral unit provision consists of 3 ‘partnership’ pupil referral units (Riverside, St Mary’s and the Bridge), the Rowan Centre (for pregnant schoolgirls and teenage mothers) and the ARC (for primary pupils (Y1-4) plus some KS3 pupils with more complex needs). In addition there is a primary SEN unit at Thorogate School for Y5/6 pupils and an Alternative Curriculum Service that organises and manages offsite provision for pupils that schools feel unable to cater for.

6. Recommendation

- 1) **That Improving Lives Select Commission is asked to note the request to Cabinet:-**
 - **That the existing ‘five’ registered pupil referral unit model in Rotherham is streamlined into a ‘two’ registered pupil referral unit model that more appropriately meets the needs of those vulnerable pupils who are unable to access mainstream school (as per statutory guidance).**
- 2) **That Improving Lives Select Commission is asked to determine if there are any issues arising from this report to feed into its work programme.**

7. Proposals and Details

The wider picture

Where children and young people manifest challenging behaviour which cannot be managed in mainstream education, a time limited period in a pupil referral unit will also be accompanied by holistic, whole family support which facilitates sustained improvement in the home. Rotherham's Early Help strategy outlines the importance of both preventing escalation of need, and also intervening earlier to reduce the risk of further escalation where this is possible. As children do not live in isolation, access to support children and young people on a pupil referral unit roll may be solicited from the Early Help Support Panel, where partner agencies delivering services to adults as well as children (such as Choices and Options, Adult Mental Health and Housing) can be engaged to provide a tight package of support coordinated by the Family CAF. Often, parenting is seen as the root cause of many children's behavioural issues. However, parenting itself can only be improved if the adult in question has the mental health capacity to recognise the need to change and commit to this, which on occasion can only be achieved following adult mental health interventions. Where mental health issues are prevalent in the child or young person, CAMHS will likewise be pivotal in affecting positive change in partnership with the Local Authority.

The current local offer

'Partnership' pupil referral units were set up as 'Behaviour and Attendance' partnerships (in approx. 2009) by the LA and secondary schools where clusters of schools across geographical areas worked together with pupils from those schools accessing 'their' pupil referral unit. Riverside (at Catcliffe) serves the Southern partnership (Wales, Brinsworth, Maltby, Aston and Dinnington. St Mary's (at Rawmarsh) serves the Northern partnership (Clifton, Wath, St Pius, Swinton and Rawmarsh). The Bridge pupil referral unit (at Whiston, adjacent to Newman Special School) serves the Central partnership (Wickersley, St Bernard's, Oakwood, Thrybergh, Wingfield and Winterhill).

Only one of the 'partnership' pupil referral units has any fully qualified teaching staff and none of them offer the opportunity to access GCSEs. There is a focus on 'vocational' courses. These pupil referral units have a notional 25 places each and generally work on offering 20 full-time equivalent places. Most placements are part-time.

Rowan is based in Rawmarsh, has an onsite nursery, and is a joint venture between RMBC and Barnardo's. Rowan has fully qualified teaching staff and offers 6 GCSEs plus additional accreditation. Rowan can cater for 15 pupils of compulsory school age. Pupils are also able to continue with partially completed courses in conjunction with their mainstream school so have the opportunity to achieve more where appropriate. Placements are full-time and long-term. There is a focus on the development of parenting skills and there is a post-16 offer onsite through RCAT.

The ARC pupil referral unit is located across two sites, Swinton (KS3) and the Welcome Centre (Y1-4), and also hosts the Home Tuition and CAMHS Education

Services. The CAMHS Education classroom is currently located at CAMHS in Kimberworth Place.

The Thorogate unit does not currently sit under the 'pupil referral unit' umbrella. It can have up to 9 pupils on roll with 6 pupils onsite in the unit at any one time. It caters for pupils with statements (SEN) who are unable to currently access a full-time programme in mainstream school, pupils who have been permanently excluded (PX) and who are therefore the full responsibility of the LA to provide a full-time, appropriate education, and pupils who schools require support with and who are very close to being permanently excluded.

In order to improve outcomes for children attending the PRU provision it is proposed to have:

PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT 1:

- This would be a 65-place (secondary) pupil referral unit located across 2 sites (currently St Mary's and Riverside). It will offer part-time, full-time, short and long-term placements. GCSEs will be offered as well as appropriate vocational courses. Links to both pre and post-16 offers at FE are intended. This would be operational with effect from January 2014 which would leave the Bridge premises vacant.
- Primary provision is still under review as the current system is not meeting pupil or school needs. There is massive pressure on the system with many schools struggling with children displaying extreme and often violent behaviours. It is the preferred choice that primary pupil referral unit provision takes place in a total of four small nurture group centres. Three of these would ideally be located on primary school sites (as per the Thorogate model) and would cater for Y1 & 2, Y3 & 4, and Y5 & 6. This Y5 & 6 centre would replace the Thorogate unit (as Thorogate school no longer wish to host that unit). The fourth would need to cater for pupils with more extreme behaviours who are unlikely to be able to access any primary school site for a time. It is anticipated that each of these centres would cater for a total of 6 pupils each onsite at any one time. Host primary schools are currently being sought so it is anticipated that the primary provision at the unit adjacent to Kimberworth Place would need to continue until probably summer 2014. These primary units would be under the leadership and governance of pupil referral unit 1 with the Head Teachers of the host primary schools being required to sit on the management committee of that pupil referral unit (as per guidance from the DfE).
- An increased number of staff would be required for these units.
- Dalton Foljambe primary school is interested in hosting a primary unit for Y1 & 2 pupils. This option is currently being investigated further.
- If the proposal for the complex needs provision proceeds then it might be appropriate to consider placing the complex needs primary pupils there as a separate unit under the management and staffing of pupil referral unit 1.

- If two further units cannot be found on primary school sites then it might be appropriate to consider finding an alternative location for Riverside secondary pupil referral unit at Catcliffe and placing the primary pupils in the unit premises there where they would benefit from being in close proximity to a mainstream primary school.
- Pupils currently accessing ARC KS3 (Swinton) will either be reintegrated back into their mainstream school, be relocated into one of the two sites at St Mary's and Riverside, or would be eligible for the proposed complex needs provision (should that proposal proceed).
- Schools will be offered the opportunity to commission part-time places at pupil referral unit 1 (at both secondary and primary phases). Capacity for school commissioned places will be dependent upon LA demand.

PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT 2:

- This will be a 25-place specialist centre (jointly funded through the LA and Barnardo's at Rowan in Rawmarsh) that will support the education of pupils with a range of health needs including teenage pregnancy. It is proposed that transition to this wider range of provision takes place from September to October with the centre being fully operational with its revised remit from October half-term 2013. The Centre will be re-branded to reflect the change from being a teen parent unit to an education centre for pupils with a range of health needs. There will continue to be an on-site nursery for the children of teenage parents.
- The CAMHS Education service offer will be incorporated into the Rowan centre with Rowan working closely with CAMHS and other health and RMBC colleagues. This will enable the resources at Rowan to be utilised to maximum effect. Fully qualified teaching staff will teach all pupils across the range of need. CAMHS Education service is required to be part of the planned pupil referral unit places (i.e. with delegated budget) rather than be a service. It also needs to be located within an educational rather than a health setting. These stipulations are as per guidance from the DfE. Through this CAMHS Education pupils would receive an improved offer from the LA if they are not well enough to access their mainstream school. A range of accreditation will be offered to all pupils irrespective of the reasons for being placed there. There will be a focus on pupils returning to mainstream school as soon as they are well enough to do so. Discussions are already taking place with CAMHS to develop an appropriate operating procedure with joint input from Education and CAMHS.
- The home tuition service will operate from Rowan with a SLA being put in place for this between Rowan and the LA. Tuition will be delivered by sessional tutors. Revised statutory guidance from the DfE on health needs (Jan 2013) indicates that the LA must be able to offer up to a full-time onsite offer for health needs if required which it is currently unable to do. The oversight and line management of the hospital school will also be located at this centre. This is to ensure that there is continuity of provision with a cohesive approach for all pupils requiring education outside of school for health reasons. The hospital school currently caters for pupils who have very

short stays in hospital (generally 1 or 2 days). If, on occasions, there are longer term pupils then home tutors are likely to be already be working with them so it would then be appropriate for the home tutors to continue working with those pupils at the hospital.

- Training related to health issues (as well as educational issues) would be targeted to all staff working across the range of health needs pupils.
- Schools will be offered the opportunity to commission places at this centre for vulnerable pupils who fulfil the entry criteria on health needs. There are already a number of requests from schools for those places.

Staffing establishment (staffing figures are given as number of people not number of full-time equivalent posts)

Pre-proposal staffing levels

St Mary's	13
The Bridge	14
Riverside	12

Rowan	7 RMBC
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staff (Barnardo's staff numbers are not included here)

Alternative Curriculum	2
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Thorogate unit	3
ARC	21

(ARC staffing figures include primary, KS3, CAMHS Education, and Home tuition but do not include sessional tutors)

Hospital school	3
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Total staff	75
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Proposed staffing levels by July 2014

Pupil referral unit 1(secondary only)

29

Primary provision is still being reviewed. Proposed interim staffing levels:

ARC KS3	6 (to be reduced by 2 in January as pupil numbers fall). 0 staff by April 2013. (1 member of staff transferring across to primary with immediate effect)
ARC primary	9 plus ARC Head of Centre

By July 2014 it is intended that primary provision will sit under pupil referral unit 1 which means the post of ARC Head of Centre will no longer be required. It is not clear at this time what level of staffing will be required for primary provision – current numbers are not at risk at the moment.

One possible proposal for staffing of primary pupil referral unit provision (figures are included within proposed HN allocation for 2014/15):

18 people across the primary units which also include a support/cover team from the pupil referral unit which can also link with schools. This broadly equates to the current numbers of staff at ARC primary (10), ARC KS3 (6) and Thorogate (3) but would change some of the levels.

Pupil referral unit 2 (Rowan)	7 RMBC staff. In addition, CAMHS Education staff, existing home tutors, and staff at the hospital school will transfer across to the management of Rowan. Current vacancies of Team Leaders for CAMHS Education and Home Tuition will not be filled. Staff at Rowan will work with a wider range of pupil need.
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Total number in proposed structure 63

There are many staffing anomalies across the pupil referral units currently, with staff doing similar roles on different pay grades and different terms and conditions. These issues will be rectified giving parity for all staff grades as the result of this restructure.

Of the pre-proposal staffing levels, 11 posts are currently vacant – most of these vacancies will not be replaced, 2 members of staff are currently employed as casual staff and are not eligible to apply for posts in the new structure, and 2 members of staff are considering retirement at Xmas.

2 of the vacancies are at Rowan – both posts have been ring-fenced to staff at risk from the restructure of the partnership pupil referral units in the first instance.

Premises:

The following is proposed:

Rowan (Rawmarsh) will continue to be used.
St Mary's (Rawmarsh) will continue to be used.

Riverside (Catcliffe) will either continue to house secondary pupil referral unit or it will house a centralised primary provision for 2 of the primary units (Y3/4 and Y5/6).

There is a possibility that Riverside pupil referral unit could be relocated to other suitable premises if they can be found. There would be financial implications with this option and would have to be discussed at CSART.

There is a possibility that Y1 and Y2 pupils who need to access Alternative Provision could be located at Dalton Foljambe school in a primary unit should that proposal proceed.

If the primary provision moves to Riverside premises at Catcliffe then the unit adjacent to Kimberworth Place would be vacated.

The classroom in Kimberworth Place will be vacated (Nov 2013)

It is intended that the Bridge premises at Whiston will be vacated (Jan 2014). If no alternative location is found for the Thorogate primary unit (currently going through a formal closure process) then it is proposed that the primary unit is relocated to the Bridge premises in January 2014 as a temporary measure whilst a longer term solution is found.

The Redbarn house premises at Swinton will be vacated by April 2014 at the latest.

8. Finance

From 1.4.13 a change to the DfE School Funding Regulations required all Pupil Referral Units to have a delegated budget which must be allocated from the Dedicated Schools Grant Allocation paid to the Authority by the Department for Education on a financial year basis.

Each PRU will manage its own budget via their Management Committee (equivalent of Governing Body in maintained Schools).

The funding must be based on the DfE's 'place-plus' funding model i.e. £8k per planned place is allocated, with additional income to the pupil referral unit (or 'top up') to be provided by individual schools (from their delegated budgets) when they place pupils in the units, or, by the Authority (from the Dedicated Schools Grant allocation) if the Authority places the pupils.

The total value of funding allocated for 2013/14 was lower than was allocated for 2012/13 due to the need to introduce the new funding methodology, whilst recognising that the pupil referral unit provision in Rotherham was still under review during this transitional year. Increased pressure on the High Needs Block also led to the reduction in funding available for pupil referral unit provision.

This proposal allocates less funding to the overall pupil referral unit provision and corresponding anticipated operating costs will also be lower than the current model.

These figures are calculated on the basis that Pupil Referral Unit 1 places (secondary) will all be commissioned by the authority rather than schools,

therefore any funding additional to the 'places' allocation will be provided from the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs block allocation. It is however anticipated that some places will be commissioned by schools. School contribution rate will be equivalent to 75% of the Average Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) rate on a pro-rata basis.

Overview of reduction in staffing, management, and premises costs for Rowan, ARC, Bridge, St Mary's and Riverside (excluding hospital school)

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Staff	1,491,482.25	1,352,081.59	1,393,535.07
Management	302,543.68	261,062.49	133,346.93
Premises	138,749.74	159,167.50	106,052.00
TOTAL	1,932,775.67	1,772,311.58	1,632,934.00

Overview of total funding for 2012-15 (excluding hospital school)

	Actual DSG	Actual HN allocation	Proposed HN allocation
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
TOTAL	2,465,149	2,255,082*	2,114,147**

*operating costs exceed High Needs allocation – proposed restructure will reduce cost to required level

**it is estimated that income from schools will reduce this figure by approx. £200,000

9. Risks and Uncertainties

- Financial issues include protected salaries and setting up costs of primary centres as well as potential costs of relocating Riverside pupil referral unit if that is required.
- This model has yet to be tested operationally – some slight adjustments might be required which could have financial implications although these would be minimal.
- Financial cost required to set up Dalton Foljambe due to space requirements.
- If level of permanently excluded pupils rises then less capacity for schools to be able to commission places to support them with pupils with a high level of need
- If level of permanently excluded pupils rises then there would be less income from schools
- Schools will only commission places at the pupil referral units if the quality of provision is high.
- There is limited capacity within primary schools to host primary units due to the rising birth rate.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

- This proposal will support our vision for Rotherham in providing quality education for some of our most vulnerable pupils ensuring they have opportunities to develop skills, learn and improve their future employment prospects.
- This proposal also meets the aims of Transforming Rotherham Learning and the Rotherham Mission for all its children and young people.

11. Background Papers

The proposal has the support of the sub-group of the Inclusion Strategic Steering Group that was set up to review Alternative Provision. It incorporates many of the recommendations from that review.

The proposal has the support of the LAs DLT.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 for Statutory Guidance for Pupil Referral Units
Appendix 2 for Rotherham's requirements for Pupil Referral Units
Appendix 3 for outcomes from consultation and timeline

13. Contact Name

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Appendix 1

Statutory Guidance:

- The LA is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. Good alternative provision is that which appropriately meets the needs of pupils which required its use and enables them to achieve good educational attainment on par with their mainstream peers. All pupils must receive a good education, regardless of their circumstances or the settings in which they find themselves.
- The LA is required to arrange suitable full-time education (or as much as the pupil's health condition allows) for pupils of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education.
- The LA must provide such education as soon as it is clear that the pupil will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.
- The LA must ensure that the education pupils receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- The LA must address the needs of individual pupils in arranging provision and must not have processes or policies in place which prevent a pupil from getting the right type of provision and a good education.

Appendix 2

The requirements of pupil referral unit provision in Rotherham are that it:

- Provides a high quality educational provision and improves the outcomes for those children in need of alternative provision outside of the mainstream school provision in Rotherham (as per statutory requirements of the Local Authority under section 19 (1) of the Education Act 1991, as amended by section 3 of the Children, Schools and Families Act 2010.)
- Provides a financially viable model of delivery using the new DfE funding methodology and is efficient and effective in its operation in terms of affordability, allocation and use of resources, particularly as the funding now sits within the High Needs Block.
- Offers improved opportunities for the development of good practice across the borough's AP provision.
- Brings together skills and expertise under a 'two' pupil referral unit model rather than a 'five' pupil referral unit model with each of the pupil referral units having a different focus.
- Has a focus on the development of skills required for successful reintegration back into mainstream communities.
- Works closely with schools to reduce the number of pupils requiring long-term provision in pupil referral units.
- Works closely with health services such as CAMHS to improve outcomes for those children who are not accessing mainstream education on health grounds.
- Integrates into Rotherham's broader early help provision, identifying clear pathways for drawing additional whole family support where required, engaging with children's social care where need dictates, where ASB and/or worklessness is an issue, this may also include bespoke targeted support in line with Rotherham's Families for Change delivery plan.

Appendix 3

Consultation updates and proposed timeline

- Staff from the Alternative Curriculum team were transferred across to the pupil referral unit structure with effect from 1st September 2013 which enabled them to have the opportunity to apply for posts within the revised structure for Pupil Referral Unit 1.
- All staff in the pupil referral units (both secondary and primary) were given the opportunity to apply for posts in the new structure. This was to ensure equality of opportunity. If primary units on primary school sites have to be staffed by school staff then those primary staff in the pupil referral units system would be at risk later next year.
- A formal consultation process commenced with a meeting with all staff and unions on 5th July 2013 and ended with a meeting on 13th September 2013. This consultation period was extended by one week at the request of the unions.
- Individual meetings have taken place with staff, unions, and staff with union representatives together. HR and Lorraine Lichfield have had regular meetings to answer questions put by staff and unions.
- Schools have been involved in the Review of Alternative Provision which outlined this potential model. The recommendations from the Review have been shared with all schools, learning communities, ISSG and other professionals with two primary workshops being held where schools had further opportunity to join the debate. Two further sessions were offered for all to attend to discuss the proposed model. Attendance was disappointing.
- No alternative model has been proposed by either schools or staff at risk.
- All staff queries have been answered.
- As the result of discussion with staff, the model has been amended to replace two of the learning mentor posts with higher level teaching assistants to strengthen the model further. The model has been further amended with an increase in administrative staff in the structure.
- Current learning mentors (band F) have been permitted to apply for Higher Level Teaching Assistant (band G) posts which will be an opportunity for their personal development should they be successful.
- Anomalies with some staff gradings have been rectified prior to the restructure which has meant that an increased number of staff have become eligible to apply for the posts that match the work they have been doing to date.
- There was a union request to have a primary representative on the interview panel for the Head of Pupil Referral Unit 1 (as well as the two secondary representatives already planned). This was agreed and took place.

Additional updates

- There were two candidates for the Head of Pupil Referral Unit 1. The interviews have taken place and there is a successful candidate.

- The Head of Pupil Referral Unit 2 (Rowan) has transferred permanently to the LA and has been replaced at Rowan by a Centre Manager.
- Thorogate unit is currently going through the formal closure process as the host school no longer wish to have the unit onsite.
- The ARC pupil referral unit has been deregistered (with effect from 1st September 2013).
- It is the intention to deregister Riverside and the Bridge pupil referral units in December 2013. There will then be two registered pupil referral units (St Mary's and Rowan) – both of which have received 'good' Ofsted judgements within the last 12 months. Both of these units will be renamed in the New Year.

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| • June – July 2013 | Cabinet member and advisers briefed |
| • 5 July – 13 Sept 2013 | Staff and union consultation re pupil referral unit proposal |
| • Sept – Oct 2013 | Pupil referral unit 2 to take on wider range of health needs |
| • Sept – Oct 2013 | Recruitment process for Pupil referral unit 1 (all pupil referral unit staff to be eligible to apply for posts in Pupil referral unit 1 to ensure equality of opportunity) |
| • Jan 2014 | Bridge premises to be vacated.
Bridge and Riverside pupil referral units to be deregistered. Rotherham will therefore have 2 registered pupil referral units (from existing registrations at St Mary's and Rowan – both of these units will be renamed and both of these units have received 'good' Ofsted judgements within the last 12 months). |
| • April 2014 | ARC KS3 to lose 2 members of staff |
| • July 2014 | ARC KS 3 to close – premises at Swinton vacated
Primary provision in place.
Welcome Centre premises vacated. |