

4. EDUCATION OTHERWISE THAN AT SCHOOL

1. Services contributing to this function

The EOTAS Providers

1.1 BSS PRU

The BSS has a dual role. It has a statutory responsibility, as a PRU, to provide education for pupils who have been permanently excluded from their schools and to assist them in successful reintegration back into mainstream education. It also performs a supportive role to schools, pupils and parents by its work in schools directly with pupils to improve their behaviour and increase attainment and to support staff in training on management techniques to reduce the incidence of poor behaviour and both temporary and permanent exclusion.

1.2 James Brindley School

James Brindley School was established in September 1997 in order to bring together in one co-ordinated school, those services that had previously been established to teach children and young people across the City of Birmingham who are unable to attend their mainstream or special school because of medical related reasons. Pupils are provided with placements dependent on the reason for referral. The aim of the school is to work towards re-inclusion into mainstream at the earliest successful time.

Pupils supported:

- Pupils with medical problems, which prevent school attendance, including chronic psychiatric or emotional problems.
- Pregnant schoolgirls and schoolgirl mothers who are not able to remain in their own schools.
- Pupils undergoing statutory assessment where the presenting problems are clearly related to medical issues, and where they are unable to attend their own school.

1.3 Virtual College

The Virtual College was originally piloted by the LEA in September 2000, and successfully established as a PRU in September 2001. The aim of the Virtual College is to provide appropriate educational provision for young people at KS3 and 4 who are currently out of school and are not being directly supported by any other school or alternative education provider. These are amongst the most vulnerable of young people who are otherwise disconnected from educational opportunity.

The College assigns an individual tutor and laptop computer to each young person on loan. Each student has a minimum of 5 hrs 1:1 direct support weekly, in addition to a 20 hour curriculum on-line, accreditation through ASDAN, and weekly access to group activities.

Uptake of the full 25 hours education provision is monitored through tracking periods of connection on line, and by tutor monitoring of progress.

1.4 **Lindsworth Village**

The Lindsworth Educational Village established under the management of Lindsworth School provides:

- the Focus PRU (established 1992) in partnership with the TEC. This provision encourages those young people not attending school in Year 11, and who have lost confidence in any educational future, to regain access and attendance in education and opportunities to complete GCSE courses and/or to take up a variety of other accredited courses.
- The 2020 programme which provides for Key Stage 4 pupils who are close to a school decision for permanent exclusion. The programme offers extensive induction including appropriate behaviour sessions; a range of work related learning courses; and support in English and Maths to at least COA level.
- The Lindsworth Educational Village also manages the Education Centres within Social Services managed residential provisions: Earlswood Secure Unit; Kingsmere Remand Unit; and Uplands CHE.

1.5 **Alternative Curriculum Key Stage 4 Providers**

Birmingham pupils at Key Stage 4 are able to access a broad range of alternative curriculum providers. These are described in the Alternative Curriculum Provision Directory annually published by the LEA.

1.6 **Educating Otherwise Team**

The 1944 Education Act states that parents have a duty to: “cause (the child) to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his (her) age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he (or she) may have, either by attendance at school or ‘otherwise’ “. Under Section 37, the LEA is required to check that this duty is being carried out.

The Educating Otherwise Team in BASS is responsible for carrying out this monitoring role. The Team has the services of a dedicated member of the EWS who carries out an initial visit and who also liaises with SSD. The advisers involved in monitoring this provision carry out an initial visit and then a 6-monthly review cycle. The advisers involved see these visits equally as an opportunity for support, advice and feedback to the parents and the child.

1.7 **Co-ordinating Services**

The Pupil Connect Team is the newly established joint working initiative, between the Education Welfare Service and Behaviour Support Service, directed to identify, track, re-connect, and monitor the

progress of pupils temporarily disconnected from education.

1.8 Key Referring Agencies are:

- Pupil Watch
- Schools
- Education Welfare Service
- Admissions Team
- Behaviour Support Service
- Education Support Service (Children in Public Care)
- Youth Offending Team
- Social Services
- Health
- Careers and Education Business Partnership
- Asylum Seekers Housing Team
- Housing
- West Midlands Service for Travelling Children

Other LEA Linking Support Services are:

- BASS Link Advisors
- Research and Statistics Section

2 Plans and Development

2.1 The post OFSTED action plan indicated that no evaluation was undertaken of EOTAS in the 1998 OFSTED. The following LEA plans are relevant.

2.2 Behaviour Support Plan

In 1998 The Department of Education and Employment (DfEE) required all Local Education Authorities to produce a Behaviour Support Plan. This document described how they would prepare and review statements for their arrangements for children with behavioural difficulties. Birmingham's first plan was published in December 1998 and reviewed in April 2000. A revised Plan was drafted in the spring of 2001 and presented to DfES for comments in June 2001. The current Plan contains some amendments as suggested by the external consultants reviewing Behaviour Support Plans for the DfES.

2.3 EOTAS Policy

Development of the now established EOTAS Policy commenced in May 1999 with the convening, by the Assistant Director Special Needs, of a policy development group drawn from the EOTAS providers and senior officers of the LEA. A draft policy was circulated for consultation in May 2000, and finalised the following September. The Policy has been updated in September 2001 as a part of the Behaviour Support Plan Review and to reflect further developments in EOTAS.

2.4 **Education Otherwise Policy**

The Educating Otherwise Policy has been established to clarify responsibilities and working protocols between the key LEA Services involved in ensuring the suitability of such arrangements. The existing joint working arrangement between Education Welfare and BASS Advisors was established in 1998, with specialist designated officers from both services undertaking this work. The Action Plan from Scrutiny Committee Report : Review Of Arrangements for Children At Risk Of Becoming Disconnected From Education.

The Scrutiny Committee Review, undertaken in September to November 2000, provided a detailed and thorough evaluation of current support in the LEA for these most at risk children. The Action Plan and its appendices provide a detailed progress review on the key issues identified by the review, and outline the current Pupil Connect strategy of the LEA.

2.5 **Attendance Policy**

The Education Welfare Service has been subject to three in depth reviews since the last OFSTED Inspection. (District Audit, Best Value, and Scrutiny Committee). The Service has developed and published a detailed policy and practice guidance for Birmingham schools on "Improving and Maintaining Pupil Attendance." This guide has been recognised by District Audit as a cutting edge good practice example.

The current revision of the LEA Attendance Policy has been timed to take due account of the outcomes of Best Value, and Scrutiny Review, concluded in April 2001. The draft policy included in the evidence box outlines the lead role of the Education Welfare Service in driving up attendance levels, as well as detailing the corporate working arrangements in place. The policy is currently in the first stages of consultation.

2.6 **EOTAS and Alternative Provisions Plans**

There are currently in excess of 30 separate EOTAS and Alternative Curriculum Provisions in Birmingham. These are jointly summarised in the EOTAS Policy and Alternative Curriculum Provision Directory; Their plans include those for the services listed above; The West Midlands Education Service For Travelling Children; The Centre for Values Education For Life ; "ENTA"; Archway; Rathbone; Reflections; and Sporting Edge.

2.7 The following Service Plans are also particularly relevant :

- The Pupil Connect Team Action Plan with first Progress Reports.
- The Education Welfare Service Business Plan
- The Behaviour Support Service Business Plan
- The Special Educational Needs Division Business Plan (See Objectives 1, 5, and 8)

2.8 LEA Support to PRUs and Alternative Curriculum Provisions

These include:

- All PRUs have a named link BASS Advisor and a named link Education Social Worker.
- All Alternative Curriculum Provisions will, from February 2001, have a named Pupil Connect Team Contact.
- Pupil Connect Team members are establishing termly visits to all alternative provisions in order to monitor pupil attendance, retention, progress, and achievement.
- A programme of joint BASS/Pupil Connect evaluations for all Alternative Provisions commenced in October 2001 to include detailed evaluation of management systems, curriculum, and pupil outcomes. Initial evaluations are concentrating on PRUs and emergent PRUs. This work programme will then progress to cover all Alternative Provisions by September 2002.
- Twelve monthly reviews of progress made against evaluation findings will then be managed by Pupil Connect in partnership with BASS. See initial progress reports, copies of Pupil Connect data bases, and copy of presentation to the LEA Service Improvement Forum can be found at.

3. Resources

- 3.1 There has been successful recruitment to the Pupil Connect Team. PRU staffing is stable, and no recruitment difficulties have been reported from PRUs or Alternative Provisions.

4. Review and evaluation

- 4.1 The evaluation by Scrutiny Committee Review, concluding in February 2001, has led to a detailed action plan for the LEA. A progress report has now been completed for the ELLL Cabinet Member to receive in January 2002.
- 4.2 The Best Value Reviews of the Behaviour Support Service and Education Welfare Service were concluded in April 2001
- 4.3 One of the key roles for "Pupil Connect" is to undertake structured evaluations of the EOTAS and Alternative Curriculum Provisions.
- 4.4 The CEO's Performance Contract and that of the Assistant Director Special Needs are reviewed termly.
- 4.5 The Special Needs Division reviews business Plans for the Education Welfare Service, and Behaviour Support Service, on an annual basis: Senior Management Team.

4.6 Action since last inspection

A number of significant developments have taken place since the 1998 inspection:-

- A joint EWS and BASS Educating Otherwise Team has been established with specialist seconded staff.

- A Co-ordinator for Key Stage 4 Alternative Provision Placements was appointed in September 1999.
- An Alternative Curriculum Directory was produced in 1999 and later updated in 2000. This is published for use by schools and LEA staff, and an electronic version has been produced for the BGFL.
- A Scrutiny Committee Review has been undertaken of “Arrangements For Children At Risk Of Becoming Disconnected From Education.” This was concluded in February 2001.
- The LEA EOTAS Policy has been developed and approved.
- Termly Register Monitoring of pupils removed from roll, where a future placement has not been identified, was established by the EWS for Secondary Schools in 1999. The Education Welfare Service has then prioritised cases identified for action. Reports on disconnected children identified through this process are now forwarded to the Pupil Connect Team.
- An EOTAS and Alternative Provisions co-ordinating group has been established.
- In September 2001, a joint Education Welfare and Police “Pupil Watch” scheme was established to target contact with children out of school.
- The Pupil Connect Team was established, in October 2001, to identify and track missing children, and to connect those children found to be disconnected from education
- A Pupil Connect Steering Group has been established representative of the key stakeholder and referring agencies for disconnected or missing children.
- The LEA Behaviour Support Plan is currently being revised.

Improvements made since last inspection with current assessment of performance against grade criteria

- 4.7 The LEA has a clear strategy for ensuring pupils who are out of school, by reason of illness, exclusion or otherwise are identified, tracked, and are provided with suitable alternative route ways to inclusive education. This is specifically detailed in the Pupil Connect Action Plan and EOTAS Policy. The LEA has established detailed monitoring procedures and systems and has commenced the evaluation of PRUs and alternative curriculum provisions
- 4.8 The LEA is providing full-time provision of a high standard for excluded pupils as demonstrated by Best Value Review and OFSTED inspection. All PRU Provisions are offering a minimum of 20 hours education per week to its pupils, and there are clear plans in place to increase this provision to full time (25hrs) for September 2002. Monitoring of pupil attendance rates indicates substantial improvement and reintegration levels are improving.

- 4.9 Referral systems are very well established for schools, LEA Officers, and other referring agencies. Clear and detailed guidance is being provided in the Exclusion Procedures; the Alternative Curriculum Provision Directory, and by the Pupil Connect Team with the role of the Alternative Provision Placements Consultant being well established. Arrangements for the referral of Educating Otherwise cases are well established between schools and the Education Welfare Service. The role of the Re-integration Officer for Pregnant Schoolgirls is also now well established.
- 4.10 Pupil Connect is taking direct action to improve the effectiveness of links with all key agencies and services including Health and Social Services. Referral systems are being advertised and services are being contacted directly to identify any cases of children who are disconnected from education. Health has established a School Nurse provision to the BSS PRU.
- 4.11 There are well established, and effective, procedures for monitoring the education of home-educated children. The LEA has also been proactive in providing a supportive resource to home educating parents in a library of teaching resources based at the James Brindley School. The Educating Otherwise Team has also produced a detailed guidance booklet for parents. (See Educating Otherwise Procedures and Action Plan)
- 4.12 There is improved monitoring of pupils removed from Secondary School Roll through the provision of termly register checks by EWS to identify pupils removed from roll without any identified future education provision, and the establishment of related action plans to target identified disconnected pupils.
- 4.13 There has been increased support for improving attendance at BSS PRU and James Brindley School through joint working with the Education Welfare Service. From September 2002, the Education Welfare Service will establish named link Education Social Workers and a service allocation to all established PRUs.
- 4.14 There has been improved monitoring of Educating Otherwise arrangements Pupil Connect link with EOTAS and Alternative Curriculum Provisions and maintain a central linking database of any pupils disconnected from these provisions. There has been an expansion in the range of EOTAS and Alternative Curriculum provision, with the establishment of the Virtual College. A tool has been developed to evaluate the performance of PRUs and the other alternative curriculum providers. A work plan for the first year of these evaluations commenced in November 2001 and will conclude in February 2002

Performance management arrangements with procedures for reviewing individual staff performance

- 4.15 BSS and EWS staff have established Personal Development Schemes approved by IIP and regular supervision arrangements are in place. Performance Management Policies are also in place in BSS PRU, Lindsworth Educational Village, and the Virtual College. The current evaluation programme will identify performance management policies in all other Alternative Provisions.

5. Contribution to the framework

- 5.1 The provision of effective EOTAS is central to supporting school improvement by:-

- the provision of complementary curriculum
- offering diverse route ways to inclusive learning
- complementing the range of nationally recognised qualifications that schools are able to offer.
- providing support to pupils through the use of individual Learning Mentors
- increasing access, raising attendance, and preventing exclusions by providing alternative programmes for students whose needs cannot be fully met within the constraints of the school timetable and curriculum.
- providing a single point of contact, through "Pupil Connect", for schools in relation to

5.2 Meeting pupils' special educational needs

This is secured by:

- The majority of PRU placed pupils are expected to be at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice.
- EOTAS provide a range of diverse route ways to inclusive education (see EOTAS Policy) and work in partnership with schools to promote inclusion in education by managing and negotiating any alternative and complementary curriculum.
- Where a pupil placed in an EOTAS provision is subject to a statement prior to any referral a statement review must be held with all concerned parties present. Placements must be appropriate and relevant to the individual pupil to ensure successful outcomes.
- In cases of parents educating their child otherwise than at school, and where a Statement of Special Need applies for that child, a Statement Review is held and, if the provision is regarded to be appropriate to the needs of the child the Statement is amended to read "Educated at Home as Parental Choice and monitored by the Educating Otherwise team". Statemented Pupils educated under section 319 of the Education Act are monitored in the same way.

5.3 **Promoting social inclusion**

This is secured by:

- EOTAS and Pupil Connect are key to engaging, connecting, and retaining the most vulnerable children into education. It is central to promoting social inclusion.
- Pupil Connect is established specifically to identify, record, place and track children who have been disconnected from education.

Corporate Issues

- The Pupil Connect Steering Group, now established, will ensure effective partnership with other key agencies and enhance multi-agency working together.
- The Pupil Connect Team will also establish close working together with Connexions, the Pre-16 F.E. Colleges Co-ordinators Group, and a recently established EOTAS and Alternative Training Providers Group.

6. **Impact**

- All EOTAS are now providing 20 hours minimum provision per week and are currently being evaluated to monitor their ability to provide 25 hours minimum by September 2002.
- Pupil Attendance Rates
- Retention Rates
- Re-inclusion rates
- Pupil Qualifications Achieved
- PRU Evaluation Reports