

Democratic Services

**Alternative Provision (Primary Education) in Milton Keynes**

**Task & Finish Group Report**

**July 2019**

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/scrutiny>

**Contents**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1.0** | **Introduction and Task and Finish Group Membership…………………………………………………………** | **3** |
| **2.0** | **Summary……………………………………………………………..** | **4** |
| **3.0** | **Acknowledgements……………………………………………..** | **5** |
| **4.0** | **Executive Summary……………………………………….…….** | **6** |
| **5.0** | **Background……………………………………………….…………** | **9** |
| **6.0** | **Evidence……………………………………………………………...** | **15** |
| **7.0** | **Conclusions and Recommendations…..…………………** | **20** |
|  | **Annex A: Terms of Reference………………….……………** | **25** |
|  | **Annex B: Timpson Report Recommendations & Government Response…………………………………………** | **26** |
|  | **Scrutiny – An Explanation………………………..…………..** | **31** |

**Note on the Text**

After the first reference, The Alternative Provision (Primary Education) in Milton Keynes Task and Finish Group will be referred to as “the Group” and Milton Keynes Council will be referred to as “the Council” throughout this report.

**1.0 Introduction and Task and Finish Group Membership**

1.1 The Alternative Provision (Primary Education) in Milton Keynes Task and Finish Group was established during the autumn of 2018 to assess whether, in the light of the current growth of Milton Keynes, the existing provision would be sufficient to meet the needs of a rapidly expanding population.

1.2 The Terms of Reference for this Task and Finish Group may be found at Annex A.

1.3 The Group is composed of Councillors M Bradburn/R Bradburn, Carr, D Hopkins, Miles, Morla and Wales. The Group has been jointly supported by Roslyn Tidman and Elizabeth Richardson as the Overview and Scrutiny Officers.





1.4 This report is the result of the Group’s work in investigating this issue and sets out:

1. an outline of the work the Group has carried out to scrutinise Alternative Provision (Primary Education) in Milton Keynes; and
2. to present the Group’s findings and recommendations to the Scrutiny Management Committee on 24 July 2019.

***Councillor D Hopkins***

***Chair, Alternative Provision (Primary Education) in Milton Keynes Task and Finish Group***

***July 2019***

**2.0 Summary**

2.1 The Group met on four occasions to consider the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Subject** |
| 21 November 2018 | Scope of review, what it hopes to achieve, work programme, timetable of meetings, call for evidence and identification of witnesses |
| 13 December 2018 | Access to Alternative Provision (Primary Education), use of referrals by schools, support to parents and carers, unregistered Alternative Provision schools (AP Schools), Milton Keynes Primary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) |
| 26 February 2019 | Review of written evidence and oral evidence from Primary and Secondary Head teachers |
| 26 March 2019 | Role of the SEND team |

2.2 The agenda, reports, presentations and minutes for each of the above meetings are available on the Council’s website at:

<https://milton-keynes.cmis.uk.com/milton-keynes/Committees/tabid/179/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/496/id/1245/Default.aspx>

2.3 The Group met again informally in April and June to review the evidence received and formulate the draft report and recommendations.

**3.0 Acknowledgements**

3.1 The Group would like to thank all those who responded to the call for evidence by sending written submissions or who gave up their time to talk to the Group at meetings. The Group would particularly like to thank Neil Barrett (Executive Principal, Stephenson (MK) Trust), Tony Berwick (Head of Jubilee Wood Primary School), Alison Drakeford (Head of Howe Park School), Vivienne Mills (Head of MK Primary Pupil Referral Unit) and Phil Webster (Head of New Bradwell School) who took the time to attend evening meetings and to share their first hand experiences with the Group.

3.2 The Chair would also like to thank the Cabinet member for Children and Families, The Director and officers from the Children’s Services Directorate of the Council and the other members of the Group for their help and support during the course of this work and for contributing their knowledge and experience to discussions in order to reach a consensus on the way forward.

3.3 The Group is grateful for the diligence and patience of Roslyn Tidman and Elizabeth Richardson in managing the Group through an intense workload. It would particularly like to thank Shelagh Muir, Committee Manager, for stepping in at the last minute to record the meeting on 13 December 2018.

**4.0 Executive Summary**

No parent in Milton Keynes sends their child to school believing they will be excluded. Similarly, no teacher starts their career wanting anything other than to help children achieve their potential.

While permanent exclusion is a rare event – nationally across England 0.1% of the 8 million children in schools were permanently excluded in 2016/17 – this still means an average of 40 every day. A further average of 2,000 pupils are excluded every day across England for a fixed period. In Milton Keynes in 2016/17, eight primary aged pupils were permanently excluded. In the same year there were 420 fixed term exclusions issued. This affected 194 pupils and equates to an average of 3.68 days per child or a total of 715 school days lost. Preliminary figures for 2017/18 show an increase in both permanent (12) and fixed term (457) exclusions across Milton Keynes.

The Task & Finish Group was asked to conduct a review of Alternative Provision in the Primary School Sector across Milton Keynes by the Scrutiny Management Committee. By definition this included a review by the Task & Finish Group to examine school exclusion in the Primary School Sector in Milton Keynes, to examine the workings of the Primary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), to explore how head teachers use exclusion in practice, and why some groups of children are more likely to be excluded, including Children in Need, those with special educational needs (SEN), children who have been supported by social care, children who are eligible for free school meals (FSM) or children who are from particular ethnic groups.

For reference, DfE statutory guidance on exclusion says:

* Only the head teacher of a school can exclude a pupil and this must be on disciplinary grounds;

• A pupil may be excluded for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year), or permanently;

• Permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort, in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school’s behaviour policy; and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school;

• The decision to exclude a pupil must be lawful, reasonable and fair.

It is the right of every head teacher to enable their staff to teach in a calm and safe school, just as it is the right of every child to benefit from a high-quality education that supports them to fulfil their potential. It is clear that the task teachers have in managing behaviour in some primary schools is a tough one, and the local authority must support teachers to deal effectively with poor and disruptive behaviour by equipping them with the right tools to achieve this task. Milton Keynes Council, School Governors and the various Multi Academy Trusts (MAT’s), individual Academies and Free Schools all have a duty of care to staff and all pupils in a school in this respect. This is in the interest of the wellbeing of both teachers and pupils in every school across Milton Keynes.

Through the Task & Finish Group review, it is clear from the evidence provided to the Group that the variation in how exclusion is used goes beyond the influence of local context, and that there is potentially more that can be done to ensure that exclusion is always used consistently and fairly, and that permanent exclusion is always a last resort, used only where nothing else will do. However, it must be emphasised that the power to exclude – both for a fixed period and permanent– is an important tool for head teachers as part of an effective approach to behaviour management.

As such, the Group concludes that there is more the local authority can do to support schools to understand and respond to individual children – particularly children with SEN, Children in Need of additional help and protection and children who are disadvantaged – who may need additional support, and who might otherwise find themselves at risk of exclusion. The Group concluded that the Council must also take the necessary steps to ensure exclusion from school does not mean exclusion from education, so that all children are getting the education they deserve and that monitoring be put in place to follow the progress of each student following his or her return to mainstream education.

The findings and recommendations highlighted in the later pages in this review are underpinned by the following key principles:

• every Milton Keynes child, regardless of their characteristics, needs or the type of school they attend, deserves a high-quality education that allows them to flourish and paves the way to a successful future;

• the local authority should expect schools consistently to have the right systems in place and teachers to have the right skills (through training and support) to manage poor behaviour and provide support where children need it – but to achieve this the Council must equip them with the right tools, capability and capacity to deliver against this expectation;

• schools across Milton Keynes must be calm and safe environments and it is right that we support head teachers to establish strong school behaviour cultures, including by making use of exclusion where appropriate;

• there is no optimum rate or number of exclusions – exclusion rates must be considered in the context in which the decisions to exclude are made. A higher rate of exclusion may reflect a local demographic or social context and can often be a sign of effective leadership in one school, whilst in others a lower exclusion rate may simply signal strong early intervention strategies that have been put in place. In contrast, higher rates of exclusion could demonstrate schools not putting in place effective interventions for children at risk of exclusion, and indeed lower rates could be indicative of children being pushed out of school without the proper processes being followed – however, the Task & Finish Group found no evidence that in Milton Keynes this final scenario is ever the case;

• alongside considering the best interests of the wider school community, head teachers, with the support of their staff, should make decisions about how to address poor behaviour, based on their knowledge of individual children and what specific support, interventions or sanctions are needed and then to seek that support from the local authority in providing the tools to intervene as appropriate;

• Milton Keynes schools must be places that are welcoming and respectful, where every child has the opportunity to succeed. To ensure this is the case, they should understand how their policies impact differently on pupils depending on their protected characteristics, such as disability or race, and should give particular consideration to the fair treatment of pupils from groups who may potentially be vulnerable to exclusion;

• it cannot be the job of schools alone to take action to understand and address the complex underlying needs that children may have and that an inter-agency approach will often be the most successful option;

• no one should accept that exclusion comes at the cost of a child getting a good education. This Task & Finish Group review sets out how we can improve the standards in schools for every child, creating the conditions in which we can be confident that schools have the support they need to ensure that every decision to exclude is lawful, reasonable and fair.

I commend this report to the Milton Keynes Council Scrutiny Management Committee and ultimately to the Milton Keynes Cabinet member for Children and Families and the Cabinet.

**5.0 Background**

***5.1 Alternative Education Provision***

5.1.1 The Department for Education’s Statutory guidance for local authorities on Alternative Provision (AP)[[1]](#footnote-1) defines AP as ‘education arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; education arranged by schools for pupils on a fixed period exclusion; and pupils being directed by schools to off-site provision to improve their behaviour.’ The statutory guidance sets out that all pupils must receive a good education and any AP should enable pupils to achieve educational attainment on a par with their mainstream peers. Alternative provision should also ensure that the specific personal, social and academic needs of pupils are properly identified and met; pupil motivation, self-confidence, attendance and engagement with education improves; and clearly defined objectives, including the next steps following the placement are put in place.

5.1.2 Due to the extent of this topic the Group have limited the scope of their work to considering the AP for primary aged pupils who have been permanently excluded or are at risk of permanent exclusion, or have been directed to an off-site provision to improve their behaviour.

***5.2 Guidance on Exclusion***

5.2.1 The Government’s statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion[[2]](#footnote-2) sets out that:

* only the head teacher of a school can exclude a pupil and this must be on disciplinary grounds;
* a pupil may be excluded for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year), or permanently. A fixed-period exclusion could also be for part of a day for example during lunch time; and
* maintained schools can direct a pupil off-site for education to improve their behaviour and a pupil from any type of school can also be transferred, with the agreement of all parties, to another school as part of a ‘managed move’.

5.2.2 The guidance advises that a decision to exclude a pupil permanently must only be taken in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school’s behaviour policy and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

5.2.3 Early intervention[[3]](#footnote-3) must also be considered to address any underlying causes of disruptive behaviour including an assessment of whether appropriate provision is in place to support any SEN (Special Educational Needs) or disability or whether there are any mental health or family problems. Where a pupil has received multiple fixed-period exclusions or is approaching the legal limit of 45 school days in an academic year, the head teacher should consider whether exclusion is providing an effective sanction.

5.2.4 Schools who have concerns about a child’s behaviour or they are at risk of exclusion, where the pupil has additional needs, has an EHC (Educational and Healthcare) plan or is a looked after child, should, in partnership with others (including the local authority as necessary), consider what additional support or alternative placement may be required.

5.2.5 The guidance notes that the exclusion rates for certain groups is consistently higher than average. This group includes:

* Pupils with SEN
* Pupils eligible for free school meals;
* Looked after children; and
* Pupils from certain ethnic groups including Gypsy/Roma, Travellers of Irish Heritage and Caribbean pupils.

Head teachers are directed to consider what extra support might be needed to address the needs of pupils from these groups to reduce the risk of exclusion and in Milton Keynes this includes the consideration of a dual placement at Milton Keynes Primary PRU.

5.2.6 Where a pupil has received a fixed-period exclusion of more than five school days, the governing board (or local authority if it is a pupil excluded from a PRU) must arrange suitable full-time education for any pupil of compulsory school age. This provision must begin no later than the sixth school day of the exclusion. Where a pupil has been permanently excluded, the local authority must arrange suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion.

***5.3 Support available in Milton Keynes for pupils who have been permanently excluded or are at risk of exclusion***

5.3.1 After a significant drop in 2015/16, the number of children permanently excluded in Milton Keynes has been increasing over the last couple of years. Whilst official data is not yet available for 2017/18, local data shows primary permanent exclusions increasing from 8 pupils a year to 12. The number of Fixed Term Exclusions has also increased from 420 in 2016/17 to 457\* in 2017/18.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Permanent Exclusions** | **Fixed Term Exclusions** |
| 2017/18 | 12\* | 457\* |
| 2016/17 | 8 | 420 |
| 2015/16 | 6 | 383 |
| 2014/15 | 16 | 366 |
| 2013/14 | 11 | 257 |

Data Source – DFE Statistical release, except 2017/18 as data is currently unavailable. \*2017/18 data is from MKC data.

Data from January 2019 reviewing permanent exclusions dating back to October 2014 shows:

* 43% were now accessing mainstream schools;
* 37% were now accessing specialist SEN provision;
* 16% were currently attending MKPRU/Bridge Academy pending re-integration;
* 4% were now home educated.

5.3.2 The Council’s, Inclusion and Intervention team works with children, young people, families and educational settings, enabling children and young people with SEN and Disability to enjoy and achieve in their learning. The main support for this particular group is the Inclusion and Intervention team (SEMH). This team works with maintained primary schools to identify and support children and young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. This support is also offered as a traded service to academies and secondary schools.

5.3.3 Schools are able to contact the team for consultations on appropriate strategies and resources to help support children in their school setting. Centralised training sessions are also offered for school staff along with delivering bespoke training packages to schools. The team works closely with the Milton Keynes Primary Pupil Referral Unit (MKPRU) to support children placed there and help support them back into mainstream school.

5.3.4 Where a pupil has been permanently excluded the Alternative Provision that the Council would normally provide would be a placement at the MKPRU. Milton Keynes Primary PRU is currently designated as an 18 PAN (Pupil Admissions Number) within Milton Keynes and 3 out of county commissioned places. That is 21 places in total. The governing body of the PRU has requested to increase its PAN on several occasions but to date this has not been approved by the Council. Therefore this unit has capacity for up to 21 pupils who have been permanently excluded or at risk of being excluded from mainstream primary schools. Places at the Unit are commissioned by the Council and may also be commissioned by Academies or (up to three places) by other local authorities. The Unit has a strong partnership approach, working closely with colleagues in SEMH, SEN, Sufficiency and Access, Social Care, Children and Family Practice, mainstream schools and other settings.

5.3.5 Pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion may be dual registered with their mainstream school and attend the MKPRU on either a full-time or part time basis. Those that have been permanently excluded attend the Unit on a full-time basis. Most pupils are on the roll of the MKPRU for 12 weeks (2 half terms). However, in exceptional circumstances and dependent on individual need, this may be extended to ensure a successful transition for the pupil back into their mainstream school or onto their next school. MKPRU offers a Therapeutic Inner Curriculum with an educational base and a Creative Curriculum with a Therapeutic base. The Therapeutic Curriculum focuses on supporting children to develop a strong sense of being, and the Creative Curriculum focuses on developing a strong sense of community and preparing them to successfully transition back to their mainstream school or other setting. Since 2015, 83 children have transitioned in and out of the MKPRU either back to a mainstream school or on to an appropriate setting for longer term support. In 2017/18 no child returned to the Unit for a second time through a failed transition.

5.3.6 In 2019/20 funding from the Council to MKPRU is £370,000 per year and funding for the de-delegated SEMH Difficulties Specialist Teaching Team is £227,000

***5.4 Alternative Provision – Market Analysis***

5.4.1 In 2018, the Department for Education commissioned research[[4]](#footnote-4) to gather information about how AP in local areas is organised, the factors that affect demand and what makes for an effective “local AP system”

5.4.2 Across the country AP is used for a wide range of purposes including provision for excluded pupils, for mental and physical health related reasons, early preventative support, as a positive alternative educational pathway, reintegration of pupils who have been out of formal education, in-year placements and a lack of specialist provision. These reasons reflect whether AP is seen as a reactive or pro-active placement.

5.4.3 The research found that most local authorities commission the bulk of their placements from a state funded provider and while there was no right answer in terms of state-funded and independent provision, the research did suggest that there can be challenges in terms or provision where one provider or sector provides all or almost all of the local AP. Nationally, on average there were 11 primary-age places in local AP per 10,000 primary-age pupils and the average cost of a full-time placement for one academic year was £18,000. Purely based on a comparison with national figures it would be expected that there would be somewhere in the region of 29 primary aged places available in Milton Keynes based on the current projection of 26,500 primary pupils.

5.4.4 The research suggests that there was not a single “best model” for providing AP. What was important was that there was a clear strategic plan with a shared understanding of the role of AP, decisions could be made about appropriate support pathways and the local offer can respond swiftly and flexibly to local needs.

5.4.5 In Milton Keynes it is the intention to offer a partnership approach with children and Alternative Provision and, should a pro-active dual placement (early intervention) be in place, between the mainstream school, MK Primary PRU, family and child which is supported by many partners. Children return to mainstream schools on Friday afternoons to ensure they maintain a sense of belonging in their school, and so that their school continues to play an active role in their continued education and development.

However, the findings in the report concluded that for an area to have a well-functioning AP system it is essential that mainstream schools have strong individual and collective responsibility for pupils. This would mean that the school on whose roll the child was originally would remain connected to and responsible for the outcomes of that student and also responsible for the AP system and its use. One way to achieve this could be by devolving decision-making and funding. Those who took part in the research identified that the current policy framework does not incentivise and might actually act as a disincentive to the responsibilities and actions that are needed for an effective local AP system.

***5.5 Timpson Review***

5.5.1 The Timpson Review of School Exclusion[[5]](#footnote-5) took place over a similar time period to the work of the Group. The Timpson Review set out to review exclusion practice and to look at why some groups of pupils are more likely to be excluded than others. The review identified excellent practice across the school system but also too much variation in exclusion practice. It concluded that there was more that could be done to ensure that every exclusion was lawful, reasonable and fair, and that permanent exclusion is always a last resort that is used only where nothing else will do. The report sets out thirty recommendations that sought to ensure that exclusion is used consistently and appropriately and that the school system can create the best possible conditions for every child to thrive and progress.

5.5.2 The recommendations from the review have been accepted in principle by the Government. As part of their response, the Government have committed to a number of key areas of action including:

* supporting head teachers to maintain safe and orderly environments for the benefit of all pupils and staff;
* supporting schools to put in place effective interventions to give pupils at risk of exclusion the best chance to succeed including making schools accountable for the outcomes of permanently excluded children;
* providing greater clarity to school leaders about when and how it is appropriate for children to be removed from their school and that there is sufficient oversight when pupils move around the education system;
* supporting schools and providers of alternative provision so that pupils who have been excluded from school continue to benefit from high quality education including revision of guidance on behaviour and discipline and mental health and behaviour, progress with the AP reform programme and a possible revision to the total numbers of days a pupil can be excluded in one year.
* The government response to Timpson highlights that there should be ‘effective partnership working between local authorities, schools, Alternative Provision providers and other partners such as police and health’.

**6.0 The Evidence**

The Group received and examined a range of evidence, which included three meetings and the review of the written responses.

***6.1 Task and Finish Group Meeting – 13 December 2018***

6.1.1 At the meeting on 13 December the Group heard from Councillor Nolan (Cabinet member for Children and Families), Mac Heath (Acting Director of Children’s Services) and Vivienne Mills (Headteacher of MK Pupil Referral Unit).

6.1.2 During the meeting Mac Heath, Acting Director of Children’s Services outlined the alternative provision for education in Milton Keynes for children who could not attend a mainstream school because they had challenges that could not be managed in that setting. He noted that alternative provision encompassed a range of individual support processes that could be put in place for the child, their parents/families and their school.

6.1.3 Vivienne Mills, the Head of the MK Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) set out that the unit is a small short-stay strengths based school that provides for up to 21 (18 from Milton Keynes) pupils who have either been, or are, at risk of being excluded from a mainstream primary school. All the pupils have behavioural, social and emotional challenges or poor mental health and some have additional learning or undiagnosed needs. The pupils at the PRU may also have an Educational Health Care Plan when they enter the PRU, or may leave the PRU with an Educational Health Care Plan. In summary Ms Mills outlined that by adopting different teaching approaches and working in partnership with schools and parents they did not need to base all pupils in the PRU. However, she did feel that there would be benefit to offering a 24 week placement and continuing the holistic and therapeutic approach to young people’s learning.

The table below lists what is currently offered at MK Primary PRU;

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Weeks 1-6** ***Sense of self Explore*** | **Weeks 6-12** ***Sense of Belonging Discover*** | ***Weeks 12-18******Sense of Community Adventures in learning*** | **Weeks 18-24** |
| Children are in PRU 4.5 days /mainstream School 0.5 daysFocus on developing child in emotional resilience / developing a strong sense of self “Who am I”? | Children are in PRU 4.5 days / mainstream School 0.5 dayFocus on supporting child to belong to a community of learners and develop their sense of responsibility to the group “Where do I belong”? | Children are in PRU 1.5 days for therapeutic interventions / mainstream school 3.5 days for academicSupporting child I successful transition back to mainstream school / new settingGraduation from PRU Week 18 | Children are in Mainstream School 5.0 daysEnsuring child has successfully transitioned back to mainstream, school / new setting. |
| Transition in meeting 2 weeks before starting / 6 week progress meeting | 10 week progress meeting and planned transition meeting ready for week 12 transition. | 18 week progress meeting | Half termly monitoring report from mainstream school to PRU on implementation of successful strategies and child’s progress. |

 However, the PRU considers the needs of each and every individual child based on their own unique requirements and so some children are accessing only the therapeutic curriculum for 1.5 days per week whilst some are at the PRU for longer periods of time depending on their own needs and some children leave the PRU earlier than the intended 12 weeks as they are ready to return to their mainstream school. The PRU recognises that every child is different and this personalises its support for each child.

***6.2 Task and Finish Group Meeting – 26 February 2019***

6.2.1 At this session the Group were joined by Neil Barrett (Executive Principal, Stephenson (MK) Trust), Tony Berwick (Head of Jubilee Wood Primary School), Alison Drakeford (Head of Howe Park School) and Phil Webster (Head of New Bradwell School).

6.2.2 As can be imagined the witnesses had a broad range of experiences to share with the Group. They were in agreement that they were seeing an increase in children with additional and challenging needs including mental health issues and that a significant amount of their budgets was being spent on small numbers of children with additional needs. Early intervention was seen as crucial to attempt to prevent behavioural issues escalating as to some degree it was felt that some of the levels of support a child needs only kick in once a child has been excluded.

6.2.3 In summary, the witnesses suggested the following ways that supporting children with additional needs could be improved:

* better and more effective signposting and a clearer set of pathways to the support that is available;
* a high proportion of children with additional needs will have already been identified as a ‘Child in Need’ and therefore there is the opportunity for early identification, partnership working and support around the family not just the child offsetting the need to exclude;
* the length of the placement at the PRU needs to be evidence led not resource led;
* mental health issues with the child or their family were often a key underlying reason behind the behaviour but this was difficult to evidence particularly for children under seven;
* an ‘out-patient’ approach where a child is supported in their school with their peers is seen as beneficial versus a placement at the PRU and then transitioning back to another school;
* the primary sector may be able to learn from and adapt how the secondary sector is managing this issue;
* more could be made of the existing expertise of teachers across MK primary schools with some way of allowing them time to support/train other teachers.

***6.3 Task and Finish Group Meeting – 26 March 2019***

6.3.1 At its final evidence gathering session the Group heard from Caroline Marriott, Head of Delivery – SEN and Disability. The Group heard how pupils access the MKPRU through either a dual placement request to the SEND Inclusion Forum (SIF) or when a child has been permanently excluded. The SEND Specialist Teams are available to support the PRU staff if required while the child is at the PRU and as part of the transition arrangements to their new school. The team meet monthly to review the progress of children within the PRU and to find collective solutions to any difficulties.

6.3.2 The SIF was established during the summer term 2018 and consists of school/setting senior leaders, experienced SENCo’s, Inclusion and Intervention Team Specialists, SEND casework officers and colleagues from Health Schools and settings. This group can provide advice and support before a child is excluded, EHC needs assessments, way forward discussions and consider higher level need funding requests.

***6.4 Written Responses***

The Group were grateful for the number and quality of the responses they received to their ‘call for evidence’ from schools across Milton Keynes and from other local authorities. Responses were received from seven schools from within the Milton Keynes area. Due to the nature of some of the responses the Group have decided not to summarise their comments here but note that all information they received was considered as part of their deliberations.

| Respondent | Key Points |
| --- | --- |
| Nottinghamshire County Council | Have not had any PRU’s in the county for five years. Funding devolved to partnerships of schools (maintained and academies) to support alternative pathways to exclusion. In the rare instance a child is excluded in the primary sector the cost of provision commissioned by the Authority is recovered from the excluding school. The partnership schools utilise projects such as nurture provision, Forest Schools, SEMH intervention groups, parent groups, specialist counsellors, Lego Therapy, thera-pat, play therapy etc. Three or four providers offer small group AP for primary aged children. Two of these are nurture based and the others make use of outdoor provision sites. |
| Hampshire County Council | Their Primary Behaviour Service (PBS) operates six teams across the county to provide early intervention and build capacity within mainstream schools. Schools can arrange a consultation, access whole school training and outreach support. Short term interventions (no more than two terms) can be offered as a dual placement based at the school or a PBS centre. There are very few permanent exclusions in the primary sector and when one does occur the child will be placed on the roll of another school and access support through the PBS centre.On the Isle of Wight the PRU has provision for both primary and secondary students. |
| Kirklees Council | Pupil Referral Service (PRS) which includes a primary department alongside Key Stage 3 and 4. Offer an outreach service to reduce the risk of permanent exclusions and a ‘supported moves’ programme. The PRU makes use of an outdoor curriculum, forest area and school dog. |
| North Yorkshire County Council | Operate Enhanced Mainstream Schools (EMS) who offer outreach support to other schools or in-reach places for pupils to attend on a part-time basis and a Pupil Referral Service (PRS) for children who have been excluded. Targeted provision is available offering a higher level of support for children but only short term placements are available which they identify as a gap in their provision. |
| Northumberland County Council | Operate a Pupil Referral Unit with 32 places for pupils aged 7 to 14. There is a nurture unit at the PRU for the youngest children which successfully integrates pupils back into mainstream schools. The Council does not have a PRU provision for 14-16 year olds and these pupils are placed with alternative providers. Schools commission places in alternative provision directly for pupils who experience a high number of fixed term exclusions and need an intervention to improve their behaviour. |
| Oxfordshire County Council | The county is divided into four regions with a modest proportion of the High Needs Funding Block dedicated to schools to invest in avoiding pupil exclusions on a case by case basis. Two of the regions are in early discussions to look to pool this funding to commission AP or specialist programmes. The Council commissions a wide range of provision from the principle AP provider in the county. This includes specialist short programmes, outreach work to schools, fixed term provision and longer-term provision. For primary age pupils, arrangements are temporary with the aim to transition to an alternative Primary school or Special school. Oxfordshire are currently reviewing their AP arrangements to ensure that there is sufficient, flexible and geographically efficient provision to meet needs. |
| Torbay Council | Currently commission places in a building owned and run by one of their Special schools for their sixth day provision. Work with schools through peer challenge groups to highlight what support is available pre-exclusion from education and social care. Have a Schools Forum funded Intensive Outreach Service which helps schools examine systems and practices as well as meet the need of the nominated child. In the longer term they are reviewing the work of the outreach service and looking to establish two small enhanced resource provisions for 6th day provision and preventative work |
| Warwickshire County Council | No PRU provision for primary aged children. In the early development stages of an innovate approach to remove the perverse incentive that the achievement agenda creates for schools to exclude pupils. They are developing a database to track progress of pupils through primary, pre 16 and into post 16 to show what has been achieved with them and how much additional resource has been employed to achieve these outcomes. The county are establishing an ethical inclusion kitemark and are working with Warwick University on an ethical inclusion partnership. |

**7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations**

**7.1 General**

The Timpson Report (May 2019) concludes that schools will be made accountable for the pupils they exclude and there will be a clampdown on off-rolling, as part of Government measures taken in response to the Timpson Review of exclusions.

The review makes 30 recommendations to Government as it highlights variation in exclusions practice across different schools, local authorities and certain groups of children. The report concludes that while there is no optimal number of exclusions, there needs to be action to ensure permanent exclusions are only used as a last resort, where nothing else will do.

Vulnerable groups of children are more likely to be excluded, with 78% of permanent exclusions (nationally) issued to children who have special educational needs (SEN), or classified as in need or eligible for free school meals. Certain ethnic groups, including Bangladeshi and Indian pupils, have lower rates of exclusion than White British pupils, with the analysis also finding some ethnic groups, such as Black Caribbean and Mixed White and Black Caribbean pupils, experiencing higher rates, after controlling for other factors.

The key findings from the Timpson Report being;

* Making early intervention the norm;
* Calling on leaders to work together;
* Making sure exclusion is the start of something new and positive;
* Enabling local authorities to establish forums;
* Taking action across Government;
* Cracking down on poor behaviour.

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| **Recommendation 1. – That the Cabinet member for Children & Families and the Director of Children’s Services be asked to review, and, where appropriate, adopt the relevant recommendations of the Timpson Report and the Government’s response (Annex B).** |

**7.2 Pre Exclusion Measures**

The Group received evidence from local contributors and in the form of written evidence from other authorities that suggested that the Council should consider ways in which it might offer more support, help and guidance before a permanent exclusion would take place. In particular ways in which the Council might work with schools to help identify the more complex needs that present in a small number of primary school students. The Group heard evidence that Behaviour Support Teams (or the equivalents) in other areas of the country emphasise their role as being seen as solution providers rather than, in all too many cases, a stepping stone to exclusion.

Witnesses applauded the work undertaken by the Council in reaching out to the so called Hard to Reach (sometimes defined as ‘troubled’) families via its multi-agency approach and suggestions were made that this multi-agency work should be the subject of regular reviews, ensuring that national best practise was assessed and considered. In addition, the Group learnt how effective Child in Need (Section 17) family meetings can be in drawing up inter-agency plans with the support of the family and how these plans aim to deliver measurable outcomes within stated timescales.

The Group heard evidence that across Milton Keynes (and elsewhere across the UK) schools partnerships has worked well to establish outstanding and innovative practise, including nurture provision, Forest Schools, additional staff engaged to offer training and thereby support SEMH (Social Emotional Mental Health) intervention groups, engaging specialist counsellors, Lego Therapy, therapy choices – PAT (pets as therapy), play therapy, Thera (young people with a learning disability) and many others. Nationally schools partnerships consist of maintained schools and academies with no discernible difference in engagement.

Luton Borough Council highlighted its work in establishing direct links between primary schools and CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) wherein there is a named link in each of its schools with CAMHS. Other written evidence suggested that the link might extend to a named school governor with responsibility for establishing and maintaining/monitoring such a link to CAMHS. Nationally there is a move towards children under 7 having access to CAMHS services (not offered at the moment as children under 7 are all too often simply described as ‘naughty’). This would potentially have the effect of increasing the Child In Need places available.

The Group heard how for example, nationally an increase in funding for additional Speech and Language Therapy had resulted in a decline in the numbers of students ultimately being excluded. The message consistently was that early intervention pays dividends and is seen as an investment in the student’s future before exclusion becomes the only option remaining to the school. The Group also learnt how, in some areas of the country, there is greater access to therapy sessions (Macintyre being one example cited). These sessions supported students through bespoke education packages that, in partnership with the school where the student is enrolled, allowed the student to remain enrolled at that school with a specialist part time package of mainstream education and specialist modules.

The Group considered evidence that suggested the Council might consider promoting an ethical inclusion ‘kite mark’ standard for its primary schools. The Inclusion Quality Mark Award provides UK schools with a nationally recognised validation of their inclusive practice and ongoing commitment to developing educational inclusion.

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| **Recommendation 2 – That the Cabinet member for Children & Families and the Director of Children’s Services be asked to ensure that the service area prioritises the early identification of children with challenging behaviour and shall have a focus on early intervention to prevent an escalation to fixed or permanent exclusion.** |

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| **Recommendation 3 – That the Cabinet member for Children & Families and the Director of Children’s Services be asked to ensure that multi-agency working identifies, at an early stage, families or children that may need additional support on entering the school system and to put interventions in place to support them.** |

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| **Recommendation 4 – That the Cabinet member for Children and Families and the Director of Children’s Services be asked to explore how poor mental health impacts on children’s behaviour and how this can best be addressed either through improving the links with and, input by, CAMHS or by a specialist role within the Council.** |

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| **Recommendation 5 – That the Cabinet member for Children and Families and the Director of Children’s Services be asked to explore with schools their interest in establishing a network to share outstanding and innovative practice in supporting children with challenging behaviour. This network to also ensure that clear pathways and signposting to support are in place with the Primary PRU placed at the centre of this.** |

**7.3 Exclusion**

The Group received evidence based on the increasing population of Milton Keynes and the surrounding area. It was suggested that for this reason alone the Council should consider the expansion of the Primary PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) from 19 to 30 places and undertake ongoing recruitment campaign to fill any skills shortfall within the provision. Funding this increase in provision needn’t be completely at the expense to the Council. Given the recommendations of the Timpson reports schools could potentially be expected to meet some of this cost to reflect their commitment to the child and to partnership working. An expansion of the current provision could include a wholly new or second campus site offering an outdoor curriculum and forest school setting. Evidence was offered that additional places should be made available to neighbouring authorities on a commissioned place basis. Suggestions were also made that consideration be given to renaming the PRU possibly as a Specialist Provision Unit (SPU). The Group considered ways in which the Council could support the PRU in working more closely with the Primary School sector across Milton Keynes by offering direct support, advice and training aimed at highlighting the options available to mainstream schools before exclusion was considered. It was suggested that the Council might facilitate the provision of a regular panel meeting of all primary schools, MKPRU and the Secondary PRU to encourage more collaborative working between the Primary and Secondary Sectors aimed at identifying and delivering best practice when working with challenging students and working with students facing challenging circumstances at the earliest opportunity.

Concerns were expressed at what appeared to be the standard 12 week placement option being offered and that the time each student spent with the PRU should be tailored to reflect the needs of each individual student. It was considered by witnesses that permanently excluded children should be dual registered with the PRU and their original mainstream school to maintain the link and thus incentivise the return to mainstream education as soon as was practicable and appropriate. Whilst this is not legally possible the Secondary sector achieve this by not permanently excluding a child which allows for them to be dual rolled between the PRU and their mainstream school.

Reference was made to the MK 2050 (Learning 2050) workstream and in particular the concept of Milton Keynes as a classroom and the benefits that approach could offer to students in Alternative Provision education.

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| **Recommendation 6 – That the Cabinet member for Children & Families and the Director of Children’s Services be asked to review as part of the 2020/21 budget process funding for alternative provision and early intervention activities to ensure that it reflects the growing school population and increase in needs. Any identified need to expand the primary education Alternative Provision offer in Milton Keynes should consider the type of provision and programmes offered.** |

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| **Recommendation 7 – That the Cabinet member for Children & Families and the Director of Children’s Services be asked to explore with the MKPRU and the primary school sector how they could work even more closely on early interventions to avoid permanent exclusion.** |

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| **Recommendation 8 – That the Cabinet member for Children & Families and the Director of Children’s Services be asked to review the standard 12 week placement at the MKPRU to ensure that the length of placement at the PRU is always evidence led against the needs of each individual child.** |

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| **Recommendation 9 – That the Cabinet Member for Children & Families and the Director of Children’s Services be asked to ensure that the ‘Learning 2050’ education stream considers adopting the concept of ‘Milton Keynes as a classroom’ with an even greater focus given to the relevance of STEM subjects; science, technology, engineering and maths in terms of children in Primary Alternative Provision.** |

**7.4 Post PRU**

The Group had access to the UK Parliament Select Committee work ‘Forgotten Children Alternative Provision and the scandal of ever increasing Exclusions – 2018) for review. The Group also considered evidence concerning the establishment of a focused nurture unit and the focus on the Secondary Sector Alternate Provision equivalent offering clear ‘pathways to success’ for students.

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| **Recommendation 10 – That the Cabinet member for Children & Families and the Director of Children’s Services be asked to establish a process to accurately track and measure the success (or otherwise) of a student following a PRU placement and to consider modelling the post Primary Sector Alternate Provision offer on the Secondary Sector experience with clearer pathways and a clearer outline of costs. In addition the Council should consider the establishment of a specialist ‘nurture unit’ to aid the integration of children back into mainstream schooling.** |

**Annex A: Terms of Reference**

1. To scrutinise the adequacy of the alternative education provision for pupils in the primary school sector who have been excluded from main stream education in Milton Keynes and to make recommendations accordingly.
2. To understand the issues relating to the alternative education provision for pupils in the primary school sector.
3. To report on the Task and Finish Group’s findings and recommendations at the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Committee on 24 July 2019.

**Annex B: Timpson Report Recommendations & Government Response**

1. DfE should update statutory guidance on exclusion to provide more clarity on the use of exclusion. DfE should also ensure all relevant, overlapping guidance (including behaviour management, exclusion, mental health and behaviour, guidance on the role of the designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children and the SEND Code of Practice) is clear, accessible and consistent in its messages to help schools manage additional needs, create positive behaviour cultures, make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 and use exclusion only as last resort, when nothing else will do. Guidance should also include information on robust and well-evidenced strategies that will support schools embedding this in practice. (Page 60)
2. DfE should set the expectation that schools and LAs work together and, in doing so, should clarify the powers of LAs to act as advocates for vulnerable children, working with mainstream, special and AP schools and other partners to support children with additional needs or who are at risk of leaving their school, by exclusion or otherwise. LAs should be enabled to facilitate and convene meaningful local forums that all schools are expected to attend, which meet regularly, share best practice and take responsibility for collecting and reviewing data on pupil needs and moves, and for planning and funding local AP provision, including early intervention for children at risk of exclusion. (Page 63)
3. DfE should ensure there is well-evidenced, meaningful and accessible training and support for new and existing school leaders to develop, embed and maintain positive behaviour cultures. The £10 million investment in supporting school behaviour practice should enable leaders to share practical information on behaviour management strategies, including how to develop and embed a good understanding of how underlying needs can drive behaviour, into their culture. It should also facilitate peer support, where school leaders have the opportunity to learn from high-performing leaders who have a track record in this area. (Page 63)
4. DfE should extend funding to equality and diversity hubs (an initiative to increase the diversity of senior leadership teams in England’s schools through training and support for underrepresented groups) beyond the current spending review period and at a level that widens their reach and impact. (Page 64)
5. To support the school workforce to have the knowledge and skills they need to manage behaviour and meet pupil needs, DfE should ensure that accessible, meaningful and substantive training on behaviour is a mandatory part of initial teacher training and is embedded in the Early Career Framework. This should include expert training on the underlying causes of poor behaviour (including attachment, trauma and speech, language and communication needs, among others), and strategies and tools to deal effectively with poor behaviour when this arises. (Page 68)
6. To ensure designated senior leads for mental health and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) are effective, DfE should:

- review the training and support available to SENCOs to equip them to be effective in their operational and strategic role as SEND leaders

- ensure the training designated senior leads receive includes a specific focus on attachment and trauma (Page 69)

1. DfE should strengthen guidance so that in-school units are always used constructively and are supported by good governance. (Page 70)
2. DfE should establish a Practice Improvement Fund of sufficient value, longevity and reach to support LAs, mainstream, special and AP schools to work together to establish effective systems to identify children in need of support and deliver good interventions for them. The fund should support effective partnership working to commission and fund AP and enable schools to create positive environments, target support effectively and provide the opportunity to share their best practice successfully. This should include developing best practice on areas including:

- internal inclusion units

- effective use of nurture groups and programmes

- transition support at both standard and nonstandard transition points and across all ages

- approaches to engaging parents and carers

- creating inclusive environments, especially for children from ethnic groups with higher rates of exclusion

- proactive use of AP as an early intervention delivered in mainstream schools and through off-site placements (Page 74)

1. DfE should promote the role of AP in supporting mainstream and special schools to deliver effective intervention and recognise the best AP schools as teaching schools (and any equivalent successors), and actively facilitate the sharing of expertise between AP and the wider school system. (Page 76)
2. To ensure AP schools can attract the staff they need, DfE should take steps to:

- ensure AP is both an attractive place to work and career choice, with high-quality staff well-equipped to provide the best possible academic and pastoral support for the children who need it most. DfE should consider ways to boost interest in and exposure to AP through new teacher training placement opportunities in AP

- better understand and act upon the current challenges with the workforce in AP, by backing initiatives to support its development, in particular focusing on making sure there is action taken to develop and invest in high-quality inspirational leaders in AP who have the capacity to drive improvement across the school network (Page 76)

1. Alongside measures to improve the quality of AP, PRUs should be renamed to reflect their role as both schools and places to support children to overcome barriers to engaging in their education. (Page 77)
2. DfE should invest in significantly improving and expanding buildings and facilities for pupils who need AP. As a priority, DfE should carefully consider the right level of capital funding to achieve this, for the next spending review. (Page 78)
3. The government should continue to invest in approaches that build multi-disciplinary teams around schools, and should identify any capacity concerns and work across Departments to ensure that schools are supported and work productively with all relevant agencies, including Health and Social Care. (Page 79)

14. DfE should make schools responsible for the children they exclude and accountable for their educational outcomes. It should consult on how to take this forward, working with schools, AP and LAs to design clear roles in which schools should have greater control over the funding for AP to allow them to discharge these duties efficiently and effectively. Funding should also be of a sufficient level and flexible enough to ensure schools are able to put in place alternative interventions that avoid the need for exclusion where appropriate, as well as fund AP after exclusion. (Page 86)

15. DfE should look carefully at the timing and amounts of any adjustments to schools’ funding following exclusion, to make sure they neither act as an incentive for schools to permanently exclude a pupil at particular times, nor discourage a school from admitting a child who has been permanently excluded from elsewhere. (Page 86)

16. Ofsted should recognise those who use exclusion appropriately and effectively, permanently excluding in the most serious cases or where strategies to avoid exclusion have failed. This could include consistently recognising schools who succeed in supporting all children, including those with additional needs, to remain positively engaged in mainstream in the context of a well-managed school. Within the leadership and management element of the judgement, Ofsted should communicate their expectation that outstanding schools have an ethos and approach that will support all children to succeed while accepting that the most serious or persistent misbehaviour, which impacts on the education and safety of others, cannot be tolerated. (Page 87)

1. DfE should work with others to build the capacity and capability of governors and trustees to offer effective support and challenge to schools, to ensure exclusion and other pupil moves such as managed moves and direction into AP are always used appropriately. This should include training as well as new, accessible guidance for governors and trustees. (Page 89)
2. Local authorities should include information about support services for parents and carers of children who have been, or are at risk of, exclusion, or have been placed in AP, in their SEND Local Offer. DfE should also produce more accessible guidance for parents and carers. In the longer term, the government should invest resources to increase the amount of information, advice and support available locally to parents and carers of children who are excluded or placed in AP. (Page 89)
3. Governing bodies, academy trusts and local forums of schools should review information on children who leave their schools, by exclusion or otherwise, and understand how such moves feed into local trends. They should work together to identify where patterns indicate possible concerns or gaps in provision and use this information to ensure they are effectively planning to meet the needs of all children. (Page 91)
4. DfE should publish the number and rate of exclusion of previously looked after children who have left local authority care via adoption, Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangement Order. (Page 91)

21. DfE should consult on options to address children with multiple exclusions being left without access to education. This should include considering placing a revised limit on the total number of days a pupil can be excluded for or revisiting the requirements to arrange AP in these periods. (Page 96)

22. DfE should review the range of reasons that schools provide for exclusion when submitting data and make any necessary changes, so that the reasons that lie behind exclusions are more accurately captured. (Page 97)

23. DfE should use best practice on managed moves gathered by this review and elsewhere to enable it to consult and issue clear guidance on how they should be conducted, so that they are used consistently and effectively. (Page 98)

24. DfE must take steps to ensure there is sufficient oversight and monitoring of schools’ use of AP, and should require schools to submit information on their use of off-site direction into AP through the school census. This should include information on why they have commissioned AP for each child, how long the child spends in AP and how regularly they attend. (Page 99)

25. To increase transparency of when children move out of schools, where they move to and why, pupil moves should be systematically tracked. Local authorities should have a clear role, working with schools, in reviewing this information to identify trends, taking action where necessary and ensuring children are receiving suitable education at their destination. (Page 99)

26. Ofsted must continue its approach set out in the draft framework and handbook of routinely considering whether there are concerning patterns to exclusions, off-rolling, absence from school or direction to alternative provision and reflecting this in their inspection judgements. Where it finds off-rolling, this should always be reflected in inspections reports and in all but exceptional cases should result in a judgement that the school’s leadership and management is inadequate. (Page 101)

27. In making changes that strengthen accountability around the use of exclusion, DfE should consider any possible unintended consequences and mitigate the risk that schools seek to remove children from their roll in other ways. This should include:

- reviewing a ‘right to return’ period where children could return from home education to their previous school, and other approaches that will ensure that this decision is always made in the child’s best interests

- consider new safeguards and scrutiny that mitigate the risk of schools avoiding admitting children where they do not have the grounds to do so (Page 102)

1. Relevant regulations and guidance should be changed so that social workers must be notified, alongside parents, when a Child in Need is moved out of their school, whether through a managed move, direction off-site into AP or to home education, as well as involved in any processes for challenging, reconsidering or reviewing decisions to exclude. DfE’s Children in Need review should consider how to take this forward so children’s social care can best be involved in decisions about education and how best to ensure a child’s safety and long-term outcomes. (Page 103)
2. Real-time data on exclusion and other moves out of education should be routinely shared with Local Safeguarding Children Boards and their successors, Safeguarding Partners, so they can assess and address any safeguarding concerns such as involvement in crime. This should include information on exclusion by characteristic. (Page 106)
3. The government’s £200 million Youth Endowment Fund, which is testing interventions designed to prevent children from becoming involved in a life of crime and violence, should be open to schools, including AP. This will enable the development of workable approaches of support, early intervention and prevention, for 10 to 14 year olds who are at most risk of youth violence, including those who display signs such as truancy from school, risk of exclusion, aggression and involvement in anti-social behaviour. (Page 106)

**Government Response**

1. We will make schools accountable for the outcomes of permanently excluded children.

2. We will establish a practice programme that embeds effective partnership working between Local Authorities, schools, alternative provision and other partners to better equip schools to intervene early for children at risk of exclusion and to ensure that the most effective provision is put in place for those who are excluded.

3. We will work with sector experts, led by the Department's lead advisor on behaviour, Tom Bennett, to rewrite our guidance (including on exclusions, and on behaviour and discipline in schools).

4. We now call on Directors of Children's Services, governing bodies, academy trusts and local forums of schools to review information on children who leave schools, by exclusion or otherwise, and to establish a shared understanding of how the data on the characteristics of such children feeds local trends.

5. We will work with Ofsted to define and tackle the practice of ‘off-rolling’.

6. We will extend support for alternative provision (AP).

**Scrutiny – An Explanation**

As Milton Keynes Council has a Cabinet (executive) system it is required by law to have a Scrutiny function to support and scrutinise its executive decision making arrangements.

Scrutiny committees and scrutiny task and finish groups are not “decision making” bodies, but are bodies which monitor and influence the decision makers. The committees and task and finish groups are made up of non-Cabinet members, and are designed to support the work of the Council in the following ways:

* Assisting the executive in research, policy review and development and thus helping drive improvements in public services;
* Reviewing and scrutinising decisions to be taken, or ones which have been taken by the Cabinet and officers, also known as acting as a “critical friend”, challenging policy and decision makers;
* Considering the Council’s performance;
* Reviewing the work of external organisations operating in the Borough to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working; and

# Enabling the voice and concerns of the public to be heard and listened to.

Each scrutiny committee or task and finish group has its own terms of reference. The scrutiny committees / task and finish groups consider issues by receiving information in a number of ways including by receiving presentations and taking evidence from councillors, Council officers and external witnesses or partners to develop an understanding of proposals or practices. As scrutiny committees and scrutiny task and finish groups have no decision making powers they can present their recommendations to the Cabinet, full Council, Council officers, or external partners. The committees will often request a formal response and progress report on the implementation of recommendations that they have provided to various parties.

**Attending Meetings of Scrutiny Committees / Task and Finish Groups**

Meetings of scrutiny committees and task and finish groups are held in public and are generally open for everyone to attend. If you would like to attend then please just turn up.

If you would like to make a representation to councillors on behalf of yourself or others on one or more the items on the agenda, let us know you are attending before the meeting so that the Chair can be advised in advance, either by calling 01908 691691 (ask for the Scrutiny Team in Democratic Services) or by emailing scrutiny@milton-keynes.gov.uk. You will have up to 3 minutes to address the meeting.

On occasions there are specific issues that the meeting must consider in private so all but members of the committee / task and finish group and key officers will be asked to leave.

If you want to speak on a matter that is not scheduled to be discussed by a scrutiny committee or task and finish group then please either call or email the address above and we will contact you to discuss how best to take this forward.

Meetings are generally held at the Civic Offices, Central Milton Keynes, the Chair of the meeting will try and make the meeting as informal as possible, but, by their nature, local authority meetings must retain a degree of formality, with the meeting being controlled by the Chair.

If you are to speak on an agenda item you will be able to speak when the item is considered. The Chair of the meeting will either call out your name when it’s your turn if you have given prior notice, or ask if any members of the public wish to speak.

You will either be invited to come forward to speak or remain in your seat – the Chair will let you know.

Depending on the room in which the meeting is being held the committee / task and finish group may be using microphones. If so and you are asked to come forward to sit at the table provided, a microphone will already be there, if you are asked to remain in your seat, a colleague will bring a hand held microphone to you.

When asked to speak, please give your name and let us know if you are representing any organisation or speaking in your own right.

The maximum time you will have to speak is three minutes. If there are lots of people wanting to speak, then the Chair might reduce the time per person to one or two minutes to enable everyone to have their say. Please try not to repeat what has been said before.

If you have been invited to give evidence to the scrutiny committee or task and finish group you will have been contacted by one of the Council’s scrutiny officers who will have briefed you on what the committee and task and finish group would like you give evidence on and what to expect at the meeting. You will be allowed sufficient time to speak to give your evidence. You will not be limited to 4 minutes.

Dates for the Council’s public meetings, together with the papers for the meetings, are available on the Council’s website at:

<http://milton-keynes.cmis.uk.com/milton-keynes/Committees.aspx>

If you have any questions about the scrutiny process please send them to: scrutiny@milton-keynes.gov.uk., The Scrutiny Team, Democratic Services, Milton Keynes Council, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes, MK9 3EJ or call 01908 691691 and ask for the Scrutiny Team in Democratic Services.



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1. Alternative Provision, Statutory guidance for local authorities, Department for Education, 2013 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, Statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion, Department for Education, 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Early intervention, meaning the earliest opportunity to identify needs and causality relating to any presented behaviours’ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Alternative provision market analysis, Research report, Department for Education, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The Timpson Review of School Exclusion, Secretary of State for Education, May 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)