A Policy to support pupils placed in a Staffordshire Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) / Short Stay School (SSS)

This document sets out the Local Authority’s policy for pupils placed in a Staffordshire PRU/SSS. A PRU is a school established and maintained by LAs to provide suitable education for pupils who, by reason of illness, exclusion or otherwise, may not receive such education (section 19 of the Education Act 1996). Some PRUs are referred to as "Short Stay Schools", although the government still broadly refer to them as PRUs or Alternative Provision (APs).

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Staffordshire Cares Local Offer:
http://helpyourself.staffordshirecares.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/advice.page?id=TQGziExn6Hk

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Part A: Policy for Pupils Educated in Pupil Referral Units/Short Stay Schools

1. Introduction

In considering those pupils who are being educated other than at school, responsibilities placed on Staffordshire County Council as a Local Authority are laid down in Section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996:

"Each local education authority shall make arrangements for the provision of suitable full time or part time education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them."

'Suitable education' may be provided by a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)/Short Stay School (SSS) defined in Section 19(2) as:

"a school established … and maintained by a local education authority which:

(a) is specially organised to provide education for such children; and
(b) is not a county school or special school".

Schools are where most young people should be for all or most of their statutory education. However, for those for whom education in school has become, for the time being inappropriate, the Authority will look to provide other strategies to:

- help them to realise and achieve their potential;
- respond to their entitlement to a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum;
- assist their personal development and help them towards full and responsible citizenship;
- encourage them to fulfil vocational or further educational aspirations;
- equip them to return to school or to undertake further education and training in the workplace.

To achieve this, the County Council looks to support pupils, parents and staff involved through a multi-agency approach recognising that the needs of this group of young people will involve many agencies and services.

2. Finance

Following the introduction of the Funding Reform April 2013, the management committees of PRU/SSSs will have delegated budgets.

PRU/SSS receive a commissioned planned place which is agreed by the commissioning home Local Authority. The planned place funding value is set nationally by the DfE and is currently valued at £10,000 per place.
Pupils placed within a PRU/SSS will be subject to top-up funding (Element 3) from the commissioning Local Authority or school for each pupil admitted to the PRU. The top-up funding for Staffordshire is set out within the High Needs Top-up Assessment Framework TRIG-8\(^1\) document.

3. **The Needs of the Pupil**

A number of general principles apply to the education of pupils being supported otherwise than at school, unless there are factors which make these impossible:-

- pupils should have their views and concerns heard and acknowledged;
- every pupil in alternative provision should have a core entitlement, covering a minimum curriculum entitlement, the number of hours education and training that should be available, and minimum standards for the length of time they should wait before being appropriately placed and before the engagement of support services;
- wherever possible, pupils should be entered for, and take, public examinations and other accredited courses and qualifications;
- an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) should be set up for each pupil, to meet the student’s complex needs and be in consultation with the family and other agencies as appropriate and regularly reviewed;
- education should take place within a reasonable distance of the pupil’s home;
- any transport arrangements should be no less favourable than those for pupils attending an LA maintained/academy school;
- pregnant pupils should be allowed to remain at their home school for as long as they are able to do so, and return as soon as they are fit to do so;
- all pupils should be supported in returning to their home school as soon as it is beneficial for them to do so or in preparing for further education and / or work related training.

4. **Equal Opportunities**

PRUs/SSSs must ensure that all policies and procedures are framed in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Public sector equality duties must be carried out to ensure that all pupils, including those with protected characteristics, are provided with an equally high standard of education and support to meet their individual need and are not subject to discrimination or harassment.

5. **Links with Schools**

For those pupils being educated in a PRU/SSS because of pregnancy, illness or other temporary or part time placement from a school, links to the pupil’s home school should be

\(^1\) [https://education.staffordshire.gov.uk/Pupil-Support/SEN-and-Vulnerable-Children/Pupil-Referral-Units-(PRUs).aspx](https://education.staffordshire.gov.uk/Pupil-Support/SEN-and-Vulnerable-Children/Pupil-Referral-Units-(PRUs).aspx)
maintained and the pupil should remain on their home school roll. Staff at the PRU/SSS should be able to expect support from a pupil’s home school in the form of:-

- a fully completed PRU/SSS referral form with relevant accompanying information;
- the individual pupil’s learning plan should be agreed and shared with the home school;
- continuing assessment and recording of the pupil’s attendance, achievements and progress as well as their pastoral and behavioural needs.

The point at which a pupil is able to be re-integrated should be negotiated with the pupil, parents/carers, PRU/SSS and the pupil’s home school.

6. **Placement in other Alternative Provision**

While a return to the home school is appropriate and achievable for some pupils, some may continue and progress to other alternative provision in line with the DfE Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance January 2013.²

This will be on the understanding that the alternative provider offers:-

- good academic attainment on par with mainstream schools – particularly in English, maths, science, PSHE and ICT – with appropriate accreditation and qualifications;
- that the specific personal, social and academic needs of pupils are properly identified and met in order to help them to overcome any barriers to attainment;
- improved pupil motivation and self-confidence, attendance and engagement with education; and
- clearly defined objectives, including the next steps following the placement such as reintegration into mainstream education, further education, training or employment.

7. **Special Educational Needs**

Staff should fulfil their responsibilities the Code of Practice 2014 and the SEND graduated response (assess, plan, do and review) and apply these, as schools would do, if there are concerns previously unidentified. Overall, a child with special educational needs should not be disadvantaged educationally by placement in a PRU/SSS or being educated out of school.

The Local Authority is empowered (Section 319 of 1996 Education Act) to arrange for some or all of a child’s special educational provision to be made other than at school. Such arrangements could include education in a PRU/SSS.

Where a pupil with a Statement of SEN or Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is placed in a PRU/SSS or other form of Alternative Provision because a place in a mainstream or special school appropriate to meet the needs specified in the statement/EHCP is not yet available, regular planning and review of the placement is essential, alongside steps to provide the necessary support.

8. **Looked After Children**

Staff should be fulfil their responsibilities with the Statutory Guidance Promoting the Education of Looked After Children 2014. All PRUs/SSSs should have a Designated Teacher for Looked after Children who follows the current statutory guidance\(^3\) including reporting to the management committee on the progress and attainment of looked after children.

There should be no drift or delay admitting a looked after child. Wherever possible first day provision should be arranged for a Looked After Child that has been permanently excluded.

Everything should be done to avoid excluding any looked-after child. Where there are concerns about a looked-after child’s behaviour, the VSH should be informed and, where necessary, involved at the earliest opportunity.

Full time education should be provided unless it is agreed that part-time provision would be appropriate for the individual and has been agreed by all partners through the personal education planning process.

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) should be arranged to support entry to the provision and also to support transition out of the provision. PEPs should be completed at least termly and more frequently where professionals involved with the pupil identify risks around the education placement e.g. risk of education placement breakdown, accessing part-time provision.

9. **Transport**

The Authority’s transport policy will be applied to pupils in a PRU/SSS or Alternative Provision via a PRU/SSS. Thus, where provision is beyond the statutory 3 mile limit (for secondary age pupils) from home, the pupil will be entitled to transport assistance to that unit. This will normally take the form of a bus pass or, where this is not feasible, of specially arranged transport.

Given the above, individual circumstances will be taken into account and transport assistance may be granted within the applicable distance limit where the circumstances of the pupil clearly justify exceptional treatment.

Any pupil admitted to the main roll of a PRU and transport is deemed appropriate fall within the category of ‘SEND’ and so would normally need to be considered and approved by the SEND Assessment Team before being processed in the usual way by the Integrated Transport and Planning Team.

To ensure the SEND Assessment and the Transport teams gain a greater understanding of the individual needs of the pupil and their circumstances so as to ensure that if transport is authorised the most appropriate and cost efficient transport assistance methods are then provided. Please use the new travel assistance form\(^4\) for all requests for travel assistance and return it to the relevant SEND District Office.

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However, at the Families First Education Management Meeting on the 22nd May 2017, it was agreed the District Inclusion Officer (DIO) would become the approver/gatekeeper of transport requests in circumstances where following a permanent exclusion; the child is to be admitted to a PRU/SSS. The arrangement of DIOs being able to directly request transport for pupils to their local PRU/SSS is aimed to speed up the process and prevent pupils waiting at home. Any subsequent moves from the PRU/SSS or to alternative education provision which requires transport will need to be agreed via the SEND transport process as detailed above.

Responsibility of transport to the PRU/SSS for pupils who attend on a dual roll basis and are on the main roll of their home school, remain with the parent/carer and home school.

10. **Admission Pathway**

The Local Authority has set out the categories of pupils who are eligible for admission to a PRU/SSS within its document entitled Admission Pathway to a Staffordshire Short Stay School / Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)⁵.

There should be no delay in admitting a secondary aged pupil onto the PRU dual roll following a permanent exclusion on day six. If a delay is to occur then this is to be discussed in detail with Entrust and escalated to SCC if applicable, however a plan must be in place with an agreed way forward.

See flowchart Appendix A.

11. **Partnership with Parent/Carers**

The Education Authority regards parent/carers as equal partners with the professional educators.

This partnership involves clear and prompt communications, especially where difficulties arise; the active involvement of parents in their child’s education, the recognition of the value of parents’ views on the provision made, and to be made, for their child and sensitivity towards parents’ needs in relation, for example, to the provision of information, the arranging of meetings and reporting on their child’s progress.

12. **Provision for Permanent Exclusions Key Stage 1/2**

Where there is no Primary PRU provision, it is expected that in the event of a permanent exclusion from Key Stage 1/2 the PRU will:-

1. At the 6th day provision will need to be made for the pupil’s education via the PRU/SSS in the form of some teaching at home or other appropriate venue.

2. The District Inclusion Officer will be responsible for negotiating another school place with support from Staffordshire County Council School Admissions and Transport Service.

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3. In the event of a hard to place pupil the PRU/SSS will continue to provide suitable education for the pupil until a school place is secured. The Fair Access Protocol\(^6\) may be invoked at this stage or consideration for an exceptional placement of a pupil without an EHCP or Statement of SEN within a Staffordshire maintained or academy special school\(^7\).

4. If the student has a statement of SEN/EHCP there must be continuous dialogue with the SEND Assessment and Planning Service re: timescales for decisions being made regarding future provision. The PRU/SSS will provide information to inform this process if required.

5. An exit strategy will be agreed.

**Part B: Curriculum Policy**

The long term goals of the PRU/SSS are to enable pupils to achieve high standards as is expected in mainstream educational settings at KS3 & KS4 to encourage and support their personal development and prepare them for adult life.

All learning experiences should be well planned, suit different abilities, be challenging and directed to these goals. To allow some pupils to make progress in their learning it will be appropriate to emphasise particular aspects of knowledge, skills and understanding, or to approach learning in alternative ways. When such alternative provision is made, the rationale should be clear and justifiable.

SSS/PRUs will be able to assess accurate current working levels, identify gaps in learning and plan learning priorities, and be able to communicate these to the onward setting at the point of transition/reintegration.

The PRU/SSS will seek to provide levels of staffing and other resources which will enable pupils to receive a core entitlement.

The ‘core entitlement’ covers:

- a minimum broad and balanced curriculum entitlement;
- the number of hours education and training that should be available to the child or young person; and
- minimum standards regarding the length of time that a child or young person should wait before being appropriately placed and the length of time for the engagement of support services such as child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).

Curriculum provision should include at least functional elements of English and Maths, ICT, Scientific Literacy, Personal and Social Development including Promoting British Values in Schools. PRU/SSS should consider the ways in which the National Curriculum, or as much of it as possible, can be provided for the child in conjunction with the pupil’s school if they remain on their home school roll.


All Alternative Provision should lead to accreditation within the qualifications framework. Some pupils are likely to remain in alternative provision until they reach the end of compulsory education (particularly those who are placed in alternative provision when they are in Key Stage 4). Such pupils should have clear routes to achieve combinations of qualifications at Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 where appropriate, that will prepare them fully for further qualifications. Those Key Stage 4 pupils who have achieved the required standard and wish to take GCSEs, BTECs, Vocational qualifications or equivalent will be offered the opportunity to do so.

The majority of pupils in alternative provision will have full-time education. That does not mean that they must receive all their education from one provider; they may have a package of mixed provision, from several different providers. But in total, the provision will amount to full-time education in most cases.

When pupils have been identified as being in need of alternative provision they should be placed within two weeks; the PRU/SSS to undertake the quality assurance of the AP on an annual basis.

A ‘Buddy’ system for staff with curriculum leaders in mainstream schools is good practice to support the sharing of expertise within high schools to deliver curriculum offer and should be considered wherever possible.

The curriculum will be enhanced by a number of additional learning experiences and opportunities to interact in an informal setting, including the possibility of work experience. Flexibility will be used with discretion, basing judgements about the nature and extent of additional activities on their relevance to the personal learning plan and on the maintenance of a balanced curriculum. It is important that the purpose of these learning experiences is shared and reviewed with the pupil. The response of the pupil must be assessed and will influence planning of further opportunities for personal development.

To ensure a broad range of such additional learning and training opportunities is available the PRU/SSS will use other providers to supplement the provision. In order to do this, the District Inclusion Partnership may be asked to provide additional funding if required.

Teaching will take account of learning theory, providing opportunities for pupils to reflect on how they learn, and to develop all aspects of their intelligence including their emotional, creative and technological development.

The PRU/SSS curriculum should:

- practically demonstrate the aims of the school.
- provide a framework of opportunities for learning through the classroom and other activities and through the nature of the school community.
- provide for the intellectual, spiritual, moral, physical, personal and cultural development of pupils
- involve the partnership of pupils, parents/carers and the community with the resource.

**Part C: Governance**
Each PRU/SSS will have a Management Committee constituted according to The Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Management Committees etc.) (England) Regulations 2007. The requirements of these regulations are explained within the Guidance on management committees for pupil referral units – constitution and roles and responsibilities.

The LA and PRU must have in place an Instrument of Government for their PRUs which records the name of the PRU (or the PRUs in the group) and the constitution of the management committee or joint management committee and other details.

Management Committees are intended to fulfil an advisory role though with statutory responsibility for certain specific functions or tasks. They are expected to be actively involved in most decision-making to ensure that their PRUs are run effectively and that they provide a suitable education for pupils.

Minutes of the Management Committee, including the headteacher’s termly report will be sent to the Senior Commissioning Manager – SEND at the Local Authority by the headteacher.

The Headteacher’s termly report for the Management Committee on the work of the PRU/SSS help members to fulfil their duties of

- Challenge and Support
- Keep up to date on key issues facing the PRU/SSS
- Maintain a focus on the PRU’s priorities

As a minimum, the report should contain information on:

- Pupil data (numbers dual/single, gender, SEND, LAC, FSM etc, fixed & permanent exclusions, NEET, attendance, progress, outcomes eg Y11 results/APS, external/internal visits/speakers, reintegration back to mainstream)
- Staffing (fte, new appointments, leavers, CPD)
- management issues/strategic planning, lesson observations
- curriculum development, teaching & learning
- safeguarding & health and safety (racism/bullying incidents, fire drills, accidents)
- Ofsted, SEF, School Improvement partner, Entrust
- Environment (premises, maintenance, grounds)

Part D: Support from the Local Authority for the PRU/SSS

All maintained/academy PRUs/SSS are entitled to a half day visit per term concentrating on improvement and management advice and support to the headteacher as part of the LA’s commissioned services from Entrust.

In addition PRU/SSS’s are entitled to 9hrs per academic year of support as part of the commissioned services from Entrust – SENSS Learning Support. This will include but not limited to:

- development and delivery of bespoke teaching programmes, and direct delivery of support in relation to their provision for pupils with SEN;
- guidance on the processes of assess, plan, do, review for students with SEN;
- assessment data for individuals in line with the current SEN legislation and local policy;

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9 [http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/711/2/DCSF-00054-2010.pdf](http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/711/2/DCSF-00054-2010.pdf)
In addition a half termly/termly meeting will be held between Headteachers of PRUs/SSS to identify common issues and plan support to meet the needs identified. This meeting can be attended by LA and/or Entrust officers by request of the PRU headteachers.

PART E: OFSTED Inspections

All PRUs/SSSs are subject to OFSTED under the existing framework for schools. The LA is the responsible authority for all ‘off site’ provision and therefore takes a full part in each inspection. The Headteacher will notify the Senior Commissioning Manager – SEND at the Local Authority and the Behaviour and Inclusion Manager at Entrust when they receive notification from OFSTED.
Appendix A

PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS PROCESS

Permanent Exclusion in all maintained Schools and Academies and PRU/SSS

Education provider must notify Senior Admin Officer (Entrust) on the first day of the permanent exclusion

Senior Admin Officer (Entrust)

Actions

Timeline and advice to schools/academies* and updates the One database regarding permanent exclusion

Informs within 2 working days

Local Support Team
SEND Locality Manager if pupil has statement/ EHCP or under assessment
Virtual School Headteacher if pupil is LAC to Staffordshire or other LA

PRU Headteacher & District Inclusion Officer (Entrust) Other L.A. if pupils resides OOC

Where an alternative school is identified the One system is updated to reflect the new school history by Snr Admin Officer (Entrust) with info by provided by the D.I.O. However if the pupil is to be EHE notification to be sent to this team who will update Capita One

For primary aged pupils where no school is identified, day 6 provision recorded on One database as dual rolled EOTAS by Snr Admin Officer (Entrust)

For ALL pupils, at point of when outcome of permanent exclusion known, Snr Admin Officer (Entrust) updates Capita One. SEND Finance use this data to ensure funding for TRIG-8* actioned to PRU. Portability funding actioned in line with DfE Guidance by Snr Admin Officer (Entrust)

PRU Headteacher to Action
Day 6 provision provided by PRU for all Key Stages & SEN pupils and recorded on One system where other AP applies. Good practice in Staffordshire LAC Policy and Procedure is 1st Day provision wherever possible. No delays should occur in placing secondary pupils on the PRU roll eg due to timings of admission meetings

* District Inclusion Officer advice package on the exclusion process is provided to maintained settings only. However, academies can buy this SLA direct from Entrust.
### After Day 6 for **Primary Aged Pupils**

#### Pupil does not have a Statement / EHCP

If permanent exclusion anticipated, District Inclusion Officer (DIO) may well have already identified school place for the pupil and the pupil is admitted to new school.

If unexpected permanent exclusion, there may be a delay in the DIO identifying a new placement.
- The DIO contacts schools in the local area to request a place. They will facilitate the admission together with the PRU if they are already involved (6th day provision) and that is required. An integral part of the process may be short term Inclusion budget allocation to support the admission.
- If all schools refuse to place the pupil and there has been only one PEX (no school has to admit if there are two PEX) the Fair Access Protocol can be initiated. The schools have to give reasons for their refusal in writing to the DIO or the School Admissions and Transport Service. The LA will then carry out an analysis eg numbers of pupils, distance, SEND numbers etc. of all schools approached and a decision is made, based on the evidence, between Admissions and the Entrust Inclusion Manager which school to direct. If a direction is agreed a letter is sent from SCC to the maintained school. If the school is an Academy then the application goes to the Secretary of State. It is usual to achieve a satisfactory outcome via the officer led negotiations with schools without the need for direction.
- Schools must not refuse to admit pupils in the normal admissions round on the basis of their poor behaviour.

#### Pupil has a SEN Statement / EHCP

Follow same steps as a non-statemented / EHCP pupil but in partnership with the SEND Locality Manager when identifying the new school.

SEND Locality Manager would lead, with the DIO assisting, to identify the mainstream setting as appropriate for the long term placement. However, short term placement would remain the responsibility of the DIO.

*Remember that Permanent Exclusion of a pupil with a Statement or EHCP is a LAST RESORT!*

**Preventative Best Practice:**
The DIO must advise that an early Annual Review (AR) is requested by the school with their EP involvement and that the SEND Locality Manager is invited to the Annual Review meeting. The DIO must alert the relevant District EP.
elsewhere. Where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools there is no need for a school to comply with parental preference for a period of two years from the last exclusion. The twice excluded rule does not apply to pupils who were below compulsory school age at the time of the exclusion, pupils who have been re-instated following a permanent exclusion (or would have been had it been practicable to do so), and pupils with special educational needs statements or Education, Health and Care Plans

Whilst waiting for new school, Alternative Provision is provided for the pupil by the PRU as KS1/2 tuition, e.g. tuition or alternative provision in the Locality.

For this provision in the interim placement, SCC commissions the PRU to provide Q/A interim educational provision.

Wherever possible if the pupil is LAC aim for 1st day provision


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<th>When a secondary aged pupil is permanently excluded, the process is managed in partnership with the DIO, PRU and District Inclusion Partnership.</th>
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<tr>
<td>NB. Fixed term exclusions are managed internally by schools, PRUs and academies. Data analysis provided on both permanent and fixed term exclusions in accordance with data requirements within the Entrust SDA (3.8.19, 3.8.22, 3.8.23 and 3.8.24)</td>
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