Oldham’s Inclusion Policy
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Foreword

From the Lead Cabinet Member for Education and Early Years

Our shared vision is that by 2020 we will have a flexible and resilient local offer of educational and alternative provision which supports the inclusion of all Oldham’s children and young people and eliminates the need to use powers to apply the disciplinary sanction of exclusion from school.

This policy is the product of extensive consultation, working co-operatively with partners to draw on the experiences of Oldham schools and our young people, recognising that there is no single model for inclusion. We have listened to a wide range of individuals and groups to understand better the scope of educational provision that will make the biggest differences to their lives. The result is a policy which will help everyone working with children and young people at risk of exclusion to secure the best possible outcomes.

The report of the Oldham Education and Skills Commission, published in January 2016, sets out a vision for Oldham to create a ‘Self-improving education system’ where schools, colleges and all interested parties work together in a new collaborative partnership. It makes 19 recommendations and focuses on achieving two key targets in Oldham by 2020:

- All performance indicators to be at the national average or above;
- All education providers to be judged ‘good’ or better by Ofsted.

Recommendation four highlights the need to address the high level of exclusions in the secondary phase and expresses the view that current arrangements are not working well. The recommendation is that all partners should work together through existing arrangements and via the new Oldham Education Partnership, to design and commit to new ways of working in order to tackle this issue.

The three year strategy flowing from the recommendations within this policy will support the development of appropriate educational provision for all our children and young people leading to the delivery of our stated vision.

Councillor Amanda Chadderton
2. Introduction

2.1 About this policy

This policy articulates our shared ambition for all Oldham’s children and young people, placing them at the centre of everything and putting their voice first. Through strong partnership working we will identify their needs early and secure high quality, appropriate educational provision.
2.2. What does Inclusion mean?

In Oldham, inclusion means something different depending on your point of view. This was very apparent in the results from the Inclusion Review survey which was completed by individuals across the stakeholder groups. Partners across the range of services and agencies that were involved in the development of this policy have agreed a broad definition within the following themes:

- There is no single model for inclusion
- Inclusion brings a sense of belonging, nurturing and safety
- Inclusive schools have the confidence and skills to include all their young people effectively
- Inclusion supports young people to achieve their desired outcomes and aspirations
- All young people are valued equally within an inclusive educational offer.
- Inclusion breaks down barriers and remove labels
- Inclusive provision is appropriate to a young person’s needs
- Inclusion involves listening to young people and families using person centred approaches
- Planned, effective transitions support inclusion

2.3. To which legislation and statutory guidance does this policy refer?

The following legislation and statutory guidance applies in all cases where relevant within this policy. The most recent documents, incorporating any updates or changes can be accessed via the following links.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2016/792/contents/made

Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England - A guide for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion

Children missing education - Statutory guidance for local authorities

2.4 Oldham Education and Skills Commission

Recommendation Four of the OESC report 2016 has a focus on behaviour and exclusions. It states:

“Oldham has a high level of permanent exclusions in the secondary phase and it is clear that current arrangements are not working as well as they should. The Commission also heard anecdotal evidence that mental health issues in children and young people are increasingly prevalent and that the availability of appropriate support needs to be improved. This is a national issue but one which also needs to be addressed locally in Oldham. The Commission recommends that by working together through existing arrangements and ultimately via the new education partnership, schools design and commit to:

- A new approach to how exclusions and ‘managed moves’ are brokered across the borough
- Improving early identification (through the new SEND strategy)
- Share information and data and carry out joint research and analysis
- Increased focus on preventative measures
- The availability of social, emotional and psychological support
- Incentivising inclusion

A re-framing of the Pupil Referral Unit (Kingsland School) will be key to this, as will a review of the current behaviour management provision in primary schools.
Joint working with health partners on issues of children and young people’s mental health will also be critical.

There may be new opportunities emerging from the devolution of health budgets within Greater Manchester to examine whether children and young people’s mental health might be delivered more effectively.

The Commission also recommends that the opportunity to secure additional capacity in Alternative Provision through the establishment of a free school should be explored.

The full report can be accessed by following the link below.
www.oldhampartnership.org.uk/economy-and-skills/oldham-education-and-skills-commission/

2.5 The Oldham Plan

The Oldham Plan seeks to create a place of ambition where people and communities flourish. Within Economy and Skills, it prioritises investment, skills and good quality jobs and developing a skilled, educated and dynamic workforce. This includes driving up education standards, managing young people’s transition between education phases, improving the quality of provision and increasing aspirations and qualifications. Central to achieving these aims is this policy and its role in creating a flexible and resilient local offer of educational and alternative provision which supports the inclusion of children and young people.

www.oldhampartnership.org.uk/
www.oldham.gov.uk/site/custom_scripts/3di/oldhamplan/index.html

2.6 Related guidance

The following guidance is reflected in the policy and contains useful information that supports the proposed new ways of working.

School attendance
Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, November 2016

Elective Home Education Guidelines for Local Authorities

SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years
3 Principles

3.1 Principles underpinning the policy

It is acknowledged that there is no single model for Inclusion. Children and young people sit at the heart of our approach, supporting families and communities to develop the resilience needed to ensure all students are able to gain maximum benefit from the Oldham educational offer.

Partners across the borough from a range of services, agencies and providers came together for a day to support and inform the development of this policy.

Collectively they decided that these are the principles that should underpin Oldham’s Inclusion policy:

- Children and Young People matter, put their voice first and place them at the centre of everything
- Needs should be identified early, leading to effective prevention, intervention and transition.
- A universal entitlement to good quality education provision with equality of opportunity for all groups and individuals
- Commitment from all partners, including parents and carers and the wider community to work together, share good practice and develop and share skills.
- Open and transparent communication and easily accessible information and guidance on provision and pathways of support
- All partners to share accountability and a duty to deliver entitlement, not targets
- There should be a strong emphasis on physical and mental health intervention and curriculum support
- Funding should follow students and their provision should be affordable and transformational
- Alternative provision should be subject to a rigorous process of evaluation and quality assurance
- Where the need for action is identified, action should follow without delay.
- There should be collaboration between agencies and stakeholders to plan and implement alternative provision
- Remove situations of isolation for the individual
- Inclusion is everybody’s business
- Create a nurturing environment for every child and young person
- The PSHE curriculum should support young people to become rounded individuals, developing resilience at an earlier stage as part of their experience of life
3.2 The principles in practice

**Person centred approaches** and transparency for young people and families lie at the heart of inclusive practice. It ensures that they will feel part of the conversation and help them to become part of the solution to the challenges they face. If young people and families understand what is expected of them they will be more likely to have higher expectations for themselves and for others leading to improved outcomes.

**Consistency of practice** across Oldham schools and settings will lead to a greater impact and improved outcomes. The earlier that partner services notify issues which could impact on a student’s engagement and participation the greater the likelihood that action can be taken to ameliorate emerging difficulties. If schools have the infrastructure in place to respond to emerging need at an earlier stage there should be a consequent reduction in referrals for additional services thereby increasing efficiency and ensuring available services are targeted at those most in need.

**Inclusion is everybody’s business** and requires all partners to work together in strong partnerships to ensure the needs of children and young people are identified early, at the time they first join a school or when their needs first manifest themselves. Students should have a sense of belonging, both within the school and the wider community.

**No school is an island.** By sharing best practice and skills across school and alternative provision all providers should be able to engage the most appropriate support beyond the universal school offer. Strong communications between schools, alternative providers and partner services and a commitment to achieving positive outcomes for all young people are key to achieving this ambition.

Everyone who works with young people should have the **highest ambitions to raise expectations** of all young people and to inspire them; to find their passion and offer them the full range of life chances. All providers should celebrate achievement and work together to make the best use of available resources. Partners should embed evidence based interventions and develop exit strategies, co-ordinating resources within a can do, ambitious culture.

**Early identification of need** leading to early intervention and prevention will contribute to a reduction in the number of children reaching crisis point. All practitioners in schools and settings should be appropriately trained to identify early signs of a reduction in an individual’s sense of wellbeing so that capacity is built into the education system and timely referrals to partner services will be made.

All partners should ensure that they have the **right staff with the right skills** and that there is a clear understanding of the services that are available. Timely referrals lead to the removal of thresholds and support effective intervention at the right time and in the right way.
3.3 Young peoples’ engagement

Young people’s views were captured as part of the development of this policy, and are reflected throughout. Some of the key messages from young people who have had first-hand experience of exclusion from education were delivered through the Youth Council via video.

“I think that it should be made clear to the parents that the exclusion of their child is treated very seriously, and their child should not take it lightly. Because in my opinion, if you give a child with difficult behaviour help, exclusion and expelling children is something which is not necessary.”

“Being excluded made my friend feel irritated, angry, confused – I think being excluded makes them want to kick back against the school again – it doesn’t make them want to avoid being excluded.”

“Being excluded didn’t make my friend feel brave or less fearful of exclusion – it made my friend feel isolated and alone because it was like school didn’t want him.”

“I think there needs to be more emphasis on Pastoral care – they are the people that can support young people who are struggling and look at the factors that affect behaviour that are beyond the walls of the school. Teachers are more focussed on what happens within the walls of the school.”

“There is definitely a stigma attached to being excluded because you get labelled as a bad kid.”

“Being excluded made me feel like the school didn’t want to deal with the actual problem they just wanted to get rid of me for a while. There were reasons behind my behaviour which didn’t get uncovered until I had cognitive behavioural therapy months later.”

“Instead of excluding people – you should talk to them – find out what’s going on – there may be other problems in that person’s life that are causing them to behave the way they are.”
4 The Oldham Context

**4.1 The population of Oldham** continues to increase in number and diversity with high levels of deprivation and disadvantage in a number of wards.

**4.2 School population information.**

The overall increase in Oldham’s population is reflected in significant increases in the school population, forecast to increase to 2026. Levels of deprivation and disadvantage, reflected in the level of Free School Meals and English as an Additional Language are significantly above reported levels for England whilst the proportion of Special Educational Needs is slightly below the England average.
4.3 Exclusions Data

In the eight years to 2014/15 Oldham has consistently permanently excluded more young people than our statistical neighbours and the rest of England.

Secondary Exclusions

Following a significant rise in 2007–08 Oldham’s secondary rate of permanent exclusion dropped between 2010 and 2012 to within 0.05% of statistical neighbours and 0.1% of the rate for England. Since that time, the rate has fluctuated, but there is an underlying increase year on year to 2014–15.

Since 2006 Oldham’s rate has been within, above and below that of our statistical neighbours and England. This changing pattern is not evident in the rates for statistical neighbours or England, which both show a consistent decrease to 2012–13, with an increase in the following 2 years to 2015.

2009–10 shows the lowest rate of fixed term exclusions in Oldham’s secondary school population. This was followed by a steady increase to 2012–13 and a decrease in the last two years. This is in contrast to permanent exclusions which increased during the last 2 years.

Primary Exclusions

Expressed as a percentage of the entire primary school population the proportion of permanent exclusions in Oldham has not surpassed 0% since 2010/11. This is lower than all comparator groups including the latest data from 2014/15 which indicates a statistical neighbour average of 0.04%.

The picture for fixed term exclusions in Oldham’s primary schools saw a negative change between 2013/14 and 2014/15 where the rate of fixed term exclusions increased from 0.44% to 0.61%, an increase of 0.17% in the year. This increase was considerably higher than all comparators. Despite this the overall figure is still considerably lower than the statistical neighbour figure of 1.17%.

5 Education Provision

5.1 Mainstream provision

Oldham local authority commissions 16 children’s centres that are delivered on a district basis across the borough. There are 162 registered childminders and 83 day care and 105 out of school and holiday care providers across the private and voluntary sectors; there are also 4 independent school nurseries.

A total of 115 providers deliver education for the compulsory years. There are 88 primary schools (71 maintained, 15 academies and 2 independent), 18 secondary schools (5 maintained, 7 academies, 1 free school, 1 University Technical College and 4 independent), 1 Pupil Referral Unit and 6 Special Schools, all of which are academies. Oldham has 2 Further Education providers one of which is also home to the regional science centre.

5.2 Specialist provision

Specialist provision is delivered both in Special Schools and additionally resourced provision accommodated within mainstream schools. This provision in delivered through:-

- 1 Primary, 1 Secondary and 2 Cross Phase Special Academies;
- 1 Primary and 1 Secondary Additionally Resourced Schools;
- 1 Primary Additionally Resourced Academy; and
- 1 cross phase Independent special school.

5.3 Alternative provision

Where individual schools identify that temporary access to Alternative Provision is likely to benefit a young person, the school will make arrangements for the pupil’s attendance. The school remains responsible for monitoring the attendance and progress of all its registered pupils regardless of where, and from whom, they receive their education.

5.4 Out of borough provision

In exceptional cases, where there is no suitable local specialist provision, children are placed in a school outside the borough. This will usually be an Independent or non-maintained school. Many of these are day placements but a small proportion include a residential element.
Oldham Schools and Further Education Establishments 2017
6 The issues

6.1 Disciplinary exclusion from school

It is acknowledged that good discipline in schools is essential to ensure that all pupils can benefit from the opportunities provided by education. The Government supports head teachers in using exclusion as a sanction where it is warranted. However, 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.

Disruptive behaviour can be an indication of unmet needs. Where a school has concerns about a pupil’s behaviour it should try to identify whether there are any causal factors and intervene early in order to reduce the need for a subsequent exclusion. In this situation schools should give consideration to a multi-agency assessment that goes beyond the pupil’s educational needs. Head teachers and governing bodies must take account of their statutory duties in relation to special educational needs (SEN) when administering the exclusion process. This includes having regard to the SEND Code of Practice: 0–25.

Excluded pupils should be enabled and encouraged to participate at all stages of the exclusion process, taking into account their age and understanding. Schools should have a strategy for reintegrating pupils that return to school following a fixed period exclusion, and for managing their future behaviour.

Head teachers in Oldham implement the statutory requirements to notify parents and the LA of a decision to exclude a pupil. The LA is represented at governor panel meetings when the decision is made whether or not to uphold the decision of a head teacher to permanently exclude a pupil.

Parents’ have a statutory right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel if requested by parents in their application for an independent review panel, the local authority / Academy Trust must appoint a SEN expert to attend the panel and cover the associated costs of this appointment.

6.2 Use of alternative provision

All children, including those in alternative provision (AP) settings, deserve a high-quality education. AP is for pupils who can’t attend mainstream school for a variety of reasons, such as school exclusion, behaviour issues, short- or long-term illness, school refusal or teenage pregnancy.

There are clear guidelines concerning schools’ use of AP. Governing bodies must ensure that parents (and the local authority where the pupil has a statement of special educational needs) are given clear information about the placement: why, when, where, and how it will be reviewed. They must keep the placement under review and involve parents in the review.

The regulations specify regular reviews but do not specify how often reviews must take place (that should be decided on a case-by-case basis). Reviews should be frequent enough to provide assurance that the off-site education is achieving its objectives and that the pupil is benefitting from it.

The legislation does not apply to Academies but they can arrange off-site provision for similar purposes under their general powers, set out in the Academy Trust’s Articles of Association. Though the regulations and guidance do not apply, they can provide Academies with an example of good practice.

Schools have the power to direct a pupil off-site for education to improve his or her behaviour. A pupil can also transfer to another school as part of a ‘managed move’ where this occurs with the consent of the parties involved, including the parents. However, the threat of exclusion must never be used to influence parents to remove their child from the school.
6.3 Special educational needs and disability

Head teachers and governing bodies must take account of their statutory duties in relation to special educational needs and disability (SEND) when administering the exclusion process. This includes having regard to the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25. Early intervention to address underlying causes of disruptive behaviour should include an assessment of whether appropriate provision is in place to support any SEN or disability that a pupil may have. This should involve assessing the suitability of available provision for a pupil's SEN or disability.

There are certain groups of pupils with additional needs who are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of exclusion. This includes pupils with SEND, including those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or statement of special educational needs. Head teachers should, as far as possible, avoid excluding permanently any pupil with an EHCP or statement of SEN. Where a pupil has an EHCP, schools should consider requesting an early annual review or interim / emergency review.

Where parents decide to exercise their right to have the decision heard by an Independent Review Panel, they have a right to request the attendance of a SEN expert at a review, regardless of whether the school recognises that their child has SEN.

6.4 Looked After Children

As well as having disproportionately high rates of exclusion, there are certain groups of pupils with additional needs who are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of exclusion. Looked after children can be most at risk if they are excluded from school and therefore a greater effort and attention should be given to this vulnerable group. Schools should engage proactively and communicate effectively with foster carers or children's home workers in supporting the behaviour of looked after children. Schools should communicate at the earliest stage when a looked after child is identified as being at risk of exclusion and co-operate proactively with foster carers or children's home workers and the local authority that looks after the child.

Where a school has concerns about the behaviour, or risk of exclusion, of a looked after child it should, in partnership with others (including the local authority as necessary), consider what additional support or alternative placement may be required. In the event that a looked after child is permanently excluded, as corporate parent the LA has the right to request that the decision is heard by an Independent Review panel.

6.5 Out of borough placements

For a permanent exclusion, if the pupil lives outside the local authority in which the school is located, the head teacher must advise the pupil's ‘home authority’ of the exclusion without delay. The local authority must arrange suitable full-time education for the pupil to begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion. This will be the pupil's ‘home authority’ in cases where the school is maintained by (or located within) a different local authority.

Where legally required to consider an exclusion, the governing body must notify parents, the head teacher and the local authority of their decision, and the reasons for their decision, in writing and without delay. Where the pupil resides in a different local authority from the one that maintains the school, the governing body must also inform the pupil’s ‘home authority’.

Where parents have exercised their right to have the decision heard by an independent review Panel and the panel upholds the permanent exclusion, the clerk should immediately report this to the local authority. If the pupil lives outside the local authority in which the school is located, the clerk should make sure that the ‘home authority’ is also informed in writing without delay of the outcome of the review. This includes any situation where parents withdraw or abandon their application for a review.

6.6 Vulnerable groups

The decision to exclude a pupil must be lawful, reasonable and fair. Schools have a statutory duty not to discriminate against pupils on the basis of protected characteristics, such as disability or race. Schools should give particular consideration to the fair treatment of pupils from groups who are vulnerable to exclusion.

The exclusion rates for certain groups of pupils are consistently higher than average. This includes: pupils with SEN; pupils eligible for Free School Meals; looked after children and pupils from certain ethnic groups. Head teachers should consider what extra support might be needed to identify and address the needs of pupils from these groups in order to reduce their risk of exclusion. For example, schools might draw on the support of outside agencies or other professionals, to help build trust when engaging with families who may have protected characteristics or be otherwise vulnerable themselves.
7 Our actions

7.1 Pupil Referral Unit

Oldham offers alternative provision for permanently excluded pupils in its Pupil Referral Unit, located in Kingsland School. The PRU provision is currently under pressure due to the high numbers of students attending the unit, difficulties in reintegrating the pupils back into mainstream provision and the high proportion of excluded pupils with identified SEN.

7.2 Managed moves and supported transfers

All Oldham maintained schools and academies comply with the LA Fair Access protocol, required within school admissions legislation to ensure that – outside the normal admissions round – unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This ensures that no school – including those with available places – is asked to take a disproportionate number of children who have been excluded from other schools, or who have challenging behaviour.

A Managed Moves protocol supports the FA protocol, providing a mechanism whereby pupils are offered a fresh start in a different school. This may be to avoid exclusion or to address identified needs relating to the pupil’s mental health and wellbeing.

7.3 Mental health and wellbeing

It is acknowledged that children and young people Children who are mentally healthy are able to:

- Develop psychologically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually:
- Initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships:
- Use and enjoy solitude:
- Become aware of others and empathise with them
- Play and learn
- Develop a sense of right and wrong; and
- Resolve (face) problems and setbacks and learn from them (Mental Health Foundation, 1999, 2002)

The long term impact of exclusion from school is well understood, defined within the following issues:

- Concern that exclusion may be a precursor to exclusion from society.
- Children with significant antisocial behaviour have poor social functioning as adults and are at high risk of social exclusion
- High cost incurred in the transition to adulthood
- Increased likelihood of criminality.
- Reduced range of qualifications
- Sometimes seen as an obstacle to achieving employment

The development of the Oldham Schools and College mental health framework supports education providers in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people with emerging and known difficulties associated with their mental health and wellbeing.
8 Recommendations to inform future strategy

The Oldham Inclusion Strategy will flow from this policy, incorporating the recommendations from the OESC and reflecting the ambition of key stakeholders and partners.

As part of a co-operative approach the following recommendations have been developed in collaboration with local stakeholders. They represent the aspirations of schools, young people, health and social care professionals together with the range of partners from associated services and agencies, including the voluntary sector, who contributed to the Inclusion Review.

8.1 We asked:
Can good quality alternative provision lead to quality engagement and avoid exclusion?

We heard:
92% of 105 consultation respondents agreed that exclusion can be avoided if good quality alternative provision is made available.

Local Authority response:
A range of good quality support should be provided through a broad alternative provision offer which facilitates engagement for young people and their families.

8.2 We asked:
What are the most common factors contributing towards permanent exclusion from school?

We heard:
A total of 1,073 responses (74%) to the survey indicated that most permanent exclusions are linked to an unstable home and family life, unidentified and therefore unmet learning needs, mental health illness or negative role models. A further 360 responses (25%) indicated that many exclusions are also linked to domestic violence, substance misuse, deprivation, multiple school moves or peer pressure. Further responses, 12 (1%) indicated that being newly arrived in the borough, sibling pressure and LGBT issues can also contribute.

Local Authority response:
In order to ensure that co-ordinated multi-agency approaches can be implemented by all schools and settings a menu of options for early intervention will be developed building on existing services and systems.

8.3 We asked:
What are the characteristics of high quality alternative provision?

We heard:
Views were strongly expressed indicating that alternative provision must meet the identified needs of young people and have measured benefits and consequences. Appropriate use of AP can support young people to maintain engagement within an education setting instead of being excluded which can exacerbate issues.

Local Authority response:
The roles and responsibilities of educational providers, including alternative provision providers, partner services and agencies, parents and young people should be clearly articulated, understood and accepted by all.

8.4 We asked:
What will the alternative provision in Oldham look like by 2020?

We heard:
Stakeholders held shared views that an inclusive landscape would be characterised by personalisation, strong relationships, clear pathways and preventative approaches predicated on learner entitlement and with strong links to the Oldham Pledge. There would be a comprehensive offer, with a level of choice and diversity that allows young people and their families to be the architects of their decisions.

Local Authority response:
In order to ensure that Oldham’s Alternative Provision offers a range of types of intervention and support we must seek out and replicate best practice examples from within and outside the borough.
8.5 We asked:
What is your understanding of the term ‘inclusion’ and how will effective Alternative Provision best be offered and delivered?

We heard:
Placing young people and their families at the heart of decision making, schools should ensure that they have the right people with the right skills working with pupils to identify difficulties as they emerge and intervene appropriately at the earliest stage.

Local Authority response:
Working in partnership, schools should develop and implement a hub and spoke model to share good practice and develop the capacity to deliver a diverse, high quality AP offer.

8.6 We asked:
What will the principles of an inclusion policy mean for children and young people?

We heard:
Overwhelmingly stakeholders felt that young people and their families should be involved in any decisions about their educational provision offer so that they develop ownership of the challenges being faced and are able to better understand how they can contribute to the solutions. Expectations will be better understood and young people will feel values within a nurturing and supportive framework.

Local Authority response:
The voice of the young person and their family must remain central in decision making.

8.7 We asked:
To what extent does a young person’s home environment contribute to the risk of their exclusion from mainstream school provision?

We heard:
24% of respondents to the survey feel that an unstable home and family life contributes to a young person’s risk of being permanently excluded from school. There should be increased collaboration between schools and family support agencies and services.

Local Authority response:
Parents and carers should be supported to feel included in the school community.

8.8 We asked:
How can we best achieve clarity and transparency for young people and their parents/carers?

We heard:
There is a shared view amongst stakeholders that there should be some element of consistency across Oldham schools and providers with clearly defined pathways. There should be clear referral routes to ensure that young people and families are able to access, and be offered, appropriate additional support at the earliest stage building on existing systems.

Local Authority response:
Schools, the LA and partner services and agencies should share and communicate information within an agreed framework and pathway, securing early and timely intervention and support.
8.9 **We asked:**
What is the role and impact of the LA in the delivery of a successful inclusion strategy?

**We heard:**
The LA should be able to direct resources appropriately to support those young people who are most in need of access to additional services if there is a strong infrastructure of educational provision, including a diverse and comprehensive alternative provision offer.

**Local Authority response:**
There should be an inclusion co-ordination function within the LA to embed the policy in day to day practice, building on existing protocols and practice.

8.10 **We asked:**
How can we make the best use of available funding in order to secure the stated outcomes?

**We heard:**
A cultural change is needed, that moves away from seeing the creation of an inclusive offer not as a problem, but as a key to success for young people who require something different. Increased awareness of how services can work together will help to maximise the impact of available provision and resources.

**Local Authority response:**
A review of local funding mechanisms should be undertaken, to support the development and delivery of resources to support the implementation of the inclusion policy within an affordable funding envelope.
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