

SECOND CHANCES

Exclusion from School and Equality of Opportunity

Edited by Nick Donovan

With a preface by Margaret Hodge M.P.

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PREFACE

Margaret Hodge M.P.

Education offers young people huge opportunities. Those without qualifications are twice as likely to be unemployed as those with A-levels. But those opportunities are wasted if children are excluded from school.

In the four years between 1991/2 and 1995/6, the number of permanent exclusions, otherwise known as expulsions, increased almost fourfold. Although not officially measured, it is believed that the use of fixed term exclusions, otherwise known as suspensions, also increased during this period.

This pamphlet raises some of the important issues surrounding exclusions from school. It makes clear that, for many schools, permanent exclusion is a last resort - half of all secondary schools only excluded one or no children in 1995/6. Other issues raised, such as the low proportion of excluded children re-entering mainstream education and the over-representation of Black children in exclusion statistics, add urgency to the government's drive to reduce the level of exclusions in our schools.

If we do not reverse the trend of rising exclusions from school we risk creating an education underclass of young people who have little hope of employment.

KEY FACTS

1. Permanent exclusions from school are growing. They have increased fourfold from 2,910 in 1990/1 to 12,476 in 1995/6¹, the latest year for which data is available.
2. Two thirds of permanent exclusions in secondary schools in 1995/6 occurred in just a quarter of all schools. 45 schools excluded 15 or more pupils.
3. It is estimated that only 15% of excluded children return to full time, mainstream education.
4. There is a link between exclusions from school and crime. In 1996, the Audit Commission found that 42% of offenders of school age who were sentenced in the youth court had been excluded from school.
5. Exclusions affect Black children disproportionately compared to their White and Asian peers. Black Caribbean pupils are nearly 5 times more likely to be excluded than their White peers.
6. The cost of exclusions to all public agencies in England and Wales reached an estimated £81 million in 1995/6.

INTRODUCTION

Nick Donovan and Peter Kenway

“Much more might be done, by both schools and LEAs, to avoid exclusion. The evidence of this survey suggested that schools’ use of exclusion was occasionally draconian, without being effective. For many children who are permanently excluded, the chances of re-entering mainstream education are remote and the alternatives are, in the present state of provision, too often expensive and inadequate. Some schools are well aware of this and work hard to retain even the most difficult pupils. That work is of fundamental importance, since no democratic society can afford to write off thousands of young people.” OFSTED, 1996.

INTRODUCTION

Bad behaviour and violence are clearly unacceptable, inside or outside the classroom. However, exclusions from school have an impact that goes far beyond the individual school: they affect local businesses, the police, victims of crime, social services and the wider community. They also have a heavy impact on the excluded child, who often leaves school with little chance of re-entering mainstream education or training.

In essence, the issue of exclusion from school can be seen as a matter of equality of opportunity. Do we define it as giving everybody just one bite of the cherry? If you fail at your first attempt in mainstream education should society then give up on you? Or do we see equality of opportunity as more than ‘a single chance to get your foot on a narrow ladder’? Implementing the ideal of ongoing equality of opportunity means tackling the rising tide of exclusions from school.

WHO IS EXCLUDED?

Only 12,476 children (0.17% of the total school population) were excluded in 1995/6. While by no means homogenous, this small group of children do share certain characteristics. An excluded child is likely to be a teenage boy. 83% of excluded children are male and over two-thirds of them are aged between 13 and 16.

Like the wider school population, most excluded children are White. However, as our first contributor, David Gillborn, makes clear, Black children are heavily over-represented in the exclusion statistics, being nearly 3 times more likely than the average to be excluded from school. This rises to 5 times more likely for Black Caribbean children. Gillborn calculates that nearly 1,000 extra Black children are excluded who would otherwise remain in school if Black pupils were excluded at the same rate as their White and Asian peers.

Myth. Exclusions are ‘colour blind’

Fact. Black children are disproportionately affected by exclusions. Black children are often excluded for different reasons than their White peers. See page 14.

Source. *Exclusions from Secondary Schools 1995/6*, OFSTED, 1996.

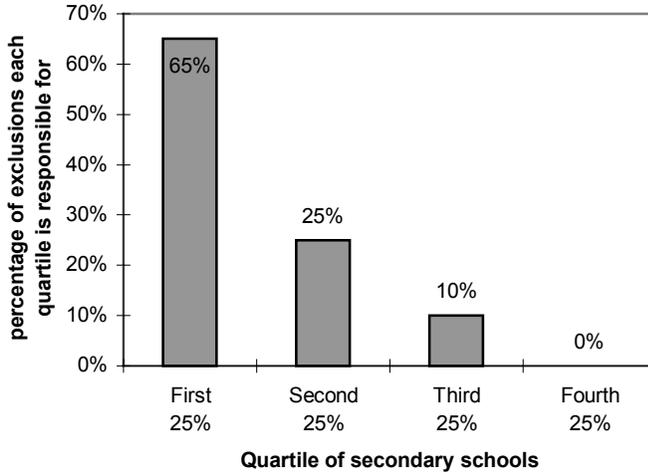
What is also clear is that pupils with statements of special educational need (SEN) are seven times more likely to be excluded (0.98%) than children without statements (0.14%).

WHAT IS THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM?

Large numbers of exclusions are not the norm - in 1995/6 a quarter of all schools excluded no children. A further quarter of schools only excluded one pupil.

As can be seen from the chart below, a large proportion of all exclusions were concentrated in a small number of schools. The top hundred excluding schools excluded 1450 pupils. 45 schools excluded 15 pupils each, with one school excluding 23 in the year. Almost two thirds of all permanent exclusions at secondary school level occurred in just one quarter of schools.

Distribution of permanent exclusions in secondary schools, 1995/6



WHY ARE PUPILS EXCLUDED?

Reasons for permanent exclusions range from acts of extreme violence to comparatively minor misbehaviour. The OFSTED special inspection into exclusions highlighted causes such as constant soiling, verbal abuse, violence towards teachers, non-teaching staff and other pupils, damaging school property and possession of cannabis².

Myth. Most permanent exclusions are for classroom violence.

Fact. Physical aggression and bullying led to just over one in four permanent exclusions in 1991/2. See page 16.

Source. *Exclusions: A Discussion Document*, Department for Education, 1992.

What is apparent, however, is that the media myth, that all pupils are excluded for acts of violence, is far from the truth. Only one in four permanent exclusions result from acts of aggression or bullying. A 1992 Department for Education report concluded that “*disobedience in various forms - constantly refusing to comply with school rules, verbal abuse or insolence to teachers - was the major reason for exclusion*”³.

WHY IS EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL SO IMPORTANT?

Why is exclusion from school so important? After all, as Parsons makes clear, this is a very small group of pupils. The vast majority of pupils are not excluded, and some believe that the ‘silent majority’ of parents support exclusion⁴.

Exclusion is an important issue for two reasons: the link between exclusion from school and crime, and the costs to public agencies and wider society.

Considering costs first: Carl Parsons estimates that the total cost of excluding children from schools in England in 1996/7 is £81 million. This includes costs to health services, social services and the criminal justice system. He calculates that average educational cost of excluding a child is £4,300, while the mean cost to other services in 1994/5 was nearly £1,200. The additional cost of maintaining a child in school who otherwise would be at risk of exclusion is calculated to be £2,800.

There are other costs too, which are far harder to calculate. A significant minority of excluded young people are involved in crime. Parsons has calculated the cost to the police service but the costs to the wider community are also likely to be significant. David Gilbertson provides data from the Metropolitan Police which shows that nearly half of all offences of theft and handling committed by juveniles are committed during school hours. Gilbertson’s view is that “*there is a direct and palpable link between exclusion, truancing and crime.*”

This view is supported by the Audit Commission's survey of young offenders, which found that 42% had been excluded from school. A further 23% 'truanted significantly'⁵. The link between exclusion and crime has also been borne out in Home Office research, whose survey of self reported offending found that almost all boys and nearly two-thirds of girls excluded from school admitted some type of offence⁶. While there is no proven **causal** link between exclusion from school and crime, it is reasonable to suppose that being in an unstructured environment increases the likelihood of offending.

Why is exclusion from school so important when they are such a small minority of the total school population? The answer for the Metropolitan Police is that young offenders who have been excluded have a large impact on volume crime. Some offenders can commit up to 50 offences before they are arrested and enter the official statistics.

WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT EXCLUSIONS FROM SCHOOL?

The fact that of all English secondary schools, half excluded one or no pupils in 1995/6 shows that most schools and their headteachers take the decision to exclude seriously and with reluctance. This is in line with the guidelines that "*permanent exclusion should be used as a last resort, when all other reasonable steps have been taken, and when allowing the pupil to remain in school would be seriously detrimental to the education or welfare of the pupil or of others*"⁷. But in a sizeable minority of schools, large numbers of exclusions are far from a rarity. What needs to be done to reduce exclusions generally, and in high excluding schools in particular?

The answer may lie within the working practices of low excluding schools. This involves drawing out the best practice from schools with good disciplinary policies and records of low exclusion. This can be done, as Audrey Osler demonstrates, by turning around the question - 'what are the characteristics of a high excluding school?' to 'what are the qualities of a successful, low-excluding school?'

Osler states that head teachers have a clear leadership role to play in fostering an ethos of inclusion and in ensuring that discipline policy is appropriate, fair and consistent. She also points to the successful experience of mentoring in Birmingham schools by KWESI, an African-Caribbean community group. More generally, she stresses importance of equal opportunities training and the early identification of special educational needs. The low excluding schools in her study were also schools with an element of pupil involvement, whether through school councils or peer group counselling.

Myth. Schools with high exclusion rates have good disciplinary policies.

Fact. “Schools which exclude few pupils tend to be better than those which exclude many at managing behaviour.” OFSTED. See page 49.

Source. *Exclusions from Secondary Schools 1995/6*, OFSTED, 1996. Page .6.

It may also be possible to use the experience of Birmingham, where there is a ‘family group’ of Roman Catholic schools who negotiate with each other to exchange excluded children. Family groups could be formed within LEAs, or within inter-LEA forums.

There is also a clear role for LEAs, not least in feeding information back to schools and placing this information in context. As Osler discusses, many schools were unaware of the ethnic disparities in their exclusion rates until they were pointed out to them.

Perhaps, however, the spread of best practice may not be enough when other powerful factors point towards excluding a child. There would still be pressure from parents of other children to exclude troublesome children, and the inter-school competition and league tables which Gillborn discusses would still form the backdrop to any decision to exclude.

What options are there for changing the institutional environment in which schools make their decisions?

One possibility, suggested by Gillborn, is a system of ‘fair dealing’. If a school excludes a pupil then they should incur a duty to take in another pupil excluded by another school. This would allow exclusion to continue in cases where the relationship between the child and school has irretrievably broken down, but keeps children within mainstream education. The prospect of having to receive another child excluded from another school, may discourage schools from excluding pupils. The school would have more knowledge about the child they were excluding than the pupil they were taking in. They may prefer not to take in an ‘unknown quantity’.

Myth. Excluded children usually move to another school.

Fact. Only 15% of children permanently excluded re-enter mainstream education. See p 17.

Source. *Misspent Youth*, Audit Commission, 1996.

An alternative option, that of financial incentives for schools not to exclude, is raised by Audrey Osler. The Age Weighted Pupil Unit, the portion of education funding which follows a pupil, is often below the cost of retaining pupils at risk of exclusion - even when augmented by a statement of special educational needs. There is therefore currently a financial incentive for schools to exclude. The government has floated the idea of excluding schools carrying the cost of educating pupils⁸. In his written submission to the Social Exclusion Unit, Martin Stephenson, the Chief Executive of Include, has stated that “*incentives will be important, and the development of an out of school weighted unit should be considered.*”⁹

OFSTED has complained that “*too many decisions are made by heads under pressure and in isolation, though governors often exert a moderating influence.*”¹⁰ An answer could be the creation of an exclusion panel. Since the implications of the exclusion are felt by many different sectors of society, representatives of those affected, including the police, social services, and local businesses, should be involved in the decision process. This would enable a decision to be taken which takes into account the full repercussions of exclusion. There would need to be careful monitoring of the speed in which a decision can be taken in the event of an incident involving violence to pupils or staff. There is no obvious reason why exclusion panels cannot be combined with a duty of placement or financial disincentives in trial areas.

Policies like the above are not panaceas: but by making exclusion truly the last resort it is intended to be, they could have a knock on effect on the earlier disciplinary process. Best practice disseminated by LEAs might be more readily implemented if there was an exclusion panel, a duty of placement, or financial disincentives to exclusion. The balance could then be shifted in favour of prevention rather than the surgical cure of exclusion.

Tackling exclusions from school solely with educational policies is not enough. Often the Police, Social Services, youth services and LEAs all have a role to play in these children's lives. How to overcome 'departmentalism' in local government, and co-ordinate local agencies' responses to socially excluded young people is a question that Martin Stephenson addresses.

He advocates what amounts to a 'purchaser-provider' split in services for disaffected young people. A lack of inter-agency co-ordination has exacerbated many of the problems socially excluded young people face. A project manager from the voluntary sector is attached to a group of disaffected young people. He then arranges the provision of various services from the public and private sectors. These services include relevant work experience at local companies, training at TECs and F.E. colleges and education at a variety of establishments. The project manager gives some continuity of care for the young person in all their dealings with the various agencies involved. This is a significant new role for the voluntary sector worker: as a 'para-professional' and as 'purchaser' of the appropriate services for the young person.

The government has stated, most recently in the Green Paper on Welfare Reform, that reducing the number of exclusions is a specific target in its battle to tackle social exclusion. This is extremely welcome given the disturbing rise in the number of permanent exclusions during the 1990s. However, exclusion from school is often only a symptom of deeper problems within that child's life. Co-ordinating the state's response to the wide variety of problems these children often face should be the next task of local and central government.

EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL: AN OVERVIEW OF THE ISSUES

David Gillborn

WHAT IS EXCLUSION? HOW IS IT USED?

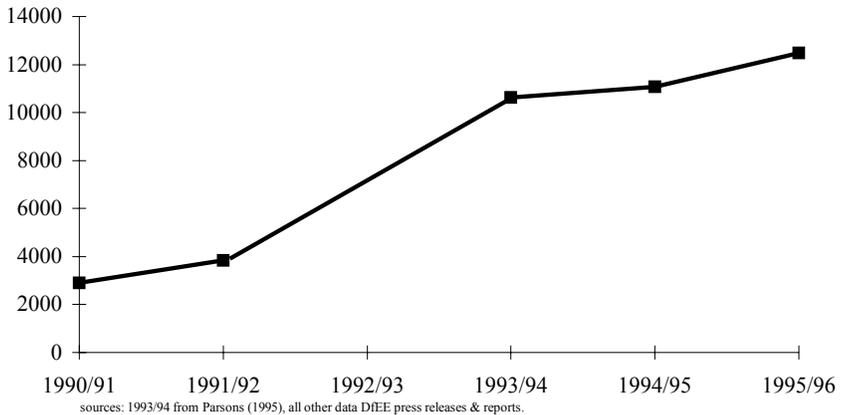
There are currently two forms of exclusion from school:

- **Fixed term exclusions, also known as suspensions**, whereby the pupil is excluded from school for a specific time period and given a date of return to the same school. This category accounts for the majority of all exclusions. In one inner London borough, for example, more than 80% of exclusions were for a fixed period¹¹. There are, however, no national figures on the number of fixed term exclusions, nor their average length. Currently, a student cannot receive fixed term exclusions in excess of 45 days in any single year.
- **Permanent exclusions, also known as expulsions**, whereby the pupil is removed from a school's roll and barred from returning. Once confirmed by the Local Education Authority (LEA) and governing body (or Discipline Committee in Grant Maintained schools) the LEA has a duty to provide some form of alternative educational provision. In practice, this alternative provision may only amount to a few hours tuition a week.

Permanent exclusions are now monitored by the DfEE, who recently published the most comprehensive analysis to date¹². It is known that official statistics under-estimate the true level of exclusions. Both the Advisory Centre for Education¹³ and the Office for Standards in Education note the occurrence of 'informal' or 'back-door' exclusions where "*parents [are] persuaded to withdraw their children before formal exclusion occurs*"¹⁴. This fact makes the rise in officially recorded exclusions all the more disturbing.

Permanent exclusion is now used more than ever before. During the 1990s the numbers have risen especially steeply, such that the 1995/96 level of 12,476 is four times that recorded at the beginning of the decade: 2,910.

Permanent exclusions from English schools in the 1990s



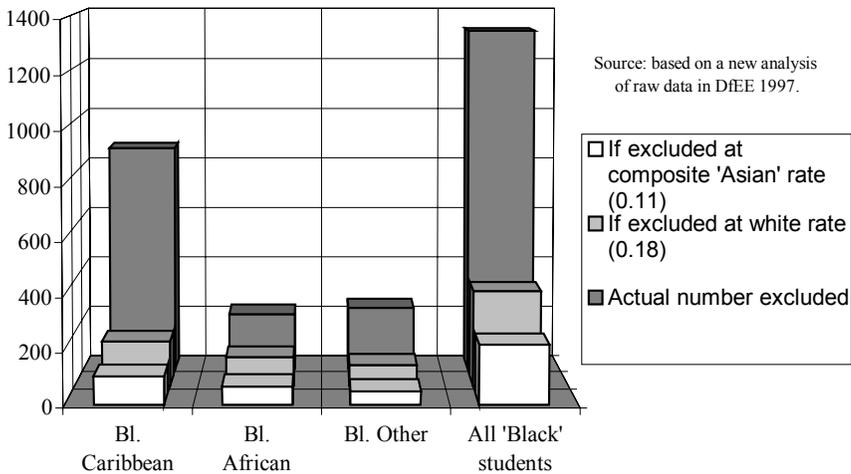
WHO IS EXCLUDED?

Although the number of excluded students has risen, the characteristics of excludees remain relatively stable. The latest DfEE statistics show that boys account for the overwhelming majority of all exclusions (83% of permanent exclusions in 1995/96). The peak ages for exclusion are 14 and 15 (accounting for 28% and 20% of exclusions respectively). Overall, 13% of exclusions are from primary schools, although the number is rising significantly (an 18% increase in the last year). Ethnic origin also appears to play a significant role: whenever data on permanent exclusions have been broken down by ethnicity, young Black people appear considerably more likely to be excluded than their White peers.

RACISM AND EXCLUSION

The over-representation of Black students has been a common finding whenever exclusion statistics have been analysed by ethnic origin, that is, young Black people are typically excluded in far greater numbers than would be expected in view of their representation in the student population¹⁵. The problem is especially pressing for young Black men (because far more males are excluded); however, in comparison with their White peers, young Black women are also over-represented in the figures.

Data on both fixed and permanent exclusions from secondary schools in 1993/4 show that those categorised as Black Caribbean were excluded at almost six times the White rate¹⁶. The most recent statistics (for 1995/96) show that Black young people are much more likely to be permanently excluded than their White peers: the overall rate was 0.19%, but for 'Black' students it was 0.66%¹⁷. The latest figures allow the calculation of how many individual young people are accounted for by the over-representation: compared to the rate of White and Asian exclusions, **each year** around 1,000 **extra** young Black people are permanently excluded from school.



The over-exclusion of young Black people (England 1995/6)

These statistics paint a consistent and worrying picture: they indicate that exclusion is operating in a racist fashion. The over representation of Black students is *prima facie* evidence of racial discrimination in exclusion procedures. There is no doubt that, as presently operated, exclusion from school has a disproportionately high impact on Black families and communities.

There is growing evidence that the exclusion of young Black people reflects the operation of deeply held, but complex, differential expectations and assumptions. Qualitative research, often involving detailed interview and observational work in schools, suggests that White teachers frequently expect Black children to present a more frequent and a more severe threat to their authority¹⁸. This can lead to teachers acting against Black children more quickly than their peers, sometimes for ‘offences’ that others may ‘get away with’. In isolation the incidents are minor, the processes mundane and commonplace - but their consequences can be devastating.

An OFSTED special inspection of exclusions offers further evidence that differential processes produce the disproportionate rates of Black exclusion. The ‘Caribbean’ young people in OFSTED’s sample presented a rather different profile to that of other excluded students: among other factors, they were judged of higher ability and to have less pronounced histories of disruption:

“The case-histories of most of the Caribbean children differed markedly from those of others studied for this survey. For example, most of them were of average or above-average ability, but had been assessed by the schools as under-achieving. Although many had been excluded several times, their disruptive behaviour did not usually date from early in their school career, nor was it so obviously associated with deep-seated trauma as with many of the White children.”¹⁹

Research has suggested, therefore, that Black students often experience school as a relatively conflict-ridden place where they are subject to greater surveillance than their peers. This is especially disturbing in view of the fact that many exclusions are categorised as being generated by a rather grey range of misbehaviour, and not the extremely violent or dangerous incidents of media folklore.

WHY ARE STUDENTS EXCLUDED?

In view of the sharp rise in exclusions during the 1990s, we are presented with two possible scenarios: either, standards of behaviour among young people have taken a major turn for the worse (beyond anything experienced in the 1950s, 60s, 70s or 80s); or, schools are increasingly unwilling and/or unable to cope with a range of student behaviour and needs. Although the former explanation is favoured by some, most educationalists suspect the latter.

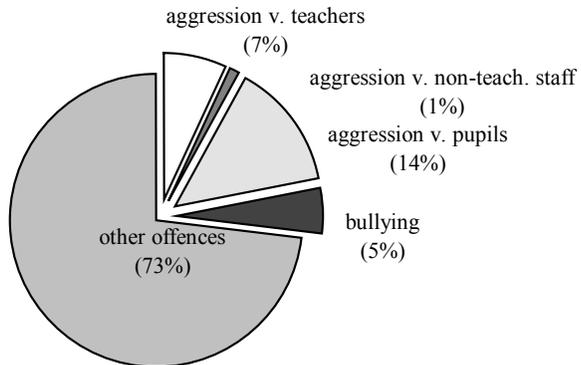
In particular, it seems reasonable to suppose that the increase is related, in some way, to the package of reforms that have reshaped the structure, funding and content of state maintained schooling in the last decade or so. A survey of LEA Directors of Education in 1994, for example, revealed that while 8% thought the increase in exclusions was due to 'poorer discipline', 42% blamed increased competition between schools²⁰.

The reforms have undoubtedly increased the level of inter-school competition²¹. Schools' reputations have become especially important as neighbouring institutions vie for a share of a limited pool of pupils. Under these conditions, it is possible that exclusions might be used more freely, in order to remove 'troublesome' or over-demanding pupils²². At a time of scarce resources, schools may increasingly be deciding that they are unable to afford the time and material costs demanded by certain pupils whom they may previously have retained. Finally, it is known that the publication of examination 'league tables' has caused considerable concern to teachers who feel pressured to improve attainment as measured by national 'benchmarks', sometimes threatening schools' prior commitment to pastoral care and especially to equal opportunities concerns²³. It has also been noted that the calculation of the performance tables is such that a school's profile will be enhanced by the permanent exclusion of pupils who seem unlikely to achieve higher pass grades²⁴.

Officially, permanent exclusion "*should be used as a last resort, when all other reasonable steps have been taken, and when allowing the pupil to remain in school would be seriously detrimental to the education or welfare of the pupil or others*"²⁵. The recent special inspection by OFSTED concluded that 'schools' practice with regard to exclusions varied to an unacceptable degree' and that "*schools' use of exclusion was occasionally draconian, without being effective*".²⁶

Despite the public perception that excluded students must have committed very serious acts, the majority of exclusions do not relate to violent behaviour. In 1990/91, physical aggression and bullying led to just over one in four permanent exclusions: “*disobedience in various forms - constantly refusing to comply with school rules, verbal abuse or insolence to teachers - was the major reason for exclusion*”.²⁷ The disruptive effects of such behaviour should not be minimised but it is clear that exclusion is being used much more widely than is officially intended.

Physical Aggression as a Reason for Exclusion England 1990-91



source: Gillborn (1996) Exclusions from School (London, Institute of Education).

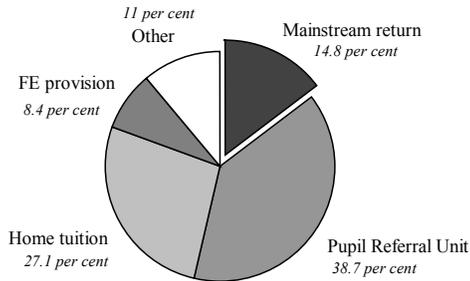
WHAT HAPPENS AFTER PERMANENT EXCLUSION?

In view of the seriousness of the sanction, it is surprising that we have so little information on the subsequent educational, social and economic careers of students who have been permanently excluded from school. In view of current evidence, two statements can be made with a degree of certainty:

- **Young people with experience of exclusion are disproportionately likely to fall foul of the criminal justice system**²⁸.

- **Only a minority of permanently excluded pupils return to full-time mainstream education.** Based on a survey of English LEAs in the Autumn term 1994, it has been calculated that only 18.5% of those excluded from secondary schools returned to mainstream education²⁹. Permanent exclusion can, therefore, have a devastating effect on the educational chances of the individuals concerned.

**Return to the Mainstream: Secondary Pupils
(Autumn term, 1994)**



Source: Parsons 1995, Table 6.

POLICY AND PRACTICE: FAIR DEALING

The establishment of the Social Exclusion Unit is a welcome development, as is the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, the Task Force on Standards and the Advisory Group on the Education of Ethnic Minority Students. It is to be hoped that they can encourage good practice in this field. Certainly the need is great. Unfortunately, there is little evidence that an awareness of the facts has informed education policy. What is needed is a clear legislative signal on school exclusions which, as an end product, encourages schools to adopt current best practice.

There is no simple answer to the problem to exclusions, but part of a successful approach may be relatively straightforward: if a school permanently excludes a pupil, they should incur a duty to take in another pupil excluded by another school. This would allow exclusion to continue in cases where the relationship between the child and school has irretrievably broken down, but would also have several advantages over the present arrangements.

First, the proportion of pupils dropping out of mainstream education after exclusion (presently 85%) would fall. This would almost certainly increase the quality of the education they receive, and would lessen the need for expensive and unsatisfactory educational alternatives like home tuition.

Second, it would act as a counter-balance to the competitive forces unleashed by the last government's reforms. It would no longer be financially beneficial to the school to exclude a particular child - the position of the school overall would not change.

Third, it would encourage schools to work to retain the students they already have. To take in another child is to take in an unknown quantity - schools may often prefer to deal with a child about whom they have more information. This should reduce the number of exclusions for cumulative, 'low-level' offences - an area where Black students may be especially vulnerable to over-exclusion.

CONCLUSION

A clear signal from central government on school exclusions, such as introducing 'fair dealing' could encourage schools to adopt current best practice. As such reforms would make exclusions more difficult, they would also make the introduction of good practice such as behaviour management plans and meaningful equal opportunities policies, relatively more attractive, thus shifting the focus of resources to prevention rather than cure.

THE COSTS OF SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS

Carl Parsons

INTRODUCTION

Permanent exclusions amount to just 0.2% of the compulsory school age children and 0.5% of secondary pupils (0.7% in inner London). So, both the numbers and proportions are small. Even including pupils excluded the previous year, who remain excluded in the current year, the number does not rise above 20,000³⁰.

The nature of the excluded pupil population is known, their needs are known and professionals are available to support these pupils. There is a policy choice to be made about whether to allocate resources for prevention, and ensure continued full-time education, or to persist with punitive approaches which alienate the young people, consign them to inadequate part-time provision, and shunt costs onto other agencies. The return on current policies is arguably poor for the expenditure involved.

COSTING EXCLUSIONS³¹

Expressed at its simplest, the additional cost to the public purse of permanently excluding a pupil from school **equals** the cost of managing the exclusion process **plus** the cost of replacement education **plus** the cost of other services (social services, health and police) called upon as a result of exclusion **minus** what would have been the cost of the pupil's mainstream school place. A measure of the quality/quantity of the substitute education should also be included in the calculations

The average annual cost for mainstream schooling in 1994/95 was approximately £2,300 for secondary pupils and £1,700 for primary pupils.

The costs for permanently excluded pupils in six LEAs surveyed were, on average, over £4,300 in full year equivalent replacement education and other education costs. Approximately 17% of this expenditure was on managing the exclusion process, 17% on support and 66% was devoted to delivering the replacement education.

The amount of education received during the period of permanent exclusion was under 10% of a full-time education. This is a consequence of the delayed start and the part-time nature of the replacement education. This is inevitably damaging to the individual pupil and makes return to mainstream school more difficult.

Some of the costs of exclusion do not arise immediately as some pupils' exclusions continue into the following year. 46% of the 1994/95 permanent exclusions were 'continuing' cases into the following year. These cost on average £5,134, a more substantial charge on the education budget in 1995/96 than new exclusions.

Taking account of the mean cost of new excludees in 1994/95, continuing cases, the trend in permanent exclusions and an inflation factor of 2.7% per year allows a calculation of *actual* expenditure on exclusions by education in the six LEAs. The total bill to education in the six LEAs reached nearly £5 million in 1995/96.

COSTS TO OTHER AGENCIES

It is important that an estimate is arrived at for the full costs to all services so that co-ordinated policies may be formulated in the face of a shared problem and planned budget allocations. On the basis of the data available in this investigation, it is clear that the expenditure incurred by other services is substantial, though it cannot be attributed wholly to the act of exclusion. The mean cost to other services is £1,172.

Approximately 20% of permanently excluded pupils are Social Services cases, costing £1,100 on average. These costs are spread unevenly; even for those young people for whom provision is made, the variation is great, with the costs for residential out of area units or schools being the most expensive items.

Approximately 10% of permanently excluded pupils call upon health services resources, but incurring small expenditure, amounting to an average of less than £100. Health costs arise from attendance at Child and Adolescent Therapy Units and similar centres with some GP consultation or psychiatrist. Information provided by four of the community healthcare trusts suggests that referrals by parents or schools, of pupils with behaviour difficulties, have risen significantly over the last 3-4 years.

Police costs are estimated to arise in connection with a little over a quarter of permanently excluded pupils at an average cost of over £2,000. This is a low estimate as data supplied from some police areas suggests up to two-thirds of excluded pupils are known to the police with one-third going to court. Police and criminal justice costs vary from the caution (around £35) to a prosecution (which runs to something approaching £3,000); where remand or multiple court appearances are involved, the expense is much greater. Reports and analyses from a number of forces suggest that the costs set out here are conservative.

At the LEAs surveyed, Police and Social Services' costs for a small number of excludees continued at a high level into the following year. This included police officer time, court appearances, and residential education largely paid for by social services. One exceptional young person had costs to social services of £39,000, including the cost of residential school, and £22,000 to the police and criminal justice.

EXTRAPOLATING THE TOTAL COSTS OF PERMANENT EXCLUSION IN ALL ENGLISH LEAs OVER THREE YEARS

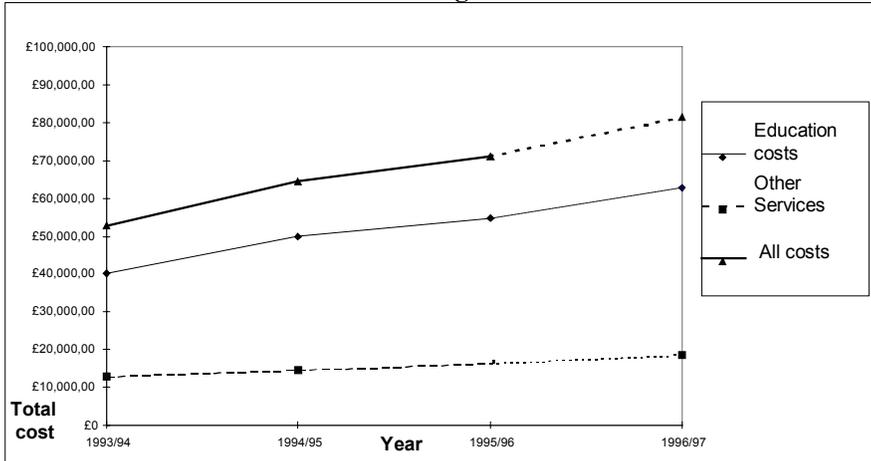
From 1994-95 figures calculated in our research for the Commission for Racial Equality:

- The mean cost to education (with wide variation) of a child excluded in 1994/95 was just under £1,900 (not aggregated to full-year equivalent cost).
- The mean cost of the continuing excluded child in 1995/96 was £5,134.
- The mean cost to other services of a child excluded in 1994/95 was £1,172.

For the six LEAs in which data were gathered, the total costs for the three year period in relation to the numbers excluded have been estimated. Calculations have then been made to extrapolate the costs in all LEAs in England of the full range of services over those three years.

The result is an estimated total expenditure of more than £71 million for 1995/96. Projections for 1996-97 put the cost of excluding pupils from schools in England at £81 million compared with approximately £34 million if they had had full-time mainstream schooling.

Figure 2: Costs to education and other services of permanent exclusions from schools in England 1993-1997



THE COST OF INCLUSION

Costs were calculated for six pupils maintained in their schools, who in other circumstances would be at risk of exclusion. In most instances, these pupils were in receipt of additional resources, with the additional costs varying from £0 to £6,300, and with a mean of £2,815.

These children were receiving full-time education. This was not without difficulty and costs to their teachers but the provision of education was approaching 100% (at least in intended provision), the young person was not left without schooling, was not left unsupervised, the family stress was minimised and the difficulties of re-integration were avoided.

Being excluded is an alienating experience. It also provides time in unstructured and unsupervised environments where young people may become involved in crime and, thereby, become a cost to the public purse. Maintaining pupils in school must reduce the likelihood of these developments.

The few costed cases of pupils maintained in school indicate that this is cheaper than the costs for those in the ‘continuing’ exclusions category. Although not possible for all troubled and troublesome children, it therefore seems to be a preferred option where support is financed, targeted and kept under review. Such pupils will also continue to receive full-time education.

CONCLUSION

Generalising from detailed costing data from a small number of local authorities has dangers yet provides the best basis currently available for total cost estimates of permanent exclusions from schools in England.

Permanent exclusion from school is deeply damaging to the pupils and very distressing for the parents and carers. In some cases, these are families with a range of problems already and the exclusion from school is a further difficulty. There are also dangers in increasing the burden on families not coping well, and the result may be longer term calls on the public services.

The rise in numbers and in expenditure is such as to make this group of pupils a significant cost to the public services. They are no longer a rare anomaly but a fixed part of the education and welfare scene for which routine provision will need to be made - in mainstream school or elsewhere. Treating them as an aberration which may go away is a mistake in terms of the quality of provision for them, in terms of the likely outcomes for the individuals themselves and for their prospects of becoming contributing citizens in the longer term.

EXCLUSION AND CRIME

David Gilbertson

IS THERE A LINK BETWEEN EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL AND JUVENILE CRIME?

In 1996 the Audit Commission found that 42% of offenders of school age who are sentenced in the youth court had been excluded from school³². In an earlier Home Office study of juvenile offending, 98% of boys, and 61% of girls who had been permanently excluded from school admitted offending³³.

There is not a clear causal relationship between exclusion from school and juvenile offending. Nevertheless, opportunities to offend increase if a child is in an unstructured environment, such as that following exclusion from school. *“Since exclusion may be a response to offending, or to behaviour (such as truancy) which is itself related to offending, it is not possible to determine which causes which. It may be more sensible to consider exclusion from school as both a cause and a consequence of offending. Nevertheless, the chances of committing offences would appear to rise considerably if excluded from school, especially if permanently...”*³⁴

The only way the Police Service counts the involvement of these children in crime is by arrest. As the proportion of crimes that end in arrest is very low, then we must understand that such figures significantly underestimate the scale of offending.

In the Metropolitan Police District in 1995/6, out of a total of 25,696 young people arrested, 1,648 were excluded or unplaced at the time of arrest. The issue, though, that is not disclosed in the Home Office study, but which comes out of our own research, is that many are repeat offenders. Some of these juveniles have committed between 20-50 offences before they are actually arrested. Thus, although the numbers of offenders who are excluded are relatively small, there is a multiplier effect and their impact on volume crime is significant.

The tables below demonstrate that a large amount of youth crime is committed by juvenile offenders during periods when they should be in school.

TABLE 1: Persons accused by offence type and age between 7th January 1997 and 18th July 1997, where offence committed in the Metropolitan Police District, and where the offence was committed between 0900 hours - 1500 hours.³⁵

Offence Type	Age							
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Total
Violence against the person	1	4	11	27	47	63	56	209
Sexual offences	5	1	1	1	7	4	4	23
Robbery	0	3	7	18	46	78	51	203
Burglary and going equipped	6	10	18	50	78	117	97	376
Theft and handling	30	66	189	273	473	575	498	2104
Fraud or forgery	1	1	3	8	15	22	41	91
Criminal damage	4	12	22	27	54	54	42	215
Other notifiable offences	0	1	2	2	10	21	27	63
Other accepted crime	1	4	15	42	85	149	172	468
Total	48	102	268	448	815	1083	988	3752

TABLE 2: Persons accused by offence type and age group, where offence committed between 7th January - 18th July 1997 in the Metropolitan Police District.³⁶

Offence Type	Juveniles accused aged 10-16 years	Percentage committed during school periods	Non-juveniles accused	Total
Violence against the person	605	34%	5149	5754
Sexual offences	72	32%	494	566
Robbery	690	29%	1068	1758
Burglary and going equipped	1114	34%	3368	4482
Theft and handling	4794	44%	18310	23104
Fraud or forgery	190	48%	2583	2773
Criminal damage	1137	19%	4660	5797
Other notifiable offences	201	31%	3249	3450
Other accepted crime	1888	25%	24586	26474
Total	10691	35%	63467	74158

Table 2 shows that 10,691 young offenders were arrested or reported for notifiable offences in the period for 7th January to 18th July 1997.

Table 1 shows that, of this total, 3,752 committed offences during times when the individual should have been in school. While a few of these offenders will have been arrested for committing more than one offence (burglary *and* a handling offence, for example), the overall impact of such double counting is slight. It can therefore be seen that over one third of juvenile offences are committed during school periods by those who have been truanting, excluded from school, or who are unplaced. In summary, juvenile offenders arrested for committing offences during school hours accounted for over 5% of the total number of offenders, *of all ages*, arrested in the Metropolitan Police District during this period in 1997.

Certain crimes are more likely to be committed during school periods. For example, table 2 shows that 4,482 offenders (of all ages) were arrested for burglary during the six-month period under review, of which 1,114 (25%) were juveniles. Of these, table 1 shows that 376 committed the offence at a time when they should have been in school.

Just as important as the volume of crime is the type of crime that excluded and truanting young people are committing, in particular, offences of violence and robbery. These are offences which cause real concern to the public and greatly increase the fear of crime. Our figures show that for the first half of 1997, 1,758 offenders (of all ages) were arrested for robbery. 690 (39%) were juveniles, of which 203 should have been in school at the time of the offence. Thus over 11% of *all* robbery offenders who came to notice in the metropolis were truanting or excluded.

This comparatively small group were also arrested during the same period for 23 out of 72 sexual offences committed by juveniles, and for 209 offences of violence, out of 605 committed by juveniles.

WHAT ARE THE POLICE DOING ABOUT SCHOOL EXCLUSION AND TRUANTING?

One of the reasons for exclusion, quite apart from anti-social behaviour *within* the school, is persistent truanting. There are a number of truancy initiatives that are operating throughout London supported by the police. They include truancy patrols by uniformed police officers, with plain clothes officers working in partnership with education welfare officers. There are also good town centre schemes run by the police, such as the one in Bromley.

We support instances of good practice such as the role that the Lennox Lewis College plays in Hackney. Another initiative in Hammersmith gives groups of 14 - 16 year olds who have a history of persistent truancy or are excluded from school an opportunity to study for a City and Guilds course in basic vehicle maintenance - a scheme which is very attractive to them. The Metropolitan Police Service are keen to involve the local business community, who have a key role to play and who are very often they are the victims of theft and robbery. If there are issues around sponsorship or the provision of resources, we are not at all embarrassed about going to local businesses.

Unfortunately, this vital work may be under threat. The Police Service, in common with the rest of the public sector, has to live with the reality of declining resources and this has had a direct impact on personnel levels as hard choices have had to be made. Increasingly we have had to retreat from areas of activity which might be viewed as peripheral to our core business, in order to devote time and effort to issues that our customers tell us are of critical importance. Truancy patrols are seldom viewed as such. It is to be hoped, however, that the impetus of the Crime and Disorder Bill, and a greater emphasis on crime prevention and crime reduction will allow us to be innovative in the way that we approach the subject in future.

CONCLUSION

Currently, much of society's resources are focused on tackling the symptoms of social problems, rather than their causes. The Police Service is no different. That is partly because targets have hitherto been focused on clear-up rates and there is a strong argument for saying that 'what gets measured, gets done'. From next year, key performance indicators will be targeted towards crime reduction and the overall strategy of the Metropolitan Police Service will be to reduce offending.

The situation regarding exclusion from school is similar. A lot of money is spent cleaning up at the end of the exclusion process. These costs are borne by the police, businesses, social services, and by society at large. Ideally, we should all be shifting resources to much earlier on in the process.

We believe that there is a direct and palpable link between exclusion, truancy and crime. Resources should therefore be focused on tackling the causes of

these problems rather than later in the process when we are just cleaning up the mess. These arrest figures are a confession of failure. We have lost children to crime when we are building them into the arrest figures. Crime reduction strategies and early intervention are the way forward.

THE FAILURE OF TRADITIONAL SERVICES FOR SOCIALLY EXCLUDED YOUNG PEOPLE

Martin Stephenson

This paper contends that the current institutional and legislative framework, coupled with professional divisions, can often exacerbate the social exclusion of young people with multiple problems. The underlying reasons for the inadequacy of traditional approaches is explained in terms of the lack of co-ordination between agencies. An alternative approach is then proposed.

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

The language of exclusion and inclusion is important in that it focuses the debate on systems, professionals and their interaction rather than labelling young people as ‘truants’ or ‘maladjusted’.

Social exclusion is defined here as applying to all those children and young people who are either impeded in gaining access to, or find difficulty maintaining themselves within mainstream education, training or employment and are thereby denied full membership of their local communities.

HOW MANY?

It is often the very fact of being outside of the mainstream that results in these young people disappearing beneath the documentary horizon. For instance, there has been no comprehensive measurement of the numbers of fixed term exclusions or of those young people who have not been formally excluded but may not have attended school for long periods because of, for example, bullying, racism, or helping with the care of siblings.

The 12,500 young people permanently excluded from school in 1995/6 are only the tip of the iceberg of those who are becoming detached from mainstream education and training. Analysis of external data and that accumulated by our organisation gives a conservative estimate of some 150,000 14-17 year olds who are completely outside of mainstream education, training and employment.

Most, if not all, of these young people experience multiple problems. There is often a complex interplay between educational, family, health, and housing issues. Their chaotic educational and care careers are a sign of the fragmented response to their problems made by the relevant agencies.

FRAGMENTED AGENCY RESPONSE

We feel that the issue of disaffection from education and training is exacerbated by poor co-ordination between the relevant agencies - a view now expressed by government ministers and embodied in the Social Exclusion Unit.

Social Services, health, education and criminal justice agencies are often all separately involved in the lives of disaffected young people. For example, an exclusion from school might result in a child entering residential care. How does a children's home cope with an excluded young person when it is not staffed for day care? The answer is, often with difficulty and with high overtime costs which would be more appropriately spent on education.

The lack of a coherent framework for the division of responsibilities and functions between local authority departments, schools, health authorities and criminal justice agencies is compounded by the different professional cultures which exist, such as that between teachers and social workers.

Professional training in education can too often concentrate on enabling teachers to master a subject rather than classroom management and wider care issues. Equally, there is often scant attention paid in most Diploma of Social Work courses to educational issues, which should be of paramount importance to social workers.

EXISTING SERVICES FOR DISAFFECTED YOUNG PEOPLE

The off-site Pupil Referral Unit has traditionally catered for the majority of permanently excluded 14-16 year olds as well as long term non-attenders. The 1993 Education Act requires these units to operate with much greater clarity and purpose in curriculum and renamed them as pupil referral units. In 1994, some 3,000 of all permanently excluded secondary age pupils attended these units³⁷.

Research and inspections have revealed a number of major weaknesses in this approach:

- The curriculum tends to be narrow and the quality of teaching can be reduced by the lack of specialist subject teachers³⁸.
- Relatively few young people are re-integrated back into mainstream primary and secondary schools. The primary aim of reintegration, particularly of younger pupils, is undermined by the presence of a group of 15 and 16 year olds who have experienced multiple exclusions and who have not returned to secondary schools. This results in a wide range of ages in the one unit and creates a long term out-of-school culture with inappropriate role models for younger pupils.
- Schools can absolve themselves of their responsibilities by the use of these units. There is a risk of pupils and parents regarding the use of these units as a ‘sin bin’ and staff may also become marginalised from mainstream professional development.
- Placements are not cost effective. The unit cost of many pupil referral units is at least £10,000 per head. In addition, over half of the units provide less than 15 hours of education a week³⁹.
- Academic achievement and progression into further education, training and employment are often unacceptably low⁴⁰.

AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

A joint Social Services Inspectorate and Ofsted report identified the main reason for failing the educational needs of children in the care system was “*the lack of one person responsible for fulfilling the role of parent in continuously pressing for improvement and inculcating in the child the importance of education*”.⁴¹ In effect, there is no single purchaser of services for these young people, only a fragmented array of provider services jostling with each other.

In recognition of the range of inter-related needs that are hampering a return to education and training, CiS has created a new multi-disciplinary post, a professional who can ensure effective co-ordination between families and agencies. The project manager for CiS, who may be a qualified teacher, youth worker or social worker, provides a blend of all three professional skill backgrounds in helping a young person adopt a structured approach to all of

their life with the key aim of enabling them to access mainstream education and training.

There are abundant educational environments which are appropriate to these young people. In addition to secondary schools, there are Further Education colleges, adult education centres, community centres and training providers. There is little need to create specialist units or additional forms of provision for this age group. What is needed, however, is a multi-disciplinary support service which will help tackle all of the barriers in a young person's life (whether they be located within health or family or educational issues) so that they can gain access to mainstream education environments. In addition, they need to be involved in a personal development programme that will equip them for the interpersonal skills to maintain themselves in a group setting.

The CiS partnerships have pioneered a new multi-disciplinary approach to the inclusion of young people within a local strategy. This approach is based on a partnership between the key public sector agencies and private sector.

There are two principal project models: the Bridge Course and Reintegration projects.

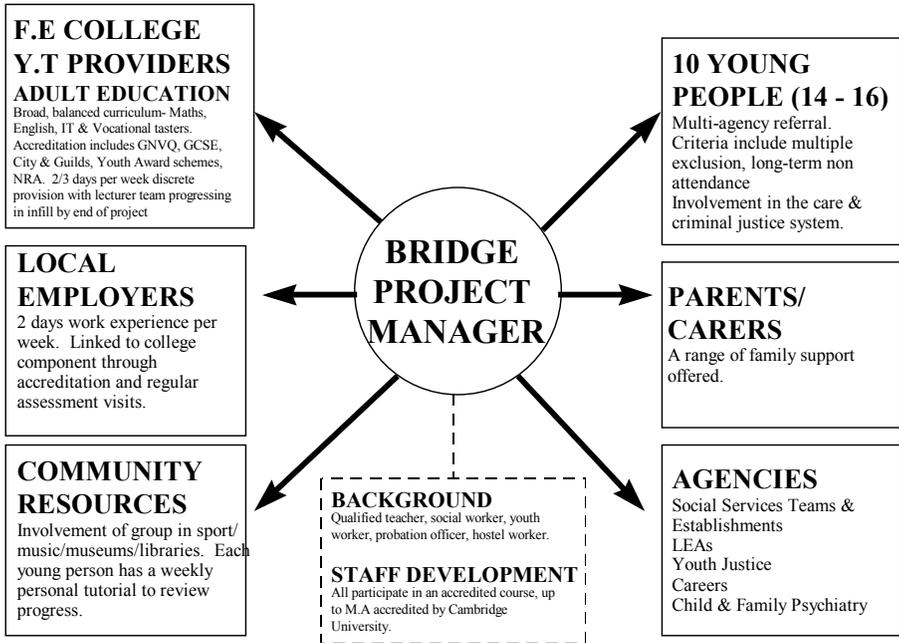
THE BRIDGE COURSE

The Bridge Course is targeted at 14-17 year olds whose education or training has irretrievably broken down and who may be in the care and/or criminal justice systems. A multi-disciplinary project manager arranges a package of further education, work experience, and a personal development programme for a group of ten young people.

The role of this project manager (see chart below) is threefold:

- To ensure, with clear and comprehensive plans, that the 10 young people develop effectively as a group and as individuals.
- To enable communication and support between parents and carer.
- To ensure that all the agencies involved are linked together through the work of this project manager.

CIS MULTI DISCIPLINARY PROJECT MANAGER



The project manager negotiates a detailed contract specifying quality and curriculum methods with service providers, arranges provision at an F.E. college for two to three days a week, establishes a network of local employers which will offer work experience integrated with the college course, and develops a personal development programme for each young person and constructive group work within the local community facilities.

Thanks to the unique role of project manager, the outcomes achieved are highly successful. Given that the Bridge is focused on those with the greatest needs and the most challenging behaviour then the minimum standards of 75% attendance and 75% progression into FE, training and employment are considerable achievements. Furthermore, this is accomplished at a unit cost of approximately £5,000 per young person.

RE-INTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

The CiS Partnerships have also pioneered new one to one reintegration programmes for younger pupils that can return 80% within one year back into mainstream primary or secondary schools. These programmes aim to re-integrate children as quickly as possible by providing temporary programmes to address individual problems and barriers to learning. Each phase in the programme roughly approximates to one school term in length.

The first phase involves one-to-one tuition to bring the young person up to speed with the particular syllabuses at the new school. This tuition is complemented by behaviour management courses and art or play therapy.

The second phase sees the transfer of this out of school package into the school environment. This is negotiated on the head teacher's terms and could be as intensive as one to one support in every lesson, or it might involve as little as some support with homework.

The third phase would see this very tightly planned intervention reduced to a watching brief by CiS staff.

These programmes have achieved an 80% re-integration rate within one year and are provided at a unit cost of approximately £7,500 per pupil.

CONCLUSION

The whole strategy discussed above is predicated on moving the bulk of resources from crisis intervention progressively towards prevention over a period of time. These projects have proved their replicability and sustainability in a range of environments and are currently operating in over 25 local authorities. Their application within this strategy framework enables a step change to be achieved in reducing the numbers of permanently excluded young people.

EXCLUSION AND RACIAL EQUALITY: IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY-MAKERS

Audrey Osler

INTRODUCTION

This paper draws on a research project which set out to identify the good practice by both schools and local authorities which might reduce the number of excluded pupils generally, and address the over representation of African Caribbean pupils in particular⁴². This paper briefly presents the background to this research and then focuses on some policy implications. Such issues are considered at both local and national levels, addressing practices within the school, and reflecting on the role of the local authority and that of Government.

EXCLUSIONS AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: THREE VIEWPOINTS

Among teachers and other education professionals, there appear to be three broad and apparently contradictory viewpoints concerning the relationship between school effectiveness and schools' exclusion policies:

1. Effective schools achieve good results without recourse to exclusion of any kind.
2. By removing disruptive pupils some schools are able to raise the attainment of some other pupils.
3. Schools with high exclusion rates are schools with problems across the board, including poor exam results.

We will return to these later, and consider whether they have any basis in fact. In the meantime they provide a useful context in which we discuss action to reduce school exclusion rates and address the problem of inequality between ethnic groups.

THE RESEARCH AIMS

The research took place in 1996 and its aims were as follows:

- To identify national patterns relating to exclusion of pupils from school through an examination of the relevant literature.
- To compare and contrast rates of exclusion among pupils in the 450 primary, secondary and special schools in Birmingham LEA and analyse the data by sex, age, school sector and ethnic group.
- To elicit the views of primary and secondary head teachers and teachers on policy and practice relating to exclusion, in schools with low or declining exclusion rates.
- To elicit the views of LEA officers and support staff concerning good practice in relation to exclusion.
- To explore pupils' understandings of discipline and related matters in primary and secondary schools with low or declining exclusion rates.
- To identify strategies which might be adopted by schools and LEAs to reduce their exclusion rates, and particularly to reduce the disproportionate representation of African Caribbean pupils amongst those excluded from school.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOOD PRACTICE: SCHOOLS

Our research resulted in the publication of a good practice guide which highlights ways in which schools can address this serious problem. It has been endorsed by Education Minister Estelle Morris and, with the support of the Prince's Trust, has been distributed to all secondary schools and directors of education in England and Wales⁴³.

All the head teachers in our 'good practice schools' (that is, schools with low or declining exclusion rates) argued that permanent exclusion should be retained, as a 'last resort' sanction, but all saw it as a failure on the part of the school. Action to reduce the use of exclusion should be part of the school development plan and should cover measures relating to behaviour policy, pastoral care, work with parents or carers, partnership with community and support services, the curriculum, the identification of special educational needs, equal opportunities policy and practices and staff training.

The level of school exclusions appears to have a direct relationship to the quality of school leadership; a reduced exclusion rate in a particular school often reflected a change of head teacher. Heads have a clear role to play in encouraging and advocating an ethos of inclusion and equality of opportunity, and in ensuring that discipline policy and action is appropriate, fair and consistent.

The importance of monitoring exclusions, both temporary and permanent, by ethnicity and gender cannot be overestimated. Many schools were unaware of the ethnic disparities in their exclusion rates until these were pointed out to them. There is a very important role here for the LEA in feeding back to schools data about their exclusion rates and giving support and training where appropriate.

Where teachers were offered training in dealing with difficult behaviour, equal opportunities issues were rarely, if ever, considered as part of this training. All the teachers in the study were working in multicultural schools, but a significant number of them were unaware of how they might develop the curriculum to ensure inclusivity, and most felt they had not had the opportunity to explore issues of race equality or equal opportunities as part of their initial or continuing training, except in the most superficial of ways.

In the ‘good practice schools’, strong working relationships had been developed with a range of agencies to support pupils vulnerable to exclusion. Inter-agency co-operation (including work with behaviour support services, child health services, the educational psychology service and educational social workers was) a feature of low excluding schools. Such schools had also developed strong partnership with parents and with community organisations, enabling them to put families in contact with relevant services.

One example of good practice in this area is the work of KWESI, a network of African Caribbean men who have volunteered to work in Birmingham primary schools with African Caribbean boys who are judged to be vulnerable to exclusion. They have undergone a programme of training and, when they agree to work with schools, the partnership is established on the basis of a ‘no-blame’ approach. This is crucial in developing relationships between a community whose experiences of school have often been negative and with

teachers who may explain behavioural problems in terms of inadequate families.

The impact of KWESI appears to have extended beyond the schools in which it has worked: the proportion of African Caribbean boys excluded from schools in the city has fallen, and the awareness of head teachers both to the problem of the over-representation of African Caribbean pupils among those excluded and the need for intervention strategies, has grown.

Pupils provided us with very practical strategies for improving discipline in schools. They asked for practical training in peaceful conflict resolution and counselling skills. It was their belief that the chief cause of discipline problems in schools is unresolved violence. They observed that teachers tend to deal with the immediate problem of violence but that often the underlying causes of disputes remain unresolved, leading to further trouble. In all schools, even in those where staff believed they had dealt with the issue, pupils reported much higher levels of racial harassment than teachers. All the schools in our sample had taken some steps to involve pupils in school decision-making, and pupils responses indicated that they were able to make direct links between opportunities for pupil participation in such things as Schools Councils and better disciplined schools. The pupils were asked what makes a better disciplined school and their answers suggest they believe that is more democratic schools which are likely to be better disciplined.

Other successful strategies to address the issues of exclusions and racial equality at school level include the development of school mentoring programmes; teaching pupils how to respond to racial harassment; and discussing racism and inequality within the curriculum, for example, within personal and social education programmes.

THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

At LEA level, strategies to tackle the problem of exclusion include the Chief Education Officer adopting personal performance targets to reduce exclusions generally and, in particular, to reduce and eventually eliminate the ethnic disproportion in exclusion rates. It is important that a senior manager should be responsible for taking an LEA-wide overview. Their brief should explicitly include identifying and tackling the causes of any racial disparity.

LEAs should encourage schools to examine the racial equality implications of their policies on behaviour and discipline and ensure that they are taking appropriate action to reduce racial disparities in achievement and exclusion. It is important that the LEA place race and ethnicity back on the agenda, and provide adequate support and training for staff in this area.

Schools with low or declining exclusion rates can be encouraged to share their experience with other schools. Groups of schools can be asked to collaborate in finding a new place for pupils excluded by other schools in the group. In Birmingham, five out of the six Roman Catholic schools operate as a family group in this way.

It is also important that the LEA publishes information for distribution to parents of excluded pupils, giving detailed information on their rights and responsibilities, including relevant provisions of the Race Relations Act 1976. Families appealing against an exclusion should be directed by the LEA to an agency which can provide them with independent support, advice and representation at the appeal hearing.

Inter-LEA co-operation can reinforce and share good practice between neighbouring LEAs; a regional forum will help foster such co-operation. It can also address the needs of pupils who live in one authority, but go to school in another.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

There are a number of ways in which central government can support initiatives taken at LEA and school levels to ensure that racial discrimination is outlawed and that all children have the opportunity to achieve in school. Most do not require huge sums of money. They include:

- Ensuring that schools which accept excluded pupils are given adequate resources to successfully re-integrate the children.
- Ensuring that sufficient education provision is made by LEAs for children out-of-school, and that attention is given both to the quality of this provision and to enabling such pupils to return to mainstream provision where this is possible.
- Monitoring fixed-term as well as permanent exclusions by ethnicity and gender. Permanent exclusions are only the tip of the iceberg and greater

transparency is important if we are to tackle this problem. Also, measures to tackle permanent exclusions may lead to a rise in informal exclusions and fixed term exclusions.

- Reviewing the legal framework for exclusions to ensure that children have the right to be represented at appeals procedures (at present this right applies only to parents and carers and the interests of some groups of children, for example, those who are in the care of the local authority, may be neglected), moreover, current practice has been judged to be in contravention of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child⁴⁴.
- Including racial equality as a management issue in head teacher training.
- Addressing racial equality issues within programmes for existing teachers, particularly those which address behavioural management and curriculum leadership.
- Ensuring equal opportunities issues are central concerns within initial teacher training, alongside numeracy and literacy.

FURTHER ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

Finally, two pressing issues. First, the maximum number of days in which a child can be excluded on a fixed term basis is due to rise from 15 days to 45 days in a term. Head teachers in our study felt this change was unnecessary, arguing that any school with good record-keeping procedures should be able to resolve problems within the current 15 day limit. They also pointed out the difficulty in re-integrating a child after 45 days.

Second, we need to consider what needs to be done to cut exclusion rates in those schools which are reluctant to change their current practices. There is some evidence that a minority of schools may present a high exclusion rate as evidence to parents of a strong approach to discipline. In our experience, it is much more likely to reflect an inadequate disciplinary policy. We identified a number of pairs of schools recruiting from the same neighbourhood, one with a high exclusion rate the other with a low rate or no exclusions. There did not appear to be any significant differences between the schools in terms of their levels of pupil attainment. One measure might be to impose financial sanctions on schools which persist in excluding large numbers of pupils. This is not suggested as policy but as a matter for further discussion.

CONCLUSIONS

If we reflect on the three viewpoints presented at the beginning of this paper, we can find some truth in each. In Birmingham, there are a significant number of schools recruiting from a range of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds who are able to achieve good exam results without recourse to exclusion of any kind. Some head teachers argue that through selective use of fixed term exclusions they are able to raise the attainment of other pupils and sometimes prevent permanent exclusions. There are schools with high exclusion rates which have problems across the board, including poor examination results. Nevertheless, there are other schools with higher than average results which appear to use exclusion rather frequently.

There appears to be a direct link between exclusion from school and subsequent social exclusion. Children who are excluded from school are quickly labelled and stigmatised. It is education which often defines the life chances of people: any attempt to tackle social exclusion must tackle exclusion from education.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Commander David Gilbertson is responsible for all aspects of operational policing in North and West London. He has previously served as Chief Superintendent in charge of Notting Hill and Tottenham divisions in London. In 1994, he was seconded to South Africa for six months to assist with the operational arrangements for the first multi-racial elections in that country.

Dr David Gillborn. Reader in Sociology of Education and Associate Director, Health and Education Research Unit, University of London, Institute of Education. Author of *Racism and Anti-Racism in Real Schools*, Open University Press, 1995, and, with Caroline Gipps, of OFSTED report: *The Achievements of Ethnic Minority Pupils: A Review of Recent Research* (1996).

Margaret Hodge, Member for Parliament for Barking. She is Chair of the Education Select Committee which is currently looking the issues surrounding exclusions from school.

Dr Audrey Osler. Senior lecturer in Education, University of Birmingham. Author of *Exclusion from School and Racial Equality*, Commission for Racial Equality, 1997 and *Exclusion from School and Racial Equality: A Good Practice Guide* endorsed by the Education Minister, Estelle Morris M.P. and distributed to all secondary schools by The Prince's Trust in 1997.

Professor Carl Parsons. Reader in Education, Christ Church College, Canterbury, Kent. Conducted first national survey in 1995 for the DfE on the numbers of children excluded from school. Author of *Excluding Primary School Children*, Family Policy Studies Centre, 1994 and *Exclusion from School: the Public Cost*, Commission for Racial Equality, 1996.

Martin Stephenson. Chief Executive of Include (formerly known as 'Cities in Schools'). Currently CiS operate about a hundred projects in twenty-five local authority areas which offer a co-ordinated approach spanning education, social services, health authorities, TECs, police and probation services to deal with the multiple problems of disaffected young people.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ DES press release 126/93. DfEE press release 342/97. Unless otherwise stated 'exclusions' refers to permanent exclusions only.
- ² *Exclusions from Secondary Schools 1995/6*, OFSTED, 1996
- ³ *Exclusions: A Discussion Document*, DES, London, HMSO, 1992, p. 3.
- ⁴ See Isabelle Brodie and David Berridge, *School Exclusion: Research Themes and Issues*, University of Luton, 1996. p.13.
- ⁵ *Misspent Youth: Young People and Crime*, Audit Commission, London, 1996. p. 67
- ⁶ Graham J. and Bowling B., *Young People and Crime*, Home Office, London, 1995. p.40.
- ⁷ *Exclusions From School*, DES Circular 10/94.
- ⁸ See the *Guardian* 19/2/1998.
- ⁹ Stephenson. M., *Report to the Social Exclusion Unit*, unpublished, 1998. p.21.
- ¹⁰ *Exclusions from Secondary Schools 1995/6*, OFSTED, 1996. p. 30.
- ¹¹ *Education Statistics Bulletin 1991- 1992*, Lewisham Education Authority, 1993.
- ¹² *Permanent Exclusions from Schools in England 1995/6*, DESE, London, HMSO 1997. All statistics refer to permanent exclusions, unless otherwise stated.
- ¹³ *Findings from ACE Investigations into Exclusions*, Advisory Centre for Education, London, 1993.
- ¹⁴ *Exclusions: A Response to the Department of Education Discussion Paper*, OFSTED, London, 1993, p.2.
- ¹⁵ Gillborn, D and Gipps, C, *The Achievements of Ethnic Minority Pupils: A Review of Recent Research*, London, HMSO, 1996, pp.50-54.
- ¹⁶ OFSTED inspection data published in Gillborn & Gipps, 1996, pp.52-53.
- ¹⁷ DESE, 1997, p.2.
- ¹⁸ Gillborn & Gipps, 1996 offer a summary of this work; including studies in primary schools (Connolly 1995; Wright 1992) and secondary schools (Gillborn 1990; Mac an Ghaill 1988; Mirza 1992; Sewell 1997; Wright 1986).
- ¹⁹ *Exclusions from Secondary Schools 1995/6*, OFSTED, London, 1996. p. 11
- ²⁰ The survey was conducted by MORI and reported in the BBC television documentary 'First Sight', broadcast on 10 November 1994.
- ²¹ Gewirtz, S., Ball, S.J. and Bowe, R., *Markets, Choice and Equity in Education*, Buckingham, OUP, 1995.

²² Bourne J., Bridges, L., and Searle, C., *Outcast England: How Schools Exclude Black Children*, London, Institute of Race Relations, 1994.

²³ Gillborn, D., *Racism and Antiracism in Real Schools: Theory, Policy, Practice*. Buckingham, OUP, 1995, pp.189-91.

²⁴ The most widely quoted statistic in the performance tables relates to the *proportion* of pupils who gain five or more higher grade passes in GCSE. By excluding a pupil who is unlikely to achieve this level of success, therefore, a larger proportion of the remaining pupils is likely to appear successful.

²⁵ *Exclusions From School*, DES Circular 10/94.

²⁶ *Exclusions from Secondary Schools 1995/6*, OFSTED, London, 1996. pp.7 & 31.

²⁷ *Exclusions: A Discussion Document*, DES, London, HMSO, 1992, p. 3.

²⁸ *Misspent Youth: Young People and Crime*, Audit Commission, London, 1996, pp.66-74

²⁹ Parsons, C. et al. *National survey of local authorities policies and procedures for the identification of, and provision for, children who are out of school by reason of exclusion or otherwise*, DES, London, 1995. This figure takes into account the study's warning that reported statistics might underestimate the true figure by up to 25%. Increasing the reported statistics in line with this figure gives the following proportions returning to the mainstream: 34% of excluded primary pupils and 18.5% of excluded secondary pupils. Also see Audit Commission, 1996, p.72.

³⁰ Numbers of exclusions from school have risen over the 1990s as indicated by the DESE's own surveys - conducted for the DfEE by Christ Church College in 1995, and analyses of Form 7 returns from schools. Follow up surveys of English LEAs conducted by Christ Church College indicate that the number of pupils permanently excluded in the 1995/96 school year reached 13,581. DfEE figures are lower by a thousand (12,476).

³¹ Full details of the research upon which this paper is based are to be found in *Exclusion from School: the Public Cost*, Commission for Racial Equality, London, 1996. The research was conducted between April and October, 1996, in six LEAs.

³² *Misspent Youth... Young People and Crime*, Audit Commission, 1996.

³³ *Young People and Crime*, Graham J., and Bowling, B., Home Office, 1995. p.40.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 42.

³⁵ Source: Metropolitan Police, The Performance Information Bureau.

³⁶ Source: Metropolitan Police, The Performance Information Bureau.

³⁷ Parsons, C. et al. *National survey of local authorities policies and procedures for the identification of, and provision for, children who are out of school by reason of exclusion or otherwise*, DES, London, 1995. p. 22.

³⁸ Office for Standards in Education (1995) *Pupil Referral Units: The First Twelve Inspections*. London, OFSTED. p.6.

³⁹ See Parsons (1995) p.22 and Office for Standards in Education (1993) *Education for Disaffected Pupils*. London, OFSTED. p. 9.

⁴⁰ Office for Standards in Education (1995) *Pupil Referral Units: The First Twelve Inspections*. London, OFSTED. p. 13.

⁴¹ Social Services Inspectorate and OFSTED (1995) *The Education of Children Who Are Looked After By Local Authorities*. London, Department of Health and OFSTED. p. 42.

⁴² Osler, A., *Exclusion from School and Racial Equality: research report*. London, Commission for Racial Equality, 1997

⁴³ Osler, A., *Exclusion from School and Racial Equality: A Good Practice Guide*. London: Commission for Racial Equality, 1997.

⁴⁴ See for example, Lansdown, G., and Newell, P., *UK Agenda for Children*, London, Children's Rights Development Unit, 1994.