

SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS

Hampshire and Isle of Wight: Children's Services' approach to preventing exclusions and promoting strong attendance in schools

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Across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Children's Services endeavours to keep exclusion rates low by putting strong emphasis on early intervention and prevention; helping schools to identify and address at an early stage the social, emotional and mental health needs which often manifest themselves in unproductive behaviours. We believe that building capacity across the education system to meet children and young people's needs well is crucial and an extensive training offer is therefore available to all schools, both universal and bespoke to a school's request.

In recent years, the Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Service (HIAS) has developed a range of training packages and resources to support schools in tackling educational disadvantage, as a result of socio-economic factors. We know that children and young people who are eligible for free school meals, for example, are more likely to experience exclusions or persistent absenteeism than their peers and therefore wish to help schools tackle the typical causes of that in this pupil group. Schools have been able to join various project groups aimed at tackling educational disadvantage and there has been demonstrable impact in a number as a result of their engagement. This has included work which draws extensively on Education Endowment Foundation materials, also with the nationally renowned advisor and author, Marc Rowland.

Following the theme of helping schools to better meet children and young people's needs, HIAS has issued revised guidance to Hampshire and Isle of Wight schools for SEN Support, with extensive projects underway to strengthen the provision and outcomes of children and young people at the level of SEN Support. Again, this pupil group is typically more likely to experience exclusion or persistent absenteeism than their peers both locally and nationally. The guidance can be found here: [SEN-Support](#).

We believe that supporting children and young people to build positive, healthy relationships and to self-regulate their behaviours is an important part of their learning journey in school. To this end, HIAS is working with schools to strengthen the RHSE (Relationships, Sex, Health Education) curriculum and to promote that curriculum as being fundamental to pupils' well-being, positive behaviour and engagement with learning, as well as underpinning a positive school culture. HIAS has recently worked with a small group of secondary schools to produce a good practice document relating to positive school cultures, which includes a range of strategies and approaches used by those schools which can be found here: [Good Practice Reviews Culture](#). In addition, a project dedicated to healthy relationships and well-being in schools is underway with 22 secondary provisions, funded through the Well-being for Education Return/Recovery grant. It is intended that this also generates guidance both through the findings of the project and related national research.

Every local authority maintained school in Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight has a linked inspector/advisor from HIAS who visits the school at least annually (three times per year for the Isle of Wight) to review, in partnership with school leaders, the school's effectiveness and performance, including the joint identification of development areas. These visits, funded by the local authority, have an inclusion focus within them and provide an opportunity to review inclusion indicators alongside the quality of provision and outcomes for vulnerable groups. Through these visits, HIAS can provide support and challenge to schools, for example in respect of exclusions, attendance, reduced hours provision and meeting the needs of different pupil groups.

All schools across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have had the opportunity to undertake attachment and trauma aware training through the Virtual School for children in care. There has been good take up and many schools are now embedding their learning in practice. We feel a whole school approach is the key to success, hence dissemination of training when just one or two members of staff have undertaken it is important, as is having a senior leader involved and advocating the approach. The Virtual School holds a directory of all schools that have undertaken the training through that route. Additionally, a number of schools have independently sought attachment and trauma training through various providers. Ensuring the training comes to fruition in practice is the critical challenge across the system. The Virtual School website can be found here: [Virtual School](#).

In Hampshire, there is a dedicated team of professionals aimed at supporting schools, parents and children of primary age with positive behaviours. The Primary Behaviour Service (PBS) provides both outreach and inreach support, the latter through six dedicated centres across the county. An early intervention service, PBS has been highly successful over many years in reducing and preventing exclusions in the primary sector and in upskilling staff in schools with various aspects of behaviour management. The service offers training and resources on 'The Six Strands Curriculum' which has a range of activities designed to support the six strands of: boundaries and keeping safe; resilience and coping with change; self-regulation; respect; focus; and independence. More recently, the service has also focused on well-being and good mental health, with one branch of the service also now funded through local NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups. The PBS website can be found here: [PBS](#)

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Education Psychology (HIEP) also works across the education system to help ensure children and young people's needs are met and to deliver training to that end. HIEP offers a range of development work, including how to support children who have experienced trauma and dealing with childhood anxiety that can lead to poor school attendance. The website for more information can be found here: [HIEP](#)

There are small, dedicated teams within the Inclusion Support Service (ISS) of Hampshire and the Education Inclusion Service (EIS) of Isle of Wight that offer advice to schools relating to exclusions and attendance. They work closely with colleagues, for example in social care, and again take a preventative approach wherever possible to exclusions and persistent absenteeism. Working with HIAS, both ISS and EIS support attendance networks, which are locally run groups for attendance leads in schools. ISS and HIEP have worked together to produce guidance on emotionally-based school avoidance (EBSA) which can be found here: [EBSA](#).

The seven education centres across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight do a tremendous job supporting predominantly secondary-aged pupils who have either been permanently excluded from school or are at risk of exclusion. They work with the youngsters to successfully get them back into mainstream education wherever possible, as quickly as they can. The centres also offer outreach to support early intervention work in their local secondary schools. The Key Education Centre in Gosport and Havant has successfully engaged in attachment and trauma informed work over several years, with practice highly worthy of dissemination: [The Key EC](#)

We believe it is really important not only to provide support for schools and individual children and young people experiencing difficulties, but to also support the family. Taking a whole family approach helps to address issues of exclusion and attendance and we try to do that at an early stage. The Hampshire Family Support Service offers a range of advice and help to parents. This includes specialist parenting programmes to support parents with children aged 5 to 17 who are diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), or who display unproductive behaviours associated with mild to moderate conduct disorder, also teenagers displaying anti-social behaviour. More information can be found here: [Hants FSS](#). Similarly, the Isle of Wight offers a range of services to support families [IoW Support and Advice for Families](#)

We hope this gives a good flavour of some of the ways in which we successfully keep exclusions low relative to the national picture and promote strong attendance rates across the education system.