

THE NBAR REPORT

CORE RECOMMENDATIONS

1 The Welsh Assembly Government should, through implementing the revised curriculum and assessment arrangements from September 2008 in schools in Wales, provide a clear lead that no child (within the mainstream ability range) should leave primary school without the functional ability to read and write.

- 2 The Welsh Assembly Government should prioritise early intervention strategies on work with attendance-related and behavioural-related problems amongst children and young people.

- 3 The Welsh Assembly Government should promote an understanding across Wales that violence against staff will not be tolerated.

4 The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that all schools and local authorities rigorously adhere to Circular 1/2004 on 'Exclusion from Schools and Pupil Referral Units' with particular regard to tackling unofficial (illegal) exclusions.

5 The Welsh Assembly Government should introduce legislation on new exclusion regulations in Wales.

(a) For fixed-term exclusions of under 10 days.

Schools should be required to immediately provide the fixed-term excluded pupil with a learning programme, which maintains curriculum continuity for the individual.

(b) For fixed-term exclusions of more than 10 days:

- In order to maintain curriculum continuity schools should be required to provide adequate learning, undertake marking and provide feedback on work completed.
- Schools should have a duty to convene a meeting within 10 days in order to determine the young person's needs, to plan to meet them and to act together in an inter-agency approach to attempt to prevent permanent exclusion.

(c) For permanent exclusions

- Local authorities should be required to make 25 hours of appropriate or equivalent learning available (at KS4) to commence within 10 school days of the permanent exclusion and to convene a meeting of all key professionals and agencies involved in the pupil's life within the ten day period.

6 The Welsh Assembly Government should consider:

- Giving parents and pupils the opportunity to access an advocacy support service similar to that provided to those with SEN in the event of permanent exclusion or where there is a threat of permanent exclusion.
- Putting into place an additional national point of appeal following the independent appeal panel. The national panel will be overseen by the Welsh Assembly Government and this should include headteacher representatives to test whether this brings greater objectivity in a more neutral setting.

7 The Welsh Assembly Government should introduce guidance on the use of managed moves and transfers as an alternative to exclusion. This protocol should include guidance on:

- the removal of pupils from school sites
- pupils' rights
- promoting positive behaviour and early intervention
- the role of the headteacher
- re-inclusion following the move
- funding arrangements for managed moves
- the wishes of the young person and those of parents.

8 The Welsh Assembly Government should actively follow-up schools who are excluding pupils at a rate which is significantly higher than average. This situation should also be closely monitored by individual local authorities.

- 9 All local authorities in Wales should establish a behavioural support team and/or collaborate with neighbouring local authorities' behavioural support teams.

- 10 The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that school attendance and behavioural strategies are at the centre of its school effectiveness framework especially at the school level.

11 The Welsh Assembly Government should commission studies which examine:

- The extent and number of pupils who are out-of-school and not enrolled on any school roll throughout Wales (including those that are in PRUs, home tutored and home educated).

- The link between low levels of numeracy and literacy and unidentified additional learning needs with low attendance and behavioural problems in primary and secondary schools and the link between additional educational needs and poor behaviour, the number of exclusions, incidences of bullying and pupils' non-attendance.

- The consequences of transition with the perceived increase in school exclusions, poor behaviour and non-attendance.
- How PRUs are funded, the purpose of PRUs and their strategies for the management of pupils, securing their attendance and changing their behaviour and how they enable pupils to achieve and reach their full potential.

12 All local authorities in Wales should designate an officer responsible for inclusion who should be appropriately experienced. Some authorities may wish to collaborate with neighbouring local authorities on this matter. The inclusion officer would be the central point of contact for tracking all exclusion queries and practice. This post should be at a senior level in order to drive multi-agency approaches and to be able to liaise with parents, headteachers, governors and other involved parties.

13 The Welsh Assembly Government should clarify and strengthen its guidance for schools on physical intervention and the use of restraint.

14 All secondary schools in Wales should have a named senior manager designated as lead professional to deal with behaviour, attendance and participation with parents and carers. In terms of participation, this manager should play a key role in induction meetings, parents' evenings and other after-school and out-of-school events and be given dedicated time to conduct these functions.

15 The Welsh Assembly Government should prioritise and increase funding significantly for training programmes on behaviour and attendance not only for school-based staff but for all those professionals and local authority staff engaged in promoting positive behaviour and improving attendance, more especially the education welfare/education social work staff.

16 The Welsh Assembly Government should develop an Action Plan which will implement and monitor the recommendations in this report and to draft overarching policies on behaviour and attendance throughout Wales on:

- an immediate
- a short-term
- a long-term basis.

17 The action plan agenda should include continuing engagement with children and young people on behaviour and attendance to encourage and continue the dialogue started through the NBAR process.

18 The Local Children's Safeguarding Board in each local authority should have a standing item on school behaviour and attendance.