

A Report into the Shropshire Council Alternative Provision

Shropshire Council is undertaking a review into its alternative provision. This review has incorporated many strands. From engaging with schools, communicating with TMBSS, reaching out to other local authorities and most recently gauging school opinions with the local authority AP survey. Shropshire Council has aimed to gather the initial opinions and advice from a range of sources, this has allowed us to see what might be both viable and desirable for any change going forward. Following this initial outreach our next step will be to consider all options and hopefully go out to schools for a full consultation within the next few months in order to understand and consider their full opinion on any proposed changes. At the centre of this change is a desire to enhance the learning the children and young people along with providing additional support for schools with a potential outreach service. It is believed that this combination of support both for the school and child or young person will be the outcome of any new model.

This report will aim to briefly set out the contributions of the AP survey as well as the findings from research into other local authorities.

How successful - in general - was intervention for the pupil(s) accessing TMBSS behaviour intervention provision?

The overall feeling among those schools who replied was a positive one with 75% of recipients believing that the intervention by TMBSS was a very successful (45%) or successful (30%). This is in contrast with those who were neutral about the intervention 15% and those who found it very unsuccessful 10%. The theme of the comments was that schools were grateful for the support and regarded it as professional and supportive towards both integration back into mainstream and providing a location where pupils could break with negative behaviours and work on solutions. The service it is believed has meant fewer permanent exclusions as pupils who have attended have following the provision improved their behaviour. However, there were concerns raised by some schools around effectiveness of the provision, as some pupils have had to be permanently excluded following re-integration into mainstream, it was also raised that the limited space available at TMBSS meant that some pupils have been unable to get any intervention that they required and subsequently had to be transferred to a different school. An interesting point that was made was the impact of the parents or the home life of the children and young people as some schools regarded the enthusiasm of the parents or intervention from other council services as a factor in the success or failure of the intervention.

Would you be prepared to pay a contribution toward the cost of the provision?

Whether or not schools should pay a contribution towards the cost of any provision is a dividing subject. The respondents to the survey were divided on the issue with 54% supporting some kind of contribution while 46% were against any such move. There were a wide range of reasons behind each 'yes' or 'no' decision. Those who are willing to consider a contribution to the provision did so for many reasons, one way this could be done it was suggested was through the following on funding, if a child or young person is in a dual role than it may be the AWPU follows that child or young person, it might also be that if the pupil is in receipt any high-needs funding that this also follows the child or young person. Many appreciate the work undertaken by TMBSS and believe a contribution would benefit the service. Others pointed to a trend nationally that sees local

authorities move towards a 'contribution' model. It was also pointed out that an alternative provision as recognised by TMBSS is not necessarily available in other authorities and if a new model needs school support then it will have to be considered. There is a recognition from across schools that the provision offered is something beneficial to schools as well as pupils. The proposal of a contribution however needs more explaining, those who responded noted how it was difficult to make a 'yes'/'no' decision based on the information available and if more information was available a more informed decision could be made.

There was some concern expressed which believed the service currently on offer needs to be enhanced or improved upon before anything else. The overwhelming reason for rejecting the notion of a contribution however was the strain on school budgets and a lack of funding, a lot of schools rejected the notion of a contribution for this reason, those who supported the proposal also expressed concern over budgets and the need to realise this reality for schools.

Primary school option

Retain the 50/50 shared placement but restrict to 3 terms, with pupils attending for Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Wednesday will be used for TMBSS staff to go into schools to offer outreach support

The idea proposed for a new primary model was met with a majority of positive support with 67% of respondents either being very positive (14%) or positive (53%), 19% of respondents were neutral while 14% were negative. There was a large section of comments on the model with the majority of those responding offering a different perspective. The comments have demonstrated the wide variety of opinion and areas that need to be explored going forward. The proposal of an outreach service through TMBSS was regarded as a positive by the majority of respondents, the key positives were identified as a means of helping support schools as well as the pupils, this was emphasised through the idea of outreach and the sharing expertise (this would have the bonus of) allowing TMBSS staff to see pupil's behaviour in usual (school) setting. The dual role would mean pupils will have a sense of continuity between settings, along with the enhanced potential of supported integration back into mainstream – keeping contact with school and peers. The negative aspects of this model were identified by respondents as a concern over TMBSS staff capacity for outreach, and level of availability for all schools. There was also a repeated concern over the proposed three term limit, with respondents instead believing time in TMBSS should be looked at on a case-by-case basis (some schools raised the possibility of an increase in permanent exclusions if a term limit was imposed). It was stated that children might need a break from the school setting in order to re-set behaviour.

Secondary Option

Model 1: *Full day support on four days a week, day five used for staff to go into mainstream schools and offer advice and outreach support. This model would require another SEMH centre to cater for increased demand, potentially in the Market Drayton area.*

Model 2: Move to a shared placement model similar to the primary phase. Monday to Thursday students are allocated either a morning or afternoon session the remainder of the day will be supported in their mainstream school. Friday will be used to offer advice and outreach support.

Model 3: Students are allocated a full day at TMBSS on Monday and Tuesday or Wednesday and Thursday. If a student attended TMBSS on Monday and Tuesday they would be supported for the remainder of the week in their mainstream school. If a student was supported on a Wednesday and Thursday at TMBSS they would be supported for the remainder of the week in their mainstream school. Places would be restricted to three terms and then return to their mainstream school. Friday would be used for TMBSS staff to offer advice and outreach support.

The secondary option considered three proposals. The first model was considered overall the more positive with 62% of respondents considering it either very positive (37%) or positive (25%). Model two however was split with 50% considering it very positive (12%) or positive (38%) and another 50% who regarded it as negative. Model three was not considered positive or negative, but rather as neutral 75% with those who were positive and negative both being 12.5%. Model one therefore can be considered the preferable option – however there were a lot of comments on the proposals which set out many different perspectives of the secondary schools.

Schools were very different in their responses, all approaching the models from a different perspective. An overarching theme was the need to keep a focus on the individual students and the realisation that for many of the students referred to TMBSS there is not a one size fits all approach and that those in TMBSS have a wide variety of complex needs. That said however, going forward if the local authority is going to enhance the provision provided it might be necessary to have a standard overarching model. It is for this reason that getting an idea of what schools think of the different models is so important going forward.

The idea of model one was met with the most positive response. Being within TMBSS for four of the five days allows for a significant period of time away from the mainstream setting, the one day a week outreach opportunity on the other day where TMBSS staff could come out and engage with schools may be regarded as an opportunity to develop and share good practice. There is concern with the secondary models that a joint attendance at both the TMBSS setting and the mainstream will be impractical with the reality of teaching, most notably at GCSE level. Model one might however be more practical with those in KS3, one day a week in school would act arguably as an anchor and give the student a continued sense of belonging. It was suggested that pupils in their one day a week at mainstream could be placed within the schools own 'pupil support centre' as a basis for reintegration. This reintegration it was suggested could merge with a different model as student progress is achieved as to become slowly a way to move full time back into mainstream. It was a concern that any outreach service would be too stretched if it operated county wide. There are also a lot of clarification questions that were requested such as any proposed cost of a four day a week provision, what the intended outcome would be of any provision, how long would each placement last and what would be the procedures to review students following a return to mainstream, and what would happen if behaviour deteriorates. These questions make up the initial phase of looking into the impact and effect upon schools the models suggested.

On the option of a shared placement there were both opportunities and concerns. Operating a shared placement model would allow for more flexibility for both the school and student. The student would benefit from still feeling part of the school as well as maintaining those social links with peers, in this regard a sense of belonging would be maintained. For the school a shared

placement would allow for a possible relief of the original pressure that led to any exclusion, possibly enhancing any phased return when this is considered necessary.

Some schools regarded the 50/50 dual placement both evident in model 2 and 3 as potentially difficult. The difficulty stems from the issue with timetables most evident for those in KS4 and undertaking their GCSEs, any 50/50 placements would impact on attendance in lessons and learning. Built upon this it was suggested that model two was more suited to primary schools, in a secondary setting the model restricts continuity and would lead to gaps in learning. The outreach provision and cost was also raised and questioned. The response to model 3 was similar to that of model two, with similar issues being raised over the dual setting proposal. An overarching concern was also expressed through a concern over the financial aspect of any new model upon school budgets.

There was a concern raised over the provision offered by TMBSS and how it relates to the mainstream setting, noting the lack of a range of subjects and to a KS4 standard. The behaviour standards were also raised as it was noted that there is more leniency towards certain behaviours that are not acceptable in a school setting.

How do you feel about the development of an outreach support service?

The idea of an outreach support service was supported across all primary and secondary respondents. The reaction was in support of the idea with 91% agreeing it was very positive (29%) or positive (62%), 9% regarded the idea as neutral. This initial reaction demonstrates the support for the idea.

The overall response to an outreach service was one of positivity towards an idea that would benefit schools and pupils. It was agreed that having professional staff visit the school environment would be a benefit to the pupils and the school. It would act as a way of bridging the gap between the schools and the alternative provision, as well as potential act as a preventative service. Respondents emphasised the willingness of staff to learn and gain new skills that would come with an outreach service, improving the techniques of those members of staff who are less experienced, and it would also allow the TMBSS staff to see the pupils in the usual school setting. An outreach service may also be a way of meeting a demand that is not available currently in some schools, and in this regard, it might act as a means of reducing the number of permanent exclusions.

There were some concerns however: some schools were concerned that any outreach service might lead to a replacement for a full time or dual provision placement. This point was built upon by another school who emphasised the need for some children to have a full-time provision with the aim of reintegration into mainstream education, but this reintegration should be into the classroom setting rather than into segregation. The number of schools in Shropshire and the distance between them meant that some schools were concerned about the availability of staff and felt that the staff may be too stretched to deliver a high-quality service. The option of an outreach service is something that has support, however there are concerns and further questions that need to be explored.

A look into Local Authority Provision

Through contacting and speaking with other local authorities from across the country it has become apparent that there is not one size fits all approach to AP provision. The level of top-up is considerably different across the country and between authorities, this is also mirrored in the relationships that exists between the local authorities and the schools and the different level of top-up that is paid. There does not seem to be regional difference, rather the picture across the country is a system that looks like it has changed and evolved depending on the situation within each local authority. Several local authorities including Shropshire are undertaking a review into the current provision and this movement to do so was evident across the country. In some cases, the schools are now paying for all the commissioned top-up while in some other cases it is shared between the local authority and the school. A proportion of the AWPU in some authorities is now being requested to go towards the provision. The snapshot given is one where alternative provision is moving towards an option that has multiple funding streams from both the local authority and schools – it seems that a joint approach going forward is being evidenced across the country, any movement in this direction therefore should be explored and its benefits and challenges fully examined.

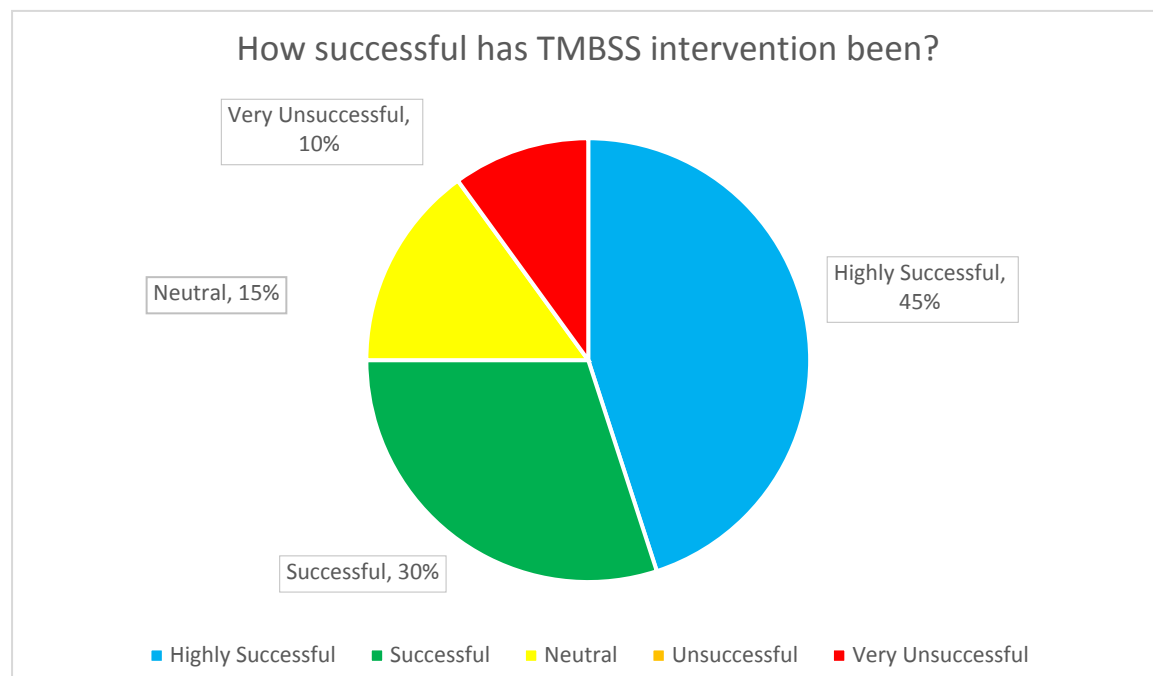
Who pays for the cost of the dual placement top-up

Local Authority	Top-Up	Who Pays: LA/School
Shropshire	7,200	LA
West Midlands A	7,300	School
West Midlands B	5,700	School
West Midlands C	KS 1,2&4: 12,758 KS3: 14,188	Pay on who commissions
West Midlands D	?	LA (currently reviewing with an idea for joint commissioning)
East Midlands A	KS 1&2: 26 078	LA
East Midlands B	3,206	School
East Midlands C	Do not commission AP	Do not commission AP
South West A		Proportion of AWPU
South West B	Do not commission AP	Do not commission AP
South East A	KS 1&2: 31,204 KS 3&4: 15,995	LA (School for medical)
South East B	9,866	LA
South East C	109	LA/School split
South East D	KS 1&2: 7,333 KS 3&4: 8,500	Pay on who commissions
East Anglia A	11,125	LA
North West A		Proportion of AWPU

Survey Response:

Number of responses: 26 – Primary responses: 19 – Secondary responses: 7

How successful - in general - was intervention for the pupil(s) accessing TMBSS behaviour intervention provision?



Primary Responses:

- “The current placement is having a positive impact. Of the 2 placements in 2017 one Year 6 child was initially funded by school as the normal application for a funded place would have taken too long and led to a permanent exclusion. This place in specialist provision was made permanent which was a good outcome for the child. The other funded placement led to the Year 3 pupil returning to another school but I have since been told this was not successful”
- “TMBSS, led by Greg Portman and his team, are professional, skilled, hugely experienced and dedicated to the needs of every child. Because of this they provide CRUCIAL support to the mainstream schools like ours.”
- “2 of the Pupils had been given fixed term exclusions and were taught on an individual curriculum as well as attending school part time. The pupils were in danger of having permanent exclusions. It was frustrating waiting for a place and by the time a place became available 1 of the pupils transferred to a different school. The parents of 1 pupil declined the place. The alternative provision is a long distance for a primary aged pupil to travel and this was a concern of the parents. We would have preferred more communication between the settings.”

- “Eventually the child was reintegrated back into our school and was significantly calmer. He was able to cope with his anger well and also his situation at home. The support we received was very good also.”
- “The child has spent an extended period of time accessing dual placement. This has been highly successful. He is now able to access learning in the classroom at mainstream for half a day. Learning is accelerating now that he is able to access the classroom at both settings. He is beginning to form relationships with his peers in mainstream due to being able to access the learning environment. However, this would not be possible without support to manage emotions within the class.”
- “The purpose of the shared placement was to attempt to modify a year 6 pupils challenging behaviour before transfer to High School. This pupil had only recently been admitted to St Laurence School (the previous term). The placement was a success, although if the parents had engaged fully even more progress might have been made.”
- “2012/13 – achieved reintegration back into school”
- “ – Because appropriate placement found, – short term integration back was successful, – Long term, permanent exclusion”
- “Child was no longer manageable in school; we had paid for outreach but needed specialist support. Shared placement worked well.”
- “Pupil 1 could not manage in mainstream school and would run away. He was then taken into care and placed in a foster home. Without a place at TMBSS he would not have been education at all. He had success at TMBSS before moving to foster carers out of county. Latest update was that he was in mainstream school full-time and doing very well. N.B. 1st month was commissioned by us. Pupil 2 is currently at TMBSS and making great progress, with her behaviour improving rapidly. She was also taken into care at about the same time as starting at TMBSS and this has helped to bring order and safety into her life. TMBSS has helped these pupils enormously but the question must be asked why both these children weren’t taken into care earlier. If they had been placed with carers earlier then I don’t think that places at TMBSS would have been needed. We must find a way of ‘education’ not being the only vehicle for solving problems caused by inadequate parenting. Once young people are in safe, caring homes education in mainstream schools will work for the majority of them.”

- “Over the years we have worked very successfully with TMBSS for a number of children, enabling them to access mainstream and eventually integrate fully back into our setting. The staff at TMBSS are highly skilled, professional and outstanding in their commitment to delivering high quality education focussing on individual needs at specific times. They are preventative as well as being reactive. We have had several success stories, working closely as a team and also one instance where a child left us and went their following a permanent exclusion. We will be working with them again in September for another child with a dual place. Already the sense of teamwork and togetherness for the pupil is clear and their support for us as a mainstream setting is invaluable.”
- “The placement did not have impact on the behaviour of the pupil in question and this pupil was eventually excluded permanently from Stokesay whilst on a shared 50/50 placement at TMBSS/Stokesay.”
- “Some children benefit tremendously from the provision and reintegrate in school successfully. Often this is because successful Early Help or child protection interventions have affected change in the home environment. For children with ASD or significant trauma/attachment difficulties the provision has been an effective assessment allowing children to access further support.”
- “One child made good progress and integrated back in to mainstream ready for secondary school. Other child doing well but less successful and changed schools – a move not related to TMBSS access.”

Secondary Responses:

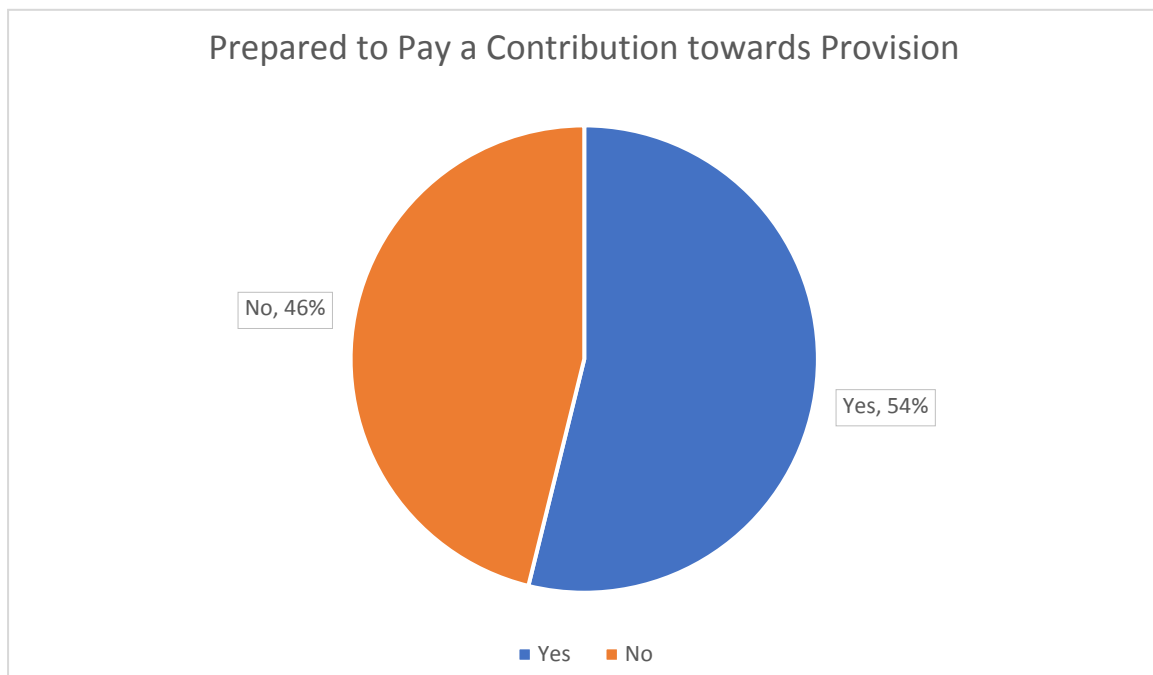
- “Children who are at risk of permanent exclusion often need small group support, and more one to one support than can be offered in the mainstream environment. Schools don’t want to turn their backs on vulnerable children, but in an increasingly bleak financial climate, there are constraints in all schools which mean that the intensive support that some pupils require, cannot be given. Sometimes it’s clear that the best efforts of school cannot be enough, cannot do enough, to create change for young people. In these cases, a TMBSS type provision can allow the space and flexibility to reboot the young person’s appetite for learning, in an environment that allows them to break cycles of negativity that may well have arisen.”
- “It is difficult to offer a generalisation of success, as I am not sure what the criteria would be. For those students accessing AP at KS4, the provision was successful, in so much as it enabled them to complete some examination subjects, although we are not provided with this outcome or destination data. For the students at KS3, following the initial assessment, the students were referred to specialist provision; to this extent, the provision was successful, in so much as the young people were able to access provision appropriate to

their needs. One student was returned to mainstream at KS4; this was not a positive experience for the student, and he had a negative impact on his peers.”

- “The intervention did not change the students’ behaviours and therefore prevent the student from being permanently excluded for violent conduct towards another student. I am also aware that once the student had been placed after permanent exclusion the behaviours that led to the initial referral and eventual permanent exclusion were still evident in the local community.”
- “Year 11 male a perm ex from another local secondary school. Was placed at TMBSS Bridgnorth and placed at SJT. No intervention or support offered from TMBSS with reintegration apart from a meeting. Placement at SJT began to breakdown and exclusions exceeded expected data in a term, decision from LA to support with tuition through online work. Alternative timetable created through the student using eLearning. He failed to log on and did not carry out any online learning.”
- “For the students who did engage and accessed the provision, this intervention was invaluable. Two of the students were on dual placements and the place at TMBSS meant that we were able to keep them at Priory – they needed the respite from full time mainstream. In two cases the students themselves did not engage (for a variety of complex reasons), which was a shame as they would have benefited. Most of our referrals have been for students with very high levels of anxiety, who have gone to the Hook-A-Gate site for dual provision, and this has worked brilliantly. Another student with very complex mental health needs was unable to attend the centre but provision was put in place for him at home, The Lantern and Louise House. This was also a very successful intervention, but one which was a significant pull on TMBSS’ resources.”
- “Students accessing the intervention either returned to CSS with strategies provided to assist in reintegration, allowing a full or part time return. Some, where it was deemed appropriate, did not return, instead finding placements beyond TMBSS due to their specific needs which could not be met through mainstream education. This would have been very difficult to achieve without the placement at TMBSS. Instead, it would have been highly likely that some students may have faced permanent exclusion had they not had TMBSS intervention or returned to CSS.”

Six No Comments

Would you be prepared to pay a contribution toward the cost of the provision?



Primary Response:

- “I believe this is a statutory responsibility of the LA. With schools running deficit budgets the levels of permanent exclusion would be sure to rise if places were not funded. It would also lead to a two tier system where schools with the funds could jump the queue.”
- “I initially thought perhaps a contribution towards transport, but some schools would have to pay more than others due to the distance from schools to TMBSS. I am unsure if the school has ever used TMBSS”
- “See answer to Q3” – “TMBSS, led by Greg Portman and his team, are professional, skilled, hugely experienced and dedicated to the needs of every child. Because of this they provide CRUCIAL support to the mainstream schools like ours.”
- “If the pupil was receiving additional high needs funding this could be used towards the cost of the provision.”
- “It would very much depend on how much the cost was. We are an academy and part of BAST so we would also have to consult with the other schools within our Trust.”

- “The schools notional budget plus GSP does not cover the cost of support provided in school. This includes 1:1 support; family support worker support; learning mentor input.”
- “I feel that putting a cost to this provision may influence the choices made by schools who are struggling with finances. These decisions should be based on children not costs.”
- “As long as costs are shared. The only reservation is that some staff may still need to be paid and that in effect the school would be paying for that pupil’s provision twice. If the Support Assistant is on a variable contract then this can be averted but this is not the case for most staff. However I am aware that is the norm in many other local authorities and if this is the only way to keep a valuable service and indeed increases its capacity. Then it is preferable.”
- “We have significant budget issues which have led to a very small surplus – we could not afford to contribute to the provision from our budget or small surplus without jeopardising the schools financial position at this time. Staffing has been set for the year and is only area where we could make savings – but we cannot do this mid year. Whilst school funding is such an issue I don’t think we could realistically expect schools to provide additional funding for pupils in crisis.”
- “Not enough info available to make a decision – Would consider all options with more costing information and understanding of implications”
- “I think the service is invaluable for schools, although am aware this does not have to be offered. Would be willing to make a contribution, however think schools need to be aware what a paid placement would cost in total should schools be paying for the service. Would also need to think about the amount asked for. Funding could be taken from notional budget (although probably being already used) and PP money could support as an idea.”
- “I think all schools should be asked to make a contribution - like an insurance system. It would be unfair if the schools with a higher number of pupils with EBD had to foot the bill entirely. Those schools that don’t then use TMBSS should be thankful that they haven’t had to - extremely challenging pupils are the biggest drain on a school’s resources! If training could be delivered to all schools that sign up to this plan then at least they would get something in return.”
- “No, as I feel that this should be covered as it already is. However if the service were to be compromised without funding, then this would be something we would look in to as a

school. Finances for SEN are already stretched and very costly to schools, so I am not sure that we would be able to stretch further.”

- “If the placement would have a measurable impact then it would be worth paying for from a school’s point of view.”
- “Some children benefit tremendously from the provision and reintegrate in school successfully. Often this is because successful Early Help or child protection interventions have affected change in the home environment. For children with ASD or significant trauma/attachment difficulties the provision has been an effective assessment allowing children to access further support.”
- “No funds available. Greatly value the service but not even enough for notional £6K funding available in budget.”
- “We used TMBSS for one pupil for four terms in 2005-06. That pupil then progressed to LA funded private provision. That pupil is now a post-graduate student at Imperial College, London and enjoying an independent, successful life. Although it is not possible to directly attribute this to his earlier provision, TMBSS enabled both his mainstream school and parents to sustain his engagement with learning at a critical period in his life so that he was able to benefit from the provision at KS3 and beyond.”

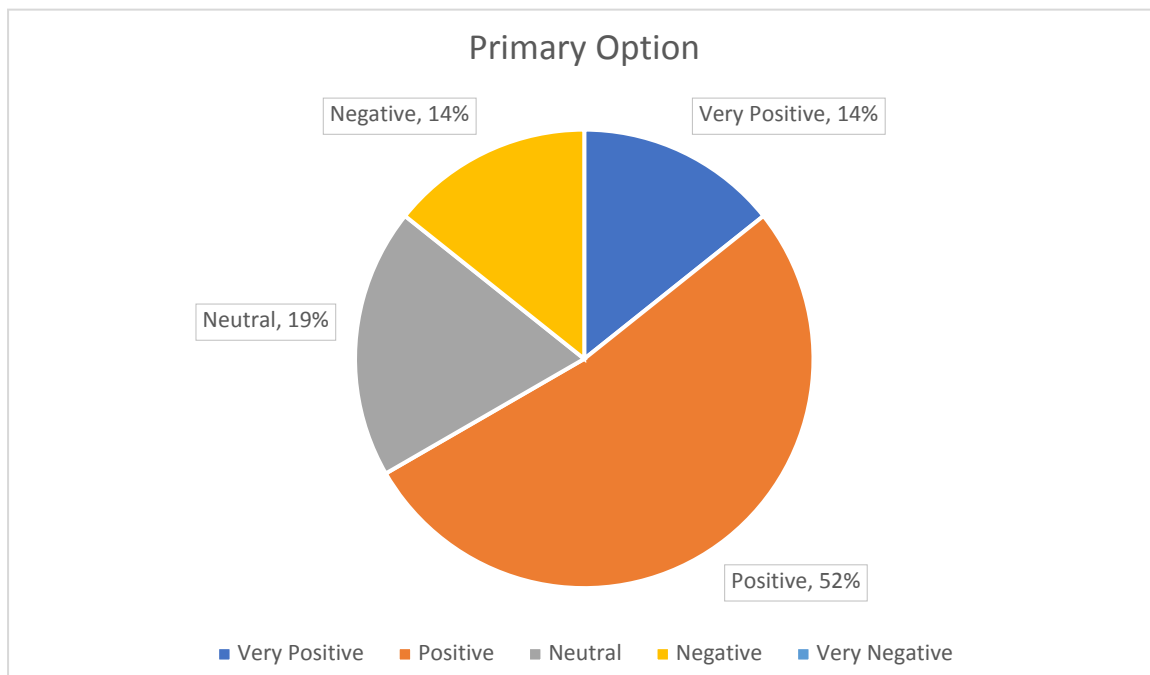
Secondary Responses:

- “If we want children to be helped in a quality provision, and to work in partnership, we have to expect to contribute. That said, school budgets are at breaking point, with hardly any flexibility remaining. There would need to be acknowledgement of relative school sizes in any formula used to calculate contributions, not a flat rate charge per student accessing the provision.”
- “Every student carries funding, and therefore, should a student move to AP, that funding should go with them for the time they are in AP.”
- “Yes – if the student has not reached permanent exclusion and we have the funding available to access it. No – if the student has been permanently excluded”
- “The size of the current school budget means we would not have the option to pay for the cost of provision. This alternative provision is the local authority’s responsibility under statute as I am sure you are aware and I support that position as set out in the recent review. I would not think it proper to charge overstretched schools – you would in effect curtail other children’s educational opportunities.”

- “Current provision needs to be addressed to assess what is needed to support. 16 week assessments have ended with student returning and limited action or realistic support placed in the setting for support purposes. Year 11 male was just placed at SJT when he clearly was not ready for mainstream placement. SJT were determined not to perm ex him as it would have been his second perm ex, so continued to support the male as much as possible. There was an initial meeting, but then it was case closed and school to work with him. There was no review, no observations carried out, just simply school asking for PPM. Parents and School worked closely together to develop strategies and work with the student as there was little in fact no follow up from TMBSS. It was only when exclusion days exceeded recommended days and a pupil disciplinary meeting that a. There are students who are being returned to mainstream when there is only evidence that small settings work. Assessments need to be carried out in the allocated mainstream and observations carried out before decisions are made. Judgements are being made based upon small setting placement at TMBSS, which is a completely different setting with small numbers, small setting completely different to mainstream placement with high student numbers usually 30 students in a class and higher student whole school numbers. Judgements need to be made based upon the mainstream setting and observations not simply TMBSS observations in an unrealistic setting.”
- “We feel that schools should pay a contribution – perhaps the proportion of the child’s AWPUP for when they attend the centre. This is a practice I am familiar with from a previous post in Hertfordshire and worked well.”
- “As with most schools the pressures surrounding school budgets are ever increasing. However if a pupils does receive top up funding in the form of an EHCP then some of this funding should be allocated to AP providers.”
- “Before we can answer this we would need to have an idea as to the size of contribution. Given budgets at the moment, this would be a very real challenge.”

One No Comment

Primary School Option



Primary Responses:

- “Most of the pupils we have referred needed a complete break from our school to reset their behaviour. The current system of a fresh start in TMBSS and working towards reintegration has worked well for us in the past. I also question if TMBSS have the staffing capacity to provide outreach support to the number of schools they take children from. If a TMBSS class has, for example 10 children, the likelihood is you would only get outreach 1 week in 5 or 10. It has proved very difficult to arrange outreach in the past. I can see this could lead to increased numbers of exclusions or part time timetables.”
- “It would be useful to have a staff member from TMBSS come to the school to work with that child in the school setting.”
- “Positive, whilst always remembering that if an individual needs a period of something slightly more intense then that can still be an option. It’s all about what the individual child and context require in order for it to be a success.”
- “This would reduce the waiting list and provide some continuity between the settings.”
- “The 50/50 split works well because the child maintains contact with peers and the school”

- “I would be concerned about the negative impact of change in routine for children and the difficulty in providing staff to support in school. Although I can see the potential benefit of TMBSS staff visiting school to offer support.”
- “This sounds like a reasonable plan.”
- “The Outreach Support might be very beneficial.”
- “I think 3 terms will allow full assessment for pupils and opportunities for training and reintegration in most cases. However, there will be some pupils who require longer or different provision. SEND must be responsive to pupil needs not prescriptive based upon budget constraint. I think that a one size fits all will lead to more exclusions.”
- “Allow sharing of expertise, see pupils behaviour in usual school setting.”
- “I think schools who access the provision for the mornings get a better deal, from past experience with pupils who require the provision when mornings are more formal that is when you tend to have more issues. Was there a discussion around Mon/Tue all day placement or Thur/Fri all day placement and other three days in school?”
- “I would go further and have pupils attend for two days only (Monday and Tuesday or Thursday and Friday). This way twice as many pupils could get support. If more pupils could get to TMBSS quicker the need to permanently exclude could be reduced massively.”
- “This would be a positive way of ensuring integration back into mainstream happens quicker, however I have reservations to a blanket rule for restrictions as I feel that this needs to be child specific. Or possibly have an alternative for those children who will require longer out of mainstream.”
- “Our experience of a 50/50 shared placement was not particularly positive, and this is partly due to the taxi journey/distance between TMBSS and school, and partly due to the pupil in question requiring consistency and finding it difficult to adapt between 2 settings every day like this.”
- “This will improve provision as teachers will have a greater understanding of the difficulties in school. This question should have been split. We are positive about the Wednesday outreach as this will improve the provision. The 3 terms restriction may result more children

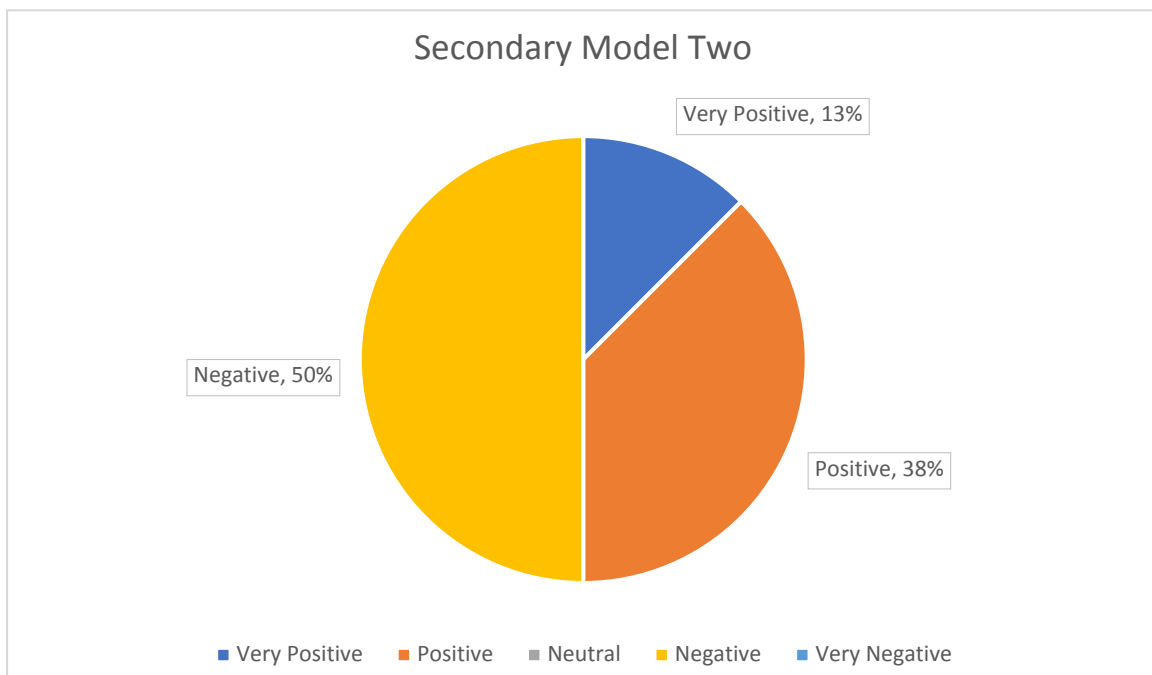
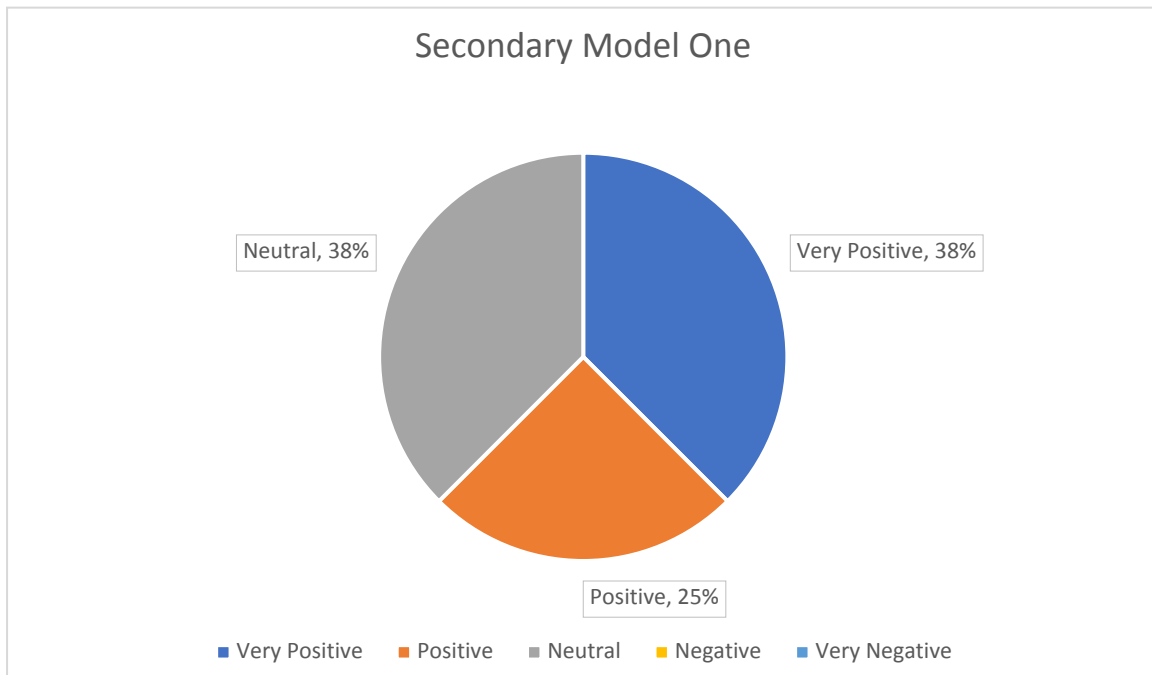
being permanently excluded. 3 terms could apply in most cases but there needs to be some flexibility for complex cases.”

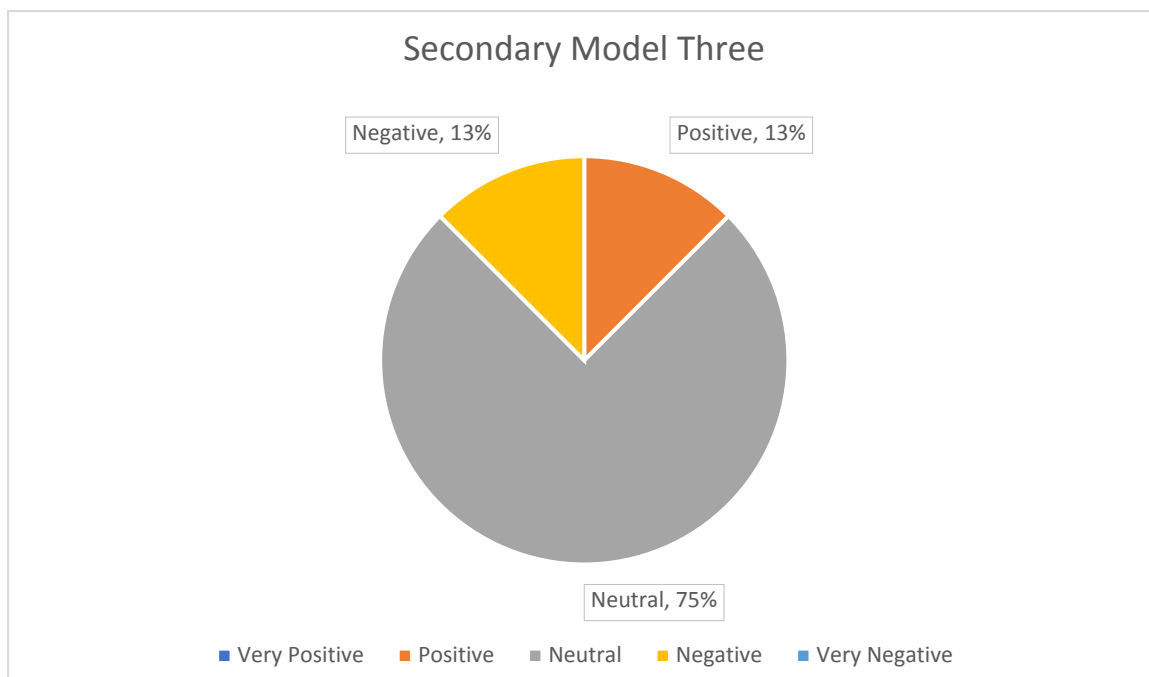
- “Outreach work in school would need to be of very high quality. We have some reservations about the three term restriction. The limited experience we have of a placement at TMBSS, some years ago, involved a child who everyone involved felt needed significantly longer than 12 months on a shared placement with the unit.”
- “Outreach could be a very positive step forward, particularly if it helps to support schools as well as the learner. Although a three-term restriction is based on the average this seems arbitrary. Surely provision should be based on need rather than an average. The Specialist Provision Strategic Review and Development plan 2018-2022 identifies specific need for primary provision within North East Shropshire (Market Drayton/Whitchurch). This plan does not address that need. Looking at the bigger picture could potentially provide a more cost effective and successful mechanism for alternative provision.”
- “We found the option for staff to visit TMBSS valuable but it is difficult to remove the class teacher with responsibility for the other 25 children whereas it may be easier for the specialist to visit the mainstream setting. In our work with Woodlands Outreach that has proved to be a useful model.”

Secondary Responses:

- “Early intervention and intervention in schools should be used to prevent children needing AP – but schools should not be charged for this service.”
- “The outreach support is one of the most crucial parts to this option. Here mainstream settings are supported with expertise of staff and offered opportunities to develop knowledge and skills from observing TMBSS placement. This is working at Tilstock where a male Year 4 student is 50/50. There was a positive meeting for EHCP held recently, where staff felt empowered by the support offered by TMBSS.”

Secondary Models





Secondary Response:

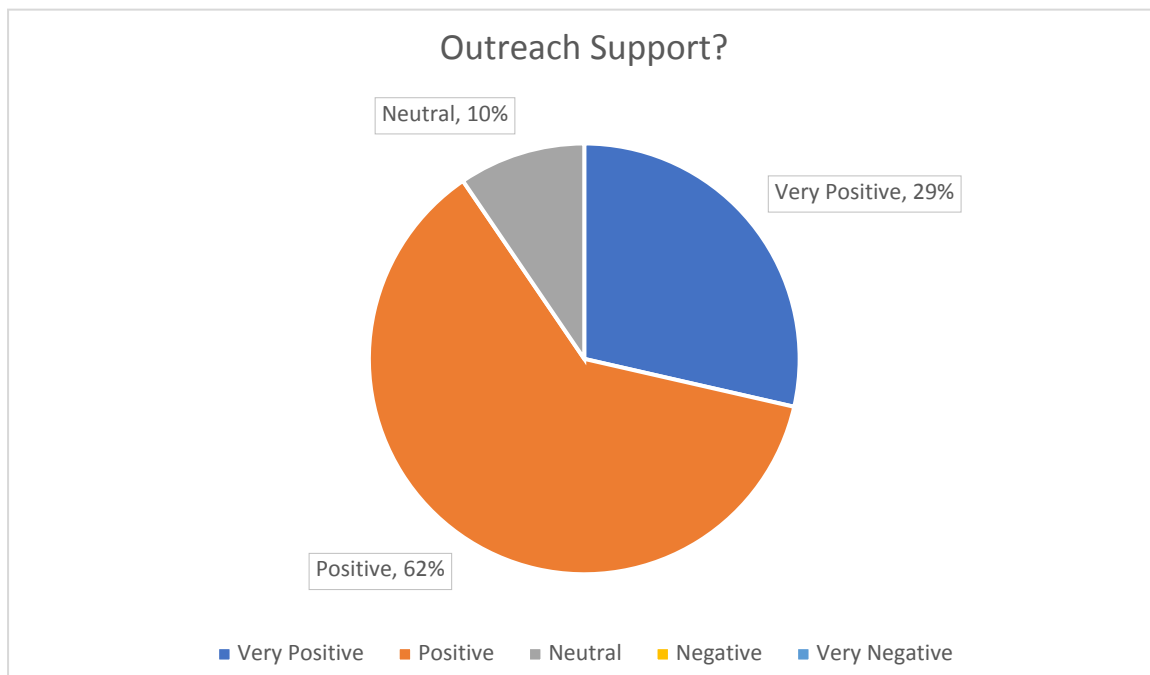
- “This model would allow for more flexibility depending on the student’s timetable. There would be no disconnect, students would still feel part of their school, and would retain social links. There would be a relief to the pressure that had caused the issues to escalate, but no sense of a student no longer ‘belonging’. There could be a phased ending to support, with gradual build back to full time. Links would develop between staff and there would be the opportunity to develop strategies and share good practice. However, transport costs would be significantly higher than with 1 or 3”
- “Any shared placement arrangement (Models 2 and 3 on a 50:50 basis) is difficult to manage around a secondary school timetable, particularly with exam courses at KS4, as a student would miss lessons, and therefore struggle to access the learning. This would exacerbate any difficulties around engagement, behaviour and learning. I would need to understand what the nature of the support being provided by TMBSS staff was – a behaviour programme, such as Zones of Regulation work, to support students in self-regulation and emotional control? This is something we work with a student for some time, prior to the point of referring a student to AP. All schools should be doing this, I would add. We refer students to AP because their level of need cannot be managed in the confines of a mainstream setting. TMBSS is about the next level of intervention. Model 1, with 4 days in AP, and 1 in school, would need to be trialled to see if it would work. We use our own Pupil Support Centre for phased reintegration of students to mainstream, and so with model 1, I assume the days in school would build up slowly. This model, with an anchor day in school initially, would certainly work better at KS3, where a return to mainstream is the long-term aim, if it is possible. In effect, if model 1 goes well, it will develop into model 3. Our experience of late has been that students who have been placed at AP have been found to have complex needs, and so are moved on to specialist placements, and so this phased return has not been tried.”

- “The most appropriate model would depend on the individual students’ situation. There is not a one size fits all for each student. Is it not possible to have all three models as the standard offer and then the most appropriate one be utilised for the student.”
- “**Option 1-** Concerns with availability of staff to provide support across a county wide provision. Is it likely that a SEMH centre provision is viable with funding provision- will 0-25 emotional wellbeing service become part of this provision to support with referral processes? Who will provide the support for the time at TMBSS? Will schools be required to buy into the service and at what costs? Who will cover the costs of transport? What is the intended outcome of the provision, is this long term or simply placement with the student than returned to school with a set of strategies for schools to put into place? It will be difficult to access outreach work for each school on one day a week provision for support. There will be high demand and schools potentially having students returned to mainstream with little opportunity for review. What happens if the mainstream placement starts to fail after return to placement are schools simply going to be advised to follow the behaviour policy and exclude as advice that has been given to another local school recently. Will there be opportunities to call for support if placements are breaking down? **Option 2-** Works in the primary setting. Who will fund the placement whilst on school site? Will TMBSS staff only be available one day a week, as across county this will reduce availability for support and guidance for schools. Will be difficult for schools to ensure continuity as option will provide gaps in learning for KS4 on a weekly basis and will be a barrier to learning during the lessons that they may be present in but missed the previous lesson due to placement. Schools will be expected to support onsite with own limited budget and staffing. Schools will be addressing options of either increasing support staffing to focus upon behaviours or to buy into services. Services need to work with the schools not simply direct with an A4 strategy sheet. **Option 3-** Not a supportive proposal for a student with ASD to be in different settings, may appear to be difficult to manage with allocated day placements. Schools will find it difficult to manage, as students will miss timetables and key lessons which will impact upon the following lesson and work they have missed. This will create gaps in learning. Provision is based upon schools using allocated budgets to pay for support for the student, then additional costs for buying into the TMBSS package. The financial impact is high especially at a time where schools need added staffing. One staff member can provide a huge impact on support for vulnerable students.”
- “I feel that there should be flexibility here – not confined to one particular model. For some of our students a part time shared placement has worked very well (am or pm at centre and the rest at school), but for others, they would require more time away from school. I would advocate having key review points, so that a student does not transfer indefinitely, but the intervention is reviewed periodically to see whether they are able to integrate back into their mainstream school. I would also be interested in exploring whether there is potential for students to be reintegrated into a different school if it is not felt that they are able to return to their initial school – like a managed move system but supported by the outreach team and schools. Again, I have seen this work well in another local authority, where the equivalent of specialist placement panel considered a wider range of options for the student

and scrutinised what the referring school had done closely to determine whether the school had done all it should to support the child. This led to either advice to the school as to what else they could/should be doing to support the child, a period of time at the centre (there were several different programmes available) or a supported managed move to another school. In terms of any shared placement at KS4, consideration of the students' GCSE options and the impact this will have on them should be made."

- "The student we have sought placements for within TMBSS have often already received some timetable alteration to reduce their likelihood of experiencing difficulties. As this has not been effective, the more full time access to TMBSS has been beneficial. Half days in/out would be a concern therefore. Supported work when back in school from TMBSS colleagues would be useful. Full days support would be preferred."
- "There are issues surrounding a more integrated approach between schools and TMBSS. One of these is the narrow range of subjects offered by TMBSS, which is of particular concern to those in key stage 4. A more integrated approach (i.e. model 3) would require a broader range of subjects taught at TMBSS, otherwise they would not be able to keep up with the work whilst in school lessons (for example, in each of the 3 sciences or option subjects) – which in turn would not be beneficial to the student. TMBSS would also need to have the same behaviour standards as schools – e.g. smoking. Schools sometimes struggle when students are reintegrated because school rules are stricter and students are not used to it. We could not have an integrated approach if such things as behaviour are not aligned – this would be unfair and setting up the students to fail. We also have to recognise that those that access TMBSS have a huge range of needs. Whilst some might be able to operate under model 3, we think this would be the minority of students. Indeed, it is our judgement that most would not be able to operate under model 3 – they often need a complete break from mainstream schools for a period of time. Model 3 would also only work if the TMBSS placement was local to the school."

How do you feel about the development of an outreach support service?



Primary Responses:

- “I would be positive about it as an addition to current timetabling but negative if it is seen as a replacement to full time 50/50 placement.”
- “It’s great to have to support of skilled and experienced practitioners, particularly in smaller schools where this may not be readily available.”
- “I think this has been seen to be a positive way to bridge the gap between the school and the AP.”
- “Specialist support for teachers would be very valuable, particularly team teaching, coaching approaches within the child’s class. It would increase confidence and upskill teachers.”
- “Extra preventive support may avoid these situations happening in the first place.”

- “Staff are always willing to use support and training to develop skills further. However, the outreach work must acknowledge that there are very different demands in the mainstream school placement for staff and children. The notion of staff in mainstream schools being expert in their own setting must be part of the process so the reintegration is successfulexchange of ideas and successes would be more important to our staff than “training” from the expert from TMBSS when the two environments and demands are very different. Schools can make adaptations but this should be reasonable and not disrupt the education occurring in the receiving classroom. Acknowledging small, responsive and nurturing environment of a specialist placement cannot and isn’t replicated in mainstream schools is important. They are different provisions and children reintegrating must be gradually made ready for all of the new demands that mainstream will place upon themthere is no point reintegrating a child into segregation , 1 to 1 support and failure.”
- “Like the outreach idea – schools would benefit from support.”
- “More expertise in mainstream schools helps to improve practice AND crucially gives support to struggling teachers and leaders who are desperately trying to keep a pupil in school but are unable to due to the extremes of behaviour that impact on the good order of the school plus the happiness/safety of other pupils. Experts telling parents that they need to improve their parenting and that they need to work with, rather than against the school, would be most welcome too.”
- “TMBSS staff have supported us greatly over the years – their knowledge and skills are vital, so I believe they would be an asset to other schools in the form of outreach. My only concern would be that they might be too stretched and unable to deliver the high quality of provision as they currently do if further demands are placed on their service.”
- “The greater the capacity for specialist staff to come out to mainstream schools the better in my opinion.”
- “I think it will allow AP teachers to gain a greater understanding of children’s contexts – families, peers, busy classroom environments. It will also enable AP staff to share techniques and approaches with less experienced teachers.”
- “This could be effective in strengthening school staff with a range of additional strategies. It would require very careful planning and high quality staff to deliver the input.”
- “This would support schools in upskilling which would support future provision.”

Secondary Responses:

- “We work best when we work together, not as a series of disconnected bodies. Where relationships build (as they would between outreach workers and schools) children and families would benefit.”
- “I cannot give a view on it until I know what the service would provide, and whether this is additional to what we already provide in school.”
- “We don’t have the staffing or financial capacity for the additional support that some students need to access. Outreach might help fill that gap.
- “Very positive but schools should not be charged for the discharge of the LA statutory duties.”
- “Preventative work is crucial for any mainstream settings. Students are needing external support to assist with management of behaviours, emotions, strategies etc. There is largely a lack of external agency support and students are at risk due to limited provision and resources from LA. Criminal Exploitation has increased and more and more children and families are being linked to this across the County. Has this been addressed? How do we across the county support children who are directly involved either through their own methods or through families?”
- “Having the opportunity to discuss key individuals with someone impartial but with specific knowledge and understanding of supporting children and schools with behavioural issues would be very helpful.”
- “Developing staff practice through experienced external outreach support would always be welcome. For the student, having the contact with support as a constant would be beneficial. Furthermore, it would allow outreach service to monitor/identify the difficulties within school and assist in further support either in school or at TMBSS.”
- “Anything we can do to ward off permanent exclusions or to support schools with students who are struggling in mainstream is a good thing. Whilst Meole Brace School has a good range of resources at its disposal, this cannot be said for all schools, who would surely benefit from an outreach service.”

Five No Comments

Outline any other options that you think should be considered as part of the review into AP in Shropshire

Primary Responses:

- “More local specialist provision.”
- “Again, I think that whilst having a specific model is useful, there must always be the option to offer something more bespoke if the need arises. In terms of AP in Shropshire, there should be expansion of what’s offered, not a decrease.”
- “I believe there should be access to nurturing specialist schools where children who cannot reintegrate into a mainstream setting can be educated in an environment which is responsive to individual needs, celebrates a child’s strengths through a flexible and responsive curriculum and where nurturing and counselling form part of the day to day provision. Life skills and self regulation would also be part of the provision.”
- “There needs to be an incentive for those schools that are proactive in taking on permanently excluded pupils (or even better those that are at risk of permanent exclusion). We need more schools willing to take on these pupils that often need a fresh start. Having sat on the Fair Access Panel, I know most schools claim that they cannot meet the needs of a new challenging pupil – the few that are willing to try should be rewarded. Why not redirect some of the money that would be needed for a TMBSS place to the school a school willing to take on a pupil who has been permanently excluded. Having had to permanently exclude (the very last resort), I also know I would much preferred to have lost an amount from the budget to another school rather than have to do so. In other words let’s have more managed moves (a proactive approach) rather than permanent exclusions which are grim and expensive for everyone.”
- “Much greater clarity is required from the authority about this whole process. For example: Schools nationally have significant concerns about children who appear to be exhibiting behaviour that is unmanageable for mainstream schools. It may be that some of these children need to be in special schools or hubs. It is important that the authority explains its thinking on support for these children which may be not at TMBSS but in other locations. Underlying this initiative appears to be the suggestion that some schools are too quick to pass children over to TMBSS or exclude them without taking appropriate action within school. This is a deeply controversial area. It is almost impossible for headteachers or members to know the detail of this accusation. The choice of words when conveying this is extremely critical. No one wants to see colleagues from areas of high deprivation criticised for having higher than level referrals to TMBSS than the ‘average’ school. Equally, no one wants to see schools not ‘playing fair’ and taking responsibility for the children for which

they have received government funding. How officers choose to present these changes to headteachers is vital to the success of any changes.”

- “There is still a need for further primary support in the Market Drayton/Whitchurch area. Our Chair of Governors has previously submitted a suggestion for using the Forest at Adderley as an additional outreach centre.”

Secondary Responses:

- “Permanently excluded pupils always need to work with an alternative provision before they move to a new school. Without this, I honestly can’t see how they can be expected to move into a new setting and succeed. There needs to be time and space for them to deconstruct what has previously happened – with intensive support available. Only then will they be able to re-orientate themselves and approach their fresh start genuinely positively, and believing that it can work. Perm Ex is a dramatic rejection for any young person, and is bound to destabilise them. Without this rite of passage, the mindset of the young person is unlikely to afford them the best chance to integrate, settle and thrive in any new setting. AP and receiving school need to work through a transition process together.”
- “Ensuring that sufficient SMEH places are available within the county before changing the classification of the existing provision and reducing the places available. If the cost of AP is to be covered by the mainstream school, is that being taken into account in any funding distribution processes to ensure that schools have sufficient funding to cover that additional cost?”
- “Provision is based upon schools using allocated budgets to pay for support for the student, then additional costs for buying into the TMBSS package. The financial impact is high especially at a time where schools need added staffing. One staff member can provide a huge impact on support for vulnerable students. Provision needs to address the increasing PE figures and take into consideration the Timpson Report. Schools need support and preventative support from agencies which unfortunately are hugely reduced in Shropshire. LA services are currently limited and waiting lists high, a recent case has seen change of social worker on 6 occasions for a high need family then impacting upon behaviours. Referral processes have long waiting lists and threshold for FPOC have increased again leaving educational establishments attempting to manage cases where support is needed. The preventative part to TMBSS provision will be one of the most important parts to moving forwards, especially if schools and LA’s are being told to reduce exclusion figures. With the increasing numbers of SEMH in schools, concerns remain about long waiting lists for 0-25 provision and cancellation of ASD assessments due to staffing issues, again place all pressures back onto educational establishments. Reassurance is needed to schools that if there is to be a specialist SEMH setting, that all cases of referral will be dealt with and links will be created between 0-25 emotional wellbeing service and TMBSS setting making referrals on behalf of schools. As the data above states that there is no statutory duty for the LA to provide provision, schools will begin to link to provide their own settings and

arrangements to support. The new provision needs to be sold to schools, bearing mind there are many agencies now sitting outside of the LA remit that will offer private support. Costing needs to be appropriate as with EP service and packages for support.”

- “I have mentioned supported managed moves above – I would be interested to see how this might operate and whether other schools would be supportive of this. They would have to be very carefully managed and supported, but if done at the right time and as a supportive measure, they may help some students to avoid permanent exclusion and have a chance at a fresh start before things have broken down completely. I do not suggest this as an alternative to permanent exclusion, but as another intervention to support a small number of children who would benefit from this.”
- “We think that no one model (above) is best; in reality a more mixed approach will probably work best. Schools, who know the students very well, must have a major say in which approach they think is suitable for the child. Some will require essentially a full-time placement; others may be able to thrive with a more mixed approach.”

Fifteen No Comments