

Report Title	Exclusions Funding
Meeting	Schools Forum
Meeting Date	13 January 2026
Chair	Jenny Sims
Report Author(s)	Helen Taylor, Head of Inclusion - Cognus Limited
Open/Exempt	Open

1 Summary

- 1.1 Reducing exclusions and suspensions has been a local area priority over the last few years. Provision has been commissioned to support the reduction of exclusions and suspensions in the Borough over the last few years, with the figures below based on 25/26 allocations:

- An inclusion coordinator (£48k)
- Integrated Youth Services Schools Team (contribution - £65k)
- Paving the way coordinator (£48k)

Total funding committed in 2025/26 - £159k

- 1.2 Next year, the total exclusion pot is significantly reduced. This is because the funding for this support comes from money raised by exclusions. Put another way, reductions in exclusions create a funding pressure for some of the services that help avoid exclusions happening in the first place.
- 1.3 Remaining funding in the pot for 2026/27 is limited (as of October 2025, this was 85k, so a shortfall of about £74k if we were to continue to fund the same services next year).
- 1.4 The Local Authority is not recommending cutting back provision to support schools to reduce exclusions in 2026/27, as exclusions remain a concern, and it is likely that a reduction in support for schools would simply see exclusions rising again and requiring those services to be put back in place (something that would be harder to do if cut now).
- 1.5 Decisions in relation to the above are for the Local Authority and not the Schools Forum, but the Schools Forum are being consulted on the LA's intentions before the agreement of the 26/27 DSG budget.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note that the exclusions funding pot will have reduced at the end of 25/26 and that the current level of commitment cannot be funded from exclusions funding alone for 2026/27 due to the reduction of exclusions in the local area in recent years.
- 2.2 To note that the LA intends on funding the inclusion coordinator and IYJS schools team contribution from exclusions funding and the paving the way coordinator role from the High Needs Block in 2026/27.
- 2.3 To note that although additional income will be forthcoming in 2026/27, that a longer term financial solution will be required to continue to support exclusions prevention work in the local area for the future.
- 2.4 To note that the actions outlined above will enable the three services identified above to remain in place for the financial year 2026/27 and for a review to take place to consider how exclusions support in the local area might be put on a more sustainable financial footing moving forward.

3 Background

Exclusions data

- 3.1 Local area data for academic year 24/25 has shown a reduction in permanent exclusions (Appendix A). The services outlined in Appendix B, funded through the statutory elements of exclusion monies, have significantly contributed to this outcome. The attention on exclusion prevention is still a local area focus, and the Local Authority wishes to see sustained impact and continued reductions in exclusions in the longer term.
- 3.2 Sutton's total rate of exclusions (0.12%) is now marginally lower than the national average (0.13%) as reflected in the DfE published exclusion and suspension data for 2023/24. This represents a decrease from AY2022-2023, where the rate was 0.19%. This figure represents 48 permanent exclusions being recorded in AY2023-2024 compared to 80 in AY2022-2023. Locally collected data for AY 2024/25 shows 34 exclusions, comparing this to DfE published data for AY2023/24, this is a 29% reduction, or 14 fewer children excluded. Comparing locally collected data for AY24/25 to DfE data AY23/24, we have seen a further 75% reduction in the number of exclusions for children with an EHCP.
- 3.3 Feedback from schools indicates that exclusion rates are influenced by a range of complex factors. There are seen to be increasing numbers of children experiencing heightened emotional and mental health needs, while access to support services remains challenging due to extended waiting times. Additionally, the inclusion of pupils with more complex SEND needs in mainstream settings places extra pressure on classrooms and reduces teachers' capacity to provide the necessary support for managing challenging behaviour.
- 3.4 Support services across education, health, and social care continue to be in high demand, with the volume of referrals often outweighing capacity, creating long waiting times and leaving CYP without much-needed support.

- 3.5 Appendix B provides a summary of what each of the services provides (Inclusion Coordinator, Schools team and Paving the Way), data in relation to activity and outcomes, as well as feedback from the schools that use the services currently.
- 3.6 A combined approach is essential: providing immediate support to children and young people to prevent further rises in exclusion rates, while also planning strategically to meet future needs and strengthen early intervention for pupils. More recent data through 25/26 has indicated a fluctuating pattern, so exclusion support continues to be a local area priority as part of the local area's SEND and Alternative Provision plans, Helping Early initiatives, and the Youth Justice Board's annual plan.

4 Latest funding position (as of October 2025)

- 4.1 Following a permanent exclusion, schools receive a termly flat rate invoice comprising:
1. Statutory elements (AWPU) that include a basic entitlement, and additional educational needs factors such as Free School Meals, English as an Additional Language
 2. An additional locally agreed amount to Limes that includes Pupil Premium (where the money follows the child/young person).
- 4.2 The Local Authority claims the pro-rata exclusion monies, and the balance is transferred to Limes College to provide additional services to excluded pupils beyond their education.

- 4.3 The table below illustrates the statutory and non-statutory exclusions money that has been committed since FY 23/24.

	Total in LBS	Statutory	Non-Statutory (Limes/Returned)
	£	£	£
Balances			
2021/22	(158,052)	(96,788)	(44,090)
2022/23	(340,101)	(169,600)	(125,583)
2023/24	(225,225)	(120,287)	(115,443)
2024/25	(292,740)	(155,037)	(98,760)
2025/26 to Autumn HT#1	(98,883)	(50,138)	(62,975)
2025/26 Remainder - estimate of Statutory Income from Autumn Term 2 until March 26	TBC	(30,000)	TBC
Total Funds	(1,115,001)	(621,851)	(446,851)
Agreed Commitments			
Schools Forum Dec 22 for FY23/24			
EHIYJS workers attached to schools		142,500	
Limes Turnaround Plus		53,237	
Total Committed FY 23/24		195,737	
Schools Forum Dec 23 for FY24/25			
Paving the Way - 1 additional FTE		45,000	
Primary Inclusion Co-ordinator		45,000	
Support Workers in Schools (contribution)		62,500	
IRP costs for maintained school		81	
Total Committed FY 24/25		152,581	
Schools Forum Jan 25 for FY 25/26			
Paving the Way - 1 additional FTE		46,350	
Primary Inclusion Co-ordinator		46,350	
Support Workers in Schools (contribution)		65,980	
Total Committed FY 25/26		158,680	
Schools Forum Jan 26 for FY 26/27			
Primary Inclusion Co-ordinator		47,745	
Support Workers in Schools (contribution)		67,959	
Total Committed FY 26/27		115,704	
Total committed to date		622,702	
Funding gap for 26/27 (estimate)		-851	

- 4.4 Currently, there is £243,614 within the statutory pot, of which £158,600 is committed expenditure for 2025/6. If the LA commits to fund the primary inclusion coordinator and IYJS school support

worker contribution the budget would broadly balance but the Paving the Way inclusion coordinator would need to be discontinued. Cognus has prepared a separate business case for the LA to consider funding this from the High Needs Block.

Appendix A

Headline Data - exclusions and suspensions

		Sutton	National	Sutton	National	Sutton	National	Sutton	National
		2017/18	2017/18	2018/19	2018/19	2019/20	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21
Total	Suspensions	1,328	410,753	1,368	438,265	969	310,733	1,363	352,454
	Suspension (rate)	3.48	5.08	3.51	5.36	2.45	3.76	3.40	4.25
	Permanent exclusions	19	7,905	28	7,894	29	5,057	28	3,928
	Permanent exclusions (rate)	0.05	0.10	0.07	0.10	0.07	0.06	0.07	0.05
State-funded primary	Suspensions	244	66,105	230	66,463	155	47,261	164	46,203
	Suspension (rate)	1.29	1.40	1.21	1.41	0.81	1.00	0.86	0.99
	Permanent exclusions	4	1,210	3	1,067	3	739	5	392
	Permanent exclusions (rate)	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.01
State-funded secondary	Suspensions	789	330,085	865	357,715	723	253,307	1,084	296,224
	Suspension (rate)	4.19	10.13	4.47	10.75	3.64	7.43	5.28	8.48
	Permanent exclusions	14	6,612	25	6,753	26	4,269	23	3,492
	Permanent exclusions (rate)	0.07	0.20	0.13	0.20	0.13	0.13	0.11	0.10
Special	Suspensions	295	14,563	273	14,087	91	10,165	115	10,027
	Suspension (rate)	66.29	12.34	53.42	11.32	16.25	7.76	19.26	7.29
	Permanent exclusions	1	83	0	74	0	49	0	44
	Permanent exclusions (rate)	0.22	0.07	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.03

		Sutton	National	Sutton	National	Sutton	National	Sutton	National
		2021/22	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25
Total	Suspensions	1,976	578,280	2,543	786,961	2,336	954,952		
	Suspension (rate)	4.86	6.91	6.20	9.33	5.69	11.31		
	Permanent exclusions	45	6,495	80	9,376	48	10,885	31	
	Permanent exclusions (rate)	0.11	0.08	0.19	0.11	0.12	0.13		
State-funded primary	Suspensions	261	66,203	271	84,264	315	104,803		
	Suspension (rate)	1.37	1.42	1.42	1.81	1.67	2.27		
	Permanent exclusions	5	758	7	1,201	4	1,462	9	
	Permanent exclusions (rate)	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.03		
State-funded secondary	Suspensions	1,599	498,120	2,165	685,930	1,897	829,896		
	Suspension (rate)	7.61	13.96	10.17	18.90	8.81	22.61		
	Permanent exclusions	40	5,658	73	8,054	44	9,298	25	
	Permanent exclusions (rate)	0.19	0.16	0.34	0.22	0.20	0.25		
Special	Suspensions	116	13,957	107	16,767	124	20,253		
	Suspension (rate)	18.77	9.60	16.64	10.99	18.54	12.62		
	Permanent exclusions	0	79	0	121	0	125	0	
	Permanent exclusions (rate)	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.08		

Data Source DfE¹

*Data for 2024/25 is locally collected data

¹

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/bfc6ab16-3881-4004-29d2-08ddd6501820>

Appendix B - services that exclusions funding currently supports

Service 1 - Inclusion Coordinator

The funding provided increased capacity via a dedicated specialist coordinator for primary and secondary phases focused on preventing exclusions and supporting all schools (primary, secondary, PRU and special) to find alternatives through multi-agency support and developing effective packages of support, in addition to the statutory duties carried out in relation to exclusion, increasing prevention capacity.

Inclusion Coordinators provide direct and indirect support; their offer includes;

- acting as a system navigator to ensure families and schools are accessing the right pathways, systems and services
- identification and management of risk through a safeguarding lens
- working with families to bring a reflective, restorative approach, and rebuild or prevent breakdown in relationships with other professionals
- active participation in the Vulnerable Pupil Panel, providing a wealth of information, guidance and professional challenge to ensure progress with cases
- provision of monthly surgeries for professionals and families
- Training and support for school staff and governors with policy and practice
- leading the development of prevention action plans and coordination of local area partners, as well as providing targeted transition support from Year 6-7.
- provision of bespoke targeted support to schools with high levels of permanent exclusions providing practical case support, risk management, alongside wider practice development
- responsible for the statutory duties in relation to suspension and exclusion, including ensuring 6th day education is in place, attending Governors panels and Independent Review Meetings as appropriate.

The outcome of this work prevents exclusions and supports children, families, and schools in accessing education and receiving the support that they need.

Inclusion Team Impact:

Between October 2024 and October 2025, the Inclusion Coordinator provided support to approximately 80 children across 30 schools, attending TAS, TAF, CP and CiN meetings in addition to Strategy Meetings and urgent Professionals' Meetings for pupils at immediate risk of exclusion. This expanded caseload represents a significant achievement, particularly as the frequency of Inclusion Surgeries for both professionals and families/carers has doubled - a notable increase - whilst successfully onboarding a new team member.

In AY2024/25, the three secondary schools that began the project last year continued to receive bespoke targeted support. This includes monthly/half-termly dedicated meetings to review children at risk of exclusion and support the development of individualised multi-agency action plans.

The data below shows the impact of this and the wider work of partners and the school in continuing to reduce exclusions:

		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
School 1	Permanent exclusions	12	8	7
	Permanent exclusion (rate)	0.81	0.53	0.46
School 2	Permanent exclusions	13	8	3
	Permanent exclusion (rate)	0.69	0.42	0.15
School 3	Permanent exclusions	12	8	6
	Permanent exclusion (rate)	0.95	0.62	0.43

In October 2025, a survey was sent to all schools that the Inclusion Team had supported the previous year, feedback identified that:

- 100% of schools rated the quality of advice, support and guidance provided by the Inclusion lead during the meetings as good or excellent.
- 100% of schools described the level of collaboration and communication among team members during and between TAS meetings as good or excellent.
- 100% of schools agreed that the advice, guidance, and support provided by the Inclusion team has helped to reduce suspensions and exclusions

Recent Updates:

This academic year, two new secondary schools have been added to this cohort and have had initial early intervention support meetings. The Inclusion Team has also begun to implement 'Team around the School' meetings for three Primary Schools who have multiple pupils at risk of exclusion. This is an increase of 167% percent.

Feedback from professionals on their interactions with Inclusion Co-ordinators continues to be overwhelmingly positive. Some examples of which can be seen in Appendix C.

Statutory exclusions funding supports 1 FTE, who will work with approx 80 children per year.

Funding sources - exclusions funding - £47,745 for 1 member of staff (average unit cost £597 per child)

Service 2: Integrated Youth Services Schools Team

Background

The Schools Team, within the Integrated Youth Service, consists of a Team Manager and 4 Specialist Support Workers (SSWs). The team commenced their work in 8 secondary schools across Sutton in April 2023 and were initially set up as a 1-year pilot. Due to the emerging positive impact the workers were having in schools, the Schools Forum agreed to extend the funding of this team until March 2026.

The SSWs are based in each assigned school for at least 1.5 days a week to create a flexible and immediate response for young people identified by the school who need support. Schools refer directly to the team and decide which children are supported. In addition to holding a caseload of children who receive targeted 1:1 support, SSWs also have the capacity to complete short-term, reactive interventions with children whom the school identifies need an immediate response. These children are supported without the school completing a formal referral or obtaining full consent from the child's parents/carers. It should be noted that different schools have used the resource differently when it comes to 'ad hoc' work.

Reach

Between December 2024 and November 2025, the Schools Team supported 76 young people through direct or ad-hoc intervention.

- 58 received structured one-to-one casework.
- 18 received short-term or group-based intervention.

Each SSW maintained an average of 12–15 open cases while delivering workshops and ad-hoc sessions at key transition points. On average, the team received 7 referrals a month.

The primary reason for referral was as follows: persistent disruptive behaviour (36%), emotional regulation (28%), peer conflict (20%), contextual safeguarding / anti-social behaviour (16%).

Analysis of the cohort of students referred

Gender	Number of YP	% of Total
Male	58	76%
Female	18	24%

Three-quarters of all referred young people are male. This aligns with national evidence showing boys are significantly more likely to be excluded, to present with early adolescent behavioural challenges, or to experience peer influence, identity-related pressures, and contextual risk.

A clear concentration of referrals appears across lower and mid-secondary years, where vulnerabilities, peer dynamics and identity formation are most acute.

Year Group	Number of YP	% of Total
Year 7	8	10.5%
Year 8	21	27.6%
Year 9	17	22.4%
Year 10	18	23.7%
Year 11	0	0%
Unknown / Not Recorded	12	15.8%

Year 8 was the largest cohort (27.6%) referred, reflecting high behavioural and emotional needs typical of early adolescence. Year 10 referrals (23.7%) typically reflected increased contextual risks linked to peer groups, community safety, and pre-GCSE pressures. Year 7 referrals (10.5%) showed early identification during transition and settling-in periods.

Overview of Quantitative Impact

Key Indicator	Metric	Change / Commentary
Referrals received	76	Up 15% on the previous year
Permanent exclusions (open cases)	6	2 rescinded post-advocacy
Fixed-term suspensions during engagement	8	Down from 15 in the previous period
Attendance improvement	+11.2% average	From 80.1% → 91.3%

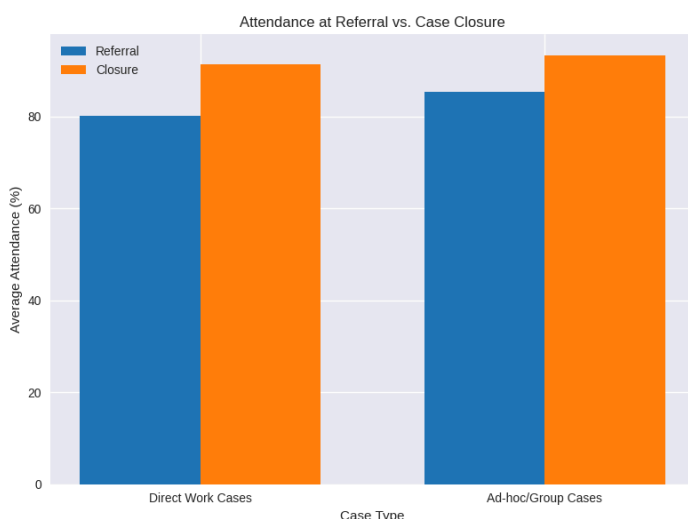
Impact on Attendance

Early analysis of attendance and behaviour data (drawing from the Schools Team Tracker and case notes) indicates:

- Attendance at the point of referral typically ranged between 70–85%, and
- With 6+ weeks of consistent intervention, many pupils reached 90%+ attendance by case closure.

Analysis of attendance figures from the dataset and school returns demonstrates that across all completed direct-work cases, average attendance improved by 11.2%, with the strongest gains seen among pupils in Years 8–10.

Indicator	Average at Referral	Average at Closure
Attendance (direct work cases)	80.1%	91.3%
Attendance (ad-hoc/group)	85.4%	93.2%



Impact on Behaviour

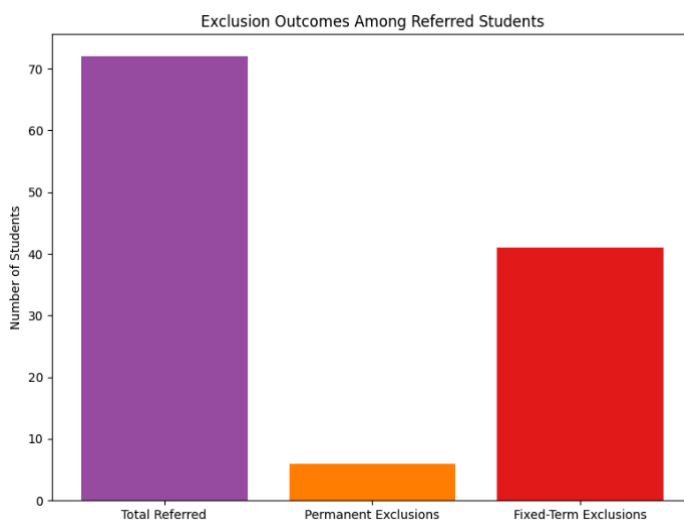
Schools reported improved behaviour, emotional regulation, and reduced frequency of pastoral incidents for pupils supported by SSWs. SSWs report sustained improvements in pupils' ability to self-regulate, reflect, and rebuild relationships with staff.

Common themes include:

- Use of co-regulation and TIPP strategies in moments of escalation.
- Restorative dialogue replacing punitive sanction cycles.
- Pupils demonstrating improved accountability and empathy.
- Young people with sustained 1-to-1 work demonstrate increased self-awareness, fewer escalations, and stronger relationships with staff.
- The majority of those receiving direct intervention avoided further fixed-term exclusions.

Impact on Permanent Exclusions and Fixed Term Suspensions

- 6 (8%) young people open to the team were permanently excluded during the reporting period; in two of these cases, exclusions were later rescinded. This means that 5% of those supported by the Schools Team went on to be PEX.
- In these cases, continuity of support and reintegration planning from the Schools Team was maintained post-exclusion.
- Of the 58 young people receiving direct work:
 - 19 (33%) had one or more fixed-term exclusions (FTE) before referral.
 - 8 (14%) received an additional exclusion *whilst engaged* with the team — all were followed by restorative and reflective sessions.
- Analysis shows a 46% reduction in repeat FTEs among young people receiving consistent mentoring for 8 weeks or more.



Impact on relationships and collaboration

Schools highlight the team's role in bridging trust between families, pupils, and school systems.

- Increased parental engagement in TAF and review meetings.
- Reduced reliance on reactive pastoral interventions.
- Greater alignment between schools and Early Help/Youth Justice frameworks.

Delivery of Group Work and Preventive Programmes

Between April and October 2025, the team delivered eight thematic workshops across Cheam High, Carshalton Boys, and Oaks Park:

Programme	Year Group	Duration	Focus
Substance Misuse Awareness	9–10	1 session	Risks of vaping, alcohol, and cannabis
Contextual Safety	9–10	1 session	Peer influence, decision-making
Boys to Men	9–10	1 session	Responsibility and identity
Year 7 Workshop Series	7	4 weeks	Respect, behaviour, community safety
Building Positive Futures	8	4 weeks	Accountability, aspirations
Aspirations & Pathways	10–11	4 weeks	Post-16 planning
Ad-hoc Reflection Sessions	7–10	Ongoing	Restorative / peer mentoring
Peer Support Pilot	9–10	3 weeks	Friendship, belonging, wellbeing

Case Studies

1. Cheam High School – Case Study: “Rh-M” (Year 10)

Presenting Needs:

- Declining attendance
- Peer conflict
- Persistent disruptive behaviour and low confidence
- Risk of PEX identified by AHT and HOY

Intervention:

Ellie provided weekly reflective sessions, restorative meetings following incidents, and coordinated regular communication with home. A structured re-entry plan was developed with the pastoral team, focusing on small achievable targets and daily check-ins.

Impact:

- Attendance improved from 81% to 92% over eight weeks.
- No fixed-term exclusions after intervention began.
- School reported a “complete shift in engagement”, with Rh-M building positive relationships and showing greater emotional stability.

School Feedback:

“Ellie’s involvement transformed this case. The relationship she built with Rh-M changed how staff viewed her — she now has a genuine chance of succeeding in Year 11.”

2. Oaks Park High School – Case Study: “Mi” (Year 10)

Presenting Needs:

- Multiple suspensions for disruptive behaviour and aggression
- Low emotional regulation
- Peer group influence and risk of contextual harm

Intervention:

Michael delivered weekly sessions using grounding techniques, goal-setting, and behaviour mapping. He also facilitated a joint meeting with parents, pastoral team, and SEND to reset expectations and clarify boundaries.

Impact:

- Reduction in negative behaviour points over the term.
- No further physical incidents since mid-term review.
- The young person is now engaging more positively with Year Team staff.

School Feedback:

“Michael has helped us see Mi differently. His work has de-escalated situations that would previously have led to exclusions.”

3. Carshalton Boys Sports College – Case Study: “Iv” (Year 9)

Presenting Needs:

- Daily detentions
- Association with higher-risk peers
- Emotional volatility is connected to family stressors

Intervention:

Michael provided weekly mentoring focused on emotional regulation, identity, and positive peer association. Significant pastoral coordination occurred when the young person disclosed concerns about his brother’s release from custody.

Impact:

- Reduction in weekly negative points
- Improved relationships with teaching staff
- Increased emotional openness and better capacity to reflect

School Feedback:

“Iv responds to Michael in a way he doesn’t with anyone else. The sessions have helped him break patterns that were escalating.”

4. Greenshaw High School – Case Study: “De” (Year 8)

Presenting Needs:

- Physical aggression towards peers
- Social vulnerability

- Emerging concerns around low mood and family pressures

Intervention:

Noble carried out weekly check-ins, liaised closely with pastoral leads, and used a strengths-based model to challenge peer influence. Risk-related incidents were reviewed through a contextual lens with the school.

Impact:

- Emotional regulation significantly improved
- No further physical incidents following intervention
- School reports that behaviour in lessons is now “much calmer and predictable”

School Feedback:

“Honey appears noticeably calmer since working with Noble. His external support gave us a much-needed fresh perspective.”

5. Carshalton High School for Girls – Case Study: “BeH” (Year 8)

Presenting Needs:

- Persistent defiance
- Multiple suspensions
- Fixed peer conflict and anxiety about school authority

Intervention:

Ellie coordinated a structured behaviour plan, restorative work around peer interactions, and communication with home to rebuild relationships. Focus was placed on emotional literacy and understanding triggers.

Impact:

- Teacher–pupil relationships stabilised
- Significant reduction in escalations
- Young person now attending consistently and engaging in lessons

School Feedback:

“Ellie is amazing. Students feel safe with her. BeH’s turnaround is one of our strongest examples of relational practice working in real time.”

6. Glenthorne High School – Case Study: “TMc” (Year 10)

Presenting Needs:

- Complex presentation involving emotional dysregulation
- Challenging relationships with staff
- Episodes of verbal conflict and low self-esteem
- Difficulties maintaining friendships and managing stress

Intervention:

Shakira provided a structured weekly intervention, focusing on building trust, emotional literacy,

and self-regulation strategies.

A “communication agreement” was co-produced with school staff to reset expectations, reduce miscommunication, and build consistency.

Parents were actively involved throughout.

Impact:

- Recorded behavioural incidents decreased notably across the term
- Improved engagement in lessons and fewer removals
- Young person is now able to articulate emotions before escalation
- Staff report greater empathy and understanding of her needs

School Feedback:

“This case shows the value of consistent, relational work. TMc now has strategies she never had before — and school feels different for her.”

7. Overton Grange – Case Study: “JeS” (Year 11)

Presenting Needs:

- High exclusion history (10 incidents)
- Persistent disruption, impulsivity, and low self-regulation
- Severely fractured relationships with teaching staff

Intervention:

Shakira used restorative models, behaviour coaching, and joint re-entry planning with pastoral leads. Strengths-based approaches were used to rebuild self-worth and reduce staff–pupil tension.

Impact:

- Reduced frequency of high-level behavioural incidents
- Staff report improved communication and willingness to repair
- The family expressed appreciation for consistent external support

School Feedback:

“Shakira’s involvement helped us reframe JeS’s behaviour — the change in relationship dynamic has been significant.”

8. Harris Academy Sutton – Case Study: “LMc” (Year 9)

Presenting Needs:

- Permanently excluded from the previous school
- Low confidence, high anxiety, attachment to peer groups
- Ongoing concerns around disengagement

Intervention:

Noble used a trauma-informed transition plan, weekly mentoring, and collaboration with SEND and pastoral staff. Focus was on emotional safety, identity, and goal-setting.

Impact:

- Attendance improved from **86% to 93.5%**
- No exclusion incidents since reintegration
- Young person engaging more confidently with support staff

School Feedback:

“This intervention stabilised LMc when he arrived following PEX. The structure and trust built were essential.”

9. John Fisher – Case Study: “SqN” (Year 8)

Presenting Needs:

- Over five incidents of threatening behaviour over two academic years
- Peer influence contributing to risk
- Relationship strain between home and school

Intervention:

Noble provided weekly mentoring, behaviour mapping, and consistent liaison with HOY. A safeguarding-aware plan was developed, balancing boundaries with relational support.

Impact:

- Clear reduction in high-level incidents
- Young person showing improved emotional regulation
- More consistent engagement in learning

School Feedback:

“Noble’s work has helped SqN make sense of his triggers. His emotional maturity has noticeably improved.”

10. Feedback from Partners, Parents, and Pupils

From Schools:

“Ellie has been an outstanding member of staff, consistently demonstrating excellent collaboration with Year Teams and key students.”

— Assistant Headteacher, Cheam High

“Ellie is amazing. The students feel supported and trust her.”

— Head of Year, Carshalton Girls

“H appears noticeably calmer since working with Noble.”

— Head of Behaviour, Greenshaw

From Parents and Young People:

“Michael has been brilliant. He’s supported A when he couldn’t talk to me and helped the school see him differently.”

— Parent of Year 10 boy

“I feel like things are better now. Ellie really listens.”

— Year 10 girl

“We’re so happy with the change in R-M. The relationship with Ellie has turned everything around.”
— Parent of R-M

Funding sources

Subsidised £110,000 from DSG + **£65,980** exclusion money + contribution per school £11,000 (£88,000)

Proposed cost for 26/27: £298,00 (average unit cost £3921 per child)

C: Paving the Way (PTW) Impact

- 3.3 PTW is an early intervention service that supports children with a range of needs, including social communication, attention and concentration differences, and anxiety. They provide holistic support that includes a range of assessments to identify root causes to behaviour differences, and a menu of support which includes 121 sessions with the child, at-home support through advice given to families, group work, the provision of strategies to support the child in all settings and the team forms part of the Cognus Autism diagnostic pathway.

Recognising the need to build capacity in the primary sector and identify and support the needs of children and families earlier, PTW capacity was increased by 1 FTE through the addition of a Behaviour Specialist as a one-year pilot in the first instance, which the focus of supporting Years 4-6 into Year 7 to support readiness for transition to secondary which has been identified as a local area priority.

At the agreed point of review last year, initial data were positive; however, the long-term impact of the focused support could not be proven owing to the time taken to recruit and train the new Behaviour Specialist. Due to the service’s proven history and excellent reputation, Schools Forum supported the extension of the project from April 2025 to March 2026 to evaluate and evidence the adapted model.

The addition of a Behaviour Support Specialist has had a clear positive impact across the PtW service. Despite receiving an average of six new support requests per week, they have significantly reduced the waiting list - from 79 children and young people awaiting support in February 2023, to 41 as of 23rd November 2025, a 48% decrease. As a result, waiting times have fallen from six months in June 2023 to four months by November 2025.

In addition to noticeable improvements in children’s emotional regulation and engagement, the Warriors groups have accelerated the process of gathering evidence for neurodevelopmental referrals. Of the 159 children who have participated, 103, or 65%, have so far been referred for further assessment through CAMHS or Cognus Clinical Psychology.

Year 4-7 Project - 2025 (mid-year) Data Review

- Data shows that throughout the academic year of September 2023 to July 2024, 10 Year 6 pupils were supported by Paving the Way. With the implementation of the Year 4-7 project, the number of Year 6 pupils who have been supported from September 2024 to July 2025 has risen to 51 – a significant increase.
- Looking at the data at the mid-year point (25/26), so far, 32 children in years 4-6 have been supported in the Summer Term; this goes beyond the 35 children that were supported at this point of the project last year

- Of the 32 Year 4-6 children supported between April 2025 and October 2025, service outcomes demonstrate that 94% of pupils make progress as a result of the intervention. Post support, 56% of pupils have made progress in the area of school and learning, 47% have made progress in managing routine; connected to this, 39% of children have made progress with attention and organisation. These are all skills that support a successful transition and the ability to cope with the expectations and requirements of secondary school and readiness to learn. 59% of children have improved self-esteem and connected to this, the ability to make and maintain friendships (which is critical in supporting children to feel a sense of belonging). 42% of children have made progress in how they behave.
- Family holiday workshops on 'Managing anxiety through play', 'Back to school', 'Managing emotions', and 'Summer Fun' have been held since April 2025. Of the 60 families attending, 60% were Years 4-6

Year 6 pupils transitioning to High School

- 18 pupils attended the Warriors group. For each, families and schools were provided with strategies and/or signposting to sustain support.
- 11 children were referred to and accepted for neurodevelopmental assessments.
- 12 of the children attended a specific Transition Warriors group, supporting highlighted Year 6 pupils. The support of this group covered: understanding timetables/ organisation, internet safety, managing emotions, and making new friends. PtW collaborated with a High School Pastoral lead and Internet Safety specialist, co-delivering a session each.
- A transition-focused parent support coffee evening for Year 6 families was held in June 2025 to ensure successful transitions to secondary school. A further aim was for the school/parents to better understand pupils' individual needs; provide guidance; build relationships and share key information to support families during the process. 30 parents attended and reported feeling more confident in their ability to prepare their children for high school, having a better understanding of the social and emotional shifts their child may face and being more confident at strategies they could use to support them. They also reported reduced anxiety as a result of meeting other parents in an informal setting, as it provided an opportunity for shared experiences and support. Resources/info packs were shared with parents through email and in person on the day.

Exclusion data:

- September 23 – July 24, of the 10 children supported, 0 have had a suspension
- September 24 – July 25, of the 51 children supported, 0 have had a suspension

Next Steps for Year 7s over the coming months:

- Short class observations and conversations with pupils to gain pupil voice.
- Follow up with the parent(s) of year 7 children.
- Feedback has been requested from SENCos of the year 7 pupils to gain more context around the pupils who were worked with at the primary stage (have the interventions recommended by primary school/Paving the Way report enabled the provision of adequate interventions).

Statutory exclusions funding supports 1 FTE, who will work with approx 80 children on a 1-2-1 basis per year for approximately 10 weeks each.

Cost £47,745 for 1 member of staff (average unit cost £597 per child)

Appendix C

Service Testimonials

Service 1: Inclusion Capacity Service and Impact

Inclusion Team Around the School feedback:

"The meetings not only provide our staff with reassurance and tailored interventions to inform next steps, but they also encourage reflective practice and challenge existing perspectives, ensuring that the child remains at the centre of all decision-making. The support provided by SW and her team has empowered staff to explore additional, individualised strategies and to engage in collaborative problem-solving. Furthermore, having someone who can effectively coordinate and lead professional meetings involving multiple agencies has proven to be extremely valuable. There has been a significant improvement in our suspension rates, and we believe this positive change is a direct result of the support offered to us—helping us to think creatively, not just as a school, but as part of a wider network. We are sincerely grateful to SW and her team for the continued guidance and support they provide.

"There are so many positives that I can talk about to do with SW's leadership of inclusion. Firstly, she is a beacon of hope for many of our students. She constantly reminds us that we need to have a student-centred approach when trying to find the best solution and support for a student. Secondly, SW is a trusted professional by all of the people that she has made connections with. When SW sets up a meeting with these professionals, it is taken seriously and all parties leave these meetings with clear actions on how to support the child. I have a lot of respect for someone that can bring together professionals from education, social care and health and have them all work together to achieve a common goal of less absence and a lower risk of permanent exclusion. Because SW works so closely with us she is also able to give a better insight to the pre-VPP members and therefore speed up the offer of support we are looking for. SW also has a good working knowledge of how our school can support other schools and knows the best time to lean in for a support from us... We have now had 2 solid years of support from SW....Sutton benefits enormously from SW and we are really fortunate to have her as part of our local offer. Thank you for all that you do".

"The meetings are useful for understanding different options and support open to pupils and opening some doors."

General Service Feedback

Feedback from a newly appointed Deputy Headteacher:

"I was in attendance at the VPP last week and feel I could be using this mechanism more effectively than what we currently do as a school. I worked with you briefly during my time at [school] and saw first hand the positive impact you had on their pastoral systems and decision-making...Your input feels especially key to my transition into the school and in helping me link more effectively with Sutton's processes and standards. I'm eager to learn from your perspective and ensure I'm aligned with best practices from the outset".

Feedback from VPP Chair:

"SW's involvement with the VPP is integral to its efficiency, effectiveness and success... SW's information sharing and guidance ensured a smooth transition. It was particularly impressive that SW used the changeover as an opportunity to review best practice so that any relevant changes could have an immediate and positive effect... The VPP is a strong team comprising a range of professionals who all bring shared and unique skills "to the table". SW's vast experience in the education sector and of a range of support networks is so strong, clearly displaying not only the ability to support the team but equally to bring a super level of challenge, pushing us to offer the best solution and process for every child. There has been a significant improvement in everyone's understanding of the wide range of options available. SW plays a significant role here as her experience brings swift conclusions to problems. Conversely, but equally important is SW's commitment to the panel, especially evident in the very clear respect the team displays towards her skill set. Positive outcomes for vulnerable pupils are clearly impacted by the excellent, concise, clear and apposite leadership so impressively shown by SW".

Service 2: Schools Team

FEEDBACK:

Professional:

Mick Berry, Headteacher (Harris Sutton Academy) - *'We were really happy with everything Noble did here at Harris Sutton, his commitment to the young people was really positive. He worked really well with the staff here and very much was part of the team'.*

Faye McLellan, Pastoral Support (Carshalton Boys School) - *'Michael is always very professional whilst working with our boys at Carshalton Boys.*

He has an amazing skill of being able to build a really strong working relationship even with some of our most tricky and closed book boys.

Lots of our boys that Michael has worked with will often seek him out when it is known that he is in school.

Michael is able to build relationships quickly and can often support boys when they are at crisis point.

He is quick to adapt the way that he is working with an individual especially if there has been an issue throughout the week that is still at the forefront of the young person's mind.

Michael is able to offer support and guidance to members of staff when it comes to making referrals and planning support for individuals that are directly open to Michael himself.

Michael is always approachable and also has a smile on his face.

Michael is very flexible when it comes to working with the boys especially if there has been an accident his is quick to act and support those struggling'.

Jason Mirtschin, Assistant Headteacher (Greenshaw High School) - *'We have really benefited from working closely with the schools team and having someone based in our school once a week. So far we have not had to permanently exclude any of the students who are being seen. The feedback we have given has been acted on and the process is now working really well. The feedback from the students who are involved has been positive. We are now looking forward to seeing how this resource evolves'*.

Glen Baldwin, Assistant Headteacher (Overton Grange) - *'Shakira has been invaluable this year, she has engaged brilliantly with our most challenging student and made a huge difference to our PermEx numbers'*.

Service User:

Parent of Tr - *'Michael has been able, Tr loves. Tr has provided a complete turnaround, due to Michael. Tr is now using his learning about speaking to his peers about their behaviour;*
- Tr feels safe with Michael. When Tr was 3yrs old, he had a permanent cut to his face, and so he didn't trust people. He has issues with teachers, a bit of racism from a young age. Primary school he commented on it a lot. Identity has always been an issue. Accepting institutional racism, I have tried to help him deal with it, so he can be aware. Tr feels very settled, he can be open and trusting;

- This works for him.*
- Tr previously felt like he couldn't speak to anyone. He gave Tr a voice, and the school to listen. He now has a timeout card, if someone is annoying him;*
- Michael has been able to get him to think about things and not react;*
- I don't get calls everyday now from school;*
- Last parent teacher feedback informed that he is doing so much better this year;*
- Tr is always looking forward'.*

Parent of AS - *'AS and I established a good relationship with Noble;*
- I have seen positive change in her;
- Noble always remains in contact with me, after sessions, communication is flowing. I would have liked to come to the office and see where my child is doing sessions;
- Noble got to listen and get to know her, and he was able to see her for himself, unbiased (it is easy to be stereotyped, but Noble was able to see things from a different perspective);
- Noble really believed in her, and her made her believe in herself;
- With regards to safety, I am happy with this. Noble was supported to understand where AS was going, but I would have preferred to see the building;
- My only concern was AS travelling to and fro between sessions. But I was able to coordinate with Noble to ensure that she arrives and leaves in time, this communication has remained ongoing. This gave me a lot of reassurance;

- On occasions when AS fell off track, Noble was able to be honest and communicate with me. He gave so many suggestions. It was nice to see that he had my daughters best interest';
Parent of RY - *'I felt better after RY started seeing Shakira because I wanted her to have a trusted adult she could confide in, who wouldn't judge her, would allow her to speak freely, and who was able to involve us when it was necessary while making it clear to RY she was supporting her and allowing us to join in with her still feeling she could trust Shakira, she felt able to be herself without fear of her feeling silly.*

RY doesn't normally talk to people and has been doing well with Shakira's support and we felt like Shakira went above and beyond to help RY'.

Service 3: Increase Paving the Way (PTW)

FEEDBACK:

Family/Carer Feedback:

"Because of my daughter's relatively recent diagnosis I know very few parents with SEN children. I also work, so tonight's meeting was one of the very few occasions where I could meet parents with similar struggles. Thank you for providing me with that opportunity. It was empowering to know I am not alone in my struggles."

"If every parent could learn about the challenges each family or child encounters or may encounter, it would heighten parental awareness. Parents would then have solutions at hand when facing difficulties, or be better equipped to make sound judgments and take effective measures against future issues – ultimately benefiting numerous families."

"I Thought [Behaviour Specialist] was absolutely amazing, she was so attentive and understanding".

"We feel we have been listened to and fully supported throughout".

"[Behaviour Specialist] was very warm, kind and insightful".

"[Behaviour Specialist] and her team are professional, friendly and approachable. I felt supported and heard throughout my experience and cannot thank the team enough."

"[Behaviour Specialist] has been amazing throughout."

"I feel all our questions and worries have been listen to and answered."

"[Behaviour Specialist] has made my daughter feel extremely comfortable and was gentle and kind with her".

"[Behaviour Specialist] was approachable, professional and easy to talk to for both my daughter and us as parents. She put us at ease, and it really felt like she wanted to understand the full picture of our child. Thank you."

"[Behaviour Specialist] has been amazing, kind, informative, first class service and all done in such a kid and caring manor, really appreciated her support and I'm hoping she can help with my twins who are soon to start at [school]."

"[Behaviour Specialist] was our case worker for this stage of the assessment process. Having the continuity of [BS], who previously carried out our other son's initial assessment, was so helpful. She was very kind, easy to talk to and understood what we have been experiencing. Her advice and support was much appreciated. Thank you!"

"[Behaviour Specialist] has been excellent throughout the consultation with us. She has been efficient and helpful offering advice and information where necessary. She has been professional and really great throughout the process".

Feedback from schools:

"As always, the service provided by the Paving the Way team has been truly outstanding—consistently deserving of five stars. If I were responsible for line managing [her] and her team... Their unwavering commitment, deep and contextual knowledge, and exceptional professionalism set them apart from other services."

"The team's responsiveness and timeliness, under [Behaviour Specialist]'s leadership, ensure that support is provided exactly when it is needed, making a real difference for the children and families involved. What stands out most is their genuine dedication to putting the best interests of each child and their family at the heart of every case. Their approach, in particular [BS] in this instance, is both compassionate and thoughtful, reflecting a clear passion for the work they undertake and complete diligently."

"In every interaction, [Behaviour Specialist] demonstrated a remarkable ability to balance expert guidance with empathy, ensuring that families feel supported and fully understood throughout the process. It is a pleasure to work alongside such a skilled, like-minded and value-driven team."

"Such a wonderful service. I am new to the role of SENDCO and think this service is invaluable to worried parents."

"The child was invited to attend Paving the Way Warriors in order to observe and collect more evidence. Not only was this extremely beneficial for supporting the child, but it really helped with spotting signs that may not be seen in girls in a busy school environment".

Feedback from CYP involved in the Years 4-7 Project:

- *I have found that i have got better at comunating and takling and getting ready for hight school*
- *because im less worried about going to high school, I enjoyed getting to know more people*
- *I am paying more attention.*
- *I enjoyed comming in and talking and having fun*
- *It helped more with high sholl than primary, the games and t shirt*
- *It helped a tiny bit, i enjoyed the t-shirt designing i didn't find anything tricky*
- *better prepared for secondary, its fun*
- *I know what to expect and talk*
- *because im less worried about going to high school*
- *better prepared for secondary*
- *I know what to expect*
- *They helped with my emotions and the transition to High School*
- *They helped me with being more orginised.*
- *getting ready for high school and*
- *It made me feel more confident*
- *I can now ignore things more often*
- *[It gave me] ideas on high school*