

## London Assembly Education Panel – 13 September 2018

### Transcript of Item 8 – Secondary School Exclusions

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Then we come to Agenda Item 8, which is our conversation today and our discussion on secondary school exclusions.

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome our guests here today. We have Shaun Brown, Head of Curriculum Research from an organisation that we met before when they gave evidence to the Police and Crime Committee called The Difference. The Difference is a charity working to improve outcomes for excluded pupils and to reduce exclusions from school. We are looking forward to hearing what you have to say, Shaun.

Sarina Totty, thank you for coming and joining us this afternoon, Deputy Teacher of Townley Grammar School in southeast London. It is always nice when we can make a link for a former pupil with their Deputy Head, as we have today. A member of our staff graduated from your school, which must be good to know.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** It certainly is, yes.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** We have highly regarded and much respected Councillor Anntoinette Bramble, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney. I would also like to welcome Seamus Oates CBE, Chief Executive Officer of the Tri-Borough Alternative Provision (TBAP) Multi-Academy Trust. You run 11 alternative provisions (APs) and special academies. We look forward to hearing about the work that you are doing.

Can I just now turn to Deputy Mayor Councillor Anntoinette Bramble? It is fair to say [that the London Borough of] Hackney, when we look at statistics about this area, for the last five years, in terms of London Boroughs, has been in the top two or three boroughs [for number of exclusions]. I wonder if you could just talk to us for a couple of minutes. In terms of your remit, what did you as a council do when this was presented to you? Just some key points about the work, because we will pick up some of these things in the questions to you.

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor & Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** Thank you. Yes, we have been looking at exclusions, but before I talk about exclusions part of the challenge – and I will speak a bit more about that possibly later on – is that if you look at exclusions through a lens and only look at exclusions then that in itself is not helpful as such. You need to look at a wider parameter. Exclusions are something we have been looking at. Hackney has been successful. In 2016 we were first in the country for General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 results. Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) children were third in the country. Our free school meals were third in the country. Our SEND children were also fifth in the country for academic achievement.

We also looked at exclusions and thinking: how do we shift the dial on that also? One of the things that we looked at was a No Need to Exclude Policy, which is what we are working on now with schools and getting the buy-in from schools. Within that policy is a range of different techniques that schools can use to think about how they reduce exclusions. Also with that parameter is the pedagogy around ethos and culture, because when you start talking about exclusions it is quite punitive. I should declare an interest. I used to be an

Assistant Head and an Inclusion Manager within a primary school. It is not that I am soft on behaviour at all, or I do not believe there should be consequences, but if you are dealing with children and you start a punitive manner that is quite problematic.

What our policy focuses on is health and wellbeing; the wellbeing of young people and how you move forward on that. It is a real shift and a culture change. It is a more disciplined way of working. I often use the example, as a school teacher there was always one child that you would have to refrain from putting your hand on your hip and saying to that child, "How dare you?" There are many moments in that if you are a parent or a godparent or an aunt or uncle, whatever way in your life that you engage with children, there is going to be a moment with a child and it is: how do you interface with that child?

It is a way of working differently. There are children that sometimes just do not behave, but as adults we could argue there are some adults that often do not behave. How do we better distinguish between a child that is not behaving for one reason or another, but a child who is trying to indicate that there is something quite wrong and part of me is indicate there is something quite wrong, you are misinterpreting me not being able to manage my behaviour as just me misbehaving. I do not think there has been enough dialogue around that as well. Hopefully we will get to unpick that today. On that note possibly, Chair, I might pause, because I can feel myself continue to talk quite a bit on this.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Thank you for that. That is a really nice introduction. What we then would like you to do is to take us through what happens to a young person once they have been permanently excluded. We know that the number of temporary exclusions is a huge number, but we also know that there is less than 1,000 young people across London, in 2016/2017, who had been permanently excluded. How do young people and their parents and carers get involved in the decision-making from what you are doing in Hackney?

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor & Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** Are you talking about the broader piece of work we are doing around strategies or are you talking about an individual case?

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** An individual case might help us to understand the process.

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor & Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** One of the things that I would say is that what we do is we have a guide for parents and carers to walk them through that process. What you have to remember is that at the point of exclusion, often relationships are broken down between the adult, the child and the school. It can be quite a tense situation but also for parents quite worrying. Depending on the level of confidence of the parent and the ability to navigate all of the different things that are happening in school, it can also be quite stressful.

We set out a guide. The guide, I will talk you through it, gives you an overview of what happens when your child is excluded. It also talks you through what happens if there is a fixed-term exclusion or a permanent exclusion. It breaks down the exclusions, whether it is less than five days, more than six days or if it is permanent. All the way through the process, the parent has got that guide. All of that information is quite important. The guide also then goes on to talk to you about what to expect from the Head [Teacher], the Governors, what you can then do as a parent through that process. It also talks about what provision will be made for that child in each of those different scenarios, which is quite helpful.

It also gives you lots of what happens next. It is all very well that you are in this situation now but: what should I be expecting and if that does not happen, who do I then ask? All of that is in there as well. It also talks you through if it is a fixed-term or permanent in the same manner again, the expectation on the school, the expectation on you as a parent and carer, what provisions were made for your child. In the booklet as well, what we also have is places where a parent or carer can get help from. I have to say parents and carers because we have to remember that not every child is living at home with their parents.

There are places like Coram Children's Legal Centre, for example, where parents and carers can get advocates. What we do always encourage parents and carers to do, even if they phone our services, is to get an advocate, someone that can turn up at that meeting with them. In Hackney, fortunately we still offer a young people service. Young Hackney sits within my political portfolio and we have officers who will go to those meetings with young people as well.

We have something called the Re-engagement Unit (REUs) that I will speak about possibly a bit later. Members of staff that are in the REUs work with schools and around children who are on the outskirts of possibly being excluded. It is how to stop that child from being excluded and what provisions we can put in place or, if there is an exclusion about to happen, how that young person can have an advocate. The person from the REUs will then go to some of those key meetings with the parents or carers, if they so choose, so they do not feel like they are dealing with it alone.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** That is lovely. Seamus, do you have anything to add in terms of your experience? Is this common across London and is that a process that you use within your academy structure?

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** Within our organisation within London we work in Haringey, Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, and Westminster. I can talk very much from that perspective within the London context. Our organisation runs AP academies and special academies for learners who have been excluded or who have socioemotional difficulties. Within a London context we run AP academies. All of which used to be Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), so they have replaced the PRUs that were in those particular boroughs that I talked about.

In addition, we manage a number of early intervention strategies. One in particular that really chimes with the REU is the concept of what we call a Managed Intervention Centre. We have one of those in each of the four boroughs in London that we work with. That is very much aimed at targeting young people who are on the edges of exclusions. Schools can refer them to those centres. The schools within our authorities buy places at those centres.

There is a very specific curriculum that is delivered. The curriculum is around ensuring that they can keep up with mainstream school and more importantly working on some of the issues that they may have come across within the school context that they have been at. It is for a very short defined period of time; a maximum of 45 days. Similarly, we ensure that the staff from those centres are involved in any meetings that are taking place with the school and with other agencies. That is something that I would quite like to touch on in a moment, because sometimes those multiagency meetings could be a lot better and a lot more effective in terms of preventing exclusion.

We have found that those centres, having that option for schools to dip into before they get to a permanent exclusion is really effective. Whilst the rates of exclusion have increased, as they have in every London borough, what has been great for us is that the learners who have come to those centres have not come back. They have gone back into mainstream [schools] and not come back into the system of exclusion. Early

intervention is really important in that context. Within some of our boroughs we also have Primary Intervention Teams that go into primary schools and work alongside staff and learners in those schools.

Again, all of this provision is increasingly difficult to deliver, given the cost constraints around it and the fact that schools have to find money to pay for this kind of provision from rapidly decreasing budgets. We are under pressure on that level. However, the success rates of early intervention centres have been really clear for us to see. I can talk more about learners who are permanently excluded as well, because those are the ones who then come to our AP academies. That is a slightly different story and different journey.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** I am sure we will come back to that. Shaun, from what you have heard so far, anything to add in terms of supportive or challenge?

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** Not particularly challenge, but I suppose it is worth picking up on the fact that one of the things we are talking about is permanent exclusions. We have seen exclusions have risen after a period of quite a number of years of them falling, from 2006 to 2013. Thinking about the question: why has that process started and has been so consistent, not just in London but nationally, it is a fairly consistent trend? At the same time as thinking about that, also bear in mind that the positive, although there are often not that many positives that you can take from the process of a permanent exclusion, but one of the positives is that the way that it is conducted is a very transparent process. It is a very trackable process. It is a process that we can see when young people are being permanently excluded. We can see who they are, and we can find out all sorts of things about them. We can also look at their outcomes, wherever they go afterwards.

Whilst it is disappointing and worth pursuing to look at the why, it is important to bear in mind that there are good things about the fact that we can track it. When we consider that permanent exclusions are only a very, very small fraction of the number of students every year who will move school, because the school that they are in has decided that it is untenable to retain their place in the school. Every local authority has a Fair Access Panel that will work in quite different ways brokering the movements of students from one school and into another.

Those managed moves, as they are called, are very difficult to track and to trace. As a consequence, it is very difficult to know who it is happening to, how many times it is happening, what the rates are, are we seeing the same trend in managed moves and permanent exclusions or are we seeing a shift from managed moves towards permanent exclusions. It is worrying to not be able to dig into that information. On top of that as well we have no idea - I might mention this later when we are talking about attainment - about the outcomes for the managed moves students, because once they have moved they no longer part of system, they are on the roll of a school and we cannot very easily make comparisons between those students.

I would just like, very quickly, to reiterate what Seamus said, one of the primary reasons behind the rise of permanent exclusions over the last five years is that schools are facing increasing pressure to, whichever language you might choose, divert, direct resources that might have been available for inclusion towards the basic meeting of progress and achievement aims and objectives of their school. One of the key things within that is their ability to look for alternative, edge of exclusion provisions that might support a young person to stay at their sending [original] school rather than have to make a move. If you cannot afford, within your budgets, to pay for that, what tends to happen is you hold on to a young person as long as you can, to the point that it reaches a crisis. At that point your choices are quite limited as a school.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** My colleague wants to come in and pick up on a number of the issues you have raised.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** I am quite interested and concerned about managed moves and the rights of children in relation to the lack of transparency about it. [Councillor] Anntoinette Bramble has shown us a document that is about if you child has been excluded. Have you come across any examples where any council or any school chain would have a similar document related to your child is at risk of having -- is there anything documented, is there anything written down about a child's right in relation to managed moves?

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** Every local authority will have a set of rules, normally based around their Fair Access Panel. It is still entirely legal for schools to broker managed moves between each other. Moves that go through local authorities would still be transparent in some way and it is possible that you could have a set of agreed guidance that a parent might have. It is also entirely legal for one school in a local authority to make a decision about a managed move. There would not be a document that every single school is preparing.

I would say that there is guidance. I am sure it sits in the same guidance that Anntoinette was talking about in Hackney. There is an element of the managed move process within there for Hackney students going through their Fair Access Panel. It is not widely considered as a key bit of information that parents and carers are going to get. It is primarily a discussion between a parent and a student who is on the edge of exclusion about the best option for them. The best option being a chance to make a fresh start at a new school, rather than to continue down a road where there has been lots of external exclusions and where that might lead to a permanent exclusion in the future.

It is parents and a student making quite a reasonable decision that they themselves would like a chance to go and try and make a fresh start in a new school. Although there are lots of positives in that, the process of transition is a process in which a huge amount is lost, about what has been done, what could be done, what might be done. That fresh start often is a beginning again for all of those processes that might have supported the young person.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** Would there be any statistics on how many children and young people (CYP) who get permanently excluded have already had managed moves before they get to that point?

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** No, there would not.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** There is nothing?

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** No, there would not be because, from something like the DfE's database, there is no way of drawing that information out because a managed move is not something which is attached to a pupil's equity, diversity and inclusion.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** We do not have any of the demographic data that we would in relation to exclusions. Obviously, there is quite a lot of data there.

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** From my point of view, as a practitioner, the reasons that permanent exclusions went down was there was a period of time when schools were very conscious of it and local authorities were very conscious of permanent exclusions. They looked for ways to reduce those figures. One of the ways that those figures have reduced is a managed move enables somebody to move without there being a permanent exclusion. It would be better if everybody moving schools were permanently excluded, in part, for some reasons, because at least we would know who they all were. We would be able to find out where they went and what happened to them afterwards, which we cannot do at present.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** Or you could just track it and not call it a permanent exclusion. If you introduced a new statistic on that then that would avoid them being labelled as permanent excluded, which we will come on to at various points in discussion. It is clearly something that hangs over people for a long time. Those statistics might be something that we might pick up on later.

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor & Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** Could I just come in on that point? I would say I strongly disagree with just saying it is better to permanent exclude children for the data, and I am sure you did not mean it in that way.

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** Yes, I meant so that they did not disappear.

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor & Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** We know the outcomes for children that are permanently excluded. The data tells us a very negative and challenging story of where those children often end up. That is not the solution. Assembly Member Twycross you are right to raise the question: is there a concern about it? This is not just a London issue, it is national. When I speak to colleagues from other regions as well there is a concern about managed moves. A managed move in itself is not an issue. It is a good strategy for a parent and a child. You are right to raise the question, because the concern is if that is a way that schools use to off-roll children and no one can be held accountable.

If I can pre-empt what you are getting to, you are beginning to raise the question of the challenge here. Going back to your point that when you have permanent exclusions that is quite easy to have the data, the challenge is the internal exclusions within schools and the managed moves where you cannot really track children in how they are being moved around and how they are managed. That is the challenge.

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** You are right. I did not mean it as in it would be great to see lots more children permanently excluded, but one of the things the permanent exclusion process does provide is quite a clear set of rights and due process for parents and carers to challenge that is going on in a way that something which is less transparent does not give them.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Can we just confirm? Are you saying that at the moment the child and parents or carers who are involved in a managed move have no statutory hooks or --

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** No, because it is a voluntary process that they agree to enter into. It is not something that is forced upon them. It is something that they accept and decide is a good idea.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** There is an agreement between parties.

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** Yes.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** You are saying if there was an imbalance then the parent and child in that sort of relationship does not have, if you like, rights of appeal or any structures to protect them?

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** Yes.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** That is worrying, is it not?

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** It is worrying. Managed moves can be really successful when they are done well. I have seen them done well in a number of authorities. They involve the informed consent and agreement of the parents, the child and both the schools, if it is a managed move between the schools. That can work really well to give someone a fresh start as an alternative to exclusion. Where it does not work, and I have seen this happen over the years, is where a parent is presented with a choice, either take a managed move or your child will be excluded. That then you are removing any sorts of rights or entitlement from that family.

With a permanent exclusion, parents have a right to appeal. There is due process that they can go through. A managed move, as it is a voluntary agreement, there are no rights attached to that. Where a managed move takes place from school to school, we can rest assured that the outcomes from that learner are still being tracked, because the school that they move to is accountable to Ofsted and they remain on the roll of a school. What is very concerning is where children are effectively off-rolled from mainstream schools into perhaps independent or unofficial or unregistered AP, which may not be held to account.

The quoted figure nationally of 40,000 unofficial exclusions taking place would be replicated in the London scenario. There are concerns around that in terms of how a child's outcomes are tracked afterwards. We are talking through the Alternative Provision Review about the concept of schools whenever they do a managed move or permanent exclusion they remain accountable to some extent for the outcomes of that child throughout their educational history. It sounds like a very neat solution, but it becomes very challenging when you talk about a child who may have gone to three or four schools, which school holds the responsibility. It is a complex scenario without an easy solution.

There are cases, certainly within London, where children's rights are not upheld, and they are being coerced into a managed move that may not be the best thing for them. We must still hold on to the fact that a well-managed managed move can make a real difference to a young person. As can sometimes a managed move into AP.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** I would really agree with that. We are very lucky as a school where I am that we do not come across this very often. Managed moves can be very, very positive if they are done properly. The flaw here is that there is not really a simple strategy process for every school. When you exclude you have to follow a guideline. Maybe with managed moves that is something that has to be considered within that, so that then every school does the same thing, so that you can avoid when a pupil is forced into a scenario of this, or that or that is it the best option for them.

We have taken a managed move before and it was highly successful. It is the process, which depends on each school and how they do it that that happens. That is where you lose the information, lose the data, and anything can happen within that. Whereas if it is an actual system, similar to exclusions, then you can make sure it is done the correct way.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** My concern would be that it feels like in some cases a voluntary managed move is not entirely voluntary. If you have a bigger threat hanging over you then that stops being voluntary and starts being a bit coercive. That is where the lack of transparency in terms of statistics come in, because if nobody is having to report on data, demographics or what happens to those children when they do get moved, then it is very difficult for anybody to sort of identify, challenge and rectify any flaws in that system.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Yes. When we did a previous piece of work, we came across this whole issue of 'churn'. Schools would say, "Huge churn. Pupils are moving in and out, in and out". How would we know how many managed moves a child experiences?

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** Because there is not a requirement within a school record to make a mark. In any student's record in a main school, if they were looked after, there is a mark that you have to click, a box you have to tick, which means all of the data that is collected on them in that school can be sourced and extracted by the Department for Education (DfE) into its own database. That feature can be analysed based on that piece of data. There is not a piece of data that is indicated for somebody who has come into a school from a managed move.

Even though the school will keep a record of that information, it is not that they would not know that that had happened, but once they have reached Year 11 and they have left it is not possible to know whether they had one or two or three managed moves. At the moment that is not something that we could ever find out.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Can I just go back to Seamus and say: data seems to indicate that special academies and free schools have a higher rate of exclusions than local authority-maintained special schools. Why might this be the case?

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** Special academies have a higher rate?

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Yes, special and free schools.

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** It is quite unusual for special schools to exclude at all. I would have to see the data behind that.

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** Seamus, it is referencing fixed-term exclusion rates rather than permanent exclusion rates.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Sorry, Shaun, we did not hear what you said.

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** The data about the special and academy schools having higher rates of exclusion is specifically around fixed-term exclusions, so exclusions from within the school, but not permanent exclusions.

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** I cannot really comment on that nationally or within the London context. Within my own context, we do not have any permanent exclusions from any of our schools. We have very low rates of fixed-term exclusions as well within our schools, because we have alternatives to fixed-term exclusion which we use as a strategy. In terms of tackling that issue, I would say we have lots of strategies that we would make available to other free schools and special schools, if they choose to use it. Within the London context, most of our mainstream schools are now academised. Over the years we have not seen a particularly big difference between academies and local maintained schools in terms of exclusion. In fact, quite a lot of our locally maintained schools had higher rates of exclusion, because it often correlates with performance.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Thank you. Anntoinette, going back to the situation in Hackney, which I said earlier if you look at the data had the highest rates of exclusions, did you come out with any reasoning behind that relatively high exclusion rate?



**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor & Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** I do not know. There is no simple answer. I can speak about Hackney. I go back to saying, not that I am trying to excuse our high exclusion rates at all, that is why I am here, but this is a national and London issue. It is pan-London. We have to think about the interface between mainstream schools and academies. I am not saying that academies are different, but nationally when you look at how local authorities have a relationship with their maintained schools and do not have that same relationship with academies. Does that make a difference?

In Hackney, fortunately, we built all of our academies from scratch, so we have a closer relationship. You have to look at: is it the regime? Is it lack of consistency in behaviour? We talked about finances. There is a lot of money coming out of the school. I said that we had the top performing schools in country with a very rich and balanced curriculum. With money coming out of the system, you have to think: well, what gives? What you find in terms of local authorities the first thing that goes is prevention and early preventative work. You have to think in a school environment when money is coming out of the system, all of those extra staff that were doing all that extra work, are they the people that have moved out of the system?

For example, Hackney is one of the local authorities that was biggest hit by the National Funding Formula. The data is telling us something; exclusions have gone up and finance has gone down. We cannot say: is it just about money? No. Is money making a difference and play a part in it? I would have to say yes. The support workers that would have been working with those children are not there now. The members that are not class based that would have done those assessments are not there in the same way now. When head teachers who are making the decision when a member of staff leaves of 'Am I going to employ that post? I know that you are employed to teach geography but I now need you to teach history'. These are very real situations.

This is not just about Hackney now. I am going to put on that broader London approach. These are situations that London schools are going across the piece. I also think what has not been mentioned now is the disproportionality within exclusions as well. In response to your questions, and I am not quite sure I answered it broadly, when we realised we had a high exclusion rate what we did is introduce our No Need to Exclude Policy. I will talk a bit about it. As I said to you before, we tried to take it back and focus on wellbeing and look at pedagogy: what works well and how do young people flourish and thrive? We also focused in the Strategy on the wellbeing of staff.

It is not just about the young people, "Yes, it is about you, but if we do not focus on the adults that look after people it does not become all about you". What does that look like for the staff team? What are the levels of stress? We talk about the definition of wellbeing. We look at the framework where we adopt the whole-school approach. As a school, what does your health and wellbeing look like? How do you promote it? How does it interface? We set out quite clearly referral pathways. At every stage of that child's life, if there are any issues or concerns of wellbeing for the child and the wider family, where can you signpost into the local authority before it gets critical?

Exclusion is quite punitive. It is quite critical. Do not get me wrong, there are some extreme cases where it is not in the best interest for a child to stay within a school. I get that. That is only in a small minority of cases. However, quite a lot of children are being affected by this, so what does that look like? It is how we work better with the AP. There is a dialogue to have around that. One of the things that we are doing is look at alternative providers and how they work better with our maintained schools and academies. What does that interface look like? How does that bridge in and bridge out back into mainstream look like?

Whole school systems approach, I remember when I was Head of Exclusions the Head [Teacher] was concerned that so many children were getting sent to his office. I did a piece of work with children and staff. The short answer is that when we looked at our approach around behaviour and when we were all consistent, the number of children that went to the head teacher reduced. To get to that point, there was a lot of systematic work that needed to be put in place. The key was consistency around behaviour. I cannot emphasise that enough. Are we looking, as a school community, at our school behaviour and what does that look like as a level of consistency?

How are we building our teachers as well to feel confident in that role? If you are a confident teacher your classroom management is a different place than if you are quite apprehensive and nervous. I am not saying that you have exclusions because you have nervous teachers; I am not saying that. It is when you are looking at this that you need to take a systems approach. We do a big piece around social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL), the emotional development in schools, so that children are getting that, in terms of the lesson plans. We have members of staff from Young Hackney that go into schools and team-teach with teachers, work alongside teachers to speak to children about health and wellbeing.

Restorative justice is something that is really going well in some of our primary schools. I went to visit Queensbridge Primary School the other day. It is a fantastic approach. Does it take a lot more energy? Absolutely and initially to get it going it can feel quite exhausting, but when you put that progress in place it really works. I will give you a short example. What restorative justice does is if there is an incident where you have an incident with a child. Often at the end of that lesson there is not time for you to always deal and discuss that with the child, but what restorative justice does is at the end of that school day, that child and that teacher get a chance to speak.

Any of you who have been involved with young people, they have a huge sense of justice and my goodness do they have a huge sense of injustice. Often that child just wants to have that say. At the end of the day, the child and the member of staff come together. The member of staff will talk about why they did not quite like that behaviour and the young person gets their say. Then you get to reset. Often that does not happen, because the mechanics of a school day and the pressure on schools in terms of what they have to cover in the curriculum does not allow for that, so it is at the end of the school day. We are finding that works so, so well to reset those relationships with children and young people.

We have also talked about our anti-bullying policy and what that looks like. We are trying to inherit a new sense of mindfulness around behaviour, how we model behaviour and how we identify behaviour. We are just ensuring, as a local authority, that we are providing the support and networks which children and staff need. We have Pastoral Support Plans that are in place to support children who are at risk of exclusion and on a pathway to exclusion and how we can manage that.

Our REU is a more school-approached. As a whole school we are looking at: do we think there are children who are at a risk of exclusion? Is there anything we can do as a school? That is our response to those high exclusions. We do not want to be just high performing academically. We do have a broad and rich curriculum. We also want to be good at how we help support our children who have challenging behaviour.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Thank you so much for that. That is absolutely excellent. Sarina, anything to add?

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** Yes, I would like to follow on what has been said there. One of the key things for us at Townley, the core value that we hold is character education; ensuring that our students are educated about character. What comes under that is the idea of self-regulation.

If you can build a student's character, then they can learn how to behave and respond. It is not always going to happen, but it is the foundation of building everything else. That is one of our core and key values within the school.

One of the things you [Antoinette] said as well was about listening to a student and at the end of the school day sitting down and talking to them. That is our approach. It is not a zero tolerance, scream at a student, tell them that they have done wrong and move on. It is sitting down and letting them have a say and having a discussion to build that character, get them to feel that they are being listened to, get them to learn how they can self-regulate themselves to move forward. Some of the really key issues that we have is training.

Are people coming into teaching being trained fully in behaviour? Have they got enough experience or role models to be able to understand and respond to behaviour? It is something that needs a lot more focus. A lot of people can react in the wrong way. That is where things can escalate and lead to exclusions that never needed to happen in the first place. There is a lot [to think about] around training for people coming into education as teachers that is really, really important.

Money for schools is a really big problem. When a student is excluded, if it just a short fixed-term exclusion -- if that happens or if you want to try alternative routes before that it comes to that, do the schools have the resources to be able to do that. So many schools now do not have the funding for it, but how do they put that in place? How do they ensure they have student services or a support system for those students to ensure they never get to that stage? That is a really big problem for a lot of schools, that they do not have the funding and the staffing to be able to give students enough provision when these things happen.

Another one as well, this is where we talk about the self-regulation and the character-building, it seems like a small one for a school, but for us social media can be a big problem which leads to exclusions. A lot of schools have taken the approach of banning mobile phones. We have not banned mobile phones in our school. We have had a detox. What that is teaching our students is how to self-regulate their use of their phones. We do not tell them, "You cannot use it", because the first thing they want to do is use it. We teach them to regulate their use of their phone. No banning, it is, "Here is a detox. This is how it works". That is really important, because social media can come into a lot of why there is a high exclusions rates across schools. That is one of the big underlying problems.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Lovely. I want to move on and hand over to my colleague now, in terms of a bit more about complex needs and how that fits in.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** This is a question to everyone on the Panel really. It has been alluded to, by Sarina, in your comments about some of the children being excluded. Many children who are excluded have multiple support needs, including mental health issues, SEND and unstable home situations. How can secondary schools be supported better to provide an environment that meets their needs?

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** Can I pick up on that? Obviously, into our AP academies come the learners that have failed in mainstream, where mainstream schools have not been able to provide the environment that is needed to stop them being excluded. I always say to staff at the beginning of the year, we have children who will have come through some of the best schools, schools that you have described in Hackney where you have every intervention in place or the desire to put everything in place. Also from schools where there is a zero tolerance and if they wear their tie askew three times then they are excluded.

Children will have come from both extremes of the educational spectrum. What we would do is have to do something different and something that will really drill in to their needs and their requirements. Yes, when we do that we never find that the fault lies with the child. I can always trace back and they will have been let down at some point by the system, by an adult in their lives or they will have developed, almost all of them, some kind of mental health need as they have come through the system. The challenge we have then is how do we support them to get through those issues? We have to be very, very specific and very holistic in the provision that we put around each learner. We talk all the time about a personalised approach to it.

Within a mainstream context that is very difficult to achieve, because you have classes of 30, you have six lessons a day, you have timescales, time constraints, limits around you. Where it works well is where schools manage to make the time for those particular groups. I just glanced at one of your documents then and I saw Nurture Groups, Circle Time. That is a responsible adult for them to come to. These are all the kinds of things that do not cost too much money if you go in there with that approach and recognise that no child wants to be excluded, no child wants to be causing problems and no child wants to be the naughty one. That behaviour is always a cover or a cry for help.

We get some of the most extreme learners coming in, so therefore we experience some of the most extreme behaviours. When we experience the most extreme behaviours, and I mean very extreme, within some of our schools and then we trace back, we can always find a very small trigger point, which if a staff member had done something slightly different then the behaviour would not have escalated. When we talk about teacher training, it is really important that they do not just have 15 minutes on a Friday afternoon on behaviour management, they get to have training on some of the issues that these learners come with, in terms of their attachment needs, in terms of their traumas that they have been through, in terms of strategies that staff can use to support them.

We have been working with The Difference actually, talking about getting leaders into AP schools and PRU's from mainstream, so they can have the experience of seeing these children that will go into the mainstream schools and be really difficult to deal with suddenly seeing them being successful and happy in a different learning environment will change the perception of the leaders in those schools and the teachers that work with the children. Teacher training is really important, and ways in which we can facilitate exchange of staff from mainstream into AP and special educational needs settings is a good thing. At the moment, it is still a kind of optional bit of your teacher training if you want to go and sit in a PRU or special school for a few weeks. It should be a mandatory, significant part of your teacher training.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** Do most teacher training courses then not include much on behaviour?

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** They vary.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** This is going back 10 years, but I had a two-hour lecture on behaviour. I had my three six-week placements where you then have to practice it, but if you get put into a top performing grammar school the behaviour issue will be minor compared to other schools. Someone could go through a teacher training year with very, very little real experience of behaviour management. There may be more of it now, but it is not huge amounts.

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** There is more, but it is not a massive amount. Within our schools we have placements and we train staff up to work in them, but there could be a lot more. That is something we are keen to do.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** Yes, there could be.

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** I was just going to pick up on the complex needs and also over-representation of groups within a whole range of exclusion-type statistics. I suggest that when we see over-representation of looked after children or children on Child Protection Plans or children with mental health needs or SEND, we have to be ready to look inside that and think that is not all children with mental health problems who are being excluded. It is not all children with SEND who are being excluded.

What we are seeing is comorbidity. We are seeing, within those children, a mental health need and some form of learning need and possibly an experience of trauma in their early childhood. One of those labels, potentially, is the one that tracks through with them much more obviously when we look at their exclusion data and so we see spikes of SEND students, we see spikes of students with mental health needs. However, what is much, much more significant is that comorbidity. It is the fact that young children particularly who in early years have experienced really adverse childhood experiences -- there is a great deal of data about the link between adverse childhood experiences and then routes into, not just school exclusion but also then into gang grooming and a whole range of other harmful adolescent experiences.

It is when those experiences are combined with learning needs or having to move out and have a different home that you start to see really challenging behaviours. What is particularly difficult in a mainstream school is that as those behaviours might start to escalate and be recognised and a mainstream school might start to respond to that young person and put support in place, often the speed with which that escalates to a crisis point for a young person who has that complexity of need, because it is coming from a whole range of different areas of their life, is much, much quicker than any way that a school can access statutory external support in a way that would keep that young person in a mainstream school.

If you think of an example in terms of an Education Health Care Plan (EHC), there are lots of really good reasons why it is a very thorough process and it goes through a whole range of different stages. The point at which a young person reaches crisis and would potentially qualify for and require that level of support to keep them in a mainstream school, is a minimum of 20 but probably somewhere in the region of 30 weeks plus, by the time you have a plan with resources that you could put in place.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** Thirty weeks, so even before that plan starts it would be 30 weeks and then you would have to start trying to source things.

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** It would be different for each local authority, but 20 weeks is the minimum expected timeframe. That does not take you to the point where the resources are with you. You could take a different angle and you could take a social care angle and think about the point at which you are able to access the resources and support of a Child Protection Plan. Again, for good reasons there are thresholds and they step up. However, for a school with a young child who is in crisis, that lag time can be really significant, in terms of getting co-ordinated external support that would help keep a young person in a mainstream school.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** Can I bring Sarina in, because you are a Deputy Head in [the London Borough of] Bexley. What would enable or help you, in terms of accessing resources sooner, making sure you are supported better to make sure you can provide an environment and all the resources to meet the needs of a child or young person who could be prevented from facing permanent exclusion and help them through the process? What would you need?

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** Faster processes.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** Faster processes.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** When support is needed, when we have a student that might be identified with mental health needs, as minor or major as they are -- there are some, because they are so minor, we could wait weeks and months before we can get any external support for them, because of the pressure of other agencies outside of that, which puts the pressure on us as a school. Alongside that, having the funding to be able to provide what support we can. We are very lucky in that we put a lot of money into our Student Services Support and we have a very good team. We really focus on therapeutic intervention. We have invested in a therapy dog as well. All of that really supports us and our school, but it is not enough. Having access, and faster access, to outside agencies is really needed, but that is pressures on other agencies and other departments that are a problem as well.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** The line of questioning I was going to go down in terms of mental health was about whether teachers recognised the mental health issues. Do you think there is an issue with teachers struggling to recognise mental health issues or would you think it is more along the lines that you have experienced, which is that it is hard to get those services accessed?

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** Training comes under that again. There is definitely more training that is needed. Mental health over the last five to 10 years has rapidly increased in statistics right across all schools. Staff need more training on that. For us, as a school, we have focused on that. We have invested in character education, in something called the International Positive Education Network, which is all about positive education and wellbeing. That is the focus on students and staff as well. By the end of this month [September 2018], five of our staff will be mental health first aid trained, which is something that is out there now. All these resources cost. It is what a school can actually manage and be able to do. For all schools there needs to be a focus on mental health but it is going to vary across each one.

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** It will be interesting to see how the Mental Health Green Paper [*Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision*] rolls out over the coming year and the impact and reach that is able to have into schools, particularly schools where perhaps practice has not necessarily been as good as it could have been.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** The support that is given in terms of the age of our students; when they reach 16, 17 or 18 it is even harder to access the support you need and sometimes that is the crucial time. It gets even worse when they get to that age because it is more stretched, and they go into the adult sector rather than the child sector. There is a real pressure.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** When children and young people with SEND but without formal support plans start getting into difficulty at school, in terms of coming towards the point at which they might be facing exclusion are there ways schools can better support these children and young people?

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** It is not going down that zero-tolerance route. It is thinking about your alternatives, what are the other things that can be done instead of exclusion. There are so many different things a school can do but it will depend on what the school's resources are, what their knowledge and understanding is, what they can see and what staff they have that can support that. There are so many different routes you can take to support students before you get to exclusion. Whether they are SEND, mental health, looked after, whatever it is, there are Saturday or Friday afternoon detentions; there are lots of different things you can do before you get to an exclusion point. It is exploring that and not being afraid to explore that. Exclusion is the easy route, is it not? You can do it, it is done and you move

forward if you can. It is easy to do that. All the other things take time and resources, but the outcome can be much better.

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** It is important to recognise as well that for lots of people who have that experience and struggle in their mainstream school there are excellent APs out there. For them, that process of permanent exclusion, managed move or whatever into that AP is exactly what they needed in order to receive the needed level of support for their mental health, for their safeguarding needs and for learning needs that had not been identified. It is not quite as black and white as saying that to be excluded is the end of everything and the worst case for lots of student.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** I will bring Seamus in but then I am trying to move the question forward a bit. I am mindful only the Chair and I have had our questions and we have quite a lot of other people to get through. .

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** I want to echo the point and make a case for AP. If you look at the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) outcomes for official alternative providers, there is a higher proportion with 'outstanding' judgements from Ofsted than mainstream secondary schools across the country. There is some absolutely excellent provision out there.

It feels to me we should, in a more theoretical way, be talking about upstreaming that provision into mainstream schools so we can get that support in earlier on, if that is something that can be done. That has been a Holy Grail that has been talked about for 25 years, which is why we have to ensure we still have outstanding and highly resourced APs available.

Training of teachers in awareness of mental health is absolutely crucial. Your [Sarina Totty] school is doing a great job there. There are lots of mainstream schools that are not doing that. We do deliver some mental health training. It is almost a revelatory moment when teachers realise this is why this person's behaving the way they have been behaving for the past couple of months. It is really important we can get that training out there to teachers. Mental Health First Aid is a really important scheme that is around now. Those things should be encouraged and shared across the system.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** We have talked a little bit about demographics and movements in demographics in terms of exclusions. If I can start with Anntoinette, from your perspective in Hackney. Black children are obviously over-represented nationally across the board in exclusions. What is the thinking as to why this might be and are there programmes, such as mentoring, that can be demonstrated to help?

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor & Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** I will talk about Hackney a bit but, again, it is more helpful to give a London perspective and a London picture.

I would say there is a disproportionality of SEND children, which has been mentioned. One of the things we have done with our schools is to say, "If you think a child may have an issue with SEND, they are going to have an assessment or there is an assessment in process, can you hold off that exclusion?". That is something we are working with schools around.

I want to go back to that broader offer. We have a parenting programme and a counselling service that we offer our schools again as a broader offer.

What is causing the disproportionality? We have to talk about unconscious bias. You cannot get away from that, because there is a disproportionality of young black boys being excluded in the education system. Unless we can sit around this table and say with confidence that only black children do not behave or only black parents cannot raise children - I know it sounds quite brutal - we have considered unconscious bias within the system and how we begin to address that.

One of the things we are doing as a local authority is looking at improving outcomes for young black men. I am the lead member of a programme of work looking at not just education but disproportionality across the piece, whether it is education or whether it is around health. I will not speak too much about the programme now but what I have to say is will your unconscious bias change if I tell you that if a young black boy has done everything society has asked him to do - he has never been to prison, he has never done drugs, he has gone to school and gone to university - he is still less likely to be employed than his white counterpart? You begin to understand that actually unconscious bias does have a big part to play because even when young black boys do it right there is still something wrong. I am not saying some black boys do not do things wrong, we know that.

We are also working with the media as to how we can shift that negative stereotype. Only the minority of young black men in our communities are doing the wrong thing or are caught up in the wrong thing, but if you look at the media you think it is the majority. The majority of young black men are very successful and are doing lots of positive things. We are talking about the disproportionality here, so the media is how we can better interface.

It is unconscious bias. Also, it is around cultural competency. People understand about European culture. If you are very pro-Europe, you embrace European culture. We understand that. When Caribbean families came here they came here at a time when the willingness, or I would say the need, to understand the cultural background was not as interesting or as engaging as it is today. That is only anecdotal opinion but I have begun to think that has something to do with it. It was a very different climate and a very hostile climate. In that climate what a Caribbean culture was and is was not really explored in the way it is now.

It is around cultural competency and unconscious bias that have a lot to do with it.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** With the unconscious bias - if we can unpick that a bit - you need to have that addressed much earlier on than at the point at which a child or young person is at the point of being excluded.

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor & Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** Absolutely.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** How would you do that?

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor & Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** I would also say transition is a key issue as well. The data is showing primary schools often are holding a lot of these young people but when they go to secondary school an engaged child is no longer an engaged child. They were doing well in primary school and, even bright children, go on to secondary school and are not doing so well. It is not just because they are poor at English and maths or are not succeeding, so what is it. Transition points have a lot to do with it as well.

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** Transition is really important.



**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor & Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** It is the key thing.

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** The biggest exclusion rates are around 14 - 16 [years old] for us - the Year 9 transition - which is interesting.

I left my Leadership Team just now and told them I was coming here and asked them the question, "What is the biggest issue around exclusion?" The answer from one member of staff straightaway was unconscious bias towards black and Traveller children, those two groups. This is someone who deals with all of the learners coming in who have been excluded and they absolutely picked up on that.

I asked the question, "What can we do about it?" Their response was this is again something that has to be included significantly and upfront in teacher training, and as a debate and a conversation. It is something people often shy away from in terms of having a really upfront and honest conversation of: what does unconscious bias towards a Traveller child look like in real life? What does unconscious bias towards an Afro-Caribbean boy look like in real life? Those kinds of conversations and scenarios need to be played out in classroom situations and in schools to move us forward.

I did a lot of work with the Youth Justice System. When we look at young offenders' institutions, again - surprise, surprise - there is a much higher disproportionality of black and Traveller children in the Youth Offender System, most of whom have been excluded and most of whom were excluded before they got to the age of 14. There are not many of them across the country - it might be 1,000 across the country - but this is the product of things going wrong.

We need to really look at what can change that. Mentoring programmes are good when we have successful role models coming in, and not successful role models who have lived the lives they have led and then changed their mind. It is really important to have role models who have been successful.

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor & Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** Part of the question was about mentors. That is one part of the puzzle. It is also about the curriculum and resources. When you have books: who are the images in the books? When you are talking about lessons, black history is about the past but if the only time black children are hearing about black people are the ones who are dead, subliminally are you sending a message about success in the future. I am not saying do not talk about people in the past, history is history, but what are you doing in the nuance of today.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** I had written this down before we came today, to talk about cultural behavioural and the understanding of cultural behaviour. It comes down to staff training and staff being aware of culture. One example is children in one culture are taught at home if they are in trouble or something they must not make eye contact. In a school, if a student does not make eye contact with a member of staff they will get torn to pieces because they want eye contact. That is understanding of a culture and knowing you have to respect and see that.

Interestingly, last term at our School Leadership Team meeting an English teacher came in and presented to us. She wanted to identify that at GCSE and A-level English all the pieces of work that are studied are pretty much British white authors. That was a big problem. That also is a problem in everyone's understanding of cultural behaviour because you are not having a broad enough perspective on everything that is going on.

As a school we have taken this on board. Last year we did a whole diversity month within our school, to celebrate diversity, to get people to understand culture more. We have an Inclusion Officer, who has come in from the borough, who is working with students. We have set up a panel of students who are now advising staff on the things we need to look out for and we need to think about. All of that is really, really key. It is us, as staff, accepting that we need to learn more about cultures so when we respond we respond in the correct way. That is one key problem, which is that unconscious bias that is there.

**Fiona Twycross AM:** With the unconscious bias point, obviously in terms of school processes the School Governors play a role in terms of the actual process of the final exclusion generally. Is the lack of diversity among quite a lot of school governing bodies an issue, and are School Governors asking the right questions?

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** It depends on the school and the governing body. If you went into every school you will see a complete range from a governing body that is very diverse – not just in ethnicity and whatever but also in work, ethics, careers, past, all of that – who are very fully engaged in the school, want to be involved, want to learn, want to challenge and will do all of that to another school where you have a set of governors who are there and do not really say anything. It is so varied.

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** I would like just to quickly say also, I wonder if there should just be an independent panel that is away from the school because our governors, in a way, have a conflict of interest. If have got a good relationship with your head, are you always the best person to make those decisions well. Sometimes governors are in a difficult situation as well, but if you can be unbiased or you can step back from it, what training is there for governors around this as well? The key is education; teacher training needs to be looked at and also training for governors as well.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Let us go now to education attainment and other outcomes, and can I ask my colleague David to pose the first two questions?

**David Kurten AM:** Good afternoon. I would just like to ask you about how AP can affect or support children and young people in getting employment afterwards, which is a very important thing. From the figures I have, it seems that the number of pupils in the AP who get five good GCSEs is very low, just one per cent, which is extremely low, and of course they need good GCSEs to go on to learn the skills and to get employment.

How can AP provide young people with the skills they need to gain employment or to go to college, as well as the soft skills they might need in adult life?

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** Seamus, just before you give an explanation of why that is or what AP will do, could I just deposit a thought as well around that data to put it in some sort of context? If we bear in mind that for all adolescents, the process of growing up and being an adolescent is quite a challenging time in terms of separation, developing new identity, identity with peers and also the demands of school. If you layer onto that the particular challenges that young people who find themselves out of mainstream schools have had – where we start to bring together that complexity of additional learning needs, combined with mental health needs, combined with traumatic childhoods. That is the context that we are looking at there, their outcomes in, and what we are not able to do. I am just giving this the context, because it is quite easy to potentially look at AP and say, “Look at the outcomes that are coming from those institutions”. What we cannot do, is make any comparative judgement about young people with almost identical experiences who remained in a mainstream school, because lots of those experiences are untraceable. We are not able to, for instance, collect the data on young people who had managed moves and Child Protection Plans, but who stayed in a mainstream school and see how many GCSEs or outcomes they

obtained. When we think about that one per cent – which is striking, and it tells a dreadful picture for an awful lot of young people and the outcomes that they have – it is not necessarily a picture that is saying that AP itself is failing them. I know that is not necessarily what you were saying.

**David Kurten AM:** Not at all, I am not saying that. The children there have very complex needs and may struggle with the traditional qualifications because of the complex problems they have.

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** Yes, it speaks partly to what is it that we want to judge APs by when we decide how good they are.

**David Kurten AM:** Thank you. I will move on to Seamus from the Multi-Academy Trust. I was thinking, “This is the statistic”, but it is not just a statistic. What I wanted to find out is how we can help. What do you do to try and get young people into learning skills and into careers.

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** The statistic is very important and it was 1.1 [per cent] last year and it was 1.2 [per cent] the year before. It has always been between 1 and 1.5 [per cent]. Learners in regulated AP achieve five or more good GCSEs – that is A to C grade or 9 to 4 grade GCSEs. Now, I am not saying you are one of these, but that figure is always the one used by people to recognise the great things that happen in AP because for AP to have a higher proportion of outstanding judgement schools means they must be doing something right in the mainstream. That is because when Ofsted comes to AP, they look at lots of other measures and metrics. Therefore, they are looking at destination, the number of learners that go on to employment, further study or the world of work. They are looking at progress from a starting point.

Notwithstanding the fact that these learners have experienced many adverse childhood experiences and have many other complex needs around them, we have a very clear view around their starting point and we can demonstrate outstanding progress in terms of their progression in learning. Now, within TBAP schools we talk very much about an entitlement to five GCSEs. If any learner comes into us at Year 9, Year 10 or Year 11 and they are not going to be going back to mainstream, we will ensure that they have an entitlement to get five GCSEs or to sit five GCSEs. Now, some of those learners may not be capable of that and some of them may not achieve that, but that is something that we keep hold of because we recognise that achieving GCSEs of any grade are significant passports to further destinations going on from Year 11.

When we look at our data, and we look at it nationally, you get a much better statistic. You can talk about percentage accreditation. We have achieved year on year [with around] 98% of our learners. Last year that was 114 Year 11 learners achieved nationally recognised accreditation. That may not be five or more GCSEs, but it will be at least one GCSE. Those kinds of statistics are much better for us to report than the five or more GCSEs that is used to judge all mainstream schools.

Where we recognise that learners are capable of achieving academic success, it is important that post-16 they can then go on and achieve academic pathways. Traditionally they may not have achieved five or more GCSEs, but they will go onto a Further Education (FE) college and do a level two course, which is either going to be a repetition of a lot of the work they have done before, or they will be steered towards a vocational route. We recognise that and have opened what we call the 16 to 19 Academic Free School, which delivers the International Baccalaureate to exactly that group of AP learners, ones that we know are capable of getting five or more A to Cs but may not have achieved it at the age of 16.

Our first cohort, and it is a small number, seven of them graduated this year and all have university places. Therefore, we have seven learners who are going to universities from London who would not have even

thought about university on the trajectory that they were on before. One of the things that we could do as a system is look at how we can make available good academic routes for learners that are capable of achieving that within this sector. Consequently, they are not limited by the admissions criteria that you have in place at colleges and they are able to stay within an AP setting that can nurture and provide what is needed, rather than a big college where they are going to fall out straightaway, which they usually do by January.

Going onto the bigger cohort, we are looking very much now about vocational subjects and, again, we had a significant number of learners doing vocational subjects. I am very keen that we, in AP, work with our local employers to get learners coming out with the work skills that are needed for employment in that area. We are talking now about curriculum, which we want to deliver in 2020, but it is putting that at the heart of it, possibly instead of five or more GCSEs. My dream is that at 14 you might be able to say, "I have a route which is going to bring me into guaranteed employment at age 18, age 19, age 20, with this local employer who is situated near to me", and as a provider I would like to be working with those employers to get the curriculum that is going to deliver the work skills that those learners need.

Looking at excluded children – as I started off talking about the personalisation of a curriculum – it is trying to find exactly what it is they need to progress post-16. If it is an academic route, making sure we can provide that, if it is a vocational work-based route, making sure that we provide that too. Whilst recognising that transition is important, they need to have accreditation to do that, but we must not get hung up on the five or more good GCSEs.

**David Kurten AM:** I do agree with you because the academic route is not for everybody. There is a lot of discussion around at the moment that academic is seen as something up here, but technical and vocational is down there, and we need parity of esteem between academic and technical and vocational. I like your answer there, and it may be the idea that there is a right to have five GCSEs is the wrong thing. Perhaps you could say there is a right to have an academic route or a vocational and technical route. Do you think that there is a need for more supported internships or apprenticeships in AP?

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** It is really important and an apprenticeship route could be the one that I would see being able to deliver that. Now, we are actually lucky within AP because we can do this kind of stuff. Mainstream schools could do this kind of stuff a few years ago but have increasingly been focused on achieving five or more good GCSEs, and that partly explains why there has been such an increase in exclusion. Some headteachers know a learner is capable of getting five or more GCSEs, they will do everything to keep that child in school, which means the ones who are not being kept in school are the ones who come to AP and do not achieve five or more good GCSEs. That happens, absolutely and that has acted as something of a perverse incentive to exclude.

Getting a parity between a vocational route and an academic route accepted within the mainstream, and headteachers not necessarily being judged as having failed if they do not achieve the required percentage of five or more GCSEs would be fantastic.

**David Kurten AM:** This is something that does concern me because I can understand people coming to AP if they have behavioural needs and so on, mental health and special educational needs, but – we hear this term more – the off-rolling of mainstream schools, off-rolling them to you. Not because there is anything wrong with them, not because they have done anything wrong or anything like that, but just to improve their statistics. Have you seen a big increase in that kind of thing?

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** I would say that that has happened over the years, yes. I have seen that happen, definitely.

**David Kurten AM:** I will move onto you now, Anntoinette, and ask about what you do in the local education authority. What role does the local authority play in supporting young people in AP as they go into adulthood and look for skills and employment?

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** I suppose there is a range of things that we offer with that, because there is a headteacher within that school that will work in the same way they would in the mainstream, and actually at one of our APs it is actually an Executive Head who is also a head [teacher] in one of our secondary schools. The priority between the two is much in same. It is understanding a bit more about those young people, their needs and their aspirations. In the same way we would think about work experience, getting people to talk into those young people, getting them to apply to colleges, getting them to think about what they want, it is providing that same offer. I would say it is important for us to look at the outcomes for APs in the same way we do our schools.

Not every child is going to get a Baccalaureate or A to C - or now it has changed, the fives and above - I accept that. However, I feel nervous when I hear that, "Well, they are different children, they have different needs". Yes, they are, but we cannot just set up another system and say, "If you do not survive in mainstream, you go to AP and this is what will be offered to you", because society is still going to expect the same things of those children when they leave AP, as they do as children from mainstream. It is how we marry the two and think about what that offers.

For the bright children in those schools, the expectation is what we can do better, and I know for me, we are looking at it as, "Okay, those children that were academic, where are they, where is their progression, are they coming in and getting those levers?". It is not acceptable to say, "Well, actually it is approved so they need a different offer". As a local authority we are promoting apprenticeships as an alternative and not the correlation, "If you do not make university, this is what we are offering". We are saying, "This is a credible alternative", and I am very proud to say that we received an employee award of the year for the apprenticeship model in Hackney, because we were really trying to say, "This is an alternative for you", and we are trying to do work with schools to promote that even more as an offer.

Yes, we are very supportive of our young people. We need to think about how we do it better and differently, but, yes, there is an extensive offer there.

**Susan Hall AM:** Anntoinette, do you accept that CYP that are excluded are greatly at risk of getting drawn into criminal activity and, if so, what can be done to keep them out of trouble?

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** I suppose it is interesting you use the word 'accept'. When we hear children and trouble it is nothing that you ever accept. Does the data tell you that children that are excluded are more likely to enter the judicial system? Yes, that is what the data is telling us. That is why it is really important that we work backwards to ensure children are not excluded.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** There is an element in terms of when you exclude, if it is a fixed term exclusion of two days, four days, five days they have to be at home and there is an agreement that parents are meant to be there to be with their kids. That is for the school hours. They need to be in the house and not out. If you have two parents that work and if you do not turn up to work the next day, you are going to lose your job, what do you do? Do you have to go work and leave your son or your

daughter at home? If you do, are they going to stay in home? Not necessarily, they will go out, they will find other people. Although it is not necessarily always going to happen.

We have just become a multi-academy trust with another school. We are a girls' grammar school and we just sponsored a mainstream school in the area who have really high exclusion rates within that and we are looking at that. What we are trying to achieve which is very new to us and it has all just happened, is an inhouse AP with the other school and us, where instead of excluding people, not isolating them within the school, we provide them an AP within school, but away from the rest of the mainstream school until we can get them to a point where they are ready to go back into a classroom of 30 or 32.

That is an option because when you do a fixed-term exclusion you have that risk that they are leaving the school, they are out of your hands and they are in their parents' hands. Of course, parental responsibility and parental engagement will vary massively. From the parent who will be in that house with their daughter or son from morning until evening and they are not going anywhere, and they are doing the work that is being set, to other parents that leave them and tell them to get on with it. Having an alternative in-house provision will hopefully avoid that for many. However, again, that will come down to resources for an individual school and whether they can actually provide that, because if you are going to have an AP in your school, you are going to need the staff, resources and the space to be able to do that.

**Susan Hall AM:** That leads into the next question. The Mayor's Young Londoners Fund has just been launched, which obviously is providing money for projects. What projects should the Greater London Authority be looking at that can make a difference to divert young people away from criminal behaviour or being drawn into it? If you had a wish list, what would the top three things be that are projects, as an example?

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** Just to give a bit of context, before I did the job that I am doing now, I was the Head of Inclusion for ten years of Tower Hamlets PRUs, and until September [2017] I was the Deputy Head of Inclusion for a big mainstream school in Greenwich. I have seen an awful lot of kids who have been excluded and I have also been on the other end of being responsible for excluding and also trying not to exclude young people. When you are externally excluding students, there is always a risk that they are not at home and they are straying towards criminal activity. In my experience, for young people who are being drawn into criminal activity, it is a complex correlation of lots of things that are going on in their life, rather than a direct cause that because they have been externally excluded they are being drawn into criminal activity.

With that in mind, what has certainly been lost from a lot of schools and a lot of local authorities are constructive activities that happen after school that are easy for young people to access which will keep them away from being on the streets. Although initially, quite sociably on the streets with their friends, but because they are on the streets sociably with their friends and they are adolescents, and the fact that your identity and who you identify with is quite important, it is very easy for them to be drawn into activities that are a little bit anti-social. From that, for some, to become drawn into much more anti-social and criminal activities because there is not anything happening onsite at your school, straight after school, that you can get involved in and there is not something happening immediately in your community that you can go and get involved, and the requirement for lots of young people is that they have engaged parents who engage their children enough to get them home straightaway after school and then are able to actually take them and engage them in things that happen later on, [after] 5 o'clock or 6 o'clock, youth clubs, Scouts, whatever. Parents who have that relationship and that capacity have a great deal of strength for keeping their children safe in our community, but there is a whole host of other young people for whom that just is not, either financially or logistically, possible.

Any sort of projects that are being funded in and around schools that draw young people in are going to be keeping them much safer after school and, therefore, they are much less likely to be drawn into criminal activity.

**Susan Hall AM:** What sort of age would you aim that at? Bearing in mind what we hear is that as they get older - especially through the [London] Crime [Reduction] Board - that kids that are likely to be in trouble do not want to get involved in things like that, the after-school activities or whatever, and the kids that you are not going to have any issues with crime-wise are very happy to go to that even if they do not have parental supervision or encouragement. Therefore, is it thinking out of the box, is it not?

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** For me, if you were to give that money to me, I would be able to set up a team of people who have real knowledge and experience and can teach about character education. I would get them to provide free education to schools, to go into schools and provide students and staff with knowledge and understanding of character education and how to build that so that then that can be put across to all the students in that school. The problem is, we do character education, we have brought lots of companies in, lots of different things to do that, we are lucky to have some money to be able to do that, but there are lots of schools that do not. A free resource of people who can go into schools and give teachers and students education on character and how to build character in education, to be able to then implement that into their school even more.

**Susan Hall AM:** That is a good example of where the money could be put. Thank you.

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** The challenge is, as you say, tackling the children who are already on the road to crime because they may not engage with those positive activities if they are provided to them through the mainstream school, which is where things like the - what did you call your centres? Hackney Centres, early intervention centres resource? What were your early intervention centres called?

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** Are you talking about our youth hubs?

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** No.

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** The REU?

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** That is the one. The REU and Managed Intervention Centres. Hackney and the four London boroughs we work with all run these centres. These centres are getting children that are on the road to crime or at risk of exclusion. They are the group that the biggest difference could be made with, because if we can get positive activities into that group then perhaps they will not go down the road that they have already started on.

We have done some of that kind of work at the Westminster Centre, where some projects have gone in and done work around knife crime, et cetera, but it may be that if there is funding available other London boroughs could do that kind of work. It works well if schools come together. The Westminster Centre is subscribed to by most of the secondary schools in Westminster, the one in Hammersmith is subscribed to by most of the schools in Hammersmith. You start to get that cohort of children together, who probably do know each other out of school, and who are at risk of gang activity, are at risk of moving into crime, being picked up at a much earlier stage than if they have gone down that road and gone into the AP or into the youth justice system. That

could be quite a good mechanism of getting that cohort, rather than whole school approaches in mainstream, which may well tackle some of them, but quite often these children will not be in the mainstream class by that stage, they will be in the Isolation Unit or they will be on the road to fixed term exclusion, et cetera.

**Susan Hall AM:** Very often they do not want to be part of the mainstream.

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** They do not want to be. Whereas all sorts of positive activities take place in AP all the time, it is the best work that ever takes place. Residential going off camping, boxing, rugby, all of these things work really well, but you have to get the children in a space where they feel safe enough to do that and the Managed Intervention Centres and early intervention could be quite a good space to do it.

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney:** I just wanted to quickly say, when you ask that question it is like asking a child, "What do you want for Christmas?" and you picked up on the points. I would have Inclusion Units within schools. One of our secondary schools has an Inclusion Unit, so in a way to combat excluding children, they are still educated and have the same education of the school day, but just in a different part of the school, in smaller classes with specialised staff, and we are beginning to see that making a difference. That is one of the things that I would say, that we change the education system that is held within the school.

I would say outreach to get better in-reach. We can give money to schools, yes, but what about the children that do not engage in school, and actually when young people are getting into those increasingly challenging situations and risk taking, it is not happening within the school. It is about what you were saying, getting children to be able to regulate and be able to self-identify and moderate that behaviour. We need better outreach.

The last thing I would say was culture competency training. Better training for staff, better education and empowerment for staff to do the job that they want to do and do it very well. I am a teacher and fortunately I have never had to exclude a child, but it is really interesting that we are saying, "To improve your behaviour, your education life chances, we are going to deprive you of your education for a period of time". There is something uncomfortable with that, so what can we do different?

**Susan Hall AM:** Yes, but then they have a duty of care to all the other children within the class and we must bear that in mind.

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney:** Yes, but I said it earlier on, my challenge and my push back to you on that would be saying there are times when it is not safe or right for a child to stay in school, but when we move that child we need to think about the education that we are providing. That is what I am saying. We need to think about that differently for that child. Not that they stay in their environment, but actually that the level of education and input that they get, and their social and emotional wellbeing is not put at risk because they cannot manage in that environment and we need to do that differently.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** If you come down to really finding out all the reasons why students are excluded, there are so many in there that you will say, "Was that really necessary for a student to be excluded for that reason".



**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Young People, London Borough of Hackney):** Or it could be the third time they have touched someone in a line, so there is a fixed term exclusion.

**Susan Hall AM:** We have that message from others and we understand that. Thank you.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** Tony, any prevention issues that you have not heard or covered?

**Tony Arbour AM:** There is just one thing. What you have described, Sarina, is internal exile, is it not? They are not being excluded, they are being internally exiled, and I was struck by the fact that you said that you are really only doing that because you are now in a much larger trust where you are able to provide this sort of internal Siberia, but before your school was too small, is that right?

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** No, not so much. For us as a school, our exclusion rates --

**Tony Arbour AM:** Because you were a selective school.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** We are a selective school, our exclusion rates are very, very low. For us, we are sponsoring a mainstream school where they are very different to us and so we are sponsoring them to support them and to be able to help and change what is going on there and one of the things that we are looking at is their rates of exclusion, so we have been looking at that inhouse alternative.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I thought the point you were making was that because you have gone in with this other school, you now have the resources to be able to provide a unit inside the school.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** No, they already have a unit of some kind.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I take that point. It is sometimes said that a child who has been excluded, in effect, to extend my metaphor about exile, is permanently exiled because nobody wants them at another school. Is that a misreading of the situation? Kind of give a dog a bad name.

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** There are cases where permanently excluded children will go back into a mainstream school, absolutely. So where there are good and Fair Access Panels operating in local authorities they will look at the hard to place pupils, who will often be permanently excluded or have had that in their record, and they will be taken on by mainstream schools. That happens. Likewise, AP welcomes excluded children with open arms and so they are wanted by us.

**Tony Arbour AM:** In your Trust, where you presumably have all kinds of economies of scale, do you provide the kind of unit which we have just heard about?

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** Because we are dealing with children who have been excluded, the concept of fixed-term exclusions does not sit comfortably with us at all because these are children who are very vulnerable and would be put back into the street or into homes where there absolutely will not be any parental supervision. So we very early on developed the alternative to exclusion (TATE), which is very similar to the setup that you have talked about where a child will go for one day, maybe two days, very rarely more than two days to be with a learning support professional, have some

work to do in terms of their learning but more importantly look at what went wrong. We talk about the ABCs of what happened before the incident, during and after. We look at what has gone on within our APs to cause them to have that fixed term exclusion and then move forward from it. That is something we find is very successful and did reduce levels of fixed term exclusions pretty significantly in quite a lot of the AP schools that we work with.

**Shaun Brown (Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference):** Can I just pick up on that as well and say that there was something in the press recently that was quite negative about internal exclusion, it was using that sort of language of isolation. I am sure there are examples where sitting in a room staring at a wall for a whole day with almost nothing to do is what that looks like. But at its best, internal exclusion offers lots of opportunity for restorative meetings, for other professionals within a school to do extra assessments of need, for students to start to reconsider things about a particular incident and work their way through how they might address it in a different way next time. There are lots of things that can happen during an internal exclusion if schools have the capacity to set that up and resource it in a way that goes beyond just sitting in a room.

**Tony Arbour AM:** By capacity do you mean size, i.e. there are so many children in the school that the school budget, if you like, is going to be able to incorporate that? I can well imagine at a school of probably less than 1,000 pupils, instead of the children looking at the blank walls and having the fulfilling thing that you are suggesting, that would be such a burden, a drain on the school's resources they could not provide it unless the school was very large. Is there a correlation?

**Shaun Brown, Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference:** The school I was at before was a 2,000-plus school and that was not a physical space issue in the end, it was finances as to how much could you give them beyond the sitting in the room, is how many additional people can you have within your inclusion isolation space to actually do work one-to-one with someone during the course of a day.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** It does not matter, the size of the school, to be able to provide that. Any school should be able to provide that. As you said, any internal in-house alternative you are providing you want it to be the best. Internal isolation where they are staring at a wall is not what any school should have or would want because having an in-house alternative where they are still getting their core subject education, but they are also able to discuss what went wrong, what happened, how can we move forward, maybe having some testing in there that is needed for them. That is the key and any school should be able to provide that but when funding comes in there could be schools that might struggle with that.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Yes. I guess we have all served as school governors. I have lived through this. Yes, we would like to keep the children in the school but at the end of the day the school does not have the resources to provide all of that and if there was a large school nearby which had such a unit we would send the children back. Really, the origin of my question, which I put to you, is there might then be a reluctance for the school to have the child back from the unit because the child is a known disrupter. Or am I taking a very jaundiced view?

**Seamus Oates CBE (Chief Executive Officer, TBAP Multi-Academy Trust):** No. Within the context of the Managed Intervention Centres, about 98% have gone back into mainstream and not come back to the Managed Intervention Centre. There have been over 400 London learners accessing that resource across the four boroughs over the last year so there are a high number of learners going into those centres and then going back into school if the work is done well. That centre is serving nine schools within Hampstead and Fulham but it is really important that the schools have the trust with the outcomes because where it is done

badly, yes, they go into a centre and sit and look at a wall. Where it is done well they will be going back into schools with evidence that learning has taken place and also that the issues around the behaviour have been looked at and tackled and identified. That sort of set-up can work really well.

Internal alternatives to exclusion within mainstream schools can vary massively in their quality. They are not that difficult to set up within the budgets that schools currently have. In the smallest set-up you would have one support worker working with three or four children at any one time. That is how that would be organised within a school organisation. But it can absolutely reduce fixed term exclusion rates significantly and where you have got schools geographically close to one another they can start to share that kind of resource as well; those are the sorts of solutions that people have come up with.

**Sarina Totty (Deputy Headteacher, Townley Grammar School):** What you were saying, about where they go off for the AP then come back and the schools do not want them. Schools have to have an open mind and they have to be willing to accept and move forward and put things behind them but also be able to provide further support. For a student coming back it does not end there, you have to make sure that you provide further support and ongoing support from that point onwards. Often this happens, students get a fixed term exclusion, they go to an AP for a little while and then they come back and there is no support afterwards. What is really important is that schools have the open mind of moving forward and what provision, what support can we now give to be able to make it successful.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Thank you, Chair. That sounds an optimistic note to finish on.

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care, London Borough of Hackney):** There was an article in the news a couple of months back where a primary school had written to parents saying, "We want to take the children on a trip. Can you pay for it?" These are the extreme pressures that schools are under and actually it then goes back to a time that if your parents can afford to pay you get to go on that school trip. If it is a deprived area those children do not go. Not that I am excusing this by far but actually it really just brings into the picture how school funding is really affecting schools and how that then cascades down to some of the most vulnerable children.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Thank you so much to all of you. We will do follow-up work from what we have heard today. For instance we know that the Mayor has got funding lines and we know that the Mayor will be taking on board the FE budget in the future so what we will be doing is pulling together many of the thoughts and ideas that you have raised in terms of how and then we can write to the Mayor and say, "Having heard this from a group of experts, are your officers looking to be including these funding proposals that they receive in a way of additional support".

This will not be new because in the last administration funding was provided to schools, and myself and others went out and visited the initiatives which were absolutely amazing. It is what you have said, Sarina and Anntoinette, it was the additionality of that [£]10,000, [£]20,000, [£]50,000. Sadly, what they reported back was if they could only have it for two years the frustration for the rest of the school because they could see changes happening and they were not able to then follow on.

We will be exploring many of the issues that you have raised today with the Deputy Mayor for Education and Childcare and exploring that. I, in collaboration with Members of this Panel, will then see how we can make this discussion that we have had this afternoon, which was so rich, available because there is a need for people to have a better understanding of this very complex area. Thank you so much. Samira [Islam, Project Officer,

GLA] and I will be going through the minutes and the notes and everything and I do hope that we can contact you if we come across something that we do not understand.

**Councillor Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care, London Borough of Hackney):** If I may just say, Chair, as well, I would encourage you also not just to think about the money to come into the system because I will always say more money, but also different ways of working. One of the things that we have got is a group of headteachers in Hackney that are meeting about exclusions and what they can do about that. It is not just about additionality and money, which yes, we want and need but actually different ways of working because you want to make whatever input or programme you start to make it sustainable and you do that by changing practice, ideology, ways of working, pedagogy.

**Shaun Brown, Head of Curriculum Research, The Difference:** I postponed this when you were going through but the Difference's Inclusion Leaders Programme, when it is running, will take mainstream teachers out of mainstream schools and place them in PRUs for two years and train them before they go back to mainstream schools.

The three things in particular that that will do, which are really important in terms of addressing the difficulties we have got at the minute, are having inclusion leaders who can actually understand and change and shape the systems in their schools; knowledge to properly engage with external services and agencies and actually have developed the skills that they need to do that to make those systems work for themselves. Also starting to embed some of the things we have talked about here about school culture which recognises that behaviours that are quite challenging are also telling us things about needs that are not being met or experiences that a young person is currently having or may have had in their past that we could do something about if we recognise those issues rather than just see it as challenging behaviour that needs to be sanctioned. That is the aim of that Difference programme.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Thank you so much. That so links in with, I know, a funded programme enabling and supporting headteachers. I do not know if the inclusion leaders are new to that but, again, it is something that we can explore in our follow-up work. Thank you once again.

Members, thank you for your contribution here today.