

Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Paul Turner, Assistant Director – Education, SEND and Early Years.
Date of Meeting:	9 December 2021

EDUCATIONAL DIVERSITY

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To receive an update on the impact of the counselling service introduced at Educational Diversity in October 2020.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 For the Scrutiny Committee to have oversight in order to provide scrutiny, challenge and support.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure robust scrutiny of the service.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 No other alternative options to be considered.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 A Counsellor was commissioned through High Needs Block funding for Educational Diversity Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) to enhance the offer, as a significant part of the Council's response to children who require specific medical provision.

6.2 The contract commenced 1 October 2020, providing one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) counsellor across Educational Diversity schools. Two counsellors split this role three days and two days respectively.

Since October 2020 the number of referrals that have been received is 76. No referrals have been rejected and 72 per cent of referrals had their first appointment within four weeks.

6.3 Referrals were slow whilst the service was being built, but have grown considerably. The provision is a mix of offered appointments and drop-in appointments and young people can self-refer or are referred via school.

6.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 The associated cost is built into the budget for the PRU.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 There is a risk that we will not be able to meet our statutory duty related to the provision of effective hospital education if this was not provided.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 All children have a right to an education, even if their medical condition(s) may prevent regular attendance.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

- 14.1 2020-2030 Education Strategy.
Inclusion Strategy.