good practice in the provision of full-time education for excluded pupils

Interim report

by Mary Atkinson, Annie Johnson, Anne Wilkin, Fiona Johnson and Kay Kinder
National Foundation for Educational Research

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Mary Atkinson
Annie Johnson
Anne Wilkin
Fiona Johnson
Kay Kinder

Local Government Association

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Introduction

This report presents the findings from the first phase of an NFER study into the full-time provision for pupils who are excluded from school for 15 days or more. This phase comprised an initial audit of provision (as at September 2002) and the findings are based on pro forma returns, completed by Local Education Authority (LEA) officers with responsibility for this area, from a sample of 60 LEAs.

An audit of full-time provision

- Within the LEAs in the sample, there was much disparity in the understanding of the number of taught hours required to fulfil full-time provision, with less agreement and clarity at the primary than the secondary phase.

- All the LEAs reported being able to provide full-time provision for at least some pupils at key stage 4 and all but one of the LEAs noted that they could do so at key stage 3. However, a fifth of the sample indicated that they had no capacity to provide full-time provision at key stages 1 and 2.

- Within this sample, LEAs with high or medium levels of exclusion were more likely than low-excluding authorities to report having provision at key stages 3 and 4 only, suggesting that higher exclusion rates may place pressure on establishing provision for younger pupils.

- About a quarter of LEAs felt that the capacity was 'always' sufficient to meet the requirement for full-time provision and two-thirds felt that it was 'usually' sufficient. Thus, one in seven felt that capacity was only 'occasionally' or 'never' sufficient. High-excluding and small LEAs in the sample were more likely to report that capacity was 'always' sufficient.

- Proffered reasons for a shortfall in LEAs' ability to offer full-time provision were: high and/or increasing numbers of excluded pupils; the complexity of pupils' needs; difficulties with reintegration; limited funding; inadequate staffing and difficulties accessing alternative providers.

- In order to fulfil the requirements of full-time provision, LEAs in the sample most frequently reported changes to pupil referral units (PRUs), such as creating new bases, increasing capacity, providing additional space or increasing the number of hours. However, links with outside providers, staffing and preventative work were also cited as areas of change.

- The majority of LEAs in the sample referred to changes in provision at key stage 3 that had been necessary to fulfil the requirements. Around three-quarters cited changes at key stages 2 and 4 and only half mentioned changes at key stage 1.

Involvement of other agencies

- LEAs in the sample reported accessing a wide array of agencies and other services in order to help meet the full-time provision requirements. These were grouped into various 'domains of support', e.g. voluntary sector, training and work related providers, further education (FE) and offending-related agencies.

- Most commonly, LEAs said they had accessed between three and seven agencies. Nonetheless some reported up to ten outside agencies involved in full-time provision and only three of the 60

LEAs reported no involvement from outside agencies.

- Over a quarter of the LEAs in the sample reported that they had accessed outside agencies at every key stage, while almost one-third were making use of partnership working at key stage 4 only.

- Respondents who reported that their LEA could 'always' meet demand for full-time provision were more likely to have other agency involvement at all key stages. This might suggest that other agency involvement is linked to meeting demand.

- However, those LEAs in the sample that reported they could only 'occasionally' or 'never' meet the demand, most commonly involved a greater number of outside providers than those reporting 'always'. This may suggest that a greater number of agencies does not necessarily equate with capacity to meet demand.

- Involvement of FE and training providers was by far the most frequently accessed domain and involvement of these agencies was much higher at key stage 4 than at other key stages. Reports of Connexions Service involvement, on the other hand, were proportionally more commonplace at key stage 3 than at key stage 4.

- Whilst involvement from voluntary sector agencies had a comparable ranking at each key stage, the involvement of education services, Social Services, parenting and family services and health services ranked considerably higher at key stages 1 and 2 than at the later key stages. This perhaps reflects a greater focus at these earlier stages on maintaining continuity and connectivity with mainstream provision and on addressing additional emotional and educational needs, rather than motivational issues.

Monitoring

- The majority of LEAs tracked excluded pupils using an electronic database, which was either LEA or service managed. Low-excluding authorities in the sample were the most likely to operate such a system and high-excluding authorities were least likely to use them.

- Only two LEAs in the sample of 60 indicated that there were no systems in place for monitoring pupils excluded from school for 15 days or more.

- LEAs within the sample also referred to designated personnel or teams with responsibility for monitoring excluded pupils. Various types of panels (e.g. pupil placement and reintegration panels), and meetings of particular groups (e.g. pupil tracking groups), were also referenced as means of monitoring provision for excluded pupils.

- Nearly half of the LEA respondents reported having no formal mechanism in place for monitoring the quality of other agency provision. Where this was monitored, most commonly the responsibility for monitoring was reported to be located with designated personnel or teams.

- One-third of responding LEAs did not collect evidence of pupil outcomes, for example, data on destinations, reintegration and attainment.

Challenges

- Overall, the issue of recruitment and retention of appropriate staff was the most commonly cited key challenge to the requirement to provide full-time provision for excluded pupils. It consistently featured as a challenge, regardless of the size of LEAs or where full-time provision was located.

- The ability to offer and coordinate a range of appropriate alternative provision was the second most frequently identified concern. Monitoring the quality and effectiveness of alternative provision, the development of a range of support and the lack of access to training providers and college places were felt to be key issues.

- Funding was the greatest issue of concern at strategic level. The cessation of, or changes to, particular funding streams and the limited sources of funding were commonly cited as problematic for the implementation of full-time provision, as was the lack of long-term funding for staffing.

- The reintegration of excluded pupils into mainstream schools was also felt to be problematic. Respondents referred to the difficulties posed by schools' negative attitude to the reintegration of excluded pupils, which often resulted in a backlog of pupils in PRUs.

- The capacity of provision was also consistently cited as a challenge regardless of the size of LEAs and their ability to fulfil the requirements. The difficulties posed by the increasing numbers of excluded pupils and the lack of places for pupils on fixed-term exclusions were reported as being of particular concern.

- The diverse and complex needs of excluded pupils were also felt to pose particular challenges to the provision of full-time education. Respondents noted that pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties often had to be catered for within the same provision as excluded pupils but were felt to have different needs. In some instances, the lack of EBD (emotional and behavioural difficulties) provision had resulted in an immobile population in the PRU awaiting placement.

Cost and resource implications

- Of the 60 LEAs in the sample, just under a third were unable to provide any financial information. Difficulty in disentangling the costs of provision from budgets incorporating other expenditure was proffered as one of the reasons for this. Therefore, the limited data on costs must be treated with caution.

- The reported costs of full-time provision varied considerably according to the type of placement made. Generally, according to the sample, the cost of educating pupils in PRUs was relatively high, with college placements and placements with other agencies providing the lowest cost provision.

- The data suggest that many LEAs have responded to the new requirement to provide full-time education for excluded pupils by fostering links with outside educational providers and making use of alternatives to education in a PRU. It may be that this helps to alleviate the burden imposed on LEAs by the requirement to provide more hours of education, at least to the extent of reducing mean per-pupil costs.

- There was some indication that higher-excluding authorities may have lower per-pupil costs. One interpretation of this association is that economies of scale can be made in LEAs in which more pupils are excluded. However, there was no corresponding association between LEA size and per-pupil costs which might be expected if this was the case.

Concluding remarks

The preliminary findings from this study suggest that there remains lack of clarity over the requirements for full-time provision for pupils excluded for more than 15 days and what is meant by the number of 'taught'

hours. Indications are that the majority of the 60 LEAs within the sample were 'usually' able to meet the full-time provision requirements, but that there were a minority that felt they were struggling to do so. A small number of LEAs reported that they had no capacity to meet the requirement at key stages 1 and 2. In the main, fulfilment of the requirements appeared to have been achieved by changes to PRU provision at key stages 1–3 (e.g. new bases, increased capacity and refurbishment of accommodation) and by links with outside providers at key stage 4. Initial findings suggest that the fact that many LEAs have responded to the requirement in this way may help to alleviate the burden of having to provide more hours of education for excluded pupils.

However, even for those that were able to meet the requirements, it would appear that the following factors pose a constant threat to LEAs' ability to do so:

- difficulties in staffing recruitment and retention
- limited sources of funding
- limited access to alternative provision
- school reluctance to reintegrate excluded pupils
- the often complex nature of excluded pupils' difficulties
- the increasing and unpredictable number of pupils excluded from mainstream schools.

Although the study was based on a limited sample, a number of issues have been raised in the initial phase of the research that might benefit from further illumination and more in-depth exploration in phases two and three of the research.

The following issues for consideration have emerged:

- Does the confusion over the number of taught hours suggest that further clarity is required over what is meant by 'full-time' provision and what LEAs are expected to deliver, together with further direction with regard to the responsibility for provision for pupils on fixed-term exclusions of more than 15 days, which some LEAs in the sample have reportedly delegated to schools?

- Do LEAs need to consider how they might effectively monitor alternative provision and maintain a focus on the quality, as well as the quantity, of outside sources of support?

- Does the marked variation in the cost reported by the LEA sample suggest the need for some further clarity of the resources required for full-time provision, as well as greater recognition that some pupils, particularly those with complex emotional and behavioural difficulties, may have needs which are particularly cost-intensive?

Introduction

Background

Concerns regarding the increase in the number of young people permanently excluded from school during the 1990s resulted in the Government setting targets to reduce exclusions by a third by September 2002 (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998). LEAs have now met their targets but, despite this positive trend, the necessity for permanent exclusion in certain instances, continues to be widely expressed.

In the light of government requirements to ensure that, by September 2002, all pupils excluded from school for more than 15 consecutive days receive full-time and appropriate education (DfES, 2002), this study seeks to explore current provision for excluded pupils, along with improvements to that provision, in order to meet this new requirement.

Aims

The overall study had the following six main aims:

- identify and audit full-time provision (as at September 2002), for pupils excluded from school for more than 15 days

- highlight improvements in provision and practice in order to meet the government requirements to provide full-time education for excluded pupils

- identify the range of strategies in place offering full-time education to support excluded young people and the implications of full-time provision for the different key stages

- study the processes and components of these strategies, including reintegration, in order to ascertain key factors in successful post-exclusion support

- analyse the resource and cost implications for LEAs of providing full-time education for excludees

- examine the effects and initial impact of full-time educational provision for excluded pupils.

Methodology

There were three phases to the research and these are listed below.

Phase one

An initial audit of provision (as at September 2002), for young people excluded from school for 15 days or more.

Phase two

Site visits to 30 LEAs in order to examine more fully the range of strategies, including their processes and components, in place offering full-time provision to excluded young people, including face-to-face interviews with LEA personnel with responsibility for exclusions and staff working within provision for excluded pupils.

Phase three

In-depth case studies of initiatives within six LEAs, identified for their distinctive service delivery and their perceived effectiveness. This included face-to-face interviews with provision staff, school staff, young people and their parents/carers in order to obtain their views on the impact, perceived effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the working practices identified.

The present report presents the findings from phase one of the study. In September 2002, pro formas were sent to all LEAs, to be completed by LEA officers with responsibility for ensuring that the statutory requirement

for provision for excluded pupils is met. The topics covered by the pro forma and used as a basis for the structure of the report, included the following

- an audit of current full-time provision for excluded pupils: the location of provision for excluded pupils within LEA support services; the present capacity and the changes necessary to meet the requirements

- the involvement of other agencies

- monitoring of provision

- key challenges in providing full-time education for excluded pupils

- cost and resource implications.

The findings from phases two and three of the research will be presented in a final report, to be published in July 2004.

The sample

In total, 60 out of the 150 English LEAs responded, giving a return rate of 40 per cent. Sample information is provided in Appendix 1. The study sample proved to be representative of LEAs nationally in terms of size, but could be questioned in terms of its representativeness in terms of type of LEA and rate of exclusion. Ten per cent more new city authorities chose to respond to the pro forma than indicated by the national average and significantly fewer high-excluding LEAs also chose to respond. The latter might suggest that, where high numbers of pupils are excluded, authorities may be struggling to fulfil the requirements for full-time provision for excluded pupils and were therefore more reluctant to become involved in the research. Equally, however, there was some feedback to suggest that certain LEAs did not respond because they thought the criteria for completion of the pro forma was that authorities provided full-time provision for all exclusions of 15 days or more, whereas they only offered it for permanently excluded pupils.

For the purposes of analysis, the data were examined in relation to the three variables described above (type of LEA, size of LEA and rate of permanent exclusion). They were also examined according to LEAs' self-reported capacity and ability to meet the demand for full-time provision, which is described in full in Section 1, Part 1.2. However, it must be borne in mind throughout this report, that due to the relatively small number of LEAs responding overall and the variation in the numbers of LEAs in different categories, suggested findings may not be statistically significant. However, where points of possible variation and interest emerged, these are highlighted throughout.

1   An audit of full-time provision

Key points

- Within the LEAs in the sample there was much disparity in the understanding of the number of taught hours required to fulfil full-time provision, with less agreement and clarity at the primary than the secondary phase.

- Whilst all the LEAs reported being able to provide full-time provision for at least some pupils at key stage 4 and all but one of the LEAs noted that they could do so at key stage 3, almost a fifth of the sample indicated that they had no capacity to provide full-time provision at key stages 1 and 2.

- Within this sample, LEAs with high or medium levels of exclusion were more likely than low-excluding authorities to report having provision at key stages 3 and 4 only, suggesting that this may place pressure on establishing provision for younger pupils.

- Whilst about a quarter of LEAs felt that the capacity was 'always' sufficient to meet the requirement for full-time provision and two-thirds felt that it was 'usually' sufficient, one in seven felt that it was only 'occasionally' or 'never' sufficient. High-excluding and small LEAs in the sample were more likely to report that capacity was 'always' sufficient.

- High or increasing numbers of excluded pupils, the complexity of their needs and difficulties with reintegration, as well as limited funding, staffing problems and difficulties accessing alternative providers, were proffered as the reasons for any shortfall in LEAs' ability to offer full-time provision.

- In order to fulfil the requirements, LEAs in the sample most frequently reported changes to PRUs, such as creating new bases, increasing capacity, providing additional space or increasing the number of hours. However, links with outside providers, staffing and preventative work were also cited as areas of change.

- The majority of LEAs in the sample referred to changes in provision at key stage 3 that had been necessary to fulfil the requirements, whilst around three-quarters cited changes at key stages 2 and 4 and only half cited changes at key stage 1.

This section discusses information provided by the 60 LEAs in phase one of the study regarding the location of responsibility within the LEA for full-time provision, the extent of provision at each key stage and the degree to which this capacity was deemed sufficient. The changes to LEA provision that were made in order to meet the requirement for full-time provision are also described.

1.1   Location of responsibility for full-time provision

Respondents were asked to represent, in diagrammatic form, the location of responsibility (for both delivery and ensuring

that the statutory requirement is met), of provision for excluded pupils within the LEA's service structure. Of the 60 pro formas received, 42 included a diagram, as requested. A further 12 did not, but gave details of which service had responsibility for full-time provision. The remaining six were returned with this question incomplete.

The diagrams received varied in their level of detail, both in terms of hierarchical information, i.e. where the full-time provision provider sat in terms of lines of management and in terms of equivalence, i.e. which other LEA services held a similar status. Some examples of the diagrams provided are presented in Appendix 2. From the responses, it was possible to identify a typology and ranking of services that might have an input to full-time provision at some point in the line of management and delivery, as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1   LEAs indicating service involvement in the management and delivery of full-time provision

Service	Number of LEAs	
	N	%
Access/Inclusion	30	50
Education Other Than at School (EOTAS)/ Alternative Education	18	30
Behaviour Support Service (BSS)	14	23
Pupil/Student Support Services (PSS/SSS)	11	18
Special Educational Needs (SEN)	8	13
Pupil Referral Service (PRS)	6	10
Children's services/education services	4	7
Learning Support Services (LSS)	3	5
Educational Psychology Service (EPS)	2	3

Respondents were able to give more than one response, therefore percentages do not sum to 100.

No. of respondents giving one or more outcome (N) = 60.

Source: *LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.*

It is important to note that categories were not mutually exclusive, i.e. LEAs often indicated involvement of two or more of these services in full-time provision. While services with the nomenclature 'Access and Inclusion' featured most frequently in the

diagrams provided, and often had direct responsibility for full-time provision, they also appeared in a line management role in several cases, with a BSS or PSS having responsibility closer to delivery level.

When examined in relation to the LEA variables described previously, two points are notable. Firstly, those LEAs reporting that they were 'always' able to meet demand for full-time provision most commonly included those with the nomenclature 'Access and Inclusion' services. It is at least possible that some of these LEAs had reorganised services, taking into account the social inclusion agenda, in advance of the requirements. Secondly, it appeared that in those LEAs that had most difficulty in meeting the demand for full-time provision, i.e. where capacity was said to be only 'occasionally' or 'never' sufficient, responsibility for full-time provision most commonly sat within SEN services.

1.2   LEAs' current capacity to provide for excluded pupils

This section describes the extent of full-time provision for excluded pupils, including the number of hours understood by 'full time', the range of key stages covered by LEA provision, numbers of pupils who could be accommodated and the degree to which respondents felt the available provision was sufficient to meet demand.

1.2.1   Hours understood by 'full-time' provision

Currently, there is no specific statutory directive stating the number of hours which constitute 'full time' at each key stage. Recent DfES thinking, however, is that the number of hours of education provided to excluded pupils should be equivalent to that which they would receive in school. Additionally, Circular 7/90 (DES, 1990) states that, as recommended minima:

Governing bodies of all maintained schools should take as a general guide to good practice:

Age
5–7   *21 hours*
8–11   *23.5 hours*
12–16   *24 hours*

[and that] *'secondary schools may wish to consider offering at least 25 hours lesson time to pupils in key stage 4 (14–16 year olds).*

Respondents were asked to indicate what they understood, from the guidance, to be the number of *taught* hours of provision per week (excluding collective worship, assemblies, registration and all breaks), intended by the term 'full-time' education. The answers to this question revealed much disparity in understanding.

LEAs gave various figures from 18 hours to 25+ hours, with several indicating that the required number of hours fell somewhere within a range (e.g. '20–25 hours'), or anything above a minimum level (e.g. '20+ hours'). Most commonly, 25 hours was perceived to constitute full time at all key stages, though this decreased the lower the key stage, from almost two-thirds at key stage 4, falling to just under one-third at key stage 1. The second most common understanding of full-time provision at primary level was 20 hours and at secondary was 24 hours. The graph in Figure 1.1 gives an overview of the responses to this question at each key stage. This can also be seen in tabulated format in Appendix 3.

Of the 60 LEAs, 25 (40 per cent) indicated that they understood the number of taught hours required to be the same at every key stage. Again, this was most commonly 25 hours per week, though 20, 20–25 and 20+ were also cited. For the remaining 35 LEAs, there was some variation in the perception of the number of hours required at different key stages. In 17 LEAs, the number of hours required at key stage 4 and key stage 3 was understood as being the same, but with different requirements in the primary phase. Fourteen LEAs reported understanding the number of hours required at key stage 1 and key stage 2 to be equal, with differing amounts in the secondary phase. There were also several other permutations, e.g. key stages 1–3 the same, but key stage 4 different, key stages 2–4 the same, but key stage 1 different, or differing amounts at each key stage. Notably, it was not always the case that higher key stages were seen to require a longer teaching week. It is also of note that the wider variety of responses at the lower key stages suggests less agreement or clarity at primary level than in the secondary phase.

Issues around LEAs' interpretations of 'full time', such as the definition of 'taught' hours, shorter weekly timetables at FE colleges, and the appropriateness of full-time attendance for some pupils, were explored further during the interviews in phase two.

Figure 1.1   LEAs' understanding of the number of taught hours of provision per week intended by the term 'full-time' education
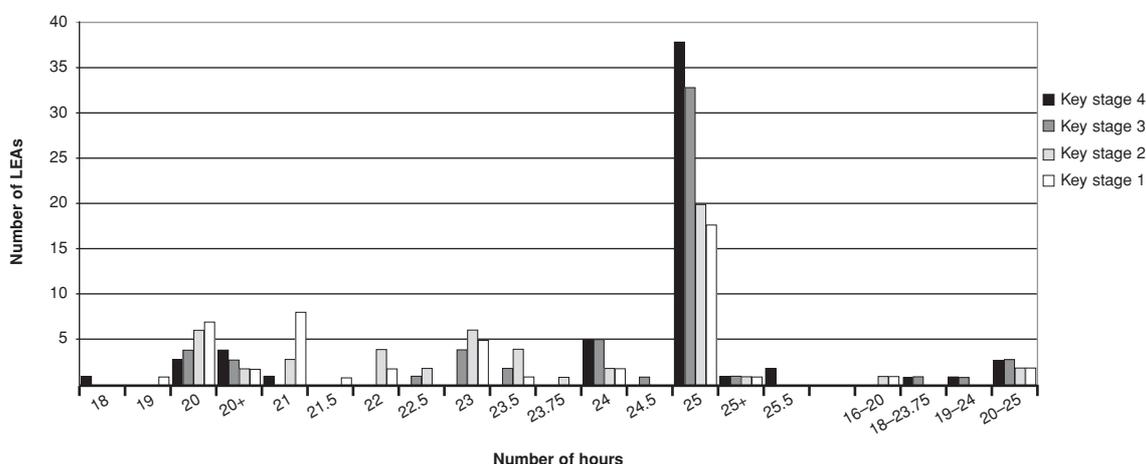
Source: *LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.*

1.2.2 Capacity for full-time provision

Respondents were asked how many pupils excluded for more than 15 days the LEA was able to make full-time provision for at each key stage. Fifty-three chose to complete this question. Table 1.2, below, shows the number of LEAs indicating some capacity to provide full-time provision at each key stage. All of the 53 LEAs indicated that they were able to provide full-time provision for at least some pupils at key stage 4, and all but one had full-time provision at key stage 3. However, 11 LEAs (almost a fifth of the whole sample) indicated that they had no capacity to provide full-time provision at key stage 2, and 16 (over a quarter of the whole sample), had no provision at key stage 1.

Table 1.2 LEAs' capacity to provide an amount of full-time provision at each key stage (KS)

| | Number of LEAs | | | | | | | |
| | KS1 | | KS2 | | KS3 | | KS4 | |
Capacity	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Some capacity for full-time provision	37	70	42	79	52	98	53	100
No full-time provision	16	30	11	21	1	2	0	0

No. of respondents (N) = 53.

Source: LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.

Of the five LEA types, new city and new regional authorities most commonly reported provision in the secondary phase only. This might indicate successful preventative work and low rates of exclusion in the primary phase or, alternatively, that new authorities have not yet fully developed specific provision for excluded primary pupils. Regardless of size, over two-thirds of all LEAs had an amount of full-time provision at all four key stages. However, small and large LEAs were slightly more likely than medium-sized LEAs to have full-time provision in the secondary phase only (around three in five, as opposed to four in five medium-sized authorities), suggesting that sometimes extremes of size may place limitations on full-time provision. LEAs with low rates of exclusion more commonly had provision in place at all four

key stages, than those with medium or high rates of exclusion. Correspondingly, LEAs with high or medium levels of exclusion were more likely to have provision at key stages 3 and 4 only, perhaps indicating that higher levels of exclusion may put pressure on establishing provision for younger pupils.

Table 1.3 shows that there was wide variation in the number of pupils for whom LEAs were able to provide full-time provision at each key stage. At key stage 1, LEAs described capacities ranging from two to 20 pupils, and at key stage 4, the range of capacity broadened to between two and 200 pupils. As was predictable, the mean capacity for full-time provision increased across the key stages, from an average of eight pupils at key stage 1 to 54 pupils at key stage 4. Fifteen LEAs described cross-phase provision, in which two or more key stages were accommodated jointly. This was most common at the primary phase (11 LEAs describing joint key stage 1/2 provision), with only one or two LEAs linking across later key stages.

Table 1.3 Extent of LEAs' capacity for full-time provision: number of pupils at each key stage (KS)

| | Number of pupils | | | |
	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
Range of capacity	2–20	2–50	2–100	2–200
Average	8	14	28	54

Source: LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.

Table 1.4 shows the number of pupils (grouped into ranges) for which LEAs said they were able to offer full-time provision at each key stage.

Table 1.4 also reveals that at key stage 1, no LEAs provided full-time provision for more than 20 pupils at one time. At key stage 2 and key stage 3, the most common capacity was up to 20, but with a small number of LEAs being able to accommodate increasing numbers of pupils. At key stage 4, there was the widest variation in the number of pupils for whom LEAs said they could provide full-time provision, with over half being able to

accommodate at least 40 excluded pupils. In certain cases, respondents did not give a specific figure for the number of pupils for whom they were able to provide full-time provision, but stated that they could provide full-time provision 'as required' or had the capacity to provide for 'all pupils'.

Table 1.4   Extent of capacity of LEAs to provide full-time provision

| | Number of LEAs | | | | | | | |
| | KS1 (N = 18) | | KS2 (N = 21) | | KS3 (N = 42) | | KS4 (N = 42) | |
Capacity	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1–20 pupils	18	100	18	86	19	45	9	21
21–40 pupils	-	-	2	9	15	36	10	24
41–60 pupils	-	-	1	5	6	14	10	24
61–80 pupils	-	-	-	-	2	5	6	14
81–100 pupils	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	10
100+ pupils	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	7

Source: *LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.*

1.2.3   Extent to which capacity is sufficient to meet demand

Respondents were asked to indicate how often capacity was sufficient to meet demand for full-time provision, with all but four completing this question. Of these 56 LEAs, 13 respondents (almost a quarter of those completing this question), felt that capacity was 'always' sufficient to meet the requirement for full-time provision, 35 (two-thirds), indicated that capacity was 'usually' sufficient, but in eight of the 56 LEAs (one in seven), the view was that capacity was only 'occasionally', or 'never' sufficient to meet demand. Thus, 'usually' was the most common response.

Nonetheless, when considering rates of exclusion, four of the 12 high-excluding LEAs felt that capacity was 'always' sufficient, contrasting with three of the 22 medium-excluding LEAs and six of the 22 low-excluding authorities.[1] Interestingly, in this sample, high-excluding LEAs were slightly more likely to report that capacity was 'always' sufficient. Additionally, small LEAs were more likely to report that capacity was 'always' sufficient, the figures being nine out of 31 small LEAs, three out of 17 medium-sized LEAs and one out of eight large authorities . Correspondingly, large LEAs were most likely to report that capacity was only 'occasionally' or 'never' sufficient to meet demand.

Ten of the 12 LEAs reporting that capacity was 'always' sufficient had full-time provision at all four key stages. This compared to two-thirds of those reporting 'usually' and just half of those who felt capacity was 'occasionally' or 'never' sufficient. Half of those LEAs reporting that capacity was 'occasionally' or 'never' sufficient had full-time provision at secondary level only, while for those reporting 'always' or 'usually', this figure was less than one in five. Finally, just one out of the 14 metropolitan authorities reported that capacity was 'always' sufficient, compared to up to one-third of other LEA types.

1.2.4   Comments/reasons for shortfall

In some cases, respondents gave additional comments relating to ability to meet demand for full-time provision and any reasons for shortfall in capacity. The reasons for the shortfall in capacity, in rank order were as follows:

- unexpectedly high or increasing numbers of excluded pupils
- diversity and complexity of need
- reintegration
- funding
- staffing
- alternative providers.

The most frequently recurring reason for shortfall in capacity related to *unexpectedly high or increasing numbers of excluded pupils* requiring full-time provision, which was noted by 16 respondents. Some stated

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[1] Note that the numbers of medium and low-excluding LEAs are lower that the overall sample total, due to four LEAs who did not respond to this question (three medium and one low-excluding LEA).

generally that 'the PRS is at capacity' or that there were 'inevitable capacity issues' where demand threatened to exceed availability. Other respondents gave specific reasons as to why current demand was high, e.g. the 'inheritance' of additional pupils following the closure of a school for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD), or the temporary accommodation of EBD pupils during special school reorganisation. Comments from eight LEAs related to shortfall at specific key stages. However, as a group, these eight did not consistently single out any one key stage. Linked to this issue of high demand for full-time provision, consequent impacts on staffing and space were also mentioned. It is interesting to note at this point that two respondents felt their present ability to meet demand would only be sustainable if current levels of exclusion did not increase. Similarly, it was stated on two occasions that ability to meet the requirement was due simply to low numbers of exclusions within the LEA.

The next most common reason for shortfall, identified by seven respondents, concerned difficulties in meeting or balancing the *diversity and complexity of need* among excluded pupils. Related to the above point, one respondent explained that 'demand outstrips resource and therefore prioritising takes place'. In this LEA, provision for permanently excluded pupils and those involved in youth offending issues took precedence. Difficulties were noted concerning pupils excluded from SEN schools in another instance. The fact that some pupils may refuse offers of provision, or not be able to sustain a full-time placement was also highlighted.

Again relating to high demand for full-time provision, five respondents noted issues around reintegration, and a backlog of pupils on the roll of PRUs. Securing a new school place for excluded pupils was seen as problematic; LEAs reported difficulties in negotiating admissions with 'receiving' schools, with one specifically mentioning delays in placing statemented pupils. Staffing

was noted as a reason for shortfall in capacity, both in terms of recruitment and staff absence. Insufficient funding was also seen to be hindering full-time provision, for example, lack of funding to purchase outside packages, individual tuition, distance learning, and again appropriate staff. Additionally, in relation to financial constraints, one respondent pointed out that 'funding does not follow pupils'.

Finally, two respondents felt that there was a shortage of opportunities for pupils to access alternative providers or training courses within their LEA. One felt that this was due to a lack of flexibility on the part of the local FE College, but another commented that, 'Pupil behaviour is more extreme than ever and therefore training placements and/or experiences are harder to locate for them.' Conversely, two respondents who commented positively on their LEA's ability to meet demand for full-time provision, mentioned flexibility and effective alternatives as factors enabling the LEA to always or usually meet the requirement.

Many of the issues raised here were also highlighted by respondents as challenges associated with establishing full-time provision and these are discussed in more depth in Section 4. The reasons for the shortfall in capacity to meet the full-time provision requirements were also explored in more depth in phase two of the study.

1.3 Changes in provision for excluded pupils

Respondents were asked to give brief details of the changes that had been made to existing provision – both generally and at specific key stages – in order to meet the requirements for full-time provision for pupils excluded for more than 15 days. Of the 60 pro formas returned, 52 stated that general or cross-phase changes had been made. Specific changes to provision at key stage 4 were noted in just over three-quarters of LEAs, while at key stage 3 this figure increased to

50 LEAs (over 80 per cent). At key stage 2, just under three-quarters of LEAs reported changes to provision, but only around half (33 LEAs) had made changes specifically to key stage 1 provision for excluded pupils. These changes are described briefly in the paragraphs below. A summary can also be found in Table 1.5, which displays the various types of changes described, the overall number of LEAs noting each type of change, along with numbers reporting these changes both in general and at specific key stages.

The changes most frequently referenced, in rank order, centred around the following areas:

● Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)

● links with outside providers

● staffing

● preventative/early intervention work

● service restructuring/creation

● modes of delivery.

1.3.1 PRUs

The most common area of change overall, and at all key stages except key stage 4, related to PRUs. The types of changes described can be further divided into five main areas: new PRUs/bases created; changes to capacity/extent of provision; physical changes/additional space; increase in hours; and restructuring of PRUs. These are discussed below.

New PRUs/bases created

This was reported by almost half of the sample (27 LEAs). New key stage 3 PRUs were noted most frequently, in 19 LEAs, followed jointly by new key stage 4 and key stage 2 sites, each in 12 LEAs. Seven described new units specifically for key stage 1. It may be of note that while this was the most common area of change, none of the five county LEAs in the sample reported establishing new units in response to the requirement for full-time provision.

Table 1.5   Changes in provision for excluded pupils

Changes in provision	Overall		General or cross-phase		Key stage 4		Key stage 3		Key stage 2		Key stage 1	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
PRUs	53	88	21	35	28	47	38	63	26	43	14	23
Links with outside providers	34	57	2	3	33	55	14	23	4	7	0	0
Staffing	23	38	10	17	12	20	11	18	7	12	4	7
Preventative/early intervention work	13	22	4	7	1	2	3	5	8	13	5	8
Service restructuring/creation	12	20	10	17	1	2	1	2	1	2	0	0
Modes of delivery	11	18	5	8	3	5	1	2	5	8	3	5
Strategic/administrative processes	9	15	5	8	1	2	3	5	1	2	0	0
Financial arrangements	9	15	6	10	3	5	2	3	0	0	0	0
Links with EBD schools	8	13	2	3	0	0	0	0	6	10	2	3
Extending the curriculum/range of accreditation	8	13	1	2	4	7	5	8	1	2	0	0
Negotiations/agreements with mainstream schools	6	10	4	7	0	0	1	2	1	2	1	2
Increased focus on reintegration	5	8	1	2	0	0	2	3	3	5	3	5
Establishment of in-school support units	3	5	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	3	2	3

Respondents were able to give more than one response, therefore percentages do not sum to 100.

No. of respondents giving one or more outcome (N) = 60.

Source: *LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.*

Changes to capacity/extent of provision

This was reported by one-third of the sample (20 LEAs) and generally consisted of such things as additional pupil places or an increased number of teaching groups. However, three noted that moving to full-time provision had resulted in the need to withdraw dual-registered places or reduce the number of places overall. Some less commonly referenced changes included the provision of midday meals and availability of crèche facilities at key stage 4. Again, this type of change was most common at key stage 3 (ten LEAs). Eight LEAs reported this capacity issue as a general or cross-phase change, seven as a specific change at key stage 4, again seven at key stage 2, and just three at key stage 1.

Physical changes/additional space

This was noted by around a quarter of respondents, with common changes being additional buildings, extra classrooms or refurbishment of existing premises. A small number noted the need for improved outdoor play areas, better security and health and safety risk analysis. These types of physical changes to provision were more commonly reported in secondary key stages than primary.

Increase in hours

This was noted in 14 LEAs, and was reported more frequently at secondary than primary level. At key stage 1 and key stage 2, four respondents noted an increase in hours as a specific change. At key stage 3, this figure was seven, at key stage 4, six LEAs and three noted this as a general change.

Restructuring of PRUs

Nine respondents described either a change in status of the LEA's provision (namely registration as a PRU), or a reconfiguring of existing provision. This was noted specifically in relation to key stage 4 in five LEAs and was noted as a general change in four. Two LEAs reported restructuring at key stage 3, and none described this type of change specifically in the primary phase.

1.3.2 Links with outside providers

The involvement of outside agencies was the second most frequently described change to provision, noted by 34 LEAs. Over half of the sample noted this as a change to key stage 4 provision and almost a quarter at key stage 3. However, the involvement of outside agencies was, perhaps inevitably, reported far less frequently at primary key stages. Under a different section of the pro forma, respondents were asked specifically to indicate other agency involvement in full-time provision – Section 2 discusses this area in greater detail.

1.3.3 Staffing

Over a third of respondents noted changes to staffing. Nineteen reported an increase in general teaching staff or subject specialists, while nine described the appointment of non-teaching staff, such as learning mentors, learning support staff or coordinators/brokers to manage the development of alternative packages. Reported increases in both teaching and non-teaching staff were more common in the secondary phase than primary, with 13 noting increases at key stage 3/4, but just five at key stage 1/2. Additionally, ten respondents described staff increases as a general or cross-phase change. A small number noted additional training for staff and reorganisation of staffing structures, in general and at various key stages.

1.3.4 Preventative/early intervention work

Nine LEAs described a focus on work to prevent exclusion and increased support to schools in response to the requirement for full-time provision. This was most common at key stage 1 and key stage 2 and included such things as nurture groups, development of respite provision and use of outreach specialist support assistants. However, four respondents noted that the requirement for full-time provision had forced a reduction in preventative work, particularly at primary level, in order to accommodate permanently excluded pupils on a full-time basis. As will be

discussed further in Section 4, the detrimental impact of full-time provision on proactive, preventative work around exclusions was seen as a key challenge to LEAs, both at strategic and operational level.

1.3.5 Service restructuring/creation

Twelve LEAs described changes to service structure or the creation of a new service, e.g. restructuring of BSS or EBD provision, or the formation of an EOTAS/PRS to coordinate PRU provision. This was usually reported as a general change. In the three cases where this type of change was noted as specific to a particular key stage, these included the establishment of a key stage 4 'Pupil Connect Team' to oversee the quality of alternative provision, a PRU reintegration and assessment group at key stage 3 and an amalgamation and restructuring of provision specifically at key stage 2.

1.3.6 Modes of delivery

Eleven LEAs mentioned changes to individual or home tuition. In three cases, home tuition had been extended. It may be that tuition services offer some flexibility in addressing the needs of excluded pupils that other services cannot provide. However, in four LEAs, the move to full-time provision had led to such provision being reduced or withdrawn completely. Five respondents described a move away from one-to-one tuition, towards more group tuition, with one commenting that this enabled greater opportunity for pupils to undertake a wider range of accreditation and achievement tests. Changes to tuition services were reported slightly more often in relation to primary than secondary key stages.

1.3.7 Other changes

Other changes noted by respondents were focused on the following:

- strategic or administrative processes
- financial arrangements
- links with EBD schools

- breadth of curriculum and accreditation
- negotiation with mainstream schools
- reintegration
- support units within schools.

Nine LEAs noted changes to strategic or administrative processes, such as new monitoring systems, improved admission procedures and the use of inclusion or allocation panels, to track and manage the placement of excluded pupils. This was most commonly noted as a general change, but where specified, was slightly more common at secondary that primary level. Monitoring and tracking procedures are discussed in more depth in Section 3. Also reported at a general or secondary level were changes to financial arrangements (nine LEAs). These tended to be increases in budget, though devolvement of budgets to PRUs and increased buying in of services by schools were also noted. The cost and resource implications of full-time provision are discussed more fully in Section 5.

Greater links with EBD schools were noted by eight respondents. This was almost exclusively in the primary phase, although one LEA reported that responsibility for all full-time provision had been taken over by a special school. It may be of note that six of these eight were small LEAs. It was also noted in one case that the opening of a new EBD school had 'unblocked' places in the PRU and thus strengthened the LEA's capacity to cater for excluded pupils. In eight LEAs, an increase in the breadth of curriculum and accreditation within PRUs was noted, e.g. the introduction of humanities and PE and opportunities to take SATs and GCSEs. A range of new alternative accreditation was also noted, including Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) awards, key skills and sports leadership.

In six LEAs it was reported that the requirement for full-time provision had prompted negotiation with mainstream schools to formalise, clarify or agree

procedures around exclusion and the location of responsibility for full-time provision. Six respondents described an increased focus on reintegration in order to meet the requirement for full-time provision, with strategies including dowries for receiving schools and supported reintegration from Behaviour Support Services. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this was not mentioned specifically in relation to key stage 4 pupils.

Finally, three LEAs reported that support units within schools had been established to enhance preventative and respite work. Again, this was not specified as a strategy at key stage 4.

The types of changes reported above and a number of issues emerging from these, were explored further in the interviews carried out in phase two of the study.

2 Involvement of other agencies

Key points

- Most commonly, LEAs said they had accessed between three and seven agencies, though some reported up to ten outside agencies involved in full-time provision. Just three of the 60 LEAs reported no involvement from outside agencies.

- Over a quarter of the LEAs in the sample reported that they had accessed outside agencies at every key stage, while almost one-third were making use of partnership working at key stage 4 only.

- Those who reported that their LEA could 'always' meet demand for full-time provision were more likely to have agency involvement at all key stages, which might suggest that agency involvement is key to meeting demand.

- However, those LEAs in the sample that reported they could only 'occasionally' or 'never' meet the demand, most commonly involved a greater number of outside providers than those reporting 'always', suggesting that a greater number of agencies may not necessarily equate with capacity to meet demand.

- LEAs in the sample reported accessing a wide array of agencies and services in order to help meet the full-time provision requirements. These were grouped into various 'domains of support', e.g. voluntary sector, training and work-related providers, FE and offending-related agencies.

- Involvement of FE and training providers was by far the most frequently accessed domain and involvement of these agencies was much higher at key stage 4 than at other key stages. Reports of Connexions Service involvement, on the other hand, were proportionally more commonplace at key stage 3 than at key stage 4.

- Whilst involvement from voluntary sector agencies had a comparable ranking at each key stage, the involvement of education services, Social Services, parenting and family services, and health services ranked considerably higher at key stages 1 and 2 than at the later key stages. This perhaps reflects a greater focus on maintaining continuity and connectivity with mainstream provision and on addressing additional emotional and educational needs, rather than motivational issues at these earlier stages.

This section gives an overall audit of the range of agencies accessed by LEAs in order to assist in the provision of full-time provision for excluded pupils, and goes on to describe the extent of involvement of these agencies at each key stage.

2.1 Extent of agency involvement

Respondents were asked to provide brief details of other agency provision, at each key stage, that the LEA had accessed in order to meet the requirements for full-time provision. Most commonly, LEAs said they had accessed

between three and seven agencies, though some reported up to ten outside agencies involved in full-time provision. Three of the 60 LEAs reported no involvement from outside agencies.

Involvement of other agencies was inevitably most prevalent at key stage 4, with 54 of the 60 LEAs (90 per cent) accessing at least one agency. At key stage 3, agency involvement was described in 35 LEAs and at key stage 2 and key stage 1, this figure fell to 17 and ten LEAs respectively. Two LEAs did not specify the key stages at which named agencies were involved in full-time provision. Sixteen of the 60 LEAs (over a quarter), reported that they had accessed outside agencies at every key stage, while 18 of the 60 (almost one-third), were making use of partnership working at key stage 4 only.

Half of the large LEAs in the sample reported involving outside agencies at all key stages. In medium and small LEAs, agency involvement at only secondary level, or key stage 4 was more prevalent. Those who reported that their LEA could 'always' meet demand for full-time provision stated more often that they had agency involvement at all key stages: perhaps suggesting that agency involvement is key to meeting demand. However, this pattern may also relate to the fact that LEAs reporting 'occasionally' or 'never' had a greater tendency not to have key stage 1/2 provision at all.

Interestingly, of those LEAs that reported 'always' meeting demand, most were accessing 4–6 agencies, while those reporting 'occasionally' or 'never' most commonly involved 7–10 outside providers. This perhaps suggests that accessing a greater number of agencies may not necessarily equate with capacity to meet demand. The low-excluding authorities involved fewer agencies than the high- or medium-excluding LEAs, possibly suggesting that a manageable level of

exclusion requires less input or support from outside providers.

2.2 Range of agencies involved in full-time provision

A broad range of agencies and services were cited as having become involved in full-time provision at different key stages. These were grouped into a typology devised by NFER researchers, which attempted to represent the various 'domains of support' which had been accessed to enhance or expand provision. Figure 2.1 shows examples of the main types of services/agencies which were grouped under each domain. Overall, this reveals a wide array of provision and facilities being accessed.

Governmental and statutory bodies involved in full-time provision included Health, Social Services, the Youth Service, offending-related agencies and initiatives and schemes, such as Sure Start and Skill Force. The uniformed services (e.g. armed services) were also noted as having involvement in full-time provision. A wide range of education services (beyond the LEA) were cited, in particular, distance learning and online education providers and the business and training community were also contributing to full-time provision in the higher key stages. Also, the voluntary sector, charities, arts, leisure and community groups were all reported to be playing a role in the provision of full-time education.

The frequency with which LEAs reported the involvement of various domains of support was calculated and an overall ranking produced, as displayed in Table 2.1.

Considering the key stages individually, agencies had differing levels of involvement. Table 2.2 gives the ranking, number and percentage of LEAs indicating each type of agency involvement, at each key stage. (Note that percentages are of those LEAs accessing agencies, and that total frequencies decreased, the lower the key stage.)

Figure 2.1 Typology of 'domains of support' accessed by LEAs, in order to meet the requirement for full-time provision, with examples

Connexions Service

Specialist leisure/arts provision
- Arts activities
- Leisure services
- Music projects
- Outdoor education facilities
- Playschemes
- Sports activities

Community based provision
- Church groups
- Community groups
- Community projects

Education services/providers
- Distance learning services
- EBD/specialist schools
- Education support centres
- Education Psychology Service (EPS)
- Education Welfare Service (EWS)
- Individual tutors
- Online education services

FE sector
- Adult education colleges
- Agricultural colleges
- FE colleges

Government initiatives
- New Start funded projects
- Partnerships with Excellence Cluster
- Positive Futures
- Skillsforce
- Sure Start

Health services
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Drug and Alcohol Awareness Service
- Drug prevention projects
- Teenage pregnancy reintegration workers
- Sexual health services

Offending-related agencies
- National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO)
- Police
- Youth Offending Team
- Youth Inclusion

Parenting and family-related activities
- Family projects
- Parenting group for boys

Personal and social development activities
- Peer mentors
- Projects working on personal social skills

Social Services
- Social Services Department link activities

Training and work-related providers
- Education Business Partnership
- Employers
- Learning and Skills Council funded training places
- Motorbike/motorcar projects
- Training providers
- Work-related learning placements

Uniformed services
- Fire service
- Armed services

Voluntary sector
- Counselling services
- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Prince's Trust
- Rathbones
- Include
- Springboard Trust

Youth Service
- Youth Service projects and provision

Source: *LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.*

Table 2.1 Overall ranking of agencies involved in full-time provision

Domain of support	Number of LEAs accessing this domain for at least one key stage	
	N	%
FE sector	53	88
Training and work related providers	43	72
Youth Service	31	52
Voluntary sector	26	43
Specialist leisure/Arts provision	20	33
Connexions Service	18	30
Education services/providers	16	27
Offending-related agencies	16	27
Health Services	14	23
Community-based provision	11	18
Social Services	10	17
Government initiatives	5	8
Parenting and family related activities	4	7
Uniformed services	4	7
Personal and social development activities	3	5

Respondents were able to give more than one response, therefore percentages do not sum to 100.
No. of respondents giving one or more outcome (N) = 60.
Source: LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.

As was predictable, involvement of FE and training providers was by far the most frequently accessed domain and involvement of these agencies was much higher at key stage 4 than at other key stages. Perhaps less foreseeable was that reports of Connexions Service involvement were proportionally more commonplace at key stage 3 than at key stage 4. Given that Connexions 'official' target age range is 13–19, this would suggest a high level of Connexions input with pupils excluded from Year 9. The Youth Service was the third most frequently reported service overall (cited by just over half of all the sample LEAs), and was cited as being the most frequently accessed service at key stage 3. In addition to agency involvement being appreciably more commonplace at key stage 4 (as observed above), it was also notable that within each category, there were often a greater number of discrete agencies involved at the higher key stages, e.g. a wider range of specialist leisure/arts providers involved.

Education services ranked highly at the primary key stages, perhaps reflecting a greater focus on maintaining continuity and connectivity with mainstream provision. At the secondary key stages, involvement from education services ranked much lower. Voluntary sector agencies were reported to be the fourth most frequently accessed domain overall, though the number of LEAs accessing these agencies decreased the lower the key stage. Social Services, parenting and family services, and health services involvement ranked considerably higher at key stage 1 and key stage 2 than at the later key stages. This suggests that, at these earlier stages, there is a greater focus on addressing additional emotional and educational needs, rather than motivational issues

Table 2.2   Ranking of agencies involved in full-time provision at each key stage

Key stage 4

(N = 54)	N	%
FE	51	94
Training and work related	42	78
Youth Service	26	48
Voluntary sector	23	43
Offending related	15	28
Connexions	14	26
Education	13	24
Specialist leisure/arts provision	13	24
Health	9	17
Social Services	9	17
Community based	7	13
Government initiatives	4	7
Personal/social development	3	6
Parenting and family	1	2
Uniformed services	1	2

Key stage 3

(N = 35)	N	%
Youth Service	17	49
Connexions	14	40
Specialist leisure/arts provision	12	34
Voluntary sector	11	31
Education	10	29
Offending related	8	23
Further Education	7	20
Health	7	20
Training and work related	7	20
Community based	5	14
Social Services	5	14
Government initiatives	3	9
Uniformed services	3	9
Personal/social development	2	6
Parenting and family	1	3

Key stage 2

(N = 17)	N	%
Education	8	47
Health	5	29
Specialist leisure/arts provision	4	24
Social Services	3	18
Voluntary sector	3	18
Youth Service	3	18
Community based	2	12
Parenting and family	2	12
Connexions	1	6
Government initiatives	1	6
Offending related	1	6
Personal/social development	1	6

Key stage 1

(N = 10)	N	%
Education	3	30
Health	3	30
Community based	2	20
Parenting and family	2	20
Specialist leisure/arts provision	2	20
Voluntary sector	2	20
Social Services	1	10
Youth Service	1	10

Respondents were able to give more than one response, therefore percentages do not sum to 100.

Source: *LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.*

3 Monitoring

Key points

- The majority of LEAs tracked excluded pupils using an electronic database, which was either LEA or service managed, although, in the LEA sample, those considered to be low-excluding authorities were the most likely to operate such a system and high-excluding authorities were least likely to use them.

- Only two LEAs in the sample of 60 indicated that there were no systems in place for monitoring pupils excluded from school for 15 days or more.

- LEAs within the sample also referred to designated personnel or teams with responsibility for monitoring excluded pupils and to various types of panels (e.g. pupil placement and reintegration panels), and meetings of particular groups (e.g. pupil tracking groups), as means of monitoring provision for excluded pupils.

- Whilst two-fifths of the LEA responses suggested that there were no formal mechanisms in place for monitoring the quality of other agency provision, where this was monitored, most commonly, the responsibility for monitoring was reported to be located with designated personnel or teams.

- Almost two-thirds of responding LEAs referred to collecting evidence of pupil outcomes, in particular data on destinations, reintegration and attainment.

This section of the report considers the arrangements in place within LEAs for monitoring the provision for pupils excluded from school for 15 days or more. First of all it focuses on the procedures in place to track such pupils. Then it considers the procedures, if any, in place for monitoring the quality of the full-time provision for excluded pupils provided by other agencies, before moving on to look at the types of evidence collected by LEAs to demonstrate the impact of full-time provision on excluded pupils.

3.1 Pupil tracking procedures

The mechanisms identified by respondents for tracking pupils excluded for 15 days or more are shown, in rank order (according to the number of respondents who cited them), in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Procedures in place for tracking pupils excluded from school for 15 days or more

Mechanism	N	%
Electronic databases	49	82
Record keeping	18	30
Designated personnel/teams	18	30
Panels	12	20
Meetings of particular groups	11	18
Transfer of information	7	12
None	2	3

Respondents were able to give more than one response, therefore percentages do not sum to 100.
No. of respondents giving one or more outcome (N) = 60.
Source: LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.

Two-thirds of those responding noted that more than one system was in use for tracking excluded pupils. As the above table shows, the majority of LEAs (more than four-fifths), tracked excluded pupils electronically through the use of a database, which was

either LEA or service managed. Of those LEAs where only one form of tracking mechanism was noted (one-third of the sample), the majority (15) referenced an electronic database as the sole means. The London boroughs in the sample, in particular small ones, appeared to be less likely than other types of LEA to operate central databases, several reporting a reliance instead on record keeping systems, such as attendance registers and school reporting systems, as well as information sharing between schools and the LEA. It may well be that such an approach was facilitated by the physical compactness of such authorities. At the same time, although LEAs appeared to operate a range of pupil tracking mechanisms regardless of the level of exclusion, those considered to be low-excluding authorities were the most likely to operate electronic databases (95 per cent), whilst those considered high-excluding authorities were the least likely to do so (58 per cent).

Record-keeping procedures in place to monitor excluded pupils, identified by nearly one-third of responding LEAs, included weekly attendance registers (those of both PRUs and other providers), schools' and PRUs' reporting/recording systems, EOTAS records and pupil lists.

The same number of LEA respondents (about a third), referred to designated personnel or teams with responsibility for monitoring excluded pupils. Identified personnel included exclusion or reintegration officers, dedicated clerks, EWOs/ESWs, PRS coordinators and a pupil mobility coordinator. For a small number of these LEAs (four), the monitoring of excluded pupils was the responsibility of a designated team, such as an exclusions team, a referral team, a pupil support or pupil access team and a school attendance team.

Monitoring was reported to take place through various types of panels in a fifth of responding LEAs. These included the following:

- pupil placement panels
- reintegration panels
- hard-to-place panels
- exclusion panels
- registration/admissions panels
- vulnerable pupils panel
- multi-agency
- out-of-school panels.

County and new regional LEAs emerged as the least likely to allocate responsibility for monitoring excluded pupils to either designated personnel or to panels. This might be indicative of the difficulties with coordination to be found within more geographically spread authorities. Perhaps not surprisingly, all but one of these LEAs operated databases, a mechanism that was also particularly prevalent within large and the larger medium-sized authorities.

A similar number of respondents (just under a fifth), referred to meetings of particular groups which performed a monitoring function. Meetings referenced included the BSS, pupil monitoring groups, pupil tracking groups, area management teams, 'children causing concern' groups, 'vulnerable' or 'at risk' children's groups and the Behaviour Improvement Programme (BIP) Steering Group.

The transfer of information between relevant parties was identified as a means of monitoring excluded pupils by just over one in ten responding LEAs. This took place through the following:

- LEA contact with headteachers
- termly reports, e.g. by the LSS to the Head of Access and Inclusion
- information from the LEA to the EWS
- the BSS and Connexions
- governing body minutes.

Finally, only two LEA respondents indicated on their pro forma that there were no systems

in place within their LEA to monitor pupils excluded from school for 15 days or more. In both cases, respondents also noted that the LEA was 'always' able to fulfil the requirements for full-time provision.

3.2 Monitoring the quality of other agency provision

The procedures identified in LEA pro formas for monitoring the quality of full-time provision offered to excluded pupils by other agencies are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2   Mechanisms in place for monitoring the quality of full-time provision offered by other agencies

Procedure	N	%
Designated personnel/teams	32	53
Reporting systems/reviews/feedback	13	22
None/left blank	11	18
Inspections	8	13
Committees/Steering groups	8	13
Meetings	7	12
Visits	6	10
Contracts/service level agreements (SLAs)	5	8
Involvement in PRU training/planning	1	2

Respondents were able to give more than one response, therefore percentages do not sum to 100.

No. of respondents giving one or more outcome (N) = 60.

Source: LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.

Half of the responding LEAs referred to designated personnel or teams having responsibility for monitoring the quality of other agency provision. PRU staff were most often referred to as having this responsibility. Other personnel specified included BSS/LSS staff, Principal Education Welfare Officers (PEWOs), advisors, education officers, Connexions staff, an assessment and review manager, brokerage officer, casework officer and a pupil mobility coordinator. Specific teams included a pupil support team, a senior management team from a PRU, and a key stage 4 placement team.

Just over a fifth of respondents stated that monitoring took place through reports and regular feedback (e.g. to management committees or LSS), or through reviews undertaken with service providers or pupils. Also mentioned was evaluation, both self-evaluation and that by other stakeholders (e.g. pupils, the LEA and others).

Almost two-fifths of LEA respondents either left this question on the pro forma blank, or indicated that their were no mechanisms within their LEA for monitoring the quality of provision offered by other agencies. Where further elaboration was included, this related to the fact that mechanisms for monitoring were not in place at LEA level, or that 'nothing formal existed at present'.

Slightly more than one in ten respondents referred to the monitoring function of inspections (either LEA or OFSTED), of management committees and steering groups, and of meetings, in particular multi-agency review meetings. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the majority of these were small LEAs, where coordinating people's time may well be less problematic. Just under one in ten respondents specified monitoring visits made to the provision and the existence of contracts or SLAs with providers.

Finally, one respondent indicated that providers of outdoor activities were involved in PRU training and curriculum planning, thus, 'ensuring that the quality of the provision was constantly monitored'.

The procedures used for monitoring the full-time provision for excluded pupils are explored in more depth in phase two of the study.

3.3 Evidence of impact

Table 3.3 shows the type of evidence respondents identified as being collected in relation to any impact of full-time provision on excluded pupils.

Almost two-thirds of responding LEAs referred to collecting evidence of pupil

outcomes, in particular data on destinations, reintegration and attainment. Just over a quarter specifically stated that evidence of impact was held on electronic databases, either centrally or service managed.

Table 3.3   Evidence collected in relation to impact of full-time provision on pupils excluded from school for 15 days or more

Type of evidence collected	N	%
Pupil outcomes data (destinations etc.)	40	67
Electronic database	17	28
Pupil tracking	10	17
Reports/feedback	7	12
None/no response	6	10

Respondents were able to give more than one response, therefore percentages do not sum to 100.
No. of respondents giving one or more outcome (N) = 60.
Source: *LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.*

For smaller numbers of LEAs, evidence relating to impact on excluded pupils was collected through pupil tracking (e.g. pupil reviews, LEA and/or school information, data on time out of school and new places found), or through reports (e.g. OFSTED, reports to strategy groups etc.) and/or feedback (from schools, parents and pupils). Finally, six out of the 60 respondents (a tenth) either indicated that their LEA was not collecting any evidence of impact, or left this question blank.

At the same time, a tenth of all respondents referencing the collection of evidence in relation to any impact on excluded pupils, noted that designated personnel or teams were responsible for this. Personnel or teams specified included admissions and exclusions managers, a pupil mobility coordinator, PRU staff, placement teams and multi-agency teams.

4 Challenges

Key points

- Overall, the issue of recruitment and retention of appropriate staff was the most commonly cited key challenge to the requirement to provide full-time provision for excluded pupils. It consistently featured as a challenge regardless of the size of LEAs or where full-time provision was located.

- The ability to offer and coordinate a range of appropriate alternative provision was the second most frequently identified challenge overall. Monitoring the quality and effectiveness of alternative provision, the development of a range of support and the lack of access to training providers and college places were felt to be key issues.

- Funding was the greatest issue of concern at strategic level. The cessation of, or changes to, particular funding streams and the limited sources of funding were commonly cited as problematic for the implementation of full-time provision, as was also the lack of long-term funding for staffing.

- The reintegration of excluded pupils into mainstream schools was also felt to be problematic. Respondents referred to the difficulties posed by schools' negative attitude to the reintegration of excluded pupils, which often resulted in a backlog of pupils in PRUs.

- The capacity of provision was also consistently cited as an issue

regardless of the size of LEAs and their ability to fulfil the requirements. The difficulties posed by the increasing numbers of excluded pupils and the lack of places for pupils on fixed-term exclusions were reported as being of particular concern.

- The diverse and complex needs of excluded pupils were also felt to pose particular challenges to the provision of full-time education. Respondents noted that pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties often had to be catered for within the same provision as excluded pupils but were felt to have different needs. In some instances, the lack of EBD provision had resulted in an immobile population in the PRU awaiting placement.

Respondents were asked what they perceived to be the key challenges, at both strategic and operational level, in providing full-time education for pupils excluded from school for more than 15 days in their LEA. Seven respondents identified no challenges at strategic level and six identified no challenges at operational level. Three identified no challenges at either level and two of these three respondents, perhaps unsurprisingly, also stated that they were 'always' able to meet the requirements for full-time provision for excluded pupils.

Firstly, the key challenges were ranked according to the number of LEAs citing them as factors. The number and percentage of LEAs identifying the key challenges are presented in Table 4.1. This shows the key challenges overall, and also those identified as strategic challenges and those identified as

Table 4.1   The number and percentage of respondents identifying overall, strategic and operational challenges

Overall challenges	N	%	Strategic challenges	N	%	Operational challenges	N	%
Staffing	29	48	Funding	24	40	Staffing	25	42
Alternative provision	26	43	School ownership/attitude	19	32	Alternative provision	14	23
Funding	24	40	Alternative provision	17	28	Capacity	11	18
School ownership/attitude	23	38	Reintegration	16	27	Accommodation	11	18
Reintegration	22	37	Capacity	12	20	Engagement of pupils	11	18
Capacity	20	33	Preventative work	10	17	Curriculum	11	18
Accommodation	17	28	Pupils' diverse/complex needs	9	15	Reintegration	10	17
Pupils' diverse/complex needs	15	25	Fluctuations in numbers	8	13	Timescales	10	17
EBD/statemented pupils	14	23	Staffing	8	13	Extreme behaviour	8	13
Curriculum	13	22	EBD/statemented pupils	8	13	EBD/statemented pupils	7	12
Timescales	13	22	Monitoring	7	12	School ownership/attitude	7	12
Preventative work	13	22	Accommodation	6	10	Transport	7	12
Transport	10	17	Partnership with schools	5	8	Pupils' diverse/complex needs	6	10
			Government policy	5	8	Pupils' inability to cope	6	10
						Preventative work	5	8
						Mix of pupils	5	8

Respondents were able to give more than one response, therefore percentages do not sum to 100.

No. of respondents giving one or more outcome (N) = 60.

Source: LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.

operational challenges. The challenges identified by respondents were also examined according to the LEA variables discussed previously. This was done by undertaking a ranking of challenges for each category and these rankings are presented in Appendix 4.

According to respondents in the LEA sample, the most frequently identified challenges overall, in rank order, were as follows:

- staffing
- alternative provision
- funding
- school ownership/attitude
- reintegration
- capacity.

4.1 Staffing

Overall, the issue of recruitment and retention of appropriate staff was the most commonly cited key challenge to the requirement to provide full-time provision for excluded pupils. This was also the most frequently cited challenge at operational level and, along with lack of suitable accommodation, was felt to have created significant challenges for the delivery of full-time provision. Staffing consistently featured as a challenge regardless of the size of LEAs or where full-time provision was located, except where it fell under the umbrella of support services, where the primary issue of concern appeared to be the lack of suitable accommodation (see section 4.7). On the other hand, staffing full-time provision appeared to be less of an issue in new city, metropolitan and London LEAs than it was in county and new regional LEAs, perhaps due to a general shortage of qualified personnel in these latter areas. Where the perception was that the LEA was either 'always' or, at the other extreme, only 'occasionally' or 'never' able to meet the requirements for full-time provision staffing was one of the most frequently cited obstacles to delivery (see Appendix 4).

Respondents noted the difficulties in recruiting staff of sufficient calibre for such a challenging job and, on top of this, the difficulty in retaining staff whilst funding was considered unstable. It is possible that the appointment of behaviour consultants and personal advisers at key stage 3 will create competition that can only exacerbate these difficulties. Interviewees also highlighted the demand for additional staffing in order to meet the needs of increasing numbers of excluded pupils, as well as the increasing stress on staff of working with such a challenging group of youngsters for longer hours.

4.2 Alternative provision

The ability to offer and coordinate a range of appropriate alternative provision was the second most frequently identified challenge overall and one that was considered to create difficulties at both strategic and operational level. It appeared to be more of an issue in large and in small LEAs, compared to medium-sized LEAs and in county and new regional LEAs, compared to other types. It may be that, in small LEAs, there is a limit to the options available within the area, whereas within a large authority it is difficult to coordinate and manage services that are widely spread and it may be linked to the widespread nature of provision in large county and regional areas. It was, however, consistently cited as a challenge regardless of LEAs' perceived ability to fulfil the requirement.

Monitoring the quality and effectiveness of alternative provision was a key concern. The development of a range of support that was able to address the varying needs of excluded pupils and the lack of training providers and college places that were accessible for excluded pupils were also felt to be key issues by respondents. Some also highlighted the difficulties involved in the development of individual packages for pupils, which were often both labour and cost intensive.

4.3 Funding

Funding, on the other hand, the third most commonly identified factor overall, was the greatest issue of concern at strategic level. It appeared to be more of an issue in small or medium-sized LEAs, where the limitation of funding was ranked first and second respectively, than in large LEAs. In LEAs that were perceived as being 'usually' able to meet the full-time provision requirements, funding was the most often cited challenge (see Appendix 4).

Respondents pinpointed a number of specific challenges with regard to funding, including the cessation of, or changes to, funding streams, e.g. the Standards Fund (SF) and the Pupil Retention Grant (PRG), which was described as particularly problematic for full-time provision, coupled with the decreasing availability of sources of funding. The need for long-term funding in order to be able to employ and retain permanent staff was also mentioned. The particularly high cost of alternative education packages for 'demanding' pupils, i.e. those with very challenging behaviour, was raised as a concern, as was also the difficulty in balancing costs because of the fluctuating numbers of excluded pupils. The cost and resource implications of providing full-time provision are addressed in more detail in Section 5.

4.4 School ownership/attitude

School ownership of full-time provision for excluded pupils and schools' attitude to excluded pupils were also raised as key strategic concerns. School ownership appeared to be less of an issue in small LEAs than it was in medium-sized and large LEAs, where it was ranked more highly (see Appendix 4). This was possibly linked to the ease with which relationships could be developed or sustained between LEAs and schools in small authorities. It consistently featured as a challenge regardless of the perception of the extent of exclusion in LEAs or where full-time provision was located.

However, where the perception was that the LEA was either 'always' or, at the other extreme, only 'occasionally' or 'never' able to meet the requirements for full-time provision, school ownership was one of the most frequently cited obstacles to delivery.

When discussing school ownership and attitudes, respondents mentioned the differential rate of exclusions across schools, schools' reluctance to accept responsibility for alternative provision for excluded pupils and in particular, to accept responsibility for those pupils excluded for more than 15 days.

4.5 Reintegration

The reintegration of excluded pupils into mainstream schools was also felt to be a significant challenge at both strategic and operational level. This was particularly associated with county LEAs, where it may be that the disparate nature of the LEA created obstacles to the reintegration process. It also appeared to be a key concern where full-time provision was located or linked to Educational Psychology Services or SEN services. This is perhaps not surprising since educational psychology was often linked to key stage 1 and 2 provision where reintegration into mainstream schools would be the primary aim (although it is important to note that the numbers in this category were particularly small) and since pupils considered to have SEN often require specialist provision.

Respondents indicated that schools' negative attitude to the reintegration of excluded pupils sometimes posed problems in terms of a backlog of pupils in PRUs. They highlighted the challenges associated with LEAs and schools working together to ensure a fair distribution of pupils, working with headteachers to provide places when many schools were over subscribed and teachers' reluctance to accept pupils back into school. In addition, they mentioned the need to speed up the reintegration process whilst also ensuring that it was still successful.

4.6 Capacity

Some respondents indicated on the LEA pro formas that the main challenges centred on the available capacity of provision for excluded pupils. Capacity was consistently cited as a challenge regardless of the size of LEAs and was raised often by respondents from London, metropolitan and new city LEAs but infrequently by those from county or new regional LEAs.

When detailing the limits to capacity, respondents, as well as referring to the general difficulty in providing enough places, cited the increasing numbers of excluded pupils, insufficient college places and the lack of places available for pupils who had been excluded for a fixed term.

4.7 Other challenges

Responses on other pro formas suggested that the main challenges centred on other areas, including the following:

- accommodation
- the nature of excluded pupils
- pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties
- preventative work
- fluctuations in numbers of excluded pupils
- fixed-term exclusions of more than 15 days.

Difficulties with accommodation were also raised as a challenge. In large LEAs, accommodation ranked more highly as an issue compared to other types of LEA (see Appendix 4). Where it was reported that the requirement for full-time provision was considered to be 'usually', 'occasionally' or 'never' met, accommodation appeared to be a specific challenge, in contrast to where it was reported to be 'always' met. Respondents mentioned specifically about the lack of suitable accommodation, for example, buildings with no playground or no staff room, and the need for more building to meet the increasing demand.

The nature of excluded pupils and their engagement with the provision offered, was felt to pose certain challenges, especially at operational level. This appeared to be particularly the case in those perceived to be low-excluding authorities, perhaps reflecting the fact that, in these LEAs, exclusion may be limited to pupils with extreme difficulties. The extreme behaviour of some pupils was sometimes felt to hamper delivery of full-time provision and, similarly, the diverse, severe and sometimes complex nature of pupils' needs were considered to make full-time provision difficult for them to access. The engagement of excluded pupils was therefore felt to pose a challenge despite the range of provision on offer. Addressing the needs of pupils with mental health problems and medical conditions, e.g. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), were concerns raised, as was also provision for pupils who exhaust all the available options. Specific challenges were also felt to be raised by pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, who often had to be catered for within the same provision as excluded pupils but who were felt to have different needs. This was consistently raised as an issue within small and medium-sized LEAs, but not in large authorities, suggesting that in these authorities it was perhaps viable for them to have separate dedicated provision for such pupils. Perhaps significantly, provision for EBD pupils was not raised as a concern where full-time provision was located under the umbrella of SEN, whilst it was a concern where it was located or linked to BSS and EOTAS. The manner in which these pupils' needs were addressed was a concern raised by respondents regardless of the extent of exclusions in the LEA. However, it did appear to be an issue within those authorities felt to be 'always' or 'usually' able to meet the requirements, but not where they were felt only 'occasionally' or 'never' able to meet the requirement. In some instances, the lack of EBD provision had resulted in an immobile

population in the PRU awaiting placement. Respondents noted the increasing need for more EBD resources and the difficulties posed by the increasing number of pupils excluded from special schools.

At strategic level, the requirement for full-time provision was also felt to have upset the ability of some LEAs to offer a more proactive approach and a focus on preventative work, a factor to which respondents also alluded when they identified changes in provision for excluded pupils (see Section 1, Part 1.3). Achieving an appropriate balance between preventative and reactive work was considered a key challenge. When challenges were examined according to the level of exclusion, respondents from medium- or high-excluding authorities mentioned more concerns about the need for full-time provision detracting from preventative work than did those from low-excluding authorities. They noted that resources were directed at key stages 3 and 4 at the expense of early intervention and prevention work and that the requirement for full-time provision had led to difficulties dealing with pupils at risk of exclusion. One decried the fact that the money had to be taken away from preventative work in order to fulfil the full-time provision requirement as this therefore 'set up an excluding cycle'.

Another frequently identified challenge at strategic level was the fluctuations in numbers of excluded pupils. The unpredictable nature of the number of excluded pupils was felt to have posed particular difficulties in terms of strategic planning for full-time provision. This also appeared to be a particular challenge in those LEAs considered to be high-excluding authorities.

It is interesting to note that 18 out of the 60 respondents specifically referred to challenges associated with fixed-term exclusions of more than 15 days duration. Respondents noted the difficulties in being able to pick up fixed-term exclusions of 15 plus days and finding places for pupils either in the PRU or in mainstream schools within such a short timescale. They also talked about school ownership of full-time provision for pupils that were on fixed-term exclusions of more than 15 days being a particular challenge. Some, for example, stated that they had an agreement with schools that pupils would not be excluded on a fixed-term basis for more than 15 days because they were unable to resource this provision. Other issues relating to fixed-term exclusions of more than 15 days, identified by more than one respondent, related to finding the staffing, funding and being able to monitor full-time provision for pupils under these circumstances.

5 Cost and resource implications

Key points

- Of the 60 LEAs in the sample, just under a third was unable to provide any financial information. Difficulty disentangling the costs of provision from budgets incorporating other expenditure was proffered as one of the reasons for this.

- The reported costs of full-time provision varied considerably according to the type of placement made. Generally, according to the sample, the cost of educating pupils in PRUs was relatively high, with college placements, and placements with other agencies providing the lowest cost provision.

- Whilst the limited data on costs must be treated with caution, they suggest that the fact that many LEAs have responded to the new requirement to provide full-time education for excluded pupils by fostering links with outside educational providers, and making use of alternatives to education in a PRU, may act to alleviate some of the financial burden imposed on LEAs by the requirement to provide more hours of education, at least to the extent of reducing mean per-pupil costs.

- There was some indication that higher-excluding authorities may have lower per-pupil costs. One interpretation of this association is that economies of scale can be made in LEAs in which more pupils are excluded; however, there was no corresponding association between LEA size and per-pupil costs which might be expected if this was the case.

This section of the report focuses on the cost and resource implications identified by the LEAs in the sample. LEAs were asked to provide details, including any relevant data and calculations, relating to the cost of full-time provision in their LEA.

Of the 60 LEAs in the survey sample, 18 (just under a third), were unable to provide any financial information at all. Several respondents indicated that this was due to the fact that the costs had not yet been calculated, whilst others reported that staffing shortages meant that they were unable to provide this information. Two LEAs cited the fact that the costs of full-time provision were difficult to disentangle from budgets incorporating other expenditure. Ten LEAs gave no reason as to why they were unable to estimate the costs associated with full-time provision.

5.1 Format of cost data provided

Where cost data was provided, LEAs presented this in a variety of different formats. Whilst some reported a total figure relating to the overall costs of providing full-time education for excluded pupils, others provided a breakdown of costs for different items of expenditure, or different types of provision. A further group of LEAs were able to provide estimates of the costs per pupil. The numbers of LEAs falling into each of these categories can be seen in Table 5.1. These categories are then discussed.

5.2 Total cost to LEAs of full-time provision

Where LEAs had provided a figure representing the total cost of full-time provision (in ten LEAs), these estimations ranged from £0.5 million in a small, low-excluding authority, to £7.3 million in a large,

Table 5.1 Format of cost data provided by LEAs

Format of Data	Number of LEAs
No data provided	18
Total cost to the LEA of providing full-time education for excluded pupils	10
Total costs, broken down by type of expenditure (e.g. staffing/buildings)	15
Total costs for a specific type of provision (e.g. PRU/FE colleges)	13
Average cost per excluded pupil	6
Cost per pupil for a specific type of provision (e.g. PRU/FE colleges)	8

Figures do not sum to 60 as some LEAs gave information in more than one format.

No. of respondents giving one or more outcome (N) = 60.

Source: LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.

medium-excluding authority. The mean cost was £2.2 million. Generally, the cost of full-time provision was associated with both the size of the LEA and the rate of exclusions within that LEA, although in the context of the small sample size (ten LEAs), this association was not statistically significant.

5.3 Costs relating to specific types of expenditure

Of the LEAs that gave a more detailed breakdown of costs, 15 gave details of the costs of specific items of expenditure, such as staffing costs, whilst 13 reported the costs associated with particular types of provision (e.g. the costs associated with running a PRU). Staffing costs comprised the greatest type of expenditure in most LEAs where this information was provided, ranging from £0.1 million in a small, low-excluding LEA to £1.6 million in one large, medium-excluding authority. The mean cost of staffing was £0.8 million. One LEA indicated that staffing costs comprised 90 per cent of the costs of educating excluded pupils. Transport was another cost cited by a number of LEAs, costing on average £0.1 million.

The majority of LEAs that indicated the cost of a particular form of provision did so in relation to the cost of providing education for excluded pupils within PRUs. Ten of the 13 LEAs that reported costs associated with particular types of provision provided figures relating to the total cost of PRU provision.

These ranged from £0.3 to £1.6 million, with a mean cost of £0.8 million.

5.4 Cost per pupil

Where LEAs provided an estimate of the cost of full-time provision per pupil, it was possible to make more direct comparisons, both between LEAs and between the relative costs of different types of provision. Fourteen LEAs were able to provide details of the average annual cost of provision per pupil. There was considerable variation in the per-pupil cost of full-time provision reported by LEAs in the sample. This information is shown in Table 5.2.

The reported average cost per pupil ranged from £6,500 to £13,500, with a mean cost of £9,902 per pupil. The reported cost of provision in a PRU was, in general, higher, ranging from £9,110 to £16,000, with a mean cost of £11,844. There was some indication that higher-excluding authorities may have lower per-pupil costs: authorities with a high rate of exclusion reported the lowest cost for both overall average cost and the cost of a PRU placement. Although one interpretation of this association is that economies of scale can be made in LEAs in which more pupils are excluded, there is no corresponding association between LEA size and per-pupil costs which might be expected if this was the case. The issue of economies of scale might therefore warrant further investigation in later phases of the research.

Table 5.2   Annual cost of full-time provision per pupil in 14 LEAs from the sample

	Characteristics of LEA			
	Type	Size	Exclusion Rate	Capacity to make full-time provision
Mean cost per pupil (£)				
6,500	City	Small	High	Always
7,059*	London	Small	High	Always
8,000	County	Large	Low	Usually
10,000–12,500	City	Small	Low	Always
13,000	City	Small	Medium	–
13,600	Regional	Large	Low	Occasionally/Never
Provision in PRU (£)				
9,110	Metropolitan	Small	High	Usually
10,000–12,000	County	Large	Low	Occasionally/Never
10,300	County	Large	Low	Usually
11,000	Regional	Medium	Low	Always
12,000	Metropolitan	Medium	Low	–
12,000–15,000**	Regional	Large	Medium	Usually
16,000	City	Small	Low	Occasionally/Never
College placements (£)				
2,500	London	Small	High	Always
2,500–5,000	Regional	Large	Medium	Usually
EBD school (£)				
25,000	Metropolitan	Medium	Low	–
Other agency (£)				
2,500–7,500 (unspecified)	Metropolitan	Medium	Low	–
4,000 (online education provider)	County	Large	Low	Occasionally/Never
5,500 (educational trust placement)	Regional	Large	Medium	Usually

*primary pupils only   **key stage 3 pupils only*

Source: LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003

The reported costs of full-time provision varied considerably according to the type of placement made. College places may cost as little as £2,500, whereas the annual cost of a place at an EBD school may reach £25,000. Generally the cost of educating pupils in PRUs is relatively high, with college placements, and placements with other agencies providing the lowest cost provision.

5.5 Overview

It is notable that the costs at the lower end of the spectrum, particularly those for the placement of an excluded pupil in a FE college, are comparable to the Age-weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) funding attached to a key stage 4 pupil. Certainly in the case of one of the LEAs providing this

data, the figure cited as the cost of an FE College placement was slightly lower than the AWPU for Year 10 and 11 pupils which stood at around £2,600 in 2001–2002 (published LEA data, reference withheld for confidentiality). Data from such a small sample must be interpreted with caution. Nonetheless, these data suggest that the fact that many LEAs have responded to the new requirement to provide full-time education for excluded pupils by fostering links with outside educational providers, and making use of alternatives to education in a PRU (see Section 1.3), may act to alleviate the financial burden imposed on LEAs by the requirement to provide more hours of education, at least to the extent of reducing mean per-pupil costs. In addition, the use of alternative providers may also be a way of passing the problem of staff recruitment and retention (see Section 4.1), on to other agencies or servcies, although ultimately external agencies only have access to the same resource pool.

Concluding remarks

The preliminary findings from this study suggest that there remains some lack of clarity over the requirements for full-time provision for pupils excluded for more than 15 days and what is meant by the number of 'taught' hours. Indications are that the majority of the 60 LEAs within the sample were 'usually' able to meet the full-time provision requirements, but that there were a minority that felt they were struggling to do so. A small number of LEAs reported that they had no capacity to meet the requirement at key stages 1 and 2. In the main, fulfilment of the requirements appeared to have been achieved by changes to PRU provision at key stages 1–3 (e.g. new bases, increased capacity and refurbishment of accommodation), and by links with outside providers at key stage 4. Initial findings suggest that the fact that many LEAs have responded to the requirement in this way may help to alleviate the burden of having to provide more hours of education for excluded pupils.

However, even for those that were able to meet the requirements, it would appear that a number of factors pose a constant threat to LEAs ability to do so. These factors are as follows:

- difficulties in staffing recruitment and retention

- limited sources of funding

- limited access to alternative provision

- school reluctance to reintegrate excluded pupils

- the often complex nature of excluded pupils' difficulties

- the increasing and unpredictable number of pupils excluded from mainstream schools.

Although the study was based on a limited sample, a number of issues have been raised in the initial phase of the research that might benefit from further illumination and more in-depth exploration in phases two and three of the research.

The following issues for consideration have emerged:

- Does the confusion over the number of taught hours suggest that further clarity is required over what is meant by 'full-time' provision and what LEAs are expected to deliver, together with further direction with regard to the responsibility for provision for pupils on fixed-term exclusions of more than 15 days, which some LEAs in the sample have reportedly delegated to schools?

- Do LEAs need to consider how they might effectively monitor alternative provision and maintain a focus on the quality, as well as the quantity, of outside sources of support?

- Does the marked variation in the cost reported by the LEA sample suggest the need for some further clarity of the resources required for full-time provision, as well as greater recognition that some pupils, particularly those with complex emotional and behavioural difficulties, may have needs which are particularly cost-intensive?

Appendix 1   LEA sample information

The types of LEAs in the sample for phase one

Table A1.1 shows the breakdown of LEAs nationally by type as a percentage of the total, and, similarly, the breakdown of LEAs in the research sample by type as a percentage of their overall total. Five types of LEA were identified as follows:

- London boroughs
- metropolitan LEAs
- new authorities with a single city focus
- new authorities with a regional focus
- county LEAs.

Table A1.1 shows that the percentage of metropolitan authorities was the same as the national average, whilst the percentage of London, new regional and county LEAs were slightly less (by five, four and two per cent respectively), than the national average and the percentage of new city authorities were significantly larger than the national average. The sample of LEAs which chose to respond to the pro forma could therefore be questioned in terms of its representativeness in terms of types of LEA.

Table A1.1 The types of LEA nationally and in the research sample

Type of LEA	National		Research Sample	
	N	%	N	%
London	33	22	10	17
Metropolitan	37	25	15	25
New regional	31	21	10	17
New city	34	23	20	33
County	15	10	5	8
Total	150	100	60	100

All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore may not add up to 100
Source: *NFER database*

The sizes of LEAs in the research sample

Table A1.2 shows how far the sample was representative of the sizes of LEAs nationally. The size of LEA was calculated according to the number of state primary and secondary schools, including grant maintained schools, within it.

The categories for the size of LEA were as follows:

- small   1–100
- medium   101–300
- large   301 upwards.

Table A1.2 shows that the percentage of small and medium-sized LEAs in the research sample was slightly lower (by only one and two per cent respectively) than was the case nationally, whilst the number of large LEAs was three per cent higher than the national average. Overall, however, a comparison of percentages demonstrates that the sample in this study is representative in terms of sizes of LEAs.

Table A1.2 The sizes of LEAs nationally and in the research sample

Size of LEA	National		Research Sample	
	N	%	N	%
Small	84	56	33	55
Medium	48	32	18	30
Large	18	12	9	15
Total	150	100	60	100

All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore may not add up to 100
Source: *NFER database*

The rates of exclusion in the sample

In order to establish the representativeness of the sample in terms of exclusion rates, percentages of all exclusions for all English LEAs were obtained from the DfES tables for 2000/2001. LEAs were then grouped so that equal numbers fell into the categories of low, medium and high levels of exclusion and the resulting cut off points were then applied to the sample. The categories for exclusions were as follows:

- low   < 0.10

- medium   ≥ 0.10 < 0.15

- high   ≥ 0.15

Table A1.3 shows that the sample included one per cent more low-excluding authorities than the national average and nine per cent more medium-excluding authorities, as well as ten per cent fewer high-excluding authorities.

Table A1.3 Rates of exclusions nationally and in the research sample

Rates of exclusion	National		Research Sample	
	N	%	N	%
Low	55	37	23	38
Medium	50	33	25	42
High	45	30	12	20
Total	150	100	60	100

All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore may not add up to 100

Source: *DfES database, 2001–2002*

Appendix 2   Examples of the diagrams provided by LEAs to show the location of full-time provision for excluded pupils

Figure A2.1   Full-time provision for excluded pupils located within Access and Inclusion
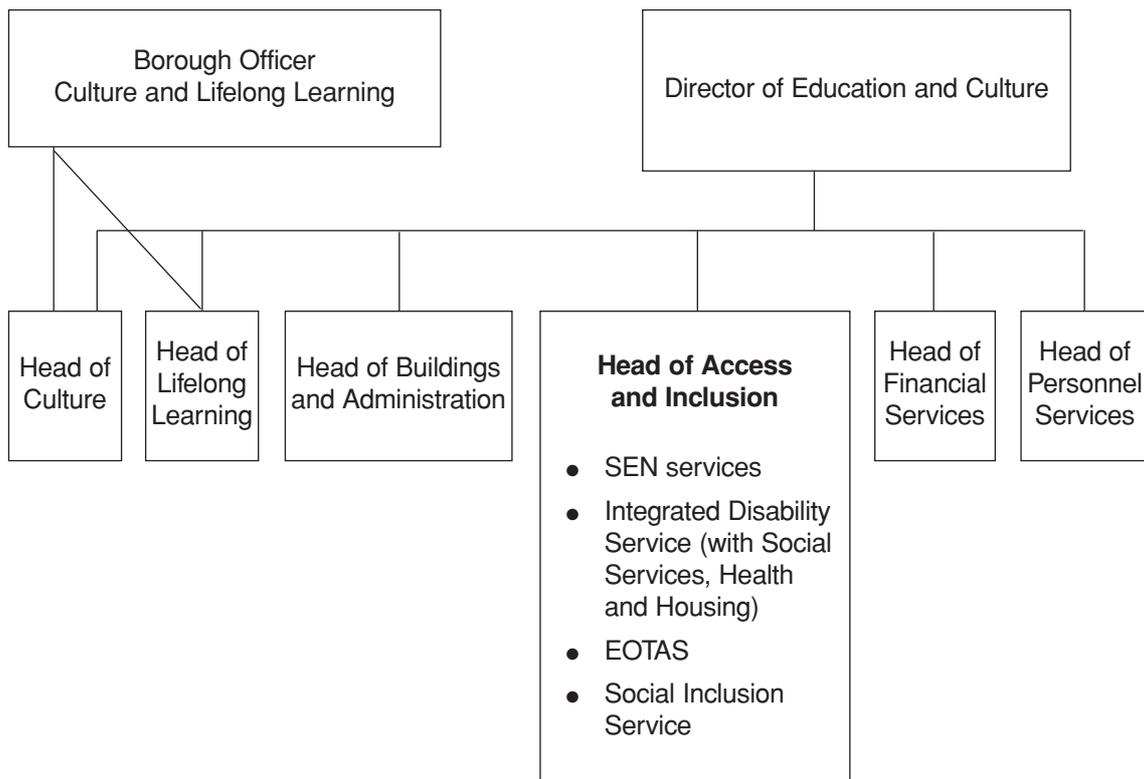
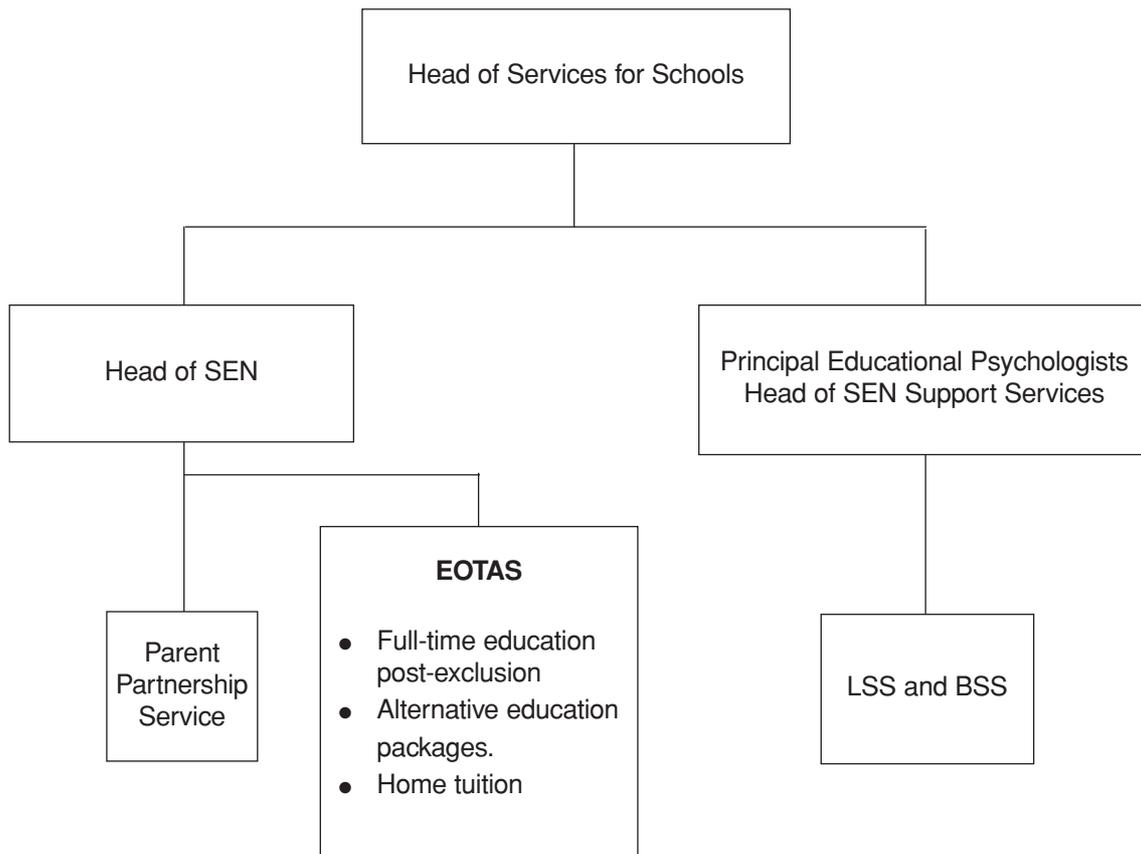**Figure A2.2   Full-time provision for excluded pupils located within SEN**

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                    ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                    │   Head of Services for Schools │
                    └─────────────────────────────┘
                                   │
              ┌────────────────────┴────────────────────┐
              │                                          │
   ┌──────────────────────┐              ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
   │     Head of SEN       │              │ Principal Educational Psychologists │
   └──────────────────────┘              │   Head of SEN Support Services     │
          │                              └──────────────────────────────────┘
   ┌──────┴──────────┐                                   │
   │                 │                                    │
┌──────────┐  ┌──────────────────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
│  Parent   │  │          EOTAS           │      │ LSS and BSS  │
│Partnership│  │                          │      └──────────────┘
│  Service  │  │  ● Full-time education   │
└──────────┘  │    post-exclusion        │
              │  ● Alternative education  │
              │    packages.             │
              │  ● Home tuition          │
              └──────────────────────────┘
```

Figure A2.3   Full-time provision for excluded pupils located within the EPS and BSS
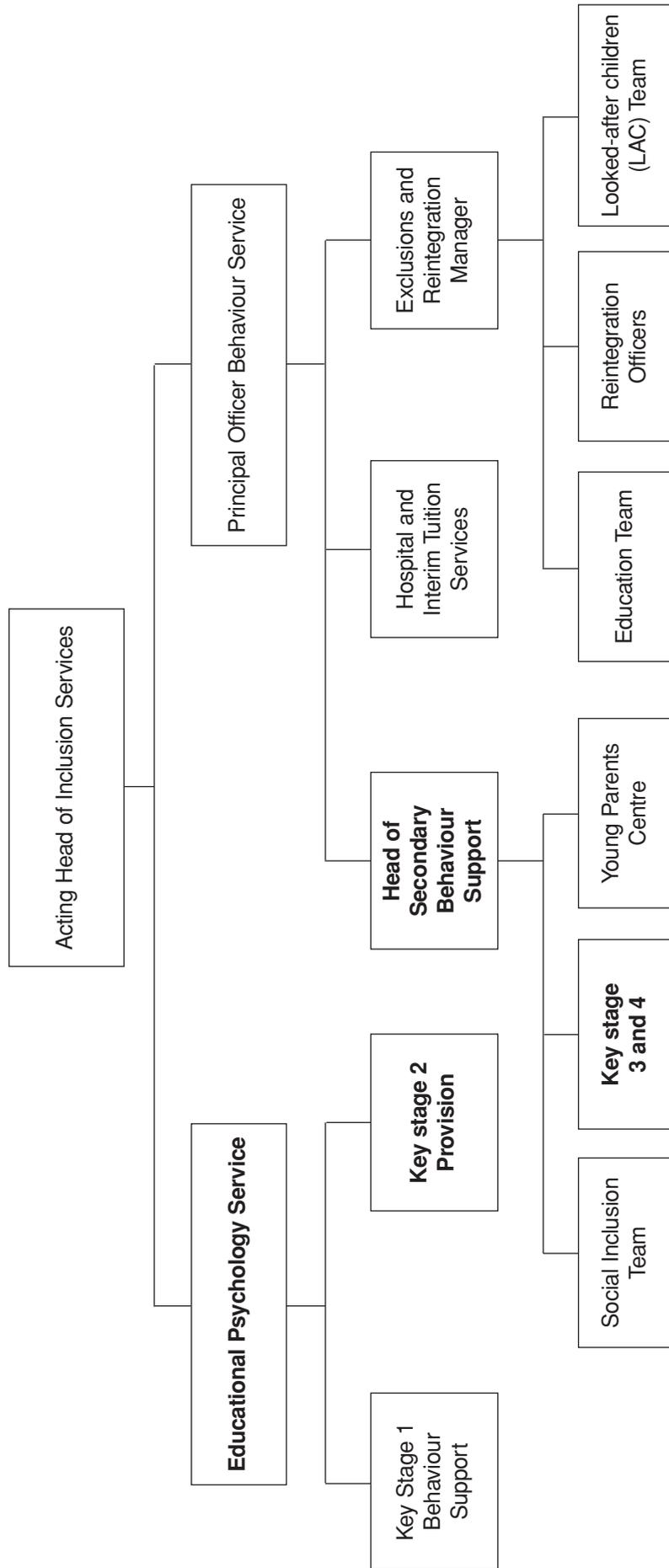
Appendix 3   The number of taught hours

Table A3.1   **LEAs' understanding of the number of taught hours of provision per week intended by the term 'full-time' education**

Hours understood by full-time provision	Number of LEAs			
	Key stage 4	Key stage 3	Key stage 2	Key stage 1
18	1	–	–	–
19	–	–	–	1
20	3	4	6	7
20+	4	3	2	2
21	1	–	3	8
21.5	–	–	–	1
22	–	–	4	2
22.5	–	1	2	–
23	–	4	6	5
23.5	–	2	4	1
23.75	–	–	1	–
24	5	5	2	2
24.5	–	1	–	–
25	38	33	20	18
25+	1	1	1	1
25.5	2	–	–	–
16–20	–	–	1	1
18–23.75	1	1	–	–
19–24	1	1	–	–
20–25	3	3	2	2
18–23.75	1	1	–	–
19–24	1	1	–	–
20–25	3	3	2	2
No response	–	1	6	9

No. of respondents (N) = 60.
Source: *LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003.*

Appendix 4 Tables showing the key challenges associated with different LEA characteristics

Table A4.1 Ranking of challenges associated with different levels of exclusion

Low-excluding LEAs	Medium-excluding LEAs	High-excluding LEAs
• Funding	• School ownership/attitude	• Staffing
• Staffing	• Staffing	• Capacity
• School ownership	• Funding	• School ownership
• Pupils' diverse needs	• Capacity	• Accommodation
• Alternative provision	• Reintegration	• Funding
• Capacity	• Accommodation	• Unpredictable numbers
• Pupil engagement	• EBD pupils	• Preventative work
• EBD pupils	• Preventative work	• EBD pupils
• Curriculum		• Transport

Source: *LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003*

Table A4.2 Ranking of challenges associated with the extent to which LEAs were able to meet the requirements for full-time provision

Occasionally/never	Usually	Always
• School ownership	• Funding	• School ownership
• Staffing	• Reintegration	• Staffing
• Alternative provision	• Capacity	• Capacity
• Transport	• Alterative provision	• Alternative provision
• Funding	• Staffing	• Funding
• Capacity	• School ownership	• EBD pupils
• Pupils' diverse needs	• Accommodation	• Curriculum
• Curriculum	• Preventative work	• Pupils' diverse needs
• Accommodation	• EBD pupils	
• Management		
• Reintegration		

Source: *LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003*

Table A4.3 Ranking of challenges associated with different sized LEAs

Small LEAs	Medium-sized LEAs	Large LEAs
• Funding	• Staffing	• School ownership
• Staffing	• Funding	• Alternative provision
• Capacity	• School ownership	• Staffing
• Alternative provision	• Capacity	• Capacity
• EBD pupils	• Reintegration	• Accommodation
• School ownership	• EBD pupils	• Reintegration
• Curriculum	• Pupil engagement	• Curriculum
• Reintegration		• Pupils' diverse needs
• Accommodation		• Timescale
• Preventative work		
• Pupils' diverse needs		

Source: *LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003*

Table A4.4 Ranking of challenges associated with different types of LEA

County	New regional	London	Metropolitan	New city
• School ownership	• Alternative provision	• School ownership	• School ownership	• Funding
• Reintegration	• Accommodation	• Capacity	• Capacity	• Staffing
• Timescale	• Funding	• Staffing	• Staffing	• Capacity
• Alternative provision	• Staffing	• Funding	• Reintegration	• Curriculum
• Staffing	• Monitoring	• EBD pupils	• Funding	• School ownership
• Curriculum	• Pupils' inability to cope		• EBD pupils	• EBD pupils
• upils' diverse needs				

Source: *LEA pro forma returns in phase one of the NFER study, 2003*

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For further information, please contact the
Local Government Association at:

Local Government House, Smith Square,
London SW1P 3HZ
Telephone 020 7664 3000
Fax 020 7664 3030
E-mail info@lga.gov.uk
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