

Avon and Somerset OPCC

Evaluation of Education Inclusion: Teachable Moments roll-out

July 2022



CordisBright

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Executive Summary

Introduction

This report presents findings from the evaluation of the Education Inclusion: Teachable Moments Project (to be referred to from this point as the Education Inclusion Project) commissioned by Avon and Somerset Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). This project was funded by the Home Office. The evaluation took place between October 2021 and April 2022 and aims to review how the Education Inclusion Project has been implemented, as well as key successes, challenges and areas for development.

Evaluation methodology

The evaluation of the Education Inclusion Project involved:

- Review of programme documentation and local Strategic Needs Assessments on youth violence.
- Scoping discussions and consultation via a combination of interviews, focus groups and surveys with project leads, delivery staff, organisations working alongside the project, children and young people and parents/carers.
- Analysis of monitoring and outcomes data (supplemented with government data). Overall, a limited amount of complete and consistent monitoring data was. This has curtailed the evaluation's ability to comment on outputs and emerging outcomes for the Education Inclusion Project.

Overview of the Education Inclusion Project

The Education Inclusion Project has been implemented across five sites in Avon and Somerset: Bath and North East Somerset (BANES), Bristol, North Somerset, Somerset, and South Gloucestershire. It aims to reduce permanent exclusions (PEX) and managed moves associated with serious youth violence (SYV), CCE or CSE for young people aged 11-16 by providing a targeted intervention and support package at the point at which a child or young person is at risk of exclusion. It draws on the concept of intervening at a "teachable moment", i.e. a moment at which services might be better able to engage children and young people in interventions focused on changing their behaviours and circumstances.¹

¹ A teachable moment is defined by the Home Office as 'the moment when a young person may be most willing to listen and engage' (source: HM Government (2018) *Serious Violence Strategy*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698009/serious-violence-strategy.pdf [Accessed 29 April 2022]). The teachable moment for the Education Inclusion Project is defined as 'A PEX or managed move due to reasons associated with a serious youth violence, CCE, or CSE, including being found with a weapon in school (Source: Avon and Somerset's Teachable Moments Bid).

In each site there is at least one full-time Education Inclusion Manager (EIM) and one full- or part-time support worker funded by the project. EIMs work with education providers and other professionals to manage the risk and build confidence in responding to the needs of the child or young person. Support workers work with the young person to address risk factors and motivations that led to their situation.

The Education Inclusion Project builds upon an existing model that has been in place in Bristol since September 2019 and is based in Bristol Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) (also known as Safer Options). We have also conducted a separate impact evaluation of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work which should be read in conjunction with this report (please see Appendix 1 in 9.1). Bristol VRU have used additional funding from the Education Inclusion Project to award grant funding to schools to employ in-house inclusion support workers.

Site models

Due to the short-term nature of the funding and the need to get up and running as soon as possible, area leads across the five areas had to make pragmatic decisions about setting up governance and management structures and recruiting to delivery teams. It was also important for them to develop provision which complemented pre-existing local education inclusion work.

This resulted in some variations in models across all five sites. The chief difference between the models was where the workers providing direct support to children and young people were based:

- *Model A: school-based support workers (Bristol)*. The intervention is delivered by support workers based in individual schools. Referrals are managed internally in schools, and schools have strategic oversight.
- *Model B: Youth Offending Service (YOS)-based (BANES, North Somerset, Somerset) support workers*. The intervention is delivered by support workers based primarily in YOS. Referrals are received through education providers the local Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) and other multi-agency meetings. The local county councils (including local VRU and YOS leads) have strategic oversight. In BANES and Somerset, delivery is joined with Local County Council Education Inclusion Team/Education Safeguarding Team.
- *Model C: Voluntary and community Sector (VCS)-based (South Gloucestershire)* The intervention is delivered by engagement workers based primarily in VCS organisations, with the YOS providing Education Inclusion Manager support and the Young people's Support team (Preventative Service within Integrated Children's Services) providing co-ordination of the project alongside the VCS. Referrals are received primarily through education providers, and the local County Councils (including local VRU and YOS leads) have strategic oversight.

Implementation within short timescales

The short-term nature of funding and short lead-in times meant that it was really important for local sites to implement their models as soon as possible to ensure as many children and young people as possible could be supported within the timescales.

Locating the project in teams with existing governance structures, systems, relationships and processes (such as YOS, VRU or Early Help) has helped ensure speedy and effective roll-out of education inclusion work. This is because it reduced the time and resource needed to train staff, establish referral routes, data sharing agreements and awareness-raising across the sector.

Despite this, **the short funding cycles and uncertainty about future funding decisions continued to pose challenges for recruitment**. These timescales made it difficult to recruit staff who would prefer longer contracts and for the Education Inclusion Project it also meant there was not sufficient time to reflect on specific skill sets needed.

It has also meant that the intervention is relatively short (six to eight weeks). In some areas and cases, this has impacted on relationship-building with children and young people. It may also make it more challenging to support children and young people with more complex needs or others who need a longer period of support.

Referral criteria and teachable moments

Although the target cohort for the Education Inclusion Project was children and young people at risk of exclusion due to SYV, CCE, or CSE, **many areas have removed SYV as a referral criterion because they felt it was not appropriate and could exclude many children and young people at risk of exclusion who would benefit from support**. This was mainly in areas with low numbers of SYV incidents, or where there were existing interventions on offer that addressed SYV.

Area leads agreed that the point of exclusion from school was a teachable moment. They also agreed that reframing the notion of a teachable moment from something that occurs in a police custody suite or hospital to something that can occur in an education setting was an innovative and important part of the project.

However, **there were concerns that the use of one cohesive 'teachable moment' (i.e. at the point of possible exclusion) does not take into consideration that 'teachable moments' may look different for different cohorts**. For example, females may be less disruptive and therefore less at risk of exclusion, but still at risk of exploitation. Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may be more at risk of exclusion, but not due to reasons associated with SYV.

Overall, most areas agreed that stability of educational placement is a protective factor against SYV and other negative outcomes. As such, they concluded that

targeting anyone at risk of exclusion, regardless of whether SYV was a specific concern at the point of referral, was the most suitable approach to tackle both exclusion and SYV in the long-term.

However, **more open referral criteria risk generating very high levels of demand which outstrip the delivery resource.** This might result in inability to meet demand, or the need to triage referrals based on severity of need. Indeed, the shifts in referral criteria did contribute to some misunderstanding from education providers around eligibility, resulting in inappropriate referrals and demand outweighing the capacity of delivery teams. This is further exacerbated by capacity and resource constraints across the system, which limits the number of onwards referrals to specialist support which can be made.

Disproportionality of exclusions

Across all sites involved in the project, stakeholders suggested that in their experience within the project, **children and young people with SEND are more likely to be at risk of exclusion than their peers.** This may be a result of young people not receiving appropriate support from education providers, leading to potentially disruptive behaviours in school which put them at risk of exclusion. Further understanding across the wider system of trauma-informed practice and support for SEND pupils is therefore needed to sustain any impact experienced as a result of education inclusion work in Avon and Somerset.

Stakeholders also acknowledged that exclusion disproportionately affects children and young people from some racially minoritised groups and especially Black young men. They recognised the importance of tackling this disproportionality and its root causes.

However, stakeholders in most local areas shared that disproportionality due to race and ethnicity is not a primary area of concern in their local area due to the very small numbers of racially minoritised pupils. The exception to this is Bristol, where racially minoritised pupils make up a substantial proportion of the general population and those referred to the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol's wider education inclusion work under the VRU.

Variation in delivery across models

The evaluation identified strengths and limitations of each model in relation to:

- **Engaging with children and young people.** Overall, delivery teams who were removed from education providers found it easier to engage children and young people, partly because of increased access to referrals in the community, and because their separation from school allowed them to build a more positive relationship with the children and young people they were supporting. Across all models, there was consensus that regular consistent support allows children and young people to build positive relationships and encourages continuous engagement.
- **Engagement and co-ordination of support with education providers.** This was more successful in models based in organisations with strong pre-existing

relationships with education providers. However, limited buy-in from education providers, particularly those located in Multi-Academy Trusts, continues to be a challenge across both the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol VRU's education inclusion work. This has manifested in children and young people continuing to be excluded even when receiving inclusion support.

- **Partnership working.** This was facilitated by increased access to multi-agency meetings in Models B (YOS-based support workers) and C (VCS-based support workers) and by the existing relationships between the YOS and relevant partners within these models.² In Model A (schools-based support workers), partnership working has been more limited because support workers have little to no contact with external agencies.

Emerging evidence of outcomes

It was not within the remit of this evaluation to explore the outcomes of the Education Inclusion Project, due to the short timescales within which the Project and the evaluation have been operating. However, we identified some emerging evidence from consultation with professional stakeholders, children and young people and parents that the Education Inclusion Project has begun to deliver positive outcomes for children and young people who have been supported. This includes:

- **Reduction of PEX.** Nine out of ten (90%) respondents to the education professional e-survey agreed or strongly agreed that the project had supported young people to remain in the same education setting. Stakeholders suggested this may be linked to EIM's ability to challenge education provider's decisions and hold them accountable.
- **Improved attendance.** Stakeholders, including children and young people themselves, shared examples of young people who had been supported by the project who have increased school attendance. This may have been partly achieved by support workers challenging education providers' responses to risk, and through direct work with children and young people improving their decision making.
- **Increased awareness of risks and consequences.** Some of the parents and children and young people we spoke to reported examples of how being supported by the Education Inclusion Project helps children and young people to become more aware of the risks and consequences of their actions, learning how to avoid repeating dangerous patterns of behaviour.
- **Improvements in safety and wellbeing.** The ten parents and children and young people we spoke to reported that children and young people feel or are

² However, in Model C (VCS-based support workers) relationships did not necessarily exist in advance between the VCS organisations hosting support workers and some partner agencies, leading to some challenges for support workers in hitting the ground running with some aspects of partnership working.

safer as a result of the Education Inclusion Project. They suggested this was as a result of improvements in health and wellbeing

- **Improved relationships.** Parents and children and young people reported that their relationships with each other had improved as a result of direct work with support workers improving their communication skills, and because children and young people generally felt happier and safer after receiving support.

There is consensus that the project has the potential to deliver wide and positive impacts on exclusion rates and on outcomes for education providers and the wider system, especially if longer timescales are allowed and wider challenges in the system (such as those around resource, capacity, and trauma-informed and inclusive working) are addressed.

Gaps in indicators and missing data from some local areas in the central monitoring framework reported to the OPCC makes it challenging to understand which children and young people are being reached by the project and what support looks like. This more central data monitoring will need to be enhanced to better understand the characteristics, needs and strengths of those receiving support and the nature and intensity of support delivered. Combined with more extensive outcomes monitoring data, this could be used to understand which elements of the support might be contributing to its success, and for whom support is working best.

Key features of effective education inclusion work

Findings from the evaluation of the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol VRU's education inclusion work indicate a number of key features of effective education inclusion work. These include:

- **Delivery team having an education background**, facilitating strong relationships with education providers.
- **Consistency** of both the support workers and the EIMs.
- EIMs and support workers being **representative of the communities** they support.
- **Diplomacy, proactiveness and adaptability** of staff.
- **Speed and responsivity** of the intervention delivered, especially when compared to other interventions delivered by statutory services (e.g., police and children's social care).
- **Child-centred and trauma-informed approach**, in the direct work of the support workers with children and young people.
- **Positive relationships with education providers.**

Key learning

Where should education inclusion work be based?

There were benefits and limitations of locating the support workers in YOS, education providers and VCS organisations. Generally, stakeholders reported better levels of engagement with children and young people in settings outside of education providers and better co-ordination of support and partnership working with other organisations through the YOS or Early Help.

What should education inclusion work look like?

It should be delivered by a skilled workforce, with experience of education systems, using a child-centred, trauma-informed approach.

Who should be the target cohort?

Currently, areas are using referral criteria flexibly to work with children and young people who are at risk of exclusion but not necessarily at risk of SYV. This is because maintaining education placements is considered a protective factor against SYV. There does also seem to be demand for support for children and young people affected by SYV or exploitation who may not be at risk of exclusion. However, more flexible referral criteria may also result in levels of demand which outstrip the capacity of the delivery teams, making it more difficult to then target the available resource to those with the highest levels of risk and need.

What is needed to inform the work?

A thorough needs assessment of children and young people at risk of exclusions and of SYV/CCE/CSE could help inform the target cohort and eligibility criteria. Further guidance around “what works” in education inclusion and examples of best practice would also be helpful for local areas.

What needs to change in the wider system to sustain the impact of the Education Inclusion project?

- Further training for education staff on trauma-informed and contextual safeguarding approaches and supporting SEND pupils.
- More resource to meet current demand.
- A longer intervention period to have an impact on longer-term outcomes. This could also result in a wider reach of the project, as it could support children and young people with more complex needs that need consistent support over a longer period of time.

Recommendations

Figure 1 presents recommendations and considerations for future of education inclusion work across Avon and Somerset, based on findings from both

evaluations. These include recommendations for consideration by the OPCC, Bristol VRU, and stakeholders involved in the Education Inclusion Project.

Figure 1: Recommendations for future education inclusion work across Avon and Somerset

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
1. Increase the length of funding cycles for education inclusion work.	The short funding cycle and uncertainty about future funding decisions made it difficult to recruit staff who would prefer longer contracts. For the Education Inclusion Project, it also meant there was not sufficient time to reflect on specific skill sets needed. In some areas, workers had to be seconded from elsewhere in the local authority to ensure people were in post in the necessary timescales, but this has resulted in under-capacity in other teams. Short funding cycles can also make it challenging to build positive working relationships with multi-agency partners.	3.2.5 4.4 5.4.1 8.2.1	Funders and commissioners
2. Conduct a robust needs assessment of young people at risk of exclusions and SYV/CCE/CSE in Avon and Somerset.	<p>There is limited understanding of disproportionality of exclusions in Avon and Somerset, and around the intersectionality of SYV, exploitation, exclusion, gender, age SEND, and ethnicity. Nevertheless, there is some evidence from qualitative consultation to suggest that young males and children and young people with SEND are disproportionality identified as at risk of exclusion. Avon and Somerset colleagues may wish to consider conducting a robust needs assessment in the future to help fully these needs so that support can be better targeted to local need.</p> <p>This aligns with Recommendations 16 and 18 in Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice Board’s recently published review of disproportionality, which suggest that that Local Authorities and YOTs need to address current issues with collecting high-quality data and analyse linked school exclusion</p>	4.3 8.2.4 8.3.4	OPCC stakeholders

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
	(including managed moves, internal exclusions, “off-rolling” and informal exclusions) and offending data to understanding whether children and young people from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority backgrounds are more likely to be excluded from school, and whether that exclusion increases the likelihood of them entering the criminal justice system. ³		
3. Establish agreed referral criteria which balance widening reach with managing demand and targeting resource to those with greatest risk and need.	<p>Overall, there was a consensus among stakeholders across all areas that stability of educational placement is a protective factor against SYV, and as such targeting anyone at risk of exclusion, regardless of whether SYV was a specific concern at the point of referral, was the most suitable approach to tackle both exclusion and SYV in the long-term. Future education inclusion work may therefore wish to consider removing SYV as a referral criterion. This could also help address the disproportionate risk of exclusion faced by children and young people with SEND, who may not necessarily be at risk of SYV or exploitation.</p> <p>Having said this, for future projects that focus on ‘teachable moments’ for young people at risk of SYV, CCE or CSE, stakeholders may wish to consider removing exclusion as a referral criterion. This is because some children and</p>	3.3.1 5.2 8.2.4 8.3.3	Local authority and OPCC stakeholders

³ Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice Board (2022) *Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System* Available at: <https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Identifying-Disproportionality-Report.pdf> [Accessed 17 June 2022].

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
	<p>young people are at risk of SYV and exploitation but not exclusion (young women and girls, for example).</p> <p>Stakeholders also suggested that expanding the age group of children and young people eligible for support to include primary school children, especially those in Years 5 and 6, could help support their transition into secondary school.</p> <p>However, more open referral high levels of demand which criteria risk generating very outstrip the delivery resource. This might result in inability to meet demand, or the need to triage referrals based on severity of need.</p>		
<p>4. Revise the Theory of Change and develop outcomes measurement approaches to support ongoing impact evaluation. (Resource has already been identified for Cordis Bright to support</p>	<p>A co-developed Theory of Change could help inform the design of future education inclusion work, as it may help clarify the key mechanisms of change and intended impacts and outcomes of work, which could help refine the target cohort and the referral criterion. This will help local areas offer more effective, evidence-based support that is specifically designed to achieve intended impacts and outcomes for the target cohort.</p> <p>Systematic collection of outcomes data is important to attribute impact of education inclusion work on any reduction in SYV or other aspect of children and young people’s lives. This data is not currently available for Bristol VRU’s core education inclusion offer and is under development for the Education Inclusion Project. Development of outcomes measurement</p>	<p>2.5.1</p>	<p>Local authority and OPCC stakeholders</p>

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
actioning this recommendation).	frameworks might help capture the wider impact of the education inclusion work and build up the evidence base of “what works” in violence reduction.		
5. Collect more detailed, consistent and complete profile, intervention and outcomes monitoring data for the cohort.	Within the central data framework reported to the OPCC, there is limited and inconsistent demographic data and data on the form and extent of support ⁴ . In addition, at this stage there was very little data available to the evaluation in relation to the outcomes of the work. This makes it difficult to understand impact and any differential impact for different groups, to unpick what constitutes a successful education inclusion intervention, and to compare progress across the different sites.	3.4.1 5.4.1	Local authority and OPCC stakeholders
6. Consider adopting a ‘scoping phase’ of implementation for future education inclusion work. This could include time to review best	Local strategic stakeholders shared that more central guidance from Avon and Somerset OPCC, especially sharing evidence about the impact of existing education exclusion and examples of best practice in education inclusion work, may have helped improved relationships with education providers, increase the efficacy of interventions, and refine referral criteria.	3.2.2 3.2.3 4.2 4.3.5 8.3.4	Local authority and OPCC stakeholders

⁴ The precise nature and quality of the data provided varied across the local areas involved in the Education Inclusion Project.

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
practice examples and guidance.	This guidance could be reviewed as part of an extended scoping phase at the beginning of any future education inclusion work. For Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, EIMs had scoping time at the beginning of the implementation period which enabled them to design the role around local need, reduce duplication, and build positive relationships with education providers.		
7. Consider opportunities to share learning and resources across local delivery teams more widely.	<p>In Bristol VRU there are three EIMs. The joint working between them has facilitated outcomes on a larger scale, because they each focus on specific issues and outcomes, reducing the duplication of work and increasing capacity.</p> <p>Increased sharing of learning and resources more widely across Bristol and Avon and Somerset might help to further improve the support the delivery teams provide going forwards. Colleagues at Avon and Somerset OPCC may consider creating and disseminating guidance on specific interventions and creating more forums for members of local site delivery teams to share learning.</p>	4.5 6.2	Local authority and OPCC stakeholders and local delivery teams
8. Locate education inclusion delivery teams in organisations with	As part of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, the team are based within Early Help. This was highlighted as a key enabler for successful implementation, because it supports engagement with children and young people and multi-agency partnership working. Across other areas, engagement and co-ordination of support with education providers, and	3.2.3 4.4.3 5.3.1 5.4.1 8.3.1	Local delivery teams

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
strong links with other providers.	partnership working was more successful in models based in organisations with strong pre-existing relationships with education providers and other agencies, and particularly those all or partly based in the YOS. This can also help with completing onward referrals as part of exit planning.		
9. Carefully consider the skills of those recruited to delivery roles in future iterations of the project or similar workstreams.	There was strong consensus across all areas that the skills and expertise of the EIMs and support workers are central in achieving positive outcomes for children and young people, education, and the wider system. In particular, stakeholders highlighted the importance of the EIMs and support workers having an education background, which can facilitate good relationships with education providers due to EIMs' ability to present complex information in ways suitable for and education providers to easily understand. Communication and rapport building skills with children and young people, being representative of the community, and diplomacy, proactiveness and adaptability were also highlighted as important skills to engage children and young people and provide effective support targeted to their needs.	4.4.1 6.2 8.3.2	Local delivery teams
10. Consider the possibilities of delivering longer interventions.	All delivery stakeholders (support workers and EIMs) agreed that although the Education Inclusion Project could be more effective with and benefit from a whole-family approach, the short-term nature of the intervention does not allow time for this wider approach. A longer intervention period could also result in a wider reach of the project, as it could support children and young people with more complex needs that need consistent support over a longer period of time.	5.4.3 7.2.4 8.2.1	Local authority and OPCC stakeholders

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
<p>11. Consider offering more regular check-in sessions between education providers and EIMs.</p>	<p>Several education professionals who we interviewed raised that communication and information-sharing within the project is still a challenge, and that improvements in this area might help them coordinate support more effectively.</p> <p>Delivery teams also reported that education providers sometimes make inappropriate referrals, with particular education providers referring many pupils who do not meet the needs thresholds required for support. This was particularly the case in areas where referral criteria have been broadened. This has resulted in demand outweighing the capacity of delivery teams. This is further exacerbated by capacity and resource constraints across the system, which limits the number of onwards referrals to specialist support which can be made.</p>	<p>5.2 5.3.3</p>	<p>Local delivery teams</p>
<p>12. Offer training across Avon and Somerset on trauma-informed practice, contextual safeguarding approaches and support for SEND</p>	<p>There was consensus among stakeholders not in the education sector that more training on trauma-informed methods, supporting SEND needs in school, and contextual safeguarding and contextual risk factors could be useful for all teachers (i.e. not only those with wellbeing or SEN responsibilities) and wider partners. This might help co-ordinate inclusion support being offered to the children and young people by all partners, and in turn help sustain any impact achieved. Consulting education colleagues on their training needs could help inform this training.</p> <p>Stakeholders suggested that SEND training could include</p>	<p>4.3.4 5.3.4 6.3 7.3 8.2.3 8.3.5</p>	<p>Local authority and OPCC stakeholders, and local delivery teams</p>

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
pupils across the system.	training to destigmatise certain presentations of SEND, which might help to reduce exclusions for these children and young people.		

1 Introduction and methodology

1.1 Chapter overview

This chapter introduces the education inclusion work in Bristol and its independent evaluation by Cordis Bright. It outlines the evaluation questions and methodology, as well as the main challenges and limitations for the evaluation. It also includes a glossary of key terms used within the report.

1.2 About this report

Cordis Bright was commissioned by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset to conduct an evaluation of the Teachable Moments Education Inclusion Project (to be referred to from here on as the Education Inclusion Project). This project was funded by the Home Office. The evaluation took place between October 2021 and April 2022 and aims to review how the Education Inclusion Project has been implemented, as well as key successes, challenges and areas for development.

The Education Inclusion Project builds upon an existing model that has been in place in Bristol since September 2019 and is based in Bristol Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) (also known as Safer Options). We also conducted a parallel impact evaluation of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work and the findings are available in a separate report (please see Appendix 1 in 9.1).

A note on Bristol VRU's education inclusion work

This evaluation took place in parallel to an impact evaluation of Bristol's VRU's education inclusion work. This existed prior to the Education Inclusion Project and is funded through existing VRU resource. Through the Education Inclusion Project, Bristol VRU has awarded grant agreements to six education providers to employ inclusion support workers in-house.

Although the evaluation of Bristol VRU's original education inclusion team focuses on the impacts and outcomes of the work, many findings related to how the work has been implemented and delivered are relevant to the Education Inclusion Project, particularly in terms of informing what delivery might look like in each of the sites going forward.

As such, relevant findings from the impact evaluation of Bristol's education inclusion work have been included in this report too. Where findings are specific to either the Bristol VRU work or the Education Inclusion Project, this has been specified.

1.3 Overview of the Education Inclusion: Teachable Moments Project

The Education Inclusion Project has been implemented across five sites in Avon and Somerset: Bath and North East Somerset (BANES), Bristol, North Somerset,

Somerset, and South Gloucestershire. It aims to provide a targeted intervention and support package at the 'Teachable Moment' where a young person aged 11-16 is facing a permanent exclusion (PEX) or managed move due to reasons associated with serious youth violence (SYV), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), or Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). This may include but is not limited to being found with a weapon in schools.

The model of delivery varies, but in each site there is at least one full-time Education Inclusion Manager (EIM) and support worker funded by the project. EIMs work with education providers and other professionals to manage the risk and build confidence in responding to the needs of the young person. Support workers work with the young person to address risk factors and motivations that led to their situation.

1.4 Evaluation aims

This evaluation aims to:

- Establish a clear description of the education inclusion model and how it is being localised in each of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) areas, ensuring that the OPCC and VRU are in a stronger position to conduct a robust impact evaluation in the future.
- Conduct a process evaluation of the roll-out, using consultation to:
 - Determine successes and challenges in implementation.
 - Build an understanding of the extent to which the period prior to exclusion is considered to be a "teachable moment".
 - Unpick views on the programme's mechanisms for change.
- Use existing data shared by local VRUs with the OPCC in order to comment on the outputs of the work so far and, where possible, any emerging outcomes.

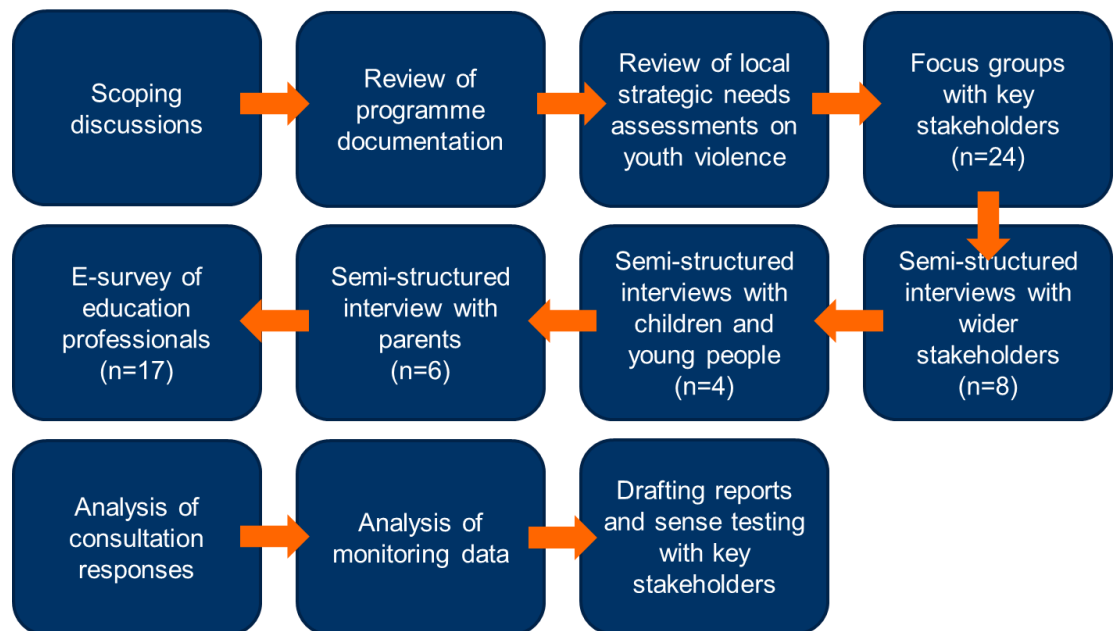
Once this evaluation report is finalised, the evaluation team will work to revise the Theory of Change based on learning from the evaluation and propose outcomes measurement approaches to support ongoing impact evaluation.

1.5 Evaluation methodology

1.5.1 Summary

The evaluation took a collaborative approach. All approaches and research tools were designed by Cordis Bright and agreed before use with the Evaluation Steering Group, which included key stakeholders from the OPCC and local VRUs, before use in the field. Figure 2 outlines the evaluation methodology.

Figure 2 Methodology for the evaluation of the Education Inclusion Project



Methods used are described in more detail in 1.5.2 to 1.5.10.

1.5.2 Scoping discussions⁵

We conducted scoping discussions with area leads of the Education Inclusion Project in BANES, North Somerset, Somerset and South Gloucestershire to understand the context of local needs and services in each area and the model of Education Inclusion work being adopted. This included discussions around the structure of the teams, pathways into the service, recruitment, governance structure, and the reach and scale of the project.

1.5.3 Review of programme documentation

We reviewed documentation provided by colleagues in BANES, North Somerset, Somerset and South Gloucestershire to understand the aims, governance and delivery structure, key activities, outcomes and impacts, target cohort and local context underpinning the delivery of the Education Inclusion Project across Avon and Somerset.⁶ This documentation included:

- Example referral form templates
- Example assessment templates

⁵ We did not consult with colleagues from Bristol as part of this scoping phase as we had already discussed the model in Bristol as part of the impact evaluation of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work.

⁶ Bristol colleagues were unable to provide the evaluation team with documentation.

- Guidance for education providers on exclusion practice
- Information shared with education providers about the Education Inclusion Project (including referral pathways)
- Job specifications for the education inclusion roles
- Governance structures
- Strategic plans

We also reviewed regional documentation from the OPCC, including the Education Inclusion Project bid, Theory of Change and projected figures.

1.5.4 Review of local Strategic Needs Assessments on youth violence

We conducted a review of recently updated “problem profiles” for all local VRUs in Avon and Somerset and the regional VRU Strategic Needs Assessment to gain a better understanding of the aims and priorities for all local VRUs. This helped inform the evaluation questions and consultation topic guides.

1.5.5 Focus groups with key stakeholders

Focus groups were conducted with support workers, EIMs and area leads across all five sites. These aimed to get a better understanding of challenges and successes in the implementation of the Education Inclusion Project, the value of undertaking this work at a ‘teachable moment’ for children and young people, and how the work was expected to improve outcomes for young people.

Support Workers (n= 9)

Two focus groups were conducted with support workers from all five sites.⁷ Area leads identified the support workers and provided the evaluation team with their contact details to organise the consultation. Acknowledging that each site used different terminology, in this report the term ‘support worker’ encompasses the following roles:

- Community Engagement Support Worker
- Youth Intervention Worker
- Preventative Case Worker
- Learning Partnership West (LPW) Engagement Worker

⁷ In-school support workers in Bristol who were employed as part of the funding from the Education Inclusion Project took part in this focus group. We did not consult with YJSWs who work in Bristol VRU’s education inclusion team in this forum.

- Inclusion Support Worker
- Life Coach in schools
- School Support Worker
- Youth Justice Support Worker

All support workers across BANES, North Somerset, Somerset and South Gloucestershire who were involved in the project were consulted apart from one in North Somerset who was unavailable. Two out of six in-school support workers in Bristol took part in the focus groups.

Focus groups with Education Inclusion Managers (EIMs) (n=8)

A focus group was conducted with Education Inclusion Managers, with participation from across all five sites.⁸ Area leads identified the EIMs and provided the evaluation team with their contact details to organise the consultation. Acknowledging that each site used different terminology, in this report the term Education Inclusion Manager refers to the following:

- Education Inclusion Coordinator
- Youth Offending Team (YOT) Education Officer
- Learning Partnership West (LPW) Education Inclusion Coordinator
- Young People's Support Service Practice Manager
- Education Diversion Project Team Manager
- Education Inclusion Manager

All EIMs across BANES, North Somerset, Somerset and South Gloucestershire who were involved in the project were consulted apart from one in South Gloucestershire who was unavailable.

Focus group with area leads (n=7)

A focus group was conducted with staff who were leading the project across the across all five sites and the OPCC lead overseeing the project.⁹ The

⁸ The Education Inclusion Managers in Bristol work across both the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol VRU's education inclusion team (which is funded separately). In this focus group, they focused on the in-school support provided in Bristol as part of the Education Inclusion Project.

⁹ The area leads in Bristol work across both the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol VRU's education inclusion team (which is funded separately). In this focus group, they focused on the in-school support provided in Bristol as part of the Education Inclusion Project.

responsibility for the project was held by different roles across each site, including:

- VRU Coordinator
- VRU Manager
- YOT Manager
- Head of Youth Justice
- VRU Strategic Lead

Throughout this report, we will use the term 'area lead' to refer to those leading the project in each area.

1.5.6 Semi-structured interviews with wider stakeholders (n=8)¹⁰

Eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with wider stakeholders involved in the design and delivery of the education-inclusion project in BANES, North Somerset, Somerset, and South Gloucestershire. These stakeholders were identified by area leads and EIMs. These interviews included:

- **Strategic stakeholders**, including representatives from the VRU, Youth Offending Service (YOS), police and social care.
- **Education professionals**, including those who work in mainstream schools or other education settings.

1.5.7 Semi-structured interviews with beneficiaries (n=10)

Ten semi-structured interviews were conducted with:

- **Children and young people** who received support from the Education Inclusion Project (n=4).
- **Parent(s)/ carer(s) of children and young people** who received support from the Education Inclusion Project. (n=6)

The aim of these interviews was to understand beneficiaries' views of the support work they or their children received as part of the Education Inclusion Project. We interviewed beneficiaries from Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Somerset, and BANES.

The families were contacted by their support worker who obtained written consent from the parent for the child or young person to take part, and either

¹⁰ Wider stakeholders in Bristol were not interviewed as part of the evaluation of the Education Inclusion Project because the teams are based within schools, and because other stakeholders had already been consulted as part of the evaluation of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work.

verbal or written consent from the child or young person to take part. Parents also gave verbal consent to the support worker if they too were willing to take part in an interview.

All interviews took place via telephone. At the beginning of parent interviews, interviewers obtained verbal consent from parents to take part. At the beginning of young person interviews, interviewers obtained verbal consent for children and young people to take part if they had not already given written consent.

Support workers were present at the interviews with children and young people as a point of contact in case any safeguarding issues arose. We aimed to ensure the interviews were a positive experience by focusing on the support received from the support worker and anything which would have made it better.

1.5.8 Analysis of education e-survey (n=17)

We conducted an e-survey of education stakeholders to understand their views on the Education Inclusion Project across BANES, South Gloucestershire, Somerset and North Somerset.¹¹ The survey was shared with area leads who circulated it around key contacts in education settings. We received 17 responses from 12 education providers. This included one response from one setting in BANES, two responses from two settings in North Somerset, and 14 responses from nine settings in South Gloucestershire.

Professionals who responded to the e-survey included a Head of Year 9, a Head of House, four Assistant Headteachers, two Pastoral Leads/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), one Pastoral Manager, one Deputy DSL, two Teaching Assistants, one Assistant Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO,) one SENCO/DSL, one Student Support Worker, one Family Liaison Officer, and one Alternative Provision Lead.

1.5.9 Analysis of monitoring and outcomes data

We analysed performance data for the Education Inclusion Project from the OPCC and included data from all five local areas. This included individual level data for 319 children and young people referred for support. The data set received included 37 variables, seen in Figure 3. This information was provided for individuals who were referred for support in the local areas between 01/09/21 and 03/03/22. Not all local areas provided data on each of the variables, and where relevant this is reflected in total figures provided throughout this report.

A full analysis of data can be found in Appendix 2, in 9.2.

¹¹ We did not conduct an e-survey of education professionals in Bristol because many of these had already completed a survey for the impact evaluation of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work. The findings from this survey can be found in the separate report for the impact evaluation of the Bristol work.

Figure 3: Variables in the referral database

No.	Variable
1	Local area
2	Gender
3	Age at referral
4	Ethnicity
5	Disability
6	Location
7	Known to have a neuro-developmental condition
8	Known to have been previously excluded, moved or persistently absent from school
9	Known to be involved in offending
10	Known to be affected by exploitation
11	Known to be NEET
12	Known to use or deal drugs
13	Known to social services
14	Known to be involved with weapons
15	Regular missing person
16	Date of first contact
17	Number of contacts with EIM
18	Most recent contact in last quarter
19	Contact type
20	Reason for contact type 'other'
21	Referrals made
22	Offer for support worker
23	Reason offer for support worker not provided
24	Acceptance of support worker
25	Date of case closure

No.	Variable
26	Predominant delivery model of intervention
27	Predominant target group
28	Intervention – education/ training
29	Intervention – employment
30	Intervention – accommodation
31	Intervention – substance misuse
32	Intervention – mental and emotional health
33	Intervention – offending behaviour
34	Intervention – other
35	Outcomes intervention aims to impact on
36	Success measures
37	Progress made

1.5.10 Sense-testing meeting

We produced a draft report and met with key stakeholders to sense-test the main findings and receive feedback on the draft report. We then finalised the evaluation findings and report on the basis of their feedback.

1.6 Challenges and limitations

The following outlines some key challenges and limitations to the evaluation:

- Capturing a wide range of perspectives.** It is often challenging to ensure that beneficiaries' perspectives and experiences are adequately reflected in evaluations of this nature. It is also often a challenge to capture the views of education professionals due to limited capacity. These challenges are reflected in the low response rate to the education e-survey and children and young people and parent interviews. We have attempted to mitigate these issues through developing case studies through analysis of qualitative consultation, which are spread throughout this report. This ensures that space is given to individuals' and education professionals' experiences.
- Availability of complete and consistent monitoring data.** A limited amount of complete and consistent monitoring data for the Education Inclusion Project is currently available to the OPCC and therefore to the evaluation, with variations between areas in the precise nature and quality of data. This has

limited the extent to which the evaluation has been able to comment on outputs and emerging outcomes for the Education Inclusion Project. Following agreement of the evaluation reports, we will develop recommendations about future outcomes and performance monitoring which we hope will support colleagues implementing similar work in the future.

- **Timescales of the project.** Due to the short timescales required for this project to be implemented and delivered, it is difficult to comment on the extent to which it has been embedded across Avon and Somerset and any emerging outcomes and impacts. We have attempted to mitigate this by conducting consultation and receiving monitoring data as near to the conclusion of the project as is feasible within required reporting schedules.

1.7 Glossary of key terms

Figure 4: Glossary of key terms

Term	Definition
Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)	When a young person under 18 has been manipulated, deceived, coerced, or controlled to undertake activity which constitutes a criminal activity. ¹²
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	A form of sexual abuse where a child or young person is exploited (and given things like gifts, drugs, money, status, and affection) in exchange for performing sexual activities. Young people are often groomed into believing they are in a loving and consensual relationship. ¹³
Permanent Exclusion (PEX)	A permanent exclusion refers to a pupil who is excluded and who will not come back to that school (unless the exclusion is overturned). ¹⁴
Fixed-term exclusion (FTE)	A fixed-term exclusion is where a child or young person is temporarily removed from school. A pupil may be excluded for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year). The law does not allow for extending, or 'converting' a

¹² The Children's Society (2021) *Defining child criminal exploitation* Available at: <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/defining-child-criminal-exploitation> [Accessed 29 April 2022]

¹³ NSPCC *Child Sexual Exploitation*. Available at: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/child-sexual-exploitation/#what> [Accessed 28 April 2022].

¹⁴ Department for Education and National Statistics (2019) *Permanent and fixed period exclusions in England 2017 to 2018* Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/820773/Permanent_and_fixed_period_exclusions_2017_to_2018_-_main_text.pdf [Accessed 28 April 2022].

Term	Definition
	FTE into a permanent exclusion. If the exclusion is longer than five school days, the school must arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth school day, e.g., at a pupil referral unit.
Managed move	A managed move is a voluntary agreement between education providers, parent(s)/carer(s) and a pupil, for that pupil to change school or educational programme under controlled circumstances. Managed moves are often used as an alternative to permanent exclusion; the result is that no exclusion is formally logged on the pupil's school record.
Out of Court Disposal panel (OOC panel)	A panel used by police to deal with less serious, and often first-time, offending without going to court. An OOC is the resolution of a low-level offence, where it is not in the public interest to prosecute, through a community resolution, youth caution, or youth conditional caution. ¹⁵
Serious Youth Violence (SYV)	Violence that occurs among young people aged 25 and under, outside of the home. It is between children and young people who are not related, and who may or may not know each other. ¹⁶
Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisation	Organisations that are independent of government funded statutory services. They might include charities, community groups, community interest companies, and voluntary organisations.

1.8 Report structure

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2** outlines the aims, target cohort, project wide logic model, and local model overviews of the Education Inclusion Project.
- **Chapter 3** discusses the successes and challenges in setting up, adapting and monitoring delivery of the Education Inclusion Project.

¹⁵ HM Inspectorate of Probation (2018) *An inspection of youth offending services in Bristol*. Available at: https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/09/Inspection-of-youth-offending-services-in-Bristol-report_2.pdf [Accessed 28 April 2022].

¹⁶ Bristol City Council (2020) *Bristol Safer Options Approach to Serious Youth Violence and Child Criminal Exploitation (2020-2030)*. Available at: <https://bristolsafeguarding.org/media/yu5li4ke/syv-bristol-approach-2020-2030.pdf> [Accessed 21 April 2022].

- **Chapter 4** summarises evaluation findings relating to the Education Inclusion Project's success in reaching children and young people, as well as challenges which inhibit the project's ability to reach and engage them.
- **Chapter 5** summarises evaluation findings on successes and challenges in partnership working by and with the Education Inclusion Project, including partnerships with education providers and multi-agency working across wider parts of the system.
- **Chapter 6** summarises the key features of effective education inclusion work.
- **Chapter 7** outlines some emerging evidence of outcomes being achieved by the Education Inclusion Project for children and young people and education providers, and potential outcomes for the wider system.
- **Chapter 8** presents conclusions from the evaluation of the Education Inclusion Project, and recommendations and considerations for future of education inclusion work across Avon and Somerset.

Throughout the report, key findings and features of the programmes are highlighted in coloured boxes, alongside the evidence supporting them. Boxes are colour-coded as follows:



Key findings



Key enabling factors



Case study



Challenge



Recommendation

A note on terminology

Stakeholders from a range of organisations were consulted as part of this evaluation, including:

- Support workers
- Education Inclusion Managers (EIM)
- Area Leads
- Education professionals
- Strategic stakeholders

Throughout this report, the term 'stakeholders' is used as an umbrella term to refer to all those who took part in interviews. Where views were held by stakeholders in particular roles, this has been specified in the text.

For simplicity, the Education Inclusion: Teachable Moments project will be referred to as the Education Inclusion Project throughout the rest of this report.

2 About the Education Inclusion Project



Key findings

- The Education Inclusion Project builds on the education inclusion work of Bristol VRU, initially rolled out in 2019. It responds to evidence indicating that children and young people who have been excluded or subject to managed moves are at greater risk of becoming involved in crime, Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).
- The project aims to reduce PEX and managed moves associated with SYV, CCE or CSE for children and young people aged 11-16. The project intends to achieve this in two main ways. First, it aims to help education providers and other professionals to manage the risk and build confidence in responding to the needs of the child or young person. Second, it aims to facilitate partnership working and provide direct support to children young people to a.) address risk factors and motivations that led to them being at risk of exclusion and b.) achieve positive outcomes in relation to education, involvement in offending and violence, and mental health and wellbeing. It also aims to bolster existing services that are overrun.
- The project intends to intervene early before children and young people become more heavily involved in violence or offending. It draws on the concept of intervening at a “teachable moment”, i.e. a moment at which services might be better able to engage children and young people in interventions focused on changing their behaviours and circumstances.
- In most local areas, project funding has been used to employ at least one full-time Education Inclusion Manager (EIM) or equivalent, and one full-time support worker. In Bristol, EIMs were already in place and project funding has used to employ in-school support workers.
- EIMs are responsible for triaging referrals, liaising with education providers to support the development of policies and responses on an individual and whole-school level, and advocating for children and young people at multi-agency panels.
- Support workers offer one-to-one support with the child or young person to address underlying vulnerabilities and risk factors, make onward referrals, offer subject matter and consultancy expertise to partners, and adopt an advocacy role on behalf of the child or young person.
- For the purposes of comparison, we have identified three main models of delivery: Model A (support workers based in schools), Model B (delivery teams based in Youth Offending Services), and Model C (support workers based in Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, with delivery also involving the Council’s YOT and Young People Support Team).

- Depending on the local area and specific delivery model, elements of the support worker and EIM roles and the activities they deliver vary.

2.1 Overview

This chapter outlines the aims, target cohort, governance and delivery structure, delivery model and local context for Education Inclusion Project in Avon and Somerset. It is based primarily on documentation provided by local areas and the OPCC, and scoping discussions with area leads (see section 1.5 for more detail). It outlines the programme's overall logic model and provides further detail on the local project models, drawing out the main commonalities and differences across the five areas.

2.2 Evidence for the focus on education inclusion in Avon and Somerset

A note on the wider evidence base for education inclusion interventions

For a more in-depth analysis of the wider evidence base relating to the theory and impact of evidence inclusion interventions, please see chapter 2 of the report on the impact evaluation of Bristol's education inclusion work (Appendix 1 in 9.1). This summarises the findings of a rapid evidence assessment relating to this topic.

The Education Inclusion Project builds on the education inclusion work of Bristol VRU, initially rolled out in 2019. This work responded to the following evidence:

- Children who have been excluded appear to be at greater risk of becoming victims and perpetrators of crime.¹⁷
- There is a broad pattern in Bristol of multiple educational moves coinciding with increased risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).¹⁸

Additionally, the Strategic Needs Assessment for the Avon and Somerset region suggests there is evidence to support an increased focus on education inclusion work across all the local VRUs in Avon and Somerset. Specifically, it highlights the following evidence of demand for the work:

- Three of the five VRUs in the region (Bristol, Somerset and South Gloucestershire) already had existing, commissioned interventions focusing on education inclusion but there was a gap in provision in BANES and North

¹⁷ Timpson, E. (2019). *Timpson Review of School Exclusion*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/807862/Timpson_review.pdf [Accessed 12 April 2022] cited in Avon and Somerset Violence Reduction Unit (2021) *Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment*

¹⁸ Avon and Somerset Violence Reduction Unit (2021) *Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment*

Somerset. Evidence shows a growing cohort of children and young people linked to serious youth violence, struggling with exclusion or disengagement from education in areas with no current provision, suggesting that further education inclusion work could be beneficial.^{19 20}

- Provision that makes links between mental health and risk of education exclusion/SYV could be further embedded across Avon and Somerset.

Department for Education data on PEX, FTE and absence rates also indicates a need for inclusion work in Avon and Somerset. PEX rates (i.e. the percentage of total pupils experiencing PEX) for BANES, North Somerset, Somerset and South Gloucestershire have been higher than the national rate since 2017/18. In 2019/20, the national rate of PEX across all schools was 0.06%, whereas it ranged from between 0.08% (BANES) and 0.10% (South Gloucestershire) in Avon and Somerset.²¹ A similar trend was seen for FTE rates (i.e. the percentage of total pupils experiencing PEX); in 2019/20 the national FTE rate was 3.76%, whereas it ranged from 4.13% (South Gloucestershire) and 6.77% (Somerset) in Avon and Somerset. More information on PEX, FTE and absence rates is available in the full data study (see Appendix 2 in 9.2).

2.3 Project aims

The primary aim of this project is to reduce PEX and managed moves for young people aged 11-16 facing a PEX or managed move due to reasons associated with serious youth violence, CCE or CSE. This may include but is not limited to being found with an offensive weapon in school.²² The project focuses on:

- **Helping education providers and other professionals to manage the risk and build confidence** in responding to the needs of the child or young person instead of automatically considering a move to another education setting, reporting directly to the police, or attempting to manage the risk internally. Through this, the project aims to create mutual accountability between education providers and pupils, shifting the culture of inclusion in schools and other education settings.
- **Providing support to children and young people to help them to address the risk factors and motivations that led to them being at risk of**

¹⁹ Crest (2021). *Problem Profile Update: Impact of the pandemic on serious violence in B&NES*

²⁰ North Somerset Council. (2021) *North Somerset Serious Violence Problem Profile: January 2021 Data Refresh*

²¹ The exception to this was Bristol, where PEX rates have been declining over the last five years and are now much lower than national and regional rates. More information on this can be found in the separate evaluation report of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work and the accompanying data study.

²² Offensive weapons are defined as (a) Those that are made as an offensive weapon (e.g., knuckle-duster, dagger, gun) or adapted (e.g., broken bottle) for use for causing injury to the person; and (b) Weapons not made or adapted (e.g., kitchen knife, spanner, hammer) but intended by the person having it with them for causing injury to the person. (Teachable Moments bid)

exclusion and achieve positive outcomes in relation to education, involvement in offending and violence and mental health and wellbeing.

As part of this, the project aims to increase understanding within the system of the needs of children and young people at risk of exclusion.

Area leads reported that these project-wide aims broadly align with those of the local area teams delivering the project. There is some variation linked to differences in referral criteria and target cohort (see section 3.3 for more detail).

Although not included in the bid for the project, all stakeholders agreed that the Education Inclusion Project aims to bolster existing services that are overrun and help provide direct support to pupils, as well as appropriate onwards referrals where necessary (e.g. to children's social care or SEND services, such as Speech and Language therapists.). They shared that this is one of the most important aims of the project, highlighting that despite elements of potential overlap between the Education Inclusion Project and other local interventions, all five sites have had large numbers of referrals and are struggling with their own capacity. Onward referrals are therefore very important to ensure that needs of all children and young people are addressed.

2.4 Target cohort

It was anticipated that this project would meet the needs of children and young people not yet entrenched in serious or frequent violence or criminality. They may be carrying a weapon out of fear or bravado or not be fully aware of the potential consequences. As such, the project aimed to enable earlier intervention.

In the Avon and Somerset context, intervention at the point of (risk of) school exclusion has been conceptualised as a "teachable moment", i.e. a moment at which services might be better able to engage children and young people in interventions focused on changing their behaviours and circumstances. In this case, the perceived "teachable moment" is intervening at the point at which the weapon is found and encouraging children and young people to engage in the process as an out of court disposal (OCD) with no recordable criminal record, which is a strong incentive to engagement.²³

During the implementation of the Education Inclusion Project, several sites changed their referral criteria to broaden eligibility for children and young people, with different requirements about involvement in SYV (see section 3.3 for a discussion of how referral criteria evolved).

²³ Teachable Moments bid

2.5 Logic model

2.5.1 Project-wide logic model

Figure 5 outlines a logic model for the Education Inclusion Project. It sets out the common inputs, activities, outputs, impact and outcomes of the project across all areas.

These are defined as follows:

- **Inputs:** the resources (financial, professional time, equipment, etc.) required to deliver the programme.
- **Activities:** the things the service does or offers to participants.
- **Outputs:** the 'products' that result from the running of the activities.
- **Outcomes:** the immediate consequence and change for the participants that are a result of the work of the programme. They usually fall into four categories of change: (1) knowledge; (2) skills; (3) attitudes and; (4) behaviour.
- **Impacts:** the higher-level and usually longer-term changes to which the programme may contribute. These might include changes at community or local area level as well as longer-term changes for participants.

We developed the inputs, activities and outputs of this logic model by drawing on project documentation and scoping interviews with the OPCC and local leads. The outcomes and impacts are based on the current Education Inclusion Project Theory of Change produced by Avon and Somerset OPCC.²⁴



Recommendation: Cordis Bright to revise the Theory of Change in collaboration with the OPCC to support ongoing impact evaluation.

We will develop a more extensive Theory of Change which has been informed by this process evaluation of the Education Inclusion Project and the impact evaluation of the Bristol education inclusion work. This will be generated in collaboration with colleagues from the OPCC and the five local areas implementing education inclusion interventions.

Depending on the local area and specific delivery model (see section 2.6 for a breakdown of models), elements of the support worker and EIM roles and the

²⁴ This is because limited information was available about impacts and outcomes in local project documentation.

activities they deliver vary. Key variations relating to different models are outlined in section 2.6.

Figure 5: Overall Logic Model for Education Inclusion Project

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
<p>Funding</p> <p>Total across all local areas: £491,986.85</p> <p>Staffing²⁵</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one FTE support worker in each area (13 in total, including six school-based support workers in Bristol)²⁶ One full time EIM in each area (five in total, not including three EIMs already employed as part of Bristol VRU's existing education inclusion work) 	<p>EIMs</p> <p><i>Direct work with/for young people:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial risk meeting with children and young people and education providers Triaging referrals <p><i>Work with education providers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaising with education providers to support the development of policies and responses on an individual and whole-school level <p><i>Work with wider partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy for young people at exclusions/ inclusions panel/OOCD panel <p>Support workers</p>	<p>Number of referrals</p> <p>Number of assessments</p> <p>Number of young people/ carers supported</p> <p>Number of education providers supported</p> <p>Number of onwards referrals for young people</p> <p>Monitoring framework reporting</p> <p>Monthly reports to the OPCC detailing referrals</p>	<p>Children and young people (individual)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved behaviour Improved interactions/relationships with schools/learning and authority Improved relationship with their families Improved educational outcomes Improved or maintained attendance Reduced involvement in anti-social behaviour, criminality and exploitation <p>School/ Education providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased confidence in managing/holding risk 	<p>Reduced number of incidents of serious youth violence</p> <p>EIMs and support workers promote a culture of inclusion within education communities, resulting in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of fixed term and permanent exclusions Reduced school transfers Fewer young people on reduced timetables <p>A culture of trauma-informed response and decision making across the system</p> <p>A greater understanding across the system of disproportionality of</p>

²⁵ In each model and area, there is funding for at least one full time Education Inclusion Manager (EIM) role and one full-time support worker role. Please note that in some areas, terminology used to refer to these roles are slightly different. In this report we use EIMs and support workers as blanket terms to cover all personnel employed within these kinds of roles. In South Gloucestershire, the funding from the Education Inclusion Project has also been used to cover 0.2 FTE of the salary of a YOT Education Officer and an honorarium for a Young People Support Team Practice Manager to support the Education Inclusion Project team.

²⁶ Although BANES was originally planning on employing a full-time support worker role they have been unable to recruit to this post.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
	<p><i>Direct work with/for young people:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six weeks of bespoke 1:1 sessions with child/young person around a range of topics, e.g. consequences and legality of carrying weapons, drugs, CCE, CSE, mental health, family issues, gangs and healthy relationships. This includes working closely with other professionals, such as education providers and Youth Offending Services (YOS). <p><i>Work with education providers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy for young people • Providing subject matter expertise and consultancy to education providers <p><i>Work with wider partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy for young people • Onward referrals for young people 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased understanding of available support services and referral pathways • Increase of appropriate referrals for Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs) • Increased understanding young people's behaviour (and factors that may be influencing it). <p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced involvement in ASB, criminality and exploitation • Appropriate measured use of police resource and CJS <p>Wider system stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding among professionals of factors influencing a young person's behaviour • Improved understanding among professionals of best approaches for the individual • Sustainability and sharing learning 	<p>exclusions impacting black male pupils</p>

2.5.2 Breakdown of financial inputs by area

The funding for the Education Inclusion Project was allocated to each local area according to local need. Figure 6 outlines the funding breakdown.

Figure 6: Funding allocation for each local area as part of the Education Inclusion Project²⁷

Local area	Funding
BANES	£73,000
North Somerset	£73,348
Somerset	£102,000
South Gloucestershire	£80,000

2.6 Delivery model overviews

Figure 7 breaks down the different models for the Education Inclusion Project.²⁸ While the strategic oversight for the three models remains in the local authority, the location of the workers providing direct support to young people vary; the models distinguish between those with support workers based in and in the YOS, education providers and VCS (voluntary and community sector) organisations.

Within each model, there are still differences determined by local-level understanding of need and by local areas needing to make pragmatic choices to account for the short-term funding and short lead-in time for the project. These are primarily related to recruitment of workers, referral criteria, and location of delivery work (refer to sections 3.2 and 3.3 for more detail).

Appendix 2 (see 9.3) provides further detail on the specific governance and delivery structures and referral pathways in each local area.

²⁷ A breakdown of funding allocation was not available for Bristol.

²⁸ The model of work used by Bristol VRU's original education inclusion team is also included in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Education Inclusion Project model overviews

	Model A: school-based support workers	Model B: YOS-based support workers	Model C: VCS-based support workers	Bristol VRU's education inclusion team
Overall description	Intervention by workers based in individual education providers/schools.	Intervention by workers primarily based in YOS.	Intervention by workers primarily based in VCS organisations, with the YOS providing Education Inclusion Manager support and the Young people's Support team (Preventative Service within Integrated Children's Services) providing co-ordination of the project alongside the VCS.	Intervention by workers primarily based in VRU locality teams/Early Help.
Affiliated local areas	Bristol	BANES, North Somerset, Somerset ²⁹	South Gloucestershire	Bristol
Referral pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclusively through education providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily through education providers, referrals within the VRU and from other services and multi-agency meetings (Behaviour and Attendance Panel, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily through education providers (pastoral leads/ teachers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily through education providers when a young person is found with a Weapon in School (WiS)

²⁹ Somerset has three support workers, two located within the YOS and one commissioned from Brighter Futures, a local VCS organisation. Somerset commissioned the support worker from Brighter Futures after implementation of the project was already underway to work with one specific school. For this reason, although Somerset could fall across several models, we have chosen to locate Somerset's Education Inclusion Project within model B (YOS-based support workers).

	Model A: school-based support workers	Model B: YOS-based support workers	Model C: VCS-based support workers	Bristol VRU's education inclusion team
		Education Safeguarding Dashboard)		
Strategic oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education providers and Local Authority (Early Help) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local County Council including, local area VRU strategic leads and YOS area service leads³⁰. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local County Council including, local area VRU strategic leads and YOS/YPS (Young People Support Team) area service leads. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bristol VRU (Safer Options), based in the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership. Safer Options is divided into three locality teams.
Delivery team location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support workers are in education providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily based in local area YOS. In BANES and Somerset delivery is joined with Local County Council Education Inclusion Team/ Education Safeguarding Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Externally commissioned support workers based in a VCS organisation, supported by the YOS Education Worker/YPS practitioners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safer Options Locality Teams (Youth Justice Support Workers (YJSWs) and Families in Focus (Early Help) (EIMS).
Variation in activities outlined in project-wide logic model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support workers also deliver group work EIMs are not part of the delivery team for the Education Inclusion Project, acting only in an 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support workers undertake the initial risk meeting and risk assessment with children and young people (rather than EIMs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support workers undertake the initial risk meeting and risk assessment with children and young people (rather than EIMs) 	

³⁰ In North Somerset there is oversight through the North Somerset YOS Management Board which incorporates VRU representation through the Safer Communities Service Manager and Education, North Somerset Council; and the Head of Youth Justice is also a member of the VRU Strategic group.

	Model A: school-based support workers	Model B: YOS-based support workers	Model C: VCS-based support workers	Bristol VRU's education inclusion team
	advisory and strategic capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support workers also deliver group work		

3 Setting up, adapting and monitoring delivery



Key findings

- The **short-term nature of funding and short lead-in time for the Education Inclusion Project affected decisions about the model of delivery across all sites**, especially in terms of governance and recruitment of workers. This has resulted in the project being implemented slightly differently across all local sites.
- There was **value in local decision-making about planning and implementation in each area** because it was the **most pragmatic way to set up and implement the project quickly**. However, **more central guidance from Avon and Somerset OPCC would have been helpful during this design process**, especially sharing evidence about the impact of existing education exclusion and examples of best practice in education inclusion work.
- The **three different delivery models (schools-based, YOS-based and VCS-based support workers) each presented different solutions to the challenge of recruiting and implementing in short timescales**. Equally, **they each encountered different challenges with governance and recruitment**.
- On balance, the **YOS-based model appears to have enabled local areas to capitalise most on existing structures and processes**, given the short timescales. However, basing the work in Early Help – as in the main Bristol education inclusion work, which had a longer lead-in time – was identified as a key supporting factor in the successful implementation of the work.
- **Different sites have used different referral criteria into the Education Inclusion Project**. For example, in some areas SYV was not included as a risk factor, and the focus was on risk of exclusion only. There were also differences in understanding of what constitutes a ‘teachable moment’ which were reflected in variations in referral criterion across sites.
- **There are gaps in indicators and missing data in the monitoring framework to the OPCC and therefore to the evaluation, with variations between areas in the precise nature and quality of data. This makes it challenging to understand which young people are being reached by the project and what support looks like**. Central data monitoring will need to be enhanced to better understand the characteristics, needs and strengths of those receiving support and the nature and intensity of support delivered. Combined with more extensive outcomes monitoring data, this could be used to understand which

elements of the support might be contributing to its success, and for whom support is working best.

- Stakeholders also indicated that future outcomes monitoring would benefit from a focus on **softer, individualised outcomes that illustrate interim or incremental change**, as well as the harder outcome measures relating to exclusion or involvement in serious violence.

3.1 Overview

This chapter discusses the successes and challenges in setting up, adapting and monitoring delivery of the Education Inclusion Project. It mainly draws on findings from focus groups and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders, and interviews with beneficiaries and parents. Where relevant, findings from analysis of monitoring data and from the impact evaluation of Bristol's education inclusion work (drawn from qualitative consultation with key stakeholders and professionals with insight into beneficiaries) are also included. These findings are intended to support future planning and delivery of similar local work.

A note on terminology

Stakeholders from a range of organisations were consulted as part of this evaluation, including:

- Support Workers
- EIMs
- Area leads
- Wider stakeholders (e.g. from the VRU, YOS, Police, education, social care)
- Families (children and young people who received support and parents whose children received support)

This section draws on findings from consultation with all the groups above, as well as those consulted as part of the impact evaluation of Bristol's education inclusion work (please see the impact evaluation report of Bristol's education inclusion work for more detail, available in Appendix 1 in 9.1).

3.2 Setting up to account for short-term funding

3.2.1 The importance of pragmatism

Due to the short-term nature of the funding for the Education Inclusion Project and the need to get up and running as soon as possible, area leads across the

five areas had to make pragmatic decisions about setting up governance structures and recruiting to delivery teams.

In addition, in each local area there was a range of pre-existing work to address education inclusion and it was important to use this funding to develop additional, complementary provision.

The OPCC and local areas agreed that local design and delivery of the project would be the responsibility of area leads, because they would be best able to judge how to utilise existing local resource and processes during the short time frame and ensure that it complemented pre-existing local work.

3.2.2 The need for more central guidance via the OPCC

However, local strategic stakeholders shared that more central guidance from Avon and Somerset OPCC would have been helpful during this design process, especially sharing evidence about the impact of existing education exclusion and examples of best practice in education inclusion work.

In particular, they identified that this may have improved the delivery teams' (EIMs and support workers) relationship with education providers by providing them with an evidence-based framework through which they could discuss the benefits and potential impact of the Education Inclusion Project.

In addition, stakeholders reported that having access to examples of best practice might have complemented the local knowledge held by area leads and delivery teams, thereby helping to increase the efficacy of the interventions while maintaining a focus on responding to local needs. Similarly, they suggested that this best practice information could have enabled local leads to refine the referral criteria earlier on in the roll-out of the Education Inclusion Project (please see 3.3 for more detail).

3.2.3 The challenge of limited lead-in time

Although local areas were successful in implementing the project in challenging timescales, a greater amount of scoping time during the design stage of the project could have been beneficial. For Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, EIMs had scoping time at the beginning of the implementation period to design the role around local need and build positive relationships with education providers (see 6.6):

“We were given time to figure out what the EIM role should look like, speak to people, attend meetings, and design the role around how we could be most effective. It helped us to designate certain areas of responsibility for each EIM to avoid duplication.”

EIM in Bristol VRU

A similar scoping phase in the Education Inclusion Project may have helped to more clearly delineate the support worker role from the YOS and Early Help and

mitigate challenges associated with line management structures (please see section 3.2.4 for more detail).



Recommendation: Consider adopting a ‘scoping phase’ of implementation for future education inclusion work. This could include time to review best practice examples and guidance.

An extended scoping phase at the beginning of any future education inclusion work, which includes central guidance from Avon and Somerset OPCC, may help improved relationships with education providers, increase the efficacy of interventions, and refine referral criteria.

3.2.4 Governance

As discussed in section 3.2, decisions on governance structures were partly determined by the need for pragmatism and speed of implementation. There were benefits and disadvantages to the different approaches adopted. However, on balance it appears that basing EIMs and/or support workers in the YOS enabled local areas to capitalise most on existing structures and processes. However, in the main Bristol education inclusion work, where there was a longer-lead in time, basing the work in Early Help was identified as a key supporting factor in the successful implementation of the work.

Areas adopting model B (YOS-based support workers) chose to manage the project through the YOS because they could hit the ground running, relying on existing governance structures, systems, and processes (e.g., data monitoring, referral routes). This was particularly important considering the short timescales of the project. The area who adopted model C (VCS-based support workers) also had EIMs employed in the YOS who could draw on existing relationships, networks and forums.

In these models some areas recruited new workers, whilst others seconded workers from other teams within the YOS and local authority. Stakeholders suggested that seconding existing YOS workers who were familiar with structures and systems was the most effective combination for effective and speedy roll-out of the project; it reduced the time and resource spent on training staff, establishing referral routes, data sharing agreements and awareness raising across the sector. For example, an EIM reported:

“The important thing is that we didn’t start this project from a stand still position. It is built on pre-existing relationships and initiatives. Otherwise, we could not have delivered it in this short timeline.”

EIM

Where new staff were hired in model B (YOS-based support workers), there were more difficulties establishing clear governance structures. This led to a slower roll-out of the work, as initially there was a focus on establishing clearer working relationships within the YOS, rather than with education providers.

In model A (schools-based) the work was sub-contracted out to education providers as part of a grant agreement. This governance structure has enabled the project to start operation more quickly in some education providers, because referrals are received internally. However, it has delayed the start of delivery in others, due to challenges associated with awarding grant agreements in short timescales, resulting in delays in recruitment.

As part of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, the team are based within Early Help. This was highlighted as a key enabler for successful implementation, because it supports engagement with young people (see 4.4) and multi-agency partnership working (see 5.3). Area leads involved in the Education Inclusion Project may therefore wish to explore locating staff in Early Help in future variations of education inclusion work.



Case study: Bristol VRU's core education inclusion work: Line management of support workers

As part of Bristol VRU's main education inclusion work, there are three YJSWs, two of which are managed by Senior Youth and Community Managers in the VRU teams, and one of which is managed by the YOT.

Two main challenges were identified relating to line-management of YJSWs:

- **Accountability.** Stakeholders reported that the YOTs and police ratify all the decision-making around the WiS pathway (the process of referring into the education inclusion team when a child or young person is found with a weapon), including direct work with young people, through the OOC panel. However, the EIMs and YJSWs are not line-managed by the YOTs or the police (they sit within Early Help). This could create issues of accountability in the future, especially if the EIMs and OOC panel disagree on what support a young person required, although there have been no reported problems so far. However, the delineation of Early Help and the YOTs may also give the WiS pathway more credibility, as it means all decisions are quality assured by an external source.
- **Confusion around responsibilities.** The education inclusion work in Bristol mainly sits under the Early Help Families in Focus (FiF) team. This team has similar roles and aims to the YOTs, but different approaches and target cohorts. This has resulted in some confusion about line management and responsibilities; stakeholders reported that in some instances YJSWs are expected to work across multiple agencies, resulting in very high caseloads (see 4.5.7). This confusion is further compounded by the fact that in some local areas the YJSWs are employed by Early Help, and in others they are part of the YOT. Greater clarity about all roles involved in the VRU's education inclusion work, and the aims of these roles, might help mitigate these issues and aid wider roll-out of the education inclusion work.

3.2.5 Recruitment and skills

Short-term funding cycles and uncertainty about future funding decisions have posed challenges for recruitment for both the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol VRU's education inclusion team. This is because it makes it difficult to recruit staff who would prefer longer contracts. For example, a key stakeholder for Bristol's education inclusion team noted:

“The only problem is that they haven't committed to making it [Safer Options] permanent. We just keep extending contracts. You need a strong and stable workforce, and they don't contribute to that. People want stability in their lives.”

Bristol VRU Key stakeholder

For the Education Inclusion Project in particular, the short lead-in times also resulted in insufficient time to reflect on specific skill sets that might be useful to recruit. This became a vicious circle, because it was actually especially important to recruit highly skilled workers because they needed to be able to deliver effective work in short timescales when there was not enough time to train them up to a high standard.

Although some sites in model B (YOS-based support workers) tried to recruit highly skilled workers by seconding people into the role from within the YOS and local authority, stakeholders suggested that this relied on existing skills that were not always directly transferable to the Education Inclusion Project. For example, one area lead stated:

“We recruited quickly through internal secondments. The downside was that maybe going external would have got post-holders with more education experience. The reality is that we couldn't have done this in the short timescales, so we didn't have any other choice. But it did mean we were lacking some skillsets that we would want moving forwards.”

Area lead



Recommendation: Increase the length of funding cycles for education inclusion work

The evaluation findings show that there is a demand and need for funding of education inclusion work in Avon and Somerset. However, the short-term nature of funding can affect recruitment of appropriately skilled workers. Where workers need to be seconded from elsewhere in the local authority, this can result in under-capacity in other teams. Short funding cycles can also make it challenging to build positive working relationships with multi-agency partners (see chapter 5 for more detail).

Increasing the length of funding cycles could therefore increase the efficacy of education inclusion work by supporting local areas to employ highly skilled workers and build positive relationships with partners, both of which are key features of effective education inclusion work (see 6 for more detail).



Challenges for implementation: sub-contracting recruitment of support workers

In model A (school-based support workers), due to the short-term nature of the funding, the VRU relied on grant agreements. Therefore recruitment of the support workers was the responsibility of the schools themselves. Area leads had no oversight or input into desired skills at all, and due to the timescales, it was not always possible for schools to recruit staff with the most appropriate skillset. Additionally, stakeholders (primarily support workers) suggested that this recruitment approach wedded the support workers to the schools' agendas, inhibiting their capacity to effectively build relationships with children and young people and maintain a child-centred approach in their work (see section 4.4 for more detail).

3.3 Adapting the referral criteria and target cohort

3.3.1 Broadening of eligibility criteria and target cohort

Originally, the Education Inclusion Project was planned to target mainly secondary school children and young people aged 11-16 facing a PEX or managed move due to reasons associated with serious youth violence, CCE or CSE. In reality, some local areas in the Education Inclusion Project removed risk of SYV as a referral criterion. This was because they did not view the original target cohort (children and young people at risk of exclusion and SYV) as appropriate for their local area. This was mainly in areas where there were:

- Low numbers of SYV incidents. Stakeholders in these areas agreed that it should be removed from the referral criteria as it limited the reach of the project and the number of referrals received.

- Existing interventions addressing SYV, such as in Bristol and Somerset. Stakeholders in these areas agreed that widening the referral criteria for the project would allow for more preventative work to occur. This would support the existing work tackling SYV and reach a wider cohort of children and young people.

In other areas, risk of SYV remained a referral criterion for the project but the extent to which this risk was focused on through the direct work with children and young people and education providers depended on the model of delivery. For example, stakeholders reported that:

- **In model A (school-based support workers), there is less of a focus on SYV**, with a greater focus on the risk of PEX, fixed-term exclusions, CCE and CSE. Stakeholders suggested this was because the support workers are located in schools, so they assume much more of a 'preventative role' focusing on early intervention rather than responding to incidents of SYV.³¹
- **In model B (YOS-based support workers), there is a greater focus on SYV**. Stakeholders suggested this is because the model is located in the YOS, so there is a natural focus on reducing the criminalisation of children and young people once an incident has occurred, which may involve reducing the risk of involvement in SYV.

3.3.2 Views on the most appropriate target cohort for future iterations of the Education Inclusion Project

Overall, most stakeholders across all areas agreed that targeting anyone at risk of exclusion, regardless of whether SYV was a specific concern at the point of referral, was the most suitable approach to tackle both exclusion and SYV in the long-term. This was because they perceived stability of educational placement to be a protective factor against SYV.³²

Further suggestions from stakeholders for future changes to eligibility criteria to ensure the Education Inclusion Project is reaching the target cohort of children and young people at risk of exclusion included:

- **Expanding the age group of children and young people eligible for support to include primary school children**, especially those in Years 5 and 6. Stakeholders suggested that this could help support their transition into

³¹ This may also be because model A (school-based support workers) developed as a result of pre-existing work on education inclusion in Bristol that focuses on and provides support for children and young people dealing with SYV and/or the possession of weapons in schools. As there was already support in place for this cohort of children and young people, it may have been possible to use this additional funding to further develop the offer (see separate report on the impact evaluation of Bristol's education inclusion work for more information, available in Appendix 1 in 9.1).

³² The evidence base for correlation between exclusion from education and involvement in offending and/or serious youth violence is considered in more detail in chapter 2 of the report on the impact evaluation of Bristol's education inclusion work, available in Appendix 1 in 9.1. This summarises the findings of a rapid evidence assessment relating to this topic.

secondary school. This was also echoed in the impact evaluation of Bristol's Education Inclusion work (see Appendix 1 in 9.1).

- **Clarifying the specific needs of children and young people that the Education Inclusion Project can appropriately address if interventions continue to be short-term.** This is especially important given the short length of the intervention, to ensure it is working with the right target cohort and can maximise its impact. For example, the majority of stakeholders reported that referrals for children and young people with complex SEND and attachment difficulties are not appropriate for the project because it would not be possible to address their needs within the timescale of the project. Having said this, there was a consensus that children and young people with SEND are disproportionately at risk of exclusion and would benefit from support from education inclusion support under a different model. The demand for support for children and young people with SEND was also illustrated by the relatively high proportion of those referred to the Project who had SEND (see 4.3.4).

3.3.3 The framing and implications of 'the teachable moment'

Initially, the 'teachable moment' of the Education Inclusion Project was defined as:

'A PEX or managed move due to reasons associated with serious youth violence, CCE or CSE, including being found with a weapon in school.'

Avon and Somerset OPCC's Teachable Moment Bid

Area leads agreed that the point of exclusion from school was a teachable moment, and that reframing the notion of a teachable moment from something that occurs in a police custody suite or hospital to something that can occur in an education setting was an innovative and important part of the project.

However, there were mixed views on whether:

1. Risk of exclusion is an appropriate 'teachable moment' for children and young people at risk of exploitation.
2. The risk of SYV or CSE/CCE is needed for the point of exclusion to be classed as a teachable moment, particularly for children and young people who may be disproportionately at risk of exclusion.

All stakeholders involved in the Education Inclusion Project raised the concern that the use of one cohesive 'teachable moment', i.e. the point where a child or young person is at risk of exclusion, could lead to the Education Inclusion Project not reaching some groups of children and young people who may be at risk of CSE or CCE, but not at risk of exclusion.

In particular, they suggested that the inclusion of incidents of SYV to determine eligibility for support could negatively affect girls or pupils with certain types of educational or learning needs who may be less disruptive and violent, and

therefore not at risk of exclusion, but have similar underlying needs and vulnerabilities to their male peers who are at risk of exclusion. For example, one strategic stakeholder reported:

“Kids that are hitting exclusion criteria are the ones that disrupt. There is more of a likelihood of lads kicking off and girls internalising what is occurring, as they tend towards self-harm, anxiety and eating disorders...The kids that kick off are the ones that receive all the support, the quiet ones sometimes need support too but are not targeted as part of this project.”

Strategic stakeholder

Stakeholders therefore argued that widening the inclusion criteria for the Education Inclusion Project could help identify a greater number of children and young people at risk of CCE and CSE who require support. This is because it allows for a more inclusive definition of what constitutes a ‘teachable moment’ which would account for a more diverse range of experiences and is more individualised.



Recommendation: Establish agreed referral criteria which balance widening reach with managing demand and targeting resource to those with greatest risk and need.

Overall, there was a consensus among stakeholders across all areas that stability of educational placement is a protective factor against SYV, and as such targeting anyone at risk of exclusion, regardless of whether SYV was a specific concern at the point of referral, was the most suitable approach to tackle both exclusion and SYV in the long-term. Future education inclusion work may therefore wish to consider removing SYV as a referral criterion. This could also help address the disproportionate risk of exclusion faced by children and young people with SEND, who may not necessarily be at risk of SYV or exploitation.

Having said this, for future projects that focus on ‘teachable moments’ for young people at risk of SYV, CCE or CSE, stakeholders may wish to consider removing exclusion as a referral criterion. This is because some children and young people are at risk of SYV and exploitation but not exclusion (young women and girls, for example).

Stakeholders also suggested that expanding the age group of children and young people eligible for support to include children in the later years of primary school could help support their transition into secondary school.

However, more open referral criteria risk generating very high levels of demand which outstrip the delivery resource. This might result in inability to meet demand, or the need to triage referrals based on severity of need. Indeed, the shifts in referral criteria did contribute to some misunderstanding from education providers around eligibility, resulting in inappropriate referrals and demand outweighing the capacity of delivery teams (see section 5.2).

3.4 The importance of improving future approaches to project monitoring

3.4.1 Potential improvements to existing central monitoring data framework and dataset

Area leads for the Education Inclusion Project are required to submit data into a monitoring framework, which is overseen by Avon and Somerset OPCC. Analysis of data submitted via this monitoring framework revealed a large amount of missing data. All stakeholders discussed the difficulty of fulfilling the data monitoring forms for the OPCC/ Home Office, sharing that they were difficult and time-consuming to complete, adding more administration to their already busy schedules. This may have led to gaps in the monitoring data framework.

In addition, the indicators included in the framework do not capture the full detail of young people’s characteristics, needs and strengths at the start of support, or of the nature and intensity of support provided to them. In order to understand which elements of the support are contributing to its success, and for which

cohorts it is most successful, it will be necessary to enhance data monitoring and collection processes across Avon and Somerset.

For example, demographic data, including the gender, age, ethnicity, and disability status of children and young people referred for support was missing for a substantial proportion of the overall cohort, as was data in relation to risk factors. This makes it difficult to comment on the profile of those referred for support, and ultimately to combine this with outcomes data to understand whether the impact of the Project is different for different cohorts. This is particularly significant in relation to data regarding disability status, on which most areas currently provide very basic information, despite this group of children and young people being disproportionately at risk of exclusion (see section 4.3.4).

Similarly, collection of data regarding the form and extent of support needs to be more robust to allow for a full understanding of what constitutes a successful education inclusion intervention. This includes, in particular, the date support started and finished, the number of contacts with EIMs and/or support workers, whether support was accepted, and the reasons for support being declined. This will be especially important as the project moves towards assessing outcomes, again to allow for analysis to ascertain the most successful support type and intensity. Finally, more consistent collection of data across all local areas may enable more comparative analysis across different sites. Currently, the extent to which data is collected for certain metrics varies considerably depending on which area is submitting the data.



Recommendation: Collect more detailed, consistent and complete profile, intervention and outcomes monitoring data for the cohort.

Within the central data framework reported to the OPCC, there is limited and inconsistent demographic data and data on the form and extent of support makes. In addition, at this stage there was very little data available to the evaluation in relation to the outcomes of the work. This makes it difficult to understand impact and any differential impact for different groups, to unpick what constitutes a successful education inclusion intervention, and to compare progress across the different sites.

3.4.2 Stakeholder views on appropriate outcomes monitoring

There are some concerns from stakeholders (primarily area leads, EIMs and support workers) about using quantitative data on harder outcomes to accurately measure the impact of the Education Inclusion Project. They recognised that the current outcomes monitoring requirements measure outcomes which are the project aims and intended longer-term outcomes, such as reduction in PEX and increased attendance (see section 2.3). However, they also highlighted that these measures do not account for smaller, more incremental changes witnessed in a service delivery capacity that can also be indicative of positive outcomes for children and young people.

Stakeholder suggested that these 'softer' outcomes are more accessible for children and young people to understand and are used during goal-setting exercises as part of the support they receive. They are also more useful when measuring change within a short timeframe, as they measure short- and medium-term outcomes. A support worker reported that:

"We have started ... building outcomes around what children and young people tell us into our system... for example, leaving the house, making a friend in school. Sometimes they are things that as adults can seem small, but we need to recognise these outcomes.

Prescribed outcomes from the Home Office include reduction in PEX, FTE, improved behaviour scores in CIMS data, increased aspirations, increased attendance. We have lots of softer outcomes that will lead to these prescribed outcomes, but we can actually discuss soft outcomes with children and young people but not the prescribed outcomes."

Support worker



Recommendation: Cordis Bright to develop outcomes measurement approaches in collaboration with the OPCC to support ongoing impact evaluation.

Linked to developing a new Theory of Change (see 2.5.1), we will also provide specific recommendations about future outcomes measures and monitoring, which might inform and enable future evaluation of the impact of any continuation of the projects. Systematic collection of outcomes data is important to attribute impact of education inclusion work on any reduction in SYV or other aspect of children and young people's lives. This data is not currently available for Bristol VRU's core education inclusion offer and is under development for the Education Inclusion Project. Development of outcomes measurement frameworks

4 Reaching children and young people

Key findings

- Referrals to the Education Inclusion Project have been higher than anticipated; the **Project received referrals for 319 children and young people between 01/09/21 and 03/03/22, against a minimum target of 280**. This is testament to local areas' ability to mobilise quickly and generate referrals in challenging timescales.
- Originally, the Education Inclusion Project was targeting mainly secondary school children and young people aged 11-16 facing a PEX or managed move due to reasons associated with serious youth violence, CCE or CSE. **Analysis of monitoring data suggests that those being referred to the Project are largely from this target cohort**. 81% of all children and young people referred were known to have been previously excluded, moved or persistently absent from school, and over half (57%) were known to be involved in offending.
- **Stakeholders acknowledged that exclusion disproportionately affects children and young people from some racially minoritised groups** and especially Black young men. They also recognised the importance of tackling this disproportionality and its root causes. However, stakeholders in most local areas shared that disproportionality due to race and ethnicity is not a primary area of concern in their local area due to the very small numbers of racially minoritised pupils. The exception to this is Bristol, where racially minoritised pupils make up a substantial proportion of the general population and those referred to the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol's wider education inclusion work under the VRU.
- Instead, **tackling disproportionality of exclusions for children and young people with SEND is a widely-recognised issue** by stakeholders in all areas implementing the Education Inclusion Project, with relatively high proportions of children and young people with SEND referred to the education inclusion project.
- There have been **varying levels of engagement of children and young people in the direct support work offered by the project**. This seems to be primarily dependent on how affiliated the support workers are with education providers, with those more removed from education providers finding it easier to engage children and young people, despite greater logistical challenges.
- **The short length of the intervention (six to eight weeks) has presented challenges in some areas and cases to engaging and building relationships with children and young people**. It also makes it less feasible to support children and young people with more complex needs which may take longer to address (e.g. those with SEND). Increased

flexibility in the support delivered may help mitigate this, and this is easier to provide in schools-based models.

- **As result of the success in generating referrals, there is insufficient capacity to meet demand across the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol VRU’s education inclusion team.** This can create longer wait times for children and young people and less cohesive partnership working with the wider system.

4.1 Overview

This chapter summarises evaluation findings relating to the Education Inclusion Project’s success in reaching children and young people, as well as challenges which inhibit the project’s ability to reach and engage them. This includes information about the scale of referral, the cohort referred for support, the engagement of young people after referral and the capacity of the project to meet demand. Findings are based on analysis of monitoring data and on consultation, especially with stakeholders more closely involved in project implementation.

4.2 Scale of referrals

319 children and young people were referred to the Education Inclusion Project between 01/09/21 and 03/03/22. This was against a minimum target of 280.³³ Somerset received the most referrals at 44% of all referrals, followed by Bristol and North Somerset (see Figure 8 for more detail).

Figure 8: Referrals for Education Inclusion Project support by local area (n=319)

Local area	Number of referrals	Percentage of all EI referrals
Somerset	139	44%
Bristol	55	17%
North Somerset	54	17%
South Gloucestershire	45	14%
BANES	26	8%
Total	319	100%

Source: OPCC EIP Monitoring Framework Key roles and activities

³³ Source: Avon and Somerset Education Inclusion: Teachable Moments Project projected figures

All stakeholders across Avon and Somerset reported that referrals to the project have been higher-than-hoped, enabling the project to reach a relatively large number of children and young people in short timescales. They highlighted two main reasons for these strong referral rates:

- The education inclusion work is filling a gap in capacity in the sector.
- The free cost of the resource is an incentive for education providers to refer young people in for support.

Reach of the support might be further increased by allowing more scoping time for similar interventions in the future. For example, as part of the implementation of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, EIMs used a scoping phase to develop internal systems of delegation for systems-wide work; each EIM targets specific issues and is the focal point for specific provisions. This has resulted in a wider reach of the service.

4.3 Characteristics of the cohort referred for support

4.3.1 Experiences and risk factors

Originally, the Education Inclusion Project was targeting mainly secondary school children and young people aged 11-16 facing a PEX or managed move due to reasons associated with serious youth violence, CCE or CSE. Analysis of monitoring data suggests that those being referred to the Project are largely from this target cohort. 81% of all children and young people referred were known to have been previously excluded, moved or persistently absent from school, and over half (57%) were known to be involved in offending.

Analysis of monitoring data indicates that children and young people who are known to social services and who are known to use or deal drugs are also commonly referred for support. These may therefore be common indicators for young people at risk of exclusion, and local areas may wish to target support towards these groups in future. Figure 9 shows prevalence of each risk factor across each area.

Figure 9: Risk factors experienced by individuals referred for EI support by local area³⁴

Risk factors	BANES	Bristol	North Somerset	South Glos	Whole cohort
Known to have been previously excluded, moved or persistently absent from school	73%	93%	74%	80%	81%
Known to be involved in offending	38%	42%	63%	80%	57%
Known to social services	31%	40%	57%	64%	50%
Known to use or deal drugs	8%	51%	30%	36%	34%
Known to be affected by exploitation	12%	15%	13%	67%	27%
Known to be involved with weapons	0%	16%	13%	27%	16%
Regular missing person	4%	13%	6%	11%	9%
Known to be NEET	8%	2%	0%	9%	4%

Source: OPCC EIP Monitoring Framework

4.3.2 Age

The average age of children and young people referred for support at the point of referral was 13.5. However, there is difference according to local area; the average age in BANES is over a year older than the whole cohort at 14.6, and slightly lower than the whole cohort in Bristol and Somerset (13.2). Figure 10 shows average ages at point of referral for all local areas.

³⁴ Data on risk factors was not available for Somerset.

Figure 10: Average age of individuals referred by local area (n=276)³⁵

Local area	Average age at referral
BANES	14.6
North Somerset	13.5
South Gloucestershire	13.5
Bristol	13.2
Somerset	13.2
Whole cohort	13.5

Source: OPCC EIP Monitoring Framework

Stakeholders reported that currently the majority of referrals are for 14–15-year-old males. They highlighted that it could be beneficial to extend support to Year 11 pupils who are often not referred by education providers despite being eligible for support because they will be leaving the education provision at the end of the academic year.

4.3.3 Ethnicity

Stakeholders acknowledged that exclusion disproportionately affects children and young people from some racially minoritised groups and especially Black young men.³⁶ They also recognised the importance of tackling this disproportionality and its root causes. However, stakeholders in most local areas shared that disproportionality due to race and ethnicity is not a primary area of concern in their local area due to the very small numbers of racially marginalised pupils.

Ethnicity data provided to the evaluation also suggests that young people from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic groups do not seem to be disproportionately identified as at risk of exclusion through the Education Inclusion Project. Out of those children and young people referred to the Project for whom ethnicity data was available, most were White (84%), with a smaller proportion Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic groups (17%).³⁷ Whilst the representation of these groups in Bristol was higher (36%), this may be a reflection of the more ethnically diverse

³⁵ Age at referral was not available for 13% (n=43) of individuals, all of whom were from Somerset.

³⁶ See, for example, Timpson, E. (2019). *Timpson Review of School Exclusion*. and Lammy, D. (2017). *The Lammy Review An independent review into the treatment of, and outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in the Criminal Justice System*.

³⁷ Percentages do not total to 100% due to rounding.

population in the city.³⁸ Figure 11 shows a breakdown by local areas of the ethnicities of children and young people referred for support.

Figure 11: Ethnicity of individuals referred by local area (n=251)

Local area	Asian/ Asian British	Black African/ Black Caribbean / Black British	Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Groups	Other Ethnic Group	White
BANES	5%	5%	18%	5%	68%
Bristol	5%	18%	5%	9%	62%
North Somerset	0%	0%	2%	2%	96%
Somerset	1%	1%	3%	1%	94%
South Gloucestershire	0%	0%	9%	2%	89%
Whole cohort³⁹	2%	5%	6%	4%	84%

4.3.4 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Disproportionality of exclusions for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) was a more common focus across the local areas involved in the Education Inclusion Project. Across all local areas, stakeholders suggested that in their experience, children and young people with SEND are more likely to be at risk of exclusion than their peers.

This is corroborated by analysis of monitoring data for those referred to the Project. Of the 206 children and young people for whom disability data was available, 24% (n=49) had a disability. Of 180 referrals for whom risk factor data was available, 24% (n=44) were known to have a neuro-developmental condition.⁴⁰

³⁸ Bristol City Council (2021) *The population of Bristol*. Available at: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/statistics-census-information/the-population-of-bristol> [Accessed 28 April 2022]. This report states that individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups make up 28% of the child or young person (aged 0-15) population in Bristol, suggesting that individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds are slightly overrepresented in the education inclusion cohort. However, this report is based on data from the 2011 census, and trends suggest the percentage of this population in Bristol is increasing over time.

³⁹ These figures represent the ethnicity breakdown of the total sample of 251 across all areas for whom relevant data was available.

⁴⁰ Data on neuro-developmental conditions was not available for Somerset.

This is higher than the national average of children and young people with disabilities (9%)⁴¹. Stakeholders suggested this disproportionality is a result of children and young people not receiving appropriate support from education providers, leading to potentially disruptive behaviours in school which put them at risk of exclusion. They also argued that professionals treating these children and young people in the same way as their peers who may present with similar behaviours negates children and young peoples' experience of discrimination and their difficulties accessing support. Overall, this can lead to those with certain SEND needs, such as ADHD, being disproportionately at risk of exclusion.

Providing targeted support for education providers around supporting SEND pupils, including training to destigmatise certain presentations of SEND, might help to reduce exclusions for these children and young people. Expanding the referral criteria to include SEND young people at risk of exclusion but not SYV or exploitation, might also help to intervene with those at risk of exclusion and provide a platform from which this training and support for education providers can be delivered.

4.3.5 Gender

Data analysis also indicated that the majority of children and young people referred for support across all areas were males (70%). However, this was not consistent across all areas; Figure 12 shows that Bristol (36%) and Somerset (39%) had a higher proportion of referrals for females than others and North Somerset (13%) and South Gloucestershire (9%) had a much lower proportion of referrals for females.

It is not clear whether these differences are because females are more at risk of exclusions, SYV or exploitation in some areas than others, or whether this is because some areas are better at identifying females at risk than others.

⁴¹ Department for Work & Pensions and National Statistics (2022) *Family Resources Survey: financial year 2020 to 2021* Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2020-to-2021/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2020-to-2021#disability-1> [Accessed 29 April 2022].

Figure 12: Gender of individuals referred by local area (n=306)

Local area	Males	Females
South Gloucestershire	91%	9%
North Somerset	87%	13%
BANES	69%	31%
Bristol	64%	36%
Somerset ⁴²	52%	39%
Whole cohort	70% (n=213)	30% (n=93)

In the future, Avon and Somerset OPCC colleagues might consider further research into the gendered associations linked to certain risk factors and behaviours, to provide guidance on how similar projects can develop and implement inclusive referral and eligibility criterion. Further exploration of the reasons behind gendered differences in referrals across different local areas might also help ensure that all children and young people in the target cohort are receiving appropriate support and being identified effectively.

⁴² Gender information was not available for 9% (n=13) of individuals referred from Somerset.



Recommendation: Conduct a robust needs assessment of young people at risk of exclusions and SYV/CCE/CSE in Avon and Somerset.

There is limited understanding of disproportionality of exclusions in Avon and Somerset, and around the intersectionality of SYV, exploitation, exclusion, gender, age SEND, and ethnicity. Nevertheless, there is some evidence from qualitative consultation to suggest that young males and children and young people with SEND are disproportionality identified as at risk of exclusion. Avon and Somerset colleagues may wish to consider conducting a robust needs assessment in the future to help fully these needs so that support can be better targeted to local need.

This aligns with Recommendation 18 in Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice Board's recently published review of disproportionality, which suggests that Local Authorities and YOTs need to collate and analysed linked school exclusion and offending data to understanding whether children and young people from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority backgrounds are more likely to be excluded from school, and whether that exclusion increases the likelihood of them entering the criminal justice system.⁴³

4.4 Mixed success in engaging referred children and young people in support

4.4.1 The value of providing support outside of school settings

Delivery stakeholders (support workers and EIMs) reported that they managed to engage with and deliver support to children and young people with varying degrees of success. They suggested that the main reason for differences between how effectively they manage to engage with children and young people is the model of delivery of the Education Inclusion Project, with engagement proving more challenging in model A (school-based support workers).

Across all sites the support workers agreed that **if the education inclusion work was located outside of education providers, it would be easier to engage the children and young people, as it would allow the support they provide to be more child-centred.** They also agreed that education settings were often not a 'safe' or 'positive' space for the children and young people receiving support, and therefore the support would be more effective and children and young people would engage more if it occurred outside the education setting.

⁴³ Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice Board (2022) *Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System* Available at: <https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Identifying-Disproportionality-Report.pdf> [Accessed 17 June 2022].



Case study: Model A (schools-based): Challenges and strengths in engaging children and young people

In model A (school-based support workers), strict safeguarding and behavioural policies in school can sometimes make it challenging for support workers to maintain confidentiality and therefore build trust with children and young people. Stakeholders reported that this has led to lower levels of engagement in the project, compared to support workers in models B (YOS-based support workers) and C (VCS-based support workers), who may be able to have more honest and open conversations with children and young people.

Additionally, support workers based in model A (school-based support workers) shared that it can be difficult to build a relationship with the children and young people they support as often they are viewed as a schoolteacher and not a youth worker, inherently changing the nature of the relationship. This is further exacerbated by support workers taking on additional tasks in schools, for example supervisory roles in designated in-school suspension locations, as it further enforces the perception that they are school staff.

The Bristol school-based support workers also reported confusion amongst themselves around the remit of their roles. They also acknowledged that working across multiple agendas and tailoring support for the children and young people according to the needs of education providers and their behavioural policies, shifts the focus away from the children and young people. This inherently changes the objective of their work from supporting children and young people to remain in school to enforcing behavioural policies and addressing certain behaviours. One support worker shared:

“Coming from a youth work background, you’re more of a natural person. Now you have to be on the side of the school all the time.”

Support worker

Although all stakeholders agreed that locating support workers in schools made it harder to engage the children and young people long-term, they did share that model A (school-based support workers) has some positive elements including greater access to children and young people outside of sessions and flexibility of sessions, whilst support workers in models B (YOS-based support workers) and C (VCS-based support workers) need to travel to meet children and young people and cannot have the same levels of spontaneity and responsiveness to need and demand.

4.4.2 Potential negative effect of short intervention length on engagement

There was broad consensus across the sites involved in the Education Inclusion Project that the short length of the education inclusion interventions (between six to eight weeks) presents challenges for support workers’ relationship building

with children and young people and can lead to issues engaging them in the work more widely.

This was highlighted as one of the main issues in the delivery of the work, as most of the outcomes experienced by children and young people hinge on work undertaken with support workers and the ability for them to trust and confide in support workers. All children and young people who received support agreed, reporting that they would want to receive support for longer periods of time. A support worker shared:

“For me, personally, because I know we are on a time limit, and I know it’s not very long at all, I have not been doing as much relationship building as in other roles. It bothers me a bit because I am rushing it along a bit to hit targets. But I am not sure if that will work with all young people.”

Support worker

Receiving the short intervention might also be harmful; for example, those with attachment issues might suffer additional trauma when it comes to an end.



Case study: short length of the Education Inclusion Project and its impact on outcomes for children and young people

Most parents of children and young people receiving support highlighted that the Education Inclusion Project’s short length affected the extent to which their children experienced positive outcomes. They suggested that longer interventions, with more discretionary flexibility about the length of support, would allow the support workers to build deeper relationships with the young people and better cater to their needs. Additionally, they suggested it would support children and young peoples’ positive behaviour changes, especially during the early stages, helping further embed the impact of the work in the long-term. This would result in sustained positive outcomes for the children and young people. In one instance, a parent reported:

“There was not enough time. Not long after the support stopped, I found out they [the young person] tried growing weed. It is peer pressure. I feel everything was going alright, but the support wasn’t long enough. Maybe if it was for 12 weeks, or even longer than that it would have been better [...] This kind of support relies on building a rapport with someone and it takes time when you are working with a kid. Six weeks is not long enough, but I understand that it’s hard because you need funding for other kids.”

Parent

Despite this, some stakeholders reported that the short length of the intervention was helpful in determining referral criteria and identifying appropriate thresholds of need that can be supported in this timeframe, and that this ensured more appropriate referrals were accepted, and the focus of the intervention remained

on exclusion. They suggested that longer interventions could possibly shift the focus towards other issues, for example towards mental health, which is not the purpose of the Education Inclusion Project.



Key enabling factors: engaging children and young people

- **The ability of support workers to access referrals into the community** e.g., providing free access to sports centres for children and young people. This incentivises children and young people to engage with the support workers and the education inclusion work more widely. This is linked to being based outside of education provision and in organisations with existing community links, e.g. for the Teachable Moments Project Model B (YOS-based support workers), C (VCS-based support workers) or for Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, being based in Early Help.
- **Distance of education inclusion work from the Police.** Bristol VRU's education inclusion team are located in Early Help. This has helped distance the education inclusion work from the police EIMs and the WiS pathway from the police, which has improved engagement with both children and young people and education providers, who are historically more distrustful of the police. This improved engagement helps build relationships and means EIMs can more easily challenge education setting to work with more of a safeguarding lens
- **The regular consistency of support provided by support workers** allows children and young people to build relationships with support workers effectively and encourage continuous engagement (see section 6.2 for more details).



Challenges: engaging young people

- **Poor attendance of children and young people in education** (especially for model A: school-based support workers). As the direct work with children and young people in model A occurs in schools, the poor attendance of children and young people directly impacts the ability of support workers to engage them. As this cohort is more likely to have poor attendance, it should be considered during decisions about the location of delivery.
- Most stakeholders agreed that **parents** are one of the biggest challenges to engaging children and young people for a multitude of reasons: (a) parents have negative views about education and services which may be reflected in their children's views, (b) parents try to guide the work, and (c) difficulty obtaining consent from parents.
- Across all models, stakeholders shared that **the short length of the intervention** may negatively impact the relationship and engagement with children and young people (please see section 4.4.2 for more details).

4.4.3 The importance of effective exit planning

All stakeholders agreed that because the intervention is so short, exit planning is very important to ensure that the underlying needs that have put children and young people at risk of exclusion, which are unlikely to have been resolved within the timespan of the project, continue to be addressed. This might include onwards referrals for additional needs, and recommending that existing support, such as family and wellbeing services, speech and language assessments, and mentoring schemes, continue. This ties into the wider aims of the Education Inclusion Project (see section 2.3 for more detail).

Stakeholders noted that exit planning in model A (school-based support workers) can be particularly challenging, as support workers continue to see children and young people around school, and do not necessarily have access to wider agencies for onwards referrals.

4.5 Limited capacity and resource to meet demand

As result of the success in generating referrals, there is insufficient capacity to meet demand across the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol VRU's education inclusion team. In addition, there is confusion among some staff about governance structures (see section 3.2). This can create longer wait times for children and young people and less cohesive partnership working with the wider system.

Resource challenges in each model include:

- In model A (school-based support workers), support workers reported that they could be drawn in to cover missing capacity in schools (please see section 4.4.1) and had high caseloads. Support workers said high caseloads are a result of that frontloading cases, due to assumptions about the rate of attrition:

“The idea is giving us more than we can do, with the assumption that the rate of attrition is high, and we will end up with a manageable caseload.”

Support worker

- In model B (YOS-based support workers), especially in sites where staff have been seconded from other teams, staff had to juggle multiple workloads as they supported their old teams and caseloads, while taking on new work and cases. This has also been a challenge for support workers in Bristol VRU’s education inclusion team, who work across the YOS and the VRU. This has resulted in high caseloads and could potentially result in lower quality of support.
- In model C (VCS-based support workers), area leads highlighted that VCS organisations could potentially help fill this gap in capacity and resource that currently exists in the wider system. They suggested that this is conditional on the types of funding used to commission the services, with short-term funding exacerbating capacity issues, as it does not allow sufficient time for the recruitment of delivery teams and the implementation of project work (see section 3.2 for a discussion of challenges associated with the short-term funding).

Increasing funding and lengthening timescales might enable local areas to consider commissioning external agencies to fill the delivery roles, increasing capacity in the YOS and wider partner agencies. Alternatively, increasing the number of support workers, improving partnership working and increasing line management support in existing delivery teams could help reduce workload and improve quality of bespoke support.



Key enabling factors: Capacity and resource

In Bristol VRU’s education inclusion team, there are three EIMS, each working within a specific area of Bristol results in more capacity and a higher quality of work. The close collaboration and teamwork of the three EIMS plays a crucial role in allowing them to develop really specific offers, which has helped embed the education inclusion work in Bristol.



Challenges: Capacity and resource

- Across all models of the Education Inclusion Project, the short-term nature of the funding and project delivery work did not allow delivery teams to increase capacity to respond to the immediate and short-term demand (see section 3.2 for more). Where model C (VCS-based support workers) was highlighted as a potential solution to this, stakeholders shared that the short-term nature of the funding does not allow VCS organisations to rapidly respond to the market demands, with calls for longer-term funding.

5 Partnership working

Key findings

- **There have been varying levels of engagement with education providers across sites.** Stakeholders who reported successful engagement suggested this has been achieved through developing strong relationships with education providers. These relationships have led to greater communication with education providers and increased support from education providers for the education inclusion work.
- However, **limited buy-in from education providers, particularly those located in Multi-Academy Trusts, continues to be a challenge across both the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol VRU's education inclusion work.** This has manifested in children and young people continuing to be excluded even when receiving inclusion support.
- **Greater multi-agency working as result of the project seems more likely to be achieved when the project is located in YOS or Early Help.** Where delivery teams are based in education providers, they are operating more in silo, with little communication with external agencies.
- **Capacity across the wider system has also been a main barrier to coordinated multi-agency working to engage and support children and young people.** This limits organisations' ability to take onward referrals from the Education Inclusion Project and to engage with the education inclusion agenda.
- **Improving education professionals' and wider professionals' knowledge and skills in trauma-informed practice, risk factors for exclusion and serious youth violence and contextual safeguarding may help to further embed the principles of the education inclusion in wider system practice and enable its impact to be sustained.⁴⁴** This is because it will allow these professionals to identify risk earlier and put more effective support in place for children and young people in the future, potentially leading to a reduction in the number of exclusions as education providers and education providers are more able to manage risk internally.

⁴⁴ Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. (Source: <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>).

5.1 Overview

This chapter summarises evaluation findings on successes and challenges in partnership working by and with the Education Inclusion Project, including partnerships with education providers and multi-agency working across wider parts of the system. Evidence to support the findings comes predominantly from evaluation interviews with area leads, delivery teams and education professionals. This is supplemented by the e-survey of education professionals.

5.2 Communication and understanding of referral criteria and pathways

The evaluation found evidence to suggest that more clarity is needed for education providers about the referral process and criteria for education inclusion work, as well as wider clarity about who the work aims to support and its capacity (see section 3.3 for more detail).

Across all models in the Education Inclusion Project, delivery teams reported that education providers sometimes make inappropriate referrals, with particular education providers referring many pupils who do not meet the needs thresholds required for support. This appears to be especially the case in sites where the referral criteria have been broadened during the implementation of the education inclusion work.

However, 14 out of 17 respondents to the education professional e-survey (82%) reported that their understanding of the referral criteria for the project was very good or fairly good. Although education professionals who were interviewed agreed that there are a high number of referrals, they suggested this was because the wider referral criteria in some areas means that the number of students who are eligible for the Education Inclusion Project far outstrips delivery team capacity. They suggested this was particularly the case in areas of higher deprivation with greater prevalence of CCE, CSE and SYV.

Education professionals also described confusion in their settings about who should be referred, what thresholds apply for need and how referrals are triaged. This lack of understanding was reflected to some extent in education professionals' responses to the e-survey; 6 out of 17 respondents (35%) reported a limited or very limited understanding of referral pathways.

There was also confusion around referral pathways for Bristol VRU's education inclusion work; some stakeholders also noted that some education providers are still confused about the difference between the formal and informal referral procedures for support. They reported that in some instances education providers are not using the appropriate referral forms but still expect support.



Recommendation: Consider offering more regular check-in sessions between education providers and EIMs.

More regular check-in sessions between education professionals and EIMs could help address some of the challenges associated with communication and information-sharing and help co-ordinate support for children and young people more effectively. Using these check-in sessions to clarify the referral criteria could also help reduce the number of inappropriate referrals, which has resulted in demand outweighing the capacity of delivery teams. This is further exacerbated by capacity and resource constraints across the system, which limits the number of onwards referrals to specialist support which can be made.

5.3 Engagement and partnership working with education providers

5.3.1 Success in engaging education partners in the majority of models

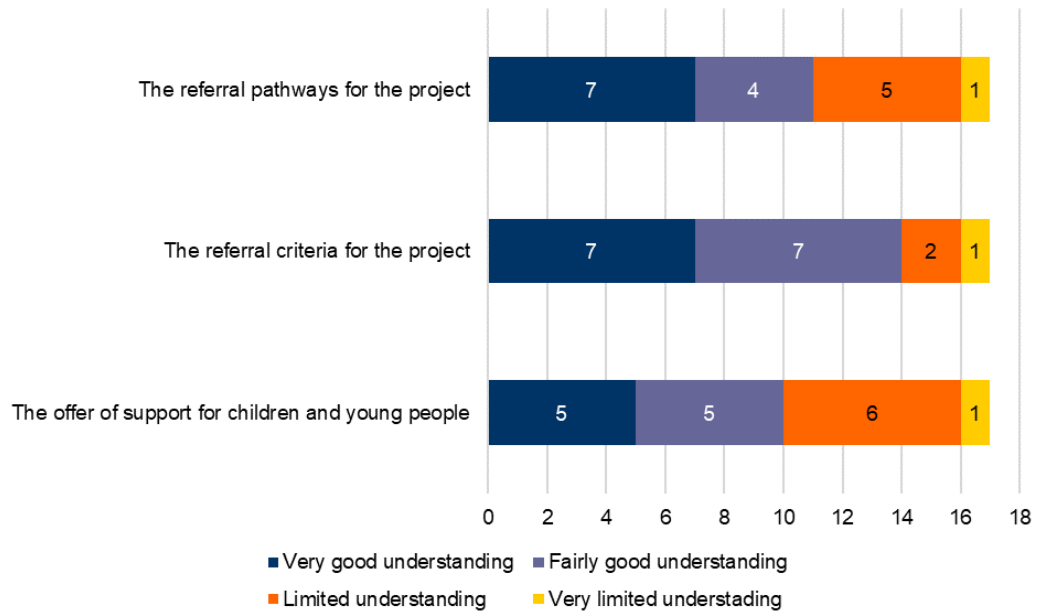
Awareness-raising of the Education Inclusion Projects with education providers has mostly been successful, particularly in areas which adopted models A (school-based support workers) and B (YOS-based support workers). This is reflected in high numbers of referrals (see section for more information).

Success in awareness-raising may be because in model A (schools-based) support workers were linked in naturally with education structures, and in model B (YOS-based) support workers were already familiar with the education system and how different education structures work due to their experience with the YOS. This was also highlighted as a reason for successful engagement with education providers as part of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work. This made it easier to build on existing relationships and raise awareness of the projects within education provision.

Awareness-raising with education providers was also effective in model C because the YOS Education Worker was able to draw on their existing relationships with education providers. However, education providers were initially unfamiliar with the support worker team in model C (VCS-based support workers) and so slower to respond to queries and engage with the Education Inclusion Project.

This mixed success in awareness-raising was also reflected in responses to the e-survey; 10 out of 17 (59%) reported that their understanding of the offer and the aims and objectives of the projects was very good or fairly good, while seven (41%) reported that their understanding was limited or very limited (see Figure 13).

Figure 13: E-survey of education professionals: Please rate your understanding of the different elements of the Education Inclusion: Teachable Moments Project (n=17)



Although not reported as a problem for the Education Inclusion Project, stakeholders involved with Bristol VRU’s education inclusion work reported that information about that work is not always clearly disseminated across wider partners, such as police and wider school staff. They explained that this can sometimes result in confusion and reduced awareness for education providers and the OOC panel around the role of the education inclusion team in responding to possible exclusions. Future education inclusion work across the region may wish to consider how information is disseminated effectively to mitigate challenges such as this.



Case study: Model B (YOS-based support workers): Engaging education partners through use of data

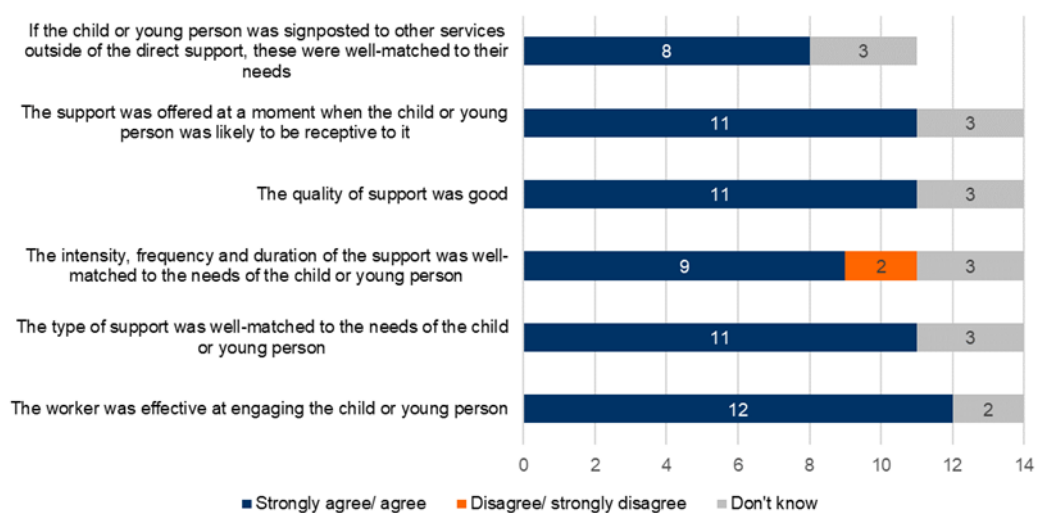
In one area, the EIM spent some time at the beginning of the project analysing local PEX data, including reasons for exclusions, excluded pupils’ backgrounds and ethnicities, and risk factors.

When they began conversations with local head teachers about the project, they were able to use this data as a starting point and target the discussion about support around the need as evidenced in the data. The EIM reported that this was helpful for head teachers who may not have been aware of the data previously.

5.3.2 Support highly-regarded by education professionals

Evidence for education professionals relatively high buy-in to the Education Inclusion Project is provided by the fact that the majority of those who took part in the evaluation spoke positively about the quality of the direct support it provided to children and young people. For instance, most of the education professionals who responded to the e-survey were positive about the direct work support workers had undertaken with children and young people in their settings. 12 out of 14 respondents (86%) agreed or strongly agreed that the worker was effective at engaging the child or young person, and 11 (79%) agreed or strongly agreed that the quality of support was good and well-matched to the child or young person(s)'s needs (see Figure 14 for more detail).

Figure 14: Education professionals e-survey: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the support the child/young person has received from their support worker (n=14)



5.3.3 Room for improvement in ongoing partnership working

There was evidence from consultation to suggest that more communication and regular check-ins between education providers and EIMs could improve the support delivered through the Education Inclusion Project. In particular, this would help the delivery teams to have a greater awareness of ongoing challenges and take steps to address them in a co-ordinated way with education professionals.

Delivery stakeholders (EIMs and support workers) were generally positive about their partnership working with education providers, reporting that the Education Inclusion Project has led to more information-sharing and improved co-ordination of support.

Education professionals who participated in the evaluation had mixed views about the efficacy of partnership working with the Project. For example, several respondents to the e-survey reported (in free text responses) that communication from the EIMs or support workers with education providers, including sharing feedback from sessions with children and young people and information around

special educational needs, was a key success of the Education Inclusion Project. However, several education professionals whom we interviewed raised that communication and information-sharing with the Project is still a challenge, and that improvements in this area might help them coordinate support more effectively.

For example, one stated:

“I am unsure of what work is being done, how often and how long for? I am unsure of what progress is being made and what issues are being tackled. If confidentiality was not an issue, it would be helpful to get more feedback into schools. There needs to be more of a structure and governance to the support.”

Education professional

More detail on the strengths and limitations of the different models with regards to engagement and co-ordination of support with education providers can be found in Figure 15. It indicates that model A (school-based support workers) has generated the closest relationships with schools, due to support workers being based in the setting.

Figure 15: Engagement with education providers: strengths and limitations of different models of delivery

Model type	Strengths	Limitations
Model A (school-based support workers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less awareness raising was required as the project was already based in schools. • Easier to engage and communicate with schools about children and young peoples' needs when based in schools, especially with pastoral teams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the pastoral teams in the schools were aware of the project, there was still a lack of awareness more widely, indicating a potential lack of coordination of support inside schools.
Model B (YOS-based support workers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness raising was very successful with education providers due to strong pre-existing relationships. • This was especially noticeable where workers were seconded into the Education Inclusion Project from within the YOS. • EIMs facilitated relationship with education providers, attending safeguarding meetings and presenting in assemblies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some confusion about project aims and referral criteria in education providers early on, linked to the secondment of YOS workers into the project and the overlap of multiple similar projects in the local area.
Model C (VCS-organisation-based support workers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None reported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More issues engaging with education providers as the delivery team had to first focus on building relationships with education providers before they could engage with them. • Capacity issues in education providers and a need to prioritise work and replying to emails from known agencies are key reasons for the difficulties faced.
Bristol VRU's education inclusion team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive relationships between the EIMs and education providers. • EIMs' educational background and expertise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffective communication about procedures and processes for some partners (particularly police and education providers) resulting in confusion for education providers and OOD panels.



Key enabling factors: Engagement and co-ordination of support with education providers

- **Support workers being located in pastoral teams in education settings** facilitates communication and enables quick information-sharing, as seen in model A (school-based support workers).
- **Strong pre-existing relationships between YOSs and education providers** facilitates communication between support workers and EIMs and education providers, as seen in model B (YOS-based support workers) and Bristol VRU's education inclusion work.
- **Establishing a key point of contact** within education inclusion teams helps mitigate communication issues and builds relationships with education providers more quickly.
- **Support workers having a clear understanding of different school systems** and structures, as well as providing **consistent support for and communication to education providers** ensures good relationships between the Education Inclusion Project and education providers (see 6.2 for more details).



Challenges: Engagement and co-ordination of support with education providers

- **A lack of capacity in education providers** can result in poorer engagement and communication with the Education Inclusion Project delivery team. This is especially the case for project delivery teams without pre-existing relationships with the education providers.
- **A lack of system wide knowledge**, especially in education, on trauma-informed practice and supporting young people with SEND, affects the long-term sustainability of the project as it can lead to a lack of coordination of support.

5.3.4 The potential value of upskilling education professionals in key relevant approaches

Across the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, there was consensus among stakeholders based outside of the education sector that more training on trauma-informed approaches, supporting SEND needs, and contextual safeguarding/risk factors could be useful for all teaching staff (i.e. not only those with wellbeing or SEND responsibilities) and also for wider partners. They suggested that this might help to co-ordinate inclusion

support being offered to the children and young people by all partners, and in turn help to sustain any impact achieved.

This could also help improve education providers' confidence in holding and managing risk within education provision. For example, one strategic stakeholder reported:

“There will be a knock-on effect... Schools will know what to do before the next young person comes in that might struggle with similar issues...As one of the by-products of this project, schools are becoming more trauma-informed. They are building a toolkit up of resources to help them in the future.”

Strategic stakeholder

Stakeholders involved in the Education Inclusion Project in particular suggested that increasing education providers' awareness of the impact of stereotyping children would be useful. They reported that in some instances, education providers have been observed to speak negatively about the children and young people receiving support from the Project, which can negatively impact their behaviour and attitudes, because they behave in the way expected of them.



Case study: Changing a culture of inclusion across the wider system

In Bristol, strategic stakeholders discussed the ramifications of Safer Options' education inclusion work with education providers, specifically the work of EIMs. They suggested that a renewed focus on trauma-informed practice and contextual safeguarding within project delivery teams resulted in a review of wider VRU and YOT practices, mechanisms, and structures. This ensures that a cohesive approach is used in all YOT procedures and support for young people. This included a review of the Bristol Inclusion Panel (BIP).

Understanding that the BIP could be run in a *“more strategic way”* the stakeholders challenged education providers around making changes to their inclusion agendas. Stakeholders provided education providers with access to information and support that would help them enact these changes. Support workers in model A (school-based support workers) of the Education Inclusion Project undertake similar work, highlighting their role in helping to educate education providers about the wider issues pupils face (contextual safeguarding) and challenging education providers about their decisions about exclusions and use of behavioural policies. One support worker reported:

“There is a lot we can do to help schools manage risk. Schools focus on learning, but for us who comes from a youth justice and support background, we have a lot more knowledge on safety planning. We can help shift their focus and highlight certain issues.”

Support worker

This is closely linked to the sustainability of the impact of the project, as with more upskilling of professionals within the system and culture change, the education inclusion work is likely to become more deeply embedded.



Recommendation: Offer training across Avon and Somerset on trauma-informed practice, contextual safeguarding approaches and support for SEND pupils across the system.

More training on trauma-informed methods, supporting SEND needs in school, and contextual safeguarding and contextual risk factors might help co-ordinate inclusion support, improve education providers' confidence in holding and managing risk, and increase the sustainability of the project. Consulting education colleagues on their training needs could help inform this training. SEND training could include training to destigmatise certain presentations of SEND, which might help to reduce exclusions for these children and young people.

5.4 Multi-agency partnership working

5.4.1 Efficacy of multi-agency working varies by model

The efficacy of multi-agency partnership working between the Education Inclusion Project and partners outside of education providers varied depending on the model implemented in each area. Stakeholders in model B (YOS-based support workers) and the original Bristol VRU education inclusion work reported that the education inclusion work had improved partnership working, information-sharing and increased the involvement of both EIMs and support workers in multi-agency meetings. However, stakeholders from model A (school-based support workers) and model C (VCS-based support workers) reported some continuing challenges in engaging wider partners.

In model A (school-based support workers), stakeholders shared that the support workers had little to no contact with any external agencies, which made it harder for them to create links with wider multi-agency structures. Stakeholders shared that the nature of schools working in silo from other organisations is reflective of wider practice, and any changes to this would require a cultural shift across the education system.

In model C (VCS-based support workers) multi-agency and partnership working was well-established between the YOS and key partner agencies, and particularly between the YOS Education Worker and schools. This aided multi-agency working in some respects. However, for the VCS-based support workers, establishing effective partnership working has been slower because these workers had to build their own, newer relationships with key partners. For Bristol VRU's education inclusion team too, short funding cycles have made it challenging to build enduring relationships with partner agencies. This has manifested in less information-sharing between different external agencies.

Delivery stakeholders (EIMs and support workers) in model B (YOS-based support workers) and in Bristol VRU's education inclusion team reported that they had increased access to multi-agency meetings and continued to improve and develop established relationships with external agencies as a result of the project. This has allowed for:

- **Greater multi-agency working.** This can help increase identification of children and young people at risk of exclusion, SYV, CSE or CCE. This is because education settings are a key point of contact for children and young people in the community, and other agencies can leverage education providers existing relationships with children and families to identify other individuals who may be at risk of SYV. These other agencies can also in certain situations use the physical location of education providers to provide targeted interventions to pupils. Being located in Early Help has further enhanced multi-agency working in Bristol VRU's education inclusion team because the EIMs can act as a bridge between different services and sectors, helping partners understand each other's roles better and build a more holistic picture of the risks facing children and young people.

- **Increased opportunities for advocacy of children and young peoples' needs** and increased inclusion of children and young peoples' voices in multi-agency meetings. This helps push forwards a more child-centred approach more widely in the system. It also improves the quality of support offered to children and young people, as it becomes more tailored to their specific needs.



Recommendation: Locate education inclusion delivery teams in organisations with strong links with other providers.

As part of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, the team are based within Early Help. This was highlighted as a key enabler for successful implementation, because it supports engagement with children and young people and multi-agency partnership working. Across other areas, engagement and co-ordination of support with education providers, and partnership working was more successful in models based in organisations with strong pre-existing relationships with education providers and other agencies, and particularly those all or partly based in the YOS. This can also help with completing onward referrals as part of exit planning (see 4.4.3).



Case study: Information-sharing using Data Sharing Agreements (DSAs)

Strategic stakeholders from model B (YOS-based support workers) in Somerset shared that pre-existing Data Sharing Agreements between the YOS and external agencies (e.g. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, social services, OOC panel) have resulted in effective information-sharing across the project. They shared that having these DSAs in place allowed for information-sharing to be refined during the implementation of the project, improving practice and efficacy. This has facilitated the work of the Education Inclusion Project and multi-agency partnership working more widely.

"Initially, when I was first asked to look at children and young people, they wanted lots of information that wasn't really relevant to what they wanted to achieve in terms of reducing school exclusion. We identified what information they really want. We have now put in place processes to refine our information search... It was easy because we already had DSAs in place within the council."

Strategic stakeholder

However, for Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, there have been some particular challenges around data-sharing from partners. In particular, a lack of standardised data around exclusions from education providers has made it challenging to successfully identify children and young people at risk of SYV,

CCE and/or CSE. In addition, because education providers are often not able to access police data, this can limit their ability to put in place robust risk assessments. Including education providers in the multi-agency meetings where this information is shared (rather than EIMs acting as a proxy) and standardising data collection and recording (possibly across digital platforms) might help to mitigate some of these challenges.



Case study: Bristol VRU: Partnership working with the Youth Offending Team's Enhanced Case Management Meetings

As part of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, the EIM role provides support to the YOTs as well as other partners. EIMs currently attend the YOT Enhanced Case Management (ECM)⁴⁵ meetings, helping secure education or training offers for children and young people already involved in the criminal justice system.



Key enabling factors: Multi-agency partnership working

In Bristol VRU's education inclusion team, multi-agency partnership working has been enabled by:

- **The EIM role acting as a single education representative**, who is able to represent and advocate on behalf of all education providers.
- **EIMs being based in Early Help**, and acting as a bridge between different services and providers.
- **Access to multi-agency meetings** to improve information-sharing and advocacy for children and young people.

⁴⁵ The Enhanced Case Management approach consists of a) the use of the trauma recovery model as the underpinning theory which matches intervention and support to presenting and underlying needs, b) training for practitioners and managers e.g., on attachment, child development and trauma, c) securing informed consent to participating in the approach from young people, d) a case formulation approach which draws on the skills of a clinical psychologist and e) provision of a clinical supervision for YOT practitioners (see Government for Social Research and Welsh Government (2017) *Evaluation of the Enhanced Case Management Approach: Summary*. Available at: [Evaluation of the Enhanced Case Management approach: Summary \(gov.wales\)](#) [Accessed 28 April 2022]).



Challenges: Multi-agency partnership working

- **Data is not always consistent or systematically shared**, especially between police and education providers. This can limit the extent to which children and young people at risk can be identified and robust risk assessments can be put in place.
- **Support workers being placed in education settings**, resulting in limited contact with multi-agency partners
- **Short funding cycles** making it challenging to build enduring relationships with partner agencies
- **Newer relationships** between delivery teams and external agencies.

5.4.2 Limited capacity in the wider system can inhibit effective multi-agency working

Capacity across the wider system has also been a main barrier to coordinated multi-agency working to engage and support children and young people. One of the main aims of the Education Inclusion Project is to facilitate onward referrals to appropriate services (see section 2.3 for more detail). However, this is not always possible due to stringent needs thresholds in other services and a lack of capacity. The sustainability of the Education Inclusion Project therefore relies on an ability to balance onwards referrals with the current existing capacity in the wider system, and not overpromising support to young people. A support worker reported:

“We need a system where those referrals are available because otherwise, you’re setting practitioners up to fail. And then you get burn out because services are too stretched and you’re stressing yourself out.”

Support worker

5.4.3 The use of whole-family approaches varied by model but was generally limited

The breadth of support and use of the whole-family approach varied significantly between the different delivery models, according to stakeholders who took part in interviews:

- In model A (school-based support workers), it was very rare for family members to be involved unless a safeguarding issue arises. This is linked to the support being delivered exclusively in schools.
- In models B (YOS-based support workers) and C (VCS-based support workers) there was usually some element of family work involved, especially during the initial assessment, which stakeholders all agreed was very useful.



Recommendation: Consider the possibilities of delivering longer interventions.

All delivery stakeholders (support workers and EIMs) agreed that although the Education Inclusion Project could be more effective with and benefit from a whole-family approach, the short-term nature of the intervention does not allow time for this wider approach. They reported that focusing primarily on children and young people and education providers is the most effective use of time.

If the Education Inclusion Project is sustained in the future, colleagues might consider extending the length and scope of the intervention to include family support work. A longer intervention period could also result in a wider reach of the project, as it could support children and young people with more complex needs that need consistent support over a longer period of time.

6 Key features of effective education inclusion work



Key findings: Key features of effective education inclusion work

Consultation with stakeholders across both the Education Inclusion Project process evaluation and the impact evaluation of the Bristol education inclusion work identified the following key features of effective education inclusion work:

- **Delivery team having an education background**, facilitating strong relationships with education providers.
- **Consistency** of both the support workers and the EIMs.
- EIMs and support workers being **representative of the communities they support**.
- **Diplomacy, proactiveness and adaptability of the support workers and EIMs**.
- **Speed and responsivity of the intervention delivered**, especially when compared to other interventions delivered by statutory services (e.g., police and children's social care).
- **Child-centred and trauma-informed approach**, in the direct work of the support workers with children and young people.
- **Positive relationships of the EIMs and school and education providers**.

6.1 Overview

This chapter summarises the key features of effective education inclusion work, drawing on findings across the evaluation of the Education Inclusion Project and from the impact evaluation of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work. It is based on findings from qualitative consultation across both evaluations, involving delivery teams, strategic stakeholders, and wider stakeholders with experience of the education inclusion work.

6.2 Skilled workforce

There was strong consensus across all areas that the skills and expertise of the EIMs and support workers are central in achieving positive outcomes for children and young people, education, and the wider system.

In particular, stakeholders highlighted the importance of the EIMs and support workers having an **education background**; this ensures that they have a clear understanding of school systems and how different education structures work and is an enabler in facilitating good relationships with education providers. This is due to EIMs' ability to present complex information in ways suitable for and education providers to easily understand. For example, a key stakeholder from Bristol VRU stated that:

“All of our EIMs have significant work experience in education. They understand the laws surrounding education, the pressures and dynamics of a school setting, timetabling in school, and what it means to try and run a busy school in the inner city. The schools have trusted these EIMs. They add value to the schools.”

Key stakeholder from Bristol VRU

Across both evaluations, the following skills and attributes of EIMs and support workers were also identified as important in achieving positive outcomes:

- **Communication and rapport building skills with children and young people.** Support workers need to be able to effectively engage children and young people, and *“build trust and a positive relationship”* quickly, to use the limited number of intervention sessions most effectively. A solid **understanding of trauma-informed approaches** was also highlighted as important.
- **Consistency.** The consistency of the support workers and the EIMs has been important in enabling them to build relationships and effectively engage with children and young people and education providers. In Bristol, stakeholders highlighted that the delivery staff of the core education inclusion team have not changed since the work begun, facilitating good relationship building.
- **Representative of the community and community-centred.** It is important that staff are familiar with local contexts and aware of the needs of the communities they are supporting to inform effective support. Maintaining a community-centred approach can also help target support in response to local need; frontline workers in Bristol VRU's education inclusion team suggested that a balance between centralised elements (such as police guidance, and specific education inclusion activities and tasks) and locally-developed approaches helped tailor solutions to different localities.
- **Close collaboration and teamwork of the EIMs where possible, sharing learning and resources.** In Bristol VRU, there are three EIMs. Joint working between them has facilitated outcomes on a larger scale.
- **Diplomacy, proactiveness and adaptability of the EIMs and support workers.** In order to build and maintain good relationships with education providers, EIMs and support workers need to be diplomatic, proactive, and adaptable, in some instances acting as a *“mediator figure”*.



Recommendation: Consider opportunities to share learning and resources across local delivery teams more widely.

In Bristol VRU there are three EIMs. The joint working between them has facilitated outcomes on a larger scale, because they each focus on specific issues and outcomes, reducing the duplication of work and increasing capacity. Increased sharing of learning and resources more widely across Bristol and Avon and Somerset might help to further improve the support the delivery teams provide going forwards. Colleagues at Avon and Somerset OPCC may consider creating and disseminating guidance on specific interventions and creating more forums for members of local site delivery teams to share learning.



Recommendation: Carefully consider the skills of those recruited to delivery roles in future iterations of the project or similar workstreams.

There was strong consensus across all areas that the skills and expertise of the EIMs and support workers are central in achieving positive outcomes for children and young people, education, and the wider system. In particular, stakeholders highlighted the importance of the EIMs and support workers having an education background. Communication and rapport building skills with children and young people, being representative of the community, and diplomacy, proactiveness and adaptability were also highlighted as important skills to engage children and young people and provide effective support targeted to their needs.

6.3 Child-centred, trauma-informed, contextual safeguarding approach

In Bristol, frontline stakeholders suggested that a child-centred approach that focuses on teachable moments rather than the criminalisation of children and young people ensures greater engagement of young people. This finding was echoed more widely across Avon and Somerset, with stakeholders highlighting that increased children and young people engagement relies on them feeling heard and respected:

“Nine times out of ten they [the children and young people] will feel more confident and engage more if they know that they are not being punished.”

Support worker

Findings from the evaluation suggest that avoiding locating education inclusion work exclusively in schools and other education provision could help retain a

more child-centred approach when delivering support. This is because when support is based in schools support workers are bound by school behavioural policies and confidentiality clauses, limiting the scope of support they can offer (see section 4.4.1 for more detail).

The fact that the education inclusion work draws on trauma-informed and contextual safeguarding approaches was also highlighted across both evaluations as one of main strengths. This approach helps provide holistic support to the children and young people, addressing the underlying issues and causes of their exclusion, and weapon carrying, such as peer pressure, friendships, and academic pressures.

It also helps embed the impact of the work in the long-term by promoting an inclusive culture to be adopted more widely across education providers (see sections 5.3 and 5.4 for more detail). In Bristol, stakeholders suggested that the trauma-informed approach of the VRU's education inclusion work could be further strengthened by adopting an ECM approach, especially:

- The presence of a clinical psychologist during WiS assessments with young people.
- Increased training and education on trauma-informed approaches for stakeholders across all sectors.

This may result in a greater understanding of contextual risk factors and awareness of the impact of childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), leading to improved identification of children and young people at risk of SYV, CCE and/or CSE.

6.4 Flexibility of offer

There was consensus across Avon and Somerset that it is important to be flexible about the support offered, within reason. It is easier for support workers in model A (school-based support workers) to be flexible with their offer, due to their close proximity to pupils and ability to intervene earlier and change their timetables to accommodate needs of children and young people as a result. In contrast it is more challenging for support workers in models B (YOS-based support workers) and C (VCS-based support workers) to be flexible with the support offered due to travel times (see 4.4.1).



Challenges: Capacity and resource

- **A lack of capacity both within the local education inclusion work and more widely across partner agencies is a key challenge affecting the flexibility of education inclusion support**, especially with regards to the intensity and length of support. This also affects the overall sustainability of impact of the project (see section 4.5 for more detail).

6.5 Speed and responsiveness

The speed and responsiveness of the education inclusion work across Avon and Somerset helps to build relationships and trust with education providers and is key to its success. For example, stakeholders reported:

“To begin with they [school and education providers] were surprised at this [speed of response] ...which helped build the trust. It encourages them to be transparent and involve the local authority rather than dealing with it [WiS incident] in house. We knew if we didn't provide a quick reliable service schools would not use us again.”

EIM

“I know I can always go to someone [EIM] if I have a concern or want some advice.”

Designated safeguarding lead

Both the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol VRU's education inclusion teams tend to be much more responsive than other statutory services who provide similar services (e.g. the police and social care). This responsiveness is especially important when intervening at a 'teachable moment', because this can be time-sensitive, especially when linked to instances of SYV, CCE and CSE.

As part of the Education Inclusion Project, stakeholders shared that it is easier for those in model A (school-based support workers) to respond more quickly to referrals due to support workers' close proximity with young people and the ease of communication with the pastoral teams in education settings (where support workers are located). Planning about the location of the delivery team and their capacity more widely around Avon and Somerset should consider proximity to education providers to mitigate these issues.

6.6 Positive relationship between education providers and the delivery teams

There was strong consensus that positive relationships between education providers and delivery teams are a key feature of effective education inclusion work. This means that education providers are more likely to contact EIMs and support workers for advice and refer into the support.

This positive relationship is supported by:

- The ability of the EIMs and support workers to provide tailored support to education providers and proactively respond to their needs. This includes providing access to information and indirect access to multi-agency partnership meetings and resources such as YOS boards and VRU meetings, to which education providers previously did not have access.
- The EIMs and support workers networking and raising awareness with education providers, even at the inception of their roles.

7 Early indications of outcomes



Key findings

- It was not within the remit of this evaluation to explore the outcomes of the Education Inclusion Project, due to the short timescales within which the Project and the evaluation have been operating.
- However, we identified some **emerging evidence from consultation with professional stakeholders, children and young people and parents that the Education Inclusion Project has begun to deliver positive outcomes for children and young people who have been supported.**
- **The impact the project has achieved, however, has been limited by the short timescales and associated challenges.** For example, it is difficult to attribute any impact to the project alone because of monitoring mechanisms and changes and flexibility of referral criteria, meaning that the risks and needs on which the Theory of Change for the project is based have changed.
- **There is consensus amongst stakeholders that there is potential for the project to have a wide and positive impact on exclusion rates across Avon and Somerset,** especially if longer timescales are allowed for relationships with children and young people and families to be built up, and wider challenges in the system are addressed, including resource, capacity, skills, and knowledge.

7.1 Overview

It was not within the remit of this evaluation to explore the outcomes of the Education Inclusion Project, due to the short timescales within which the Project and the evaluation have been operating. However, we identified some emerging evidence that the Education Inclusion Project is beginning to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people and education providers, with the potential to contribute to outcomes in the wider system.

This chapter summarises the evidence identified to date, examining views reported in semi-structured interviews and focus groups with stakeholders (mainly EIMs, support workers, education professionals and strategic stakeholders), parents and children and young people.

It was not within the remit of the evaluation to collate or analyse outcomes data, and this was not collected as part of the evaluation. However, monitoring data within the standard monitoring framework for the Project included progress updates for 85 individuals. Across these 85 individuals, 102 examples of progress

were provided, with some individuals progressing in multiple areas. Where progress updates are relevant, these have also been discussed. More details about the progress update data made can be seen in Appendix 2 in 9.2.

This chapter focuses on evidence of the emerging impact of the Education Inclusion Project only. For more information on the impacts and outcomes of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, please see the separate impact evaluation report for this work.

7.2 Outcomes for children and young people

7.2.1 Summary

Stakeholders recognised that it is too early to comment definitively on the impact of the education inclusion work. However, there is some emerging evidence, primarily from support workers and education professionals, to suggest that the work is contributing to a range of positive outcomes for children and young people who have been supported. Parents of children and young people receiving support and the children and young people themselves also reported some examples of early positive outcomes they had experienced as a result of the Education Inclusion Project.



Key enabling factors: Improving outcomes for children and young people

- Support workers using a **strengths-based approach** with children and young people facilitates softer outcomes (e.g., improved self-confidence/self-esteem).



Challenges: improving outcomes for children and young people

- **Lack of buy-in from education providers**, with some education providers PEX-ing students before the start of the work, changing the intended remit of the project (this has been a challenge for both the Education Inclusion Project and Bristol VRU's education inclusion work). This is especially prevalent in private schools and MATs, as the local authority cannot enforce rules, but only challenge the decisions they make. To mitigate this, stakeholders reported needing to establish clear boundaries with education providers earlier, which they suggested could be helped by having clearer referral criteria with stricter requirements. Systems-wide change towards more trauma-informed behavioural policies is also needed, as Head Teachers of individual in MATs often do not have the authority to change policies themselves.
- **Lack of capacity in the wider system** to accept onwards referrals.

7.2.2 Improved educational outcomes, including school attendance and behaviour in education.

Measuring educational outcomes will take time, especially to identify any longer-term impact of the support provided to children and young people. Having said this, many stakeholders shared examples of young people supported by the project who have increased school attendance and improved behaviour in school. This included examples from children and young people themselves.

This may have been partly achieved by support workers challenging education providers' responses to risk, and partly as a result of direct work with children and young people improving their decision making and understanding of the consequences of their actions (see 7.2.3).

Monitoring data shows 39 examples of positive progress related to education, training and employment, including improved attendance, increased engagement, better behaviour and better exam results, engagement in training such as art and bike workshops, and securing EHCPs.



Case study: Model B (YOS-based support workers): Holistic support for young people with SEND

One of the local areas provided an illustrative case study of how positive activities in the community have been used to supplement support in school for children and young people with SEND. This has provided children and young people with an additional outlet to use and develop skills that mainstream education does not focus on, for example, art. It also provided them with an alternative arena to practice communication and social skills.

One young person referred into the Education Inclusion Project had received multiple fixed term exclusions due to “inappropriate” and “threatening” behaviour. The young person had been diagnosed with ADHD.

Since being referred into the Education Inclusion Project, they are reported to have engaged well with all aspects of the support. As part of the support offered, they were referred into an Art Club and given the opportunity to take part in some outdoor activities. During these sessions, the young person is reported to have demonstrated their ability to engage with complex tasks, has displayed high level of concentration, and the ability to focus creatively. The case study also highlights that their attendance in school has improved.

7.2.3 Increased awareness of risks and consequences

Some of the parents and children and young people we spoke to reported examples of how being supported by the Education Inclusion Project helps children and young people to become more aware of the risks and consequences of their actions, learning how to avoid repeating dangerous patterns of behaviour. They suggested that this positively impacts children and young peoples'

behaviour in school, as they are more able to think about the future and understand the long-term impacts of their behaviours. One young person stated:

“Speaking with my support worker about what I had done in the past ... it made me think a bit more. It was a bit pathetic. I need to grow up a bit. I needed to grow up because I was hanging out with the wrong type of people. So, I stopped speaking to them and I’ve changed a bit.”

Young person

7.2.4 Improved health and wellbeing

Delivery stakeholders reported that they had seen some early indications that children and young people supported by the project have experienced improved health and wellbeing, particularly in terms of a greater understanding of good mental health amongst children and young people, raised self-esteem and improved self-confidence. Parents and children and young people we spoke to agreed.

Some stakeholders suggested that the children and young people for whom there had been the greatest improvements in wellbeing tended to have fewer complex needs. This is because those with more complex needs would need a longer timescale and more specialist, multi-agency support, to improve their wellbeing than currently available within the project.

7.2.5 Improved feelings of safety

The ten parents and children and young people we spoke to reported that children and young people feel or are safer as a result of the Education Inclusion Project. They suggested this was as a result of improvements in health and wellbeing (see 7.2.4 above) and relationships (see 7.2.6 below). For example, one parent reported:

“I am happier that he is safer now than he was before. I don’t worry so much when he goes out, compared to before. My heart used to drop every time he went out before, I was worried about what he was doing, who he was with. Now I am not always doubting what he says. I trust him more; I am not stressing or worrying when he goes out the door or to school. I am not so anxious”

Parent

7.2.6 Improved relationships

All six parents we spoke to reported that as a result of the Education Inclusion Project, their relationships with the children and young people have improved. They attributed this to the direct work with support workers, building and developing the young peoples’ communication skills. Children and young people we spoke to corroborated this, with several suggesting their improved relationships with others were a result of generally feeling happier and safer.

7.2.7 Reduced exclusions or managed moves

Although it is not possible at this stage to assess the impact that the project has had on the number of exclusions across Avon & Somerset, stakeholders suggested that the project has had a positive impact on reducing these numbers. This may be linked to EIMs ability to challenge education providers' decisions and hold them accountable. Where PEX has occurred, stakeholders reported that education providers had made the decision prior to the inception of support.

This was corroborated by findings from the education professional e-survey; eight out of nine respondents (89%) who were able to comment on young people's outcomes agreed or strongly agreed that the project resulted in the children and young people it had worked with avoiding permanent exclusion. Nine out of ten (90%) agreed or strongly agreed that it had supported young people to remain in the same education setting.



Case study: Reduced PEX

An education professional in BANES shared that support from the Education Inclusion Project helped prevent the PEX of a student. They highlighted direct work with the support worker, a whole-family approach and onwards referrals to further support needs as invaluable enablers for the success of the work. They stated:

“We had a student that was supposed to be PEX-ed... he was very difficult... He had just come to us after he had been asked to leave his previous school, and he was going to be PEX-ed again. The support worker built up a relationship with him and then shared concerns with the school. The support worker met his parents and offered them support. They also gave suggestions to the school for different things to try. Our student had complex needs; he has a bespoke package through his EHCP. The work supported an emergency annual review which then led to him receiving more funding for the bespoke package, preventing his PEX.”

Education professional



Case study: Model C (VCS-based) Joint accountability with education providers resulting in avoidance of PEX

Support workers in South Gloucestershire discussed an approach they have found that helps reduce the criminalisation of young people in education providers. They create written agreements and actions with both education providers and young people about how they will approach incidents. If an issue arises, the support workers can refer to these agreements to ensure accountability for both partners. The support workers reported that as a result of these agreements, they have been able to avoid some instances of PEX in South Gloucestershire.

7.3 Outcomes for schools and education providers

Most stakeholders identified outcomes for education providers as equally as important as those for children and young people, especially in terms of embedding the impact of the work and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the project.

Findings from qualitative consultation with stakeholders and from the e-survey of education professionals suggest that there is emerging evidence that the Education Inclusion Project contributes to the following outcomes for education providers:

- **Improved confidence in holding and managing risk within school.** Stakeholders suggested this was due to the project giving education practitioners a greater awareness of contextual risk factors and trauma-informed practice.⁴⁶ Stakeholders shared that more training would be required to further improve this understanding of underlying risk factors, and education providers' confidence in holding and managing risk (see section 5.3.4 for more detail).

⁴⁶ Of the seven education professionals who responded to the e-survey questions on the impact of the project on education settings, five agreed or strongly agreed that they were more confident in their ability to take action to address serious violence, exploitation or risk of it as a result of the project; five agreed or strongly agreed that they were more aware of the factors influencing children and young people's behaviour because of the project, and; six agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of the Education Inclusion Project they were more likely to consider keeping a child/young person in the setting (as an alternative to exclusion or a managed move) when there is a risk of involvement in serious violence and/or exploitation.



Case study: Providing support to education providers on pupils with SEND

Some parents we spoke to whose children have received support from the project shared that as a result of the Education Inclusion Project they thought that education providers were more aware of how to support their children who have SEND needs. They highlighted this as a success for the project, noting that previous exclusions were closely linked to their children's SEND. They shared that they are hopeful that education providers' increasing awareness of how to support children and young people with SEND will result in fewer PEX and FTE. One parent shared an example of how a support worker provided support:

"I think they [the Education Inclusion Project] got involved because they [the young person] were nearly kicked out of school. This young person has ADHD. The school were struggling to cope with them, especially as recently there have been issues with them taking their medication. Previously if they said no to the school if they were asked to do something, the school would send them home straight away [...] It looks like the support worker gave directions to the school about how to treat them. Whatever they've spoken and done, it sounds like it was for the best."

Parent

- **Improved awareness of support services and referral pathways**, especially for delivery model B (YOS-based support workers).⁴⁷
- **Improved partnership-working and information-sharing between partners**, especially for delivery model B (YOS-based support workers). Delivery stakeholders suggested this was because of access to multi-agency meetings and the opportunities the project has creating for establishing relationships with external agencies (see section 5.3.4 for more detail).⁴⁸

7.4 Wider impacts and outcomes

There are some wider impacts and outcomes which the project aims to achieve. Stakeholders said generally that the initial Project timescales have been too short to achieve these. However, they also reported some emerging evidence of

⁴⁷ This was also corroborated by findings from the education professionals e-survey; six out of seven respondents who responded to questions on the impact of the project on education settings agreed or strongly agreed that they were more aware of the available support services for children and young people at risk of involvement in serious violence, exploitation and/or exclusion from education as a result of the project.

⁴⁸ All seven respondents to the education professionals e-survey who responded to questions on the impact of the project on education settings agreed or strongly agreed that were more able to work in partnership with other services to support children and young people at risk of involvement in serious violence, exploitation and/or exclusion from education as a result of the project.

progress towards some of these outcomes, which they would anticipate would increase if the Project is continued. The chief outcome areas discussed were:

- **Improved communication and multi-agency and partnership working** (see 5.3).
- **Increased appropriate referrals for EHCPs and greater awareness and acknowledgement of children and young people with SEND.** All stakeholders discussed these as unintended outcomes of the Project. They shared that the Education Inclusion Project, especially delivery models B (YOS-based support workers) and C (VCS-based support workers), helps facilitate relationships with speech and language teams as well as healthcare professionals in the local authority, discussing the need to embed links more closely between these teams in the future. Learning from the roll-out of the Education Inclusion Project across all sites suggests that there is currently a gap in provision for those at the edge of exclusion with SEND which could be further explored by Avon and Somerset OPCC.



Case study: Model B (YOS-based support workers): Referrals for specialist support for young people with SEND

One of the local areas provided an example of how onwards referrals to specialist support helps improve education inclusion outcomes for children and young people. The onwards referral and subsequent support provided, gives young people the tools they need to remain in mainstream education. It also highlights their additional needs to education providers, ensuring that teachers can provide them the support they require. One local area shared an example of a pupil who received mental health support:

“The young person was presenting with... a lack of thought around actions. They had a recent temporary exclusion for putting disinfectant in their teacher’s coffee. They had significant social anxiety and a lack of confidence leading to vulnerability to peer pressure. They were referred to their local area mental health service for wellbeing and mental health, grounding techniques, sensory items to try and prevent heightened behaviour in class. The support worker advocated for a SENCO review and the young person’s placement on the On Your Bike scheme. This resulted in a spotless report card and increased confidence leading to obtainment of a Saturday job and aspirations to become a mechanic.”

Local area case study

8 Key learning

8.1 Overview

This chapter presents conclusions from the evaluation of the Education Inclusion Project, and recommendations and considerations for future of education inclusion work across Avon and Somerset. It is based upon findings of both the evaluation of the Education Inclusion Project and the impact evaluation of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, because there is key learning from each which may be useful for OPCC and local area colleagues to consider.

8.2 Conclusions

8.2.1 Successful implementation in challenging timescales

Overall, the Education Inclusion Project has been implemented successfully in very challenging timescales and circumstances. This is reflected in a good level of overall referrals; 319 individuals were referred over the course of the project against a minimum target of 280.⁴⁹

This success in getting up and running quickly is largely due to utilising existing systems, structures, processes and relationships in the local authority, for example through the YOS. This reduced the amount of time needed for developing governance structures, referral processes, and awareness-raising among education providers.

Having said this, there have remained challenges with implementing the project within the required timeframes. For example, it has not always been possible to recruit workers with the desired skills needed for the role (such as education experience). Equally, the short length of the intervention has impacted on relationship-building and engagement with children and young people, multi-agency working, and has reduced the reach of the project by making it challenging to work with young people who need a longer period of intervention (such as those with more complex needs or attachment issues).

8.2.2 Early indications of positive outcomes and impacts

Overall, there is some early indication that the project has potential to achieve positive outcomes and impacts for children and young people and education providers. In particular, the recruitment of a skilled workforce, teams being flexible, quick and responsive, and continuing to develop positive relationships with education providers are key features of effective education inclusion work which have the potential to positively impact on the lives of children and young people.

⁴⁹ Source: Avon and Somerset Education Inclusion: Teachable Moments Project projected figures

8.2.3 Wider contextual challenges

There remain some challenges across the education sector and wider system which need to be addressed to ensure the long-term sustainability of any impact achieved by education inclusion work, and to support a more inclusive culture which can support a wider group of young people. This includes training around contextual safeguarding and the trauma-informed, child-centred approach which underpins effective education inclusion work, and increased capacity and resource in the system to enable onward referrals to specialist services. Further support for education providers on supporting young people with SEND who are at risk of exclusion may also help address the disproportionality of exclusion experienced by this group.

8.2.4 Referral criteria and target cohort

These wider system changes may be especially important if education inclusion work in the region retains its current focus on children and young people who are at risk of exclusion because of reasons associated with SYV, CCE, or CSE. This is because there seems to be demand for support for children and young people who are either at risk of exclusions OR SYV/exploitation, who are not currently included in the target cohort or captured by eligibility criteria. Avon and Somerset colleagues may wish to consider conducting a robust needs assessment in the future to help fully understand the intersectionality of these issues (as well as across ethnicity, gender and SEND) so that support can be better targeted to local need.

8.3 Key considerations for future implementation

8.3.1 Where should education inclusion work be based?

There were benefits and limitations of locating the support workers in YOS, education providers and VCS organisations. Generally, stakeholders reported better levels of engagement with children and young people in settings outside of education providers and better co-ordination of support and partnership working with other organisations through the YOS or Early Help.

8.3.2 What should education inclusion work look like?

It should be delivered by a skilled workforce, with experience of education systems, using a child-centred, trauma-informed approach.

8.3.3 Who should be the target cohort?

Currently, areas are using referral criteria flexibly to work with children and young people who are at risk of exclusion but not necessarily at risk of SYV. This is because maintaining education placements is considered a protective factor against SYV. There does also seem to be demand for support for children and young people affected by SYV or exploitation who may not be at risk of exclusion. However, more flexible referral criteria may also result in levels of demand which

outstrip the capacity of the delivering teams, making it more difficult to then target the available resource to those with the highest levels of risk and need.

8.3.4 What is needed to inform the work?

A thorough needs assessment of children and young people at risk of exclusions and of SYV/CCE/CSE could help inform the target cohort and eligibility criteria. Further guidance around “what works” in education inclusion and examples of best practice would also be helpful for local areas.

8.3.5 What needs to change in the wider system to sustain the impact of the Education Inclusion project?

- Further training for education staff on trauma-informed and contextual safeguarding approaches and supporting SEND pupils.
- More resource to meet current demand.
- A longer intervention period to have an impact on longer-term outcomes. This could also result in a wider reach of the project, as it could support children and young people with more complex needs that need consistent support over a longer period of time.

8.4 Recommendations

Figure 16 presents recommendations and considerations for the future of education inclusion work across Avon and Somerset, based on findings from both evaluations. These include recommendations for consideration by the OPCC, Bristol VRU, and stakeholders involved in the Education Inclusion Project.

Figure 16: Recommendations for future education inclusion work across Avon and Somerset

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
1. Increase the length of funding cycles for education inclusion work.	The short funding cycle and uncertainty about future funding decisions made it difficult to recruit staff who would prefer longer contracts. For the Education Inclusion Project, it also meant there was not sufficient time to reflect on specific skill sets needed. In some areas, workers had to be seconded from elsewhere in the local authority to ensure people were in post in the necessary timescales, but this has resulted in under-capacity in other teams. Short funding cycles can also make it challenging to build positive working relationships with multi-agency partners.	3.2.5 4.4 5.4.1 8.2.1	Funders and commissioners
2. Conduct a robust needs assessment of young people at risk of exclusions and SYV/CCE/CSE in Avon and Somerset.	<p>There is limited understanding of disproportionality of exclusions in Avon and Somerset, and around the intersectionality of SYV, exploitation, exclusion, gender, age SEND, and ethnicity. Nevertheless, there is some evidence from qualitative consultation to suggest that young males and children and young people with SEND are disproportionality identified as at risk of exclusion. Avon and Somerset colleagues may wish to consider conducting a robust needs assessment in the future to help fully these needs so that support can be better targeted to local need.</p> <p>This aligns with Recommendations 16 and 18 in Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice Board’s recently published review of disproportionality, which suggest that that Local Authorities and YOTs need to address current issues with collecting high-quality data and analyse linked school exclusion (including managed moves, internal exclusions, “off-rolling” and informal exclusions) and offending data to understanding whether children and young people from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority backgrounds are more likely to</p>	4.3 8.2.4 8.3.4	OPCC stakeholders

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
	be excluded from school, and whether that exclusion increases the likelihood of them entering the criminal justice system. ⁵⁰		
<p>3. Establish agreed referral criteria which balance widening reach with managing demand and targeting resource to those with greatest risk and need.</p>	<p>Overall, there was a consensus among stakeholders across all areas that stability of educational placement is a protective factor against SYV, and as such targeting anyone at risk of exclusion, regardless of whether SYV was a specific concern at the point of referral, was the most suitable approach to tackle both exclusion and SYV in the long-term. Future education inclusion work may therefore wish to consider removing SYV as a referral criterion. This could also help address the disproportionate risk of exclusion faced by children and young people with SEND, who may not necessarily be at risk of SYV or exploitation.</p> <p>Having said this, for future projects that focus on ‘teachable moments’ for young people at risk of SYV, CCE or CSE, stakeholders may wish to consider removing exclusion as a referral criterion. This is because some children and young people are at risk of SYV and exploitation but not exclusion (young women and girls, for example).</p> <p>Stakeholders also suggested that expanding the age group of children and young people eligible for support to include primary school children,</p>	<p>3.3 3.3.1 5.2 8.2.4 8.3.3</p>	<p>Local authority and OPCC stakeholders</p>

⁵⁰ Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice Board (2022) *Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System* Available at: <https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Identifying-Disproportionality-Report.pdf> [Accessed 17 June 2022].

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
	<p>especially those in Years 5 and 6, could help support their transition into secondary school.</p> <p>However, more open referral high levels of demand which criteria risk generating very outstrip the delivery resource. This might result in inability to meet demand, or the need to triage referrals based on severity of need.</p>		
<p>4. Revise the Theory of Change and develop outcomes measurement approaches to support ongoing impact evaluation. (Resource has already been identified for Cordis Bright to support actioning this recommendation).</p>	<p>A co-developed Theory of Change could help inform the design of future education inclusion work, as it may help clarify the key mechanisms of change and intended impacts and outcomes of work, which could help refine the target cohort and the referral criterion. This will help local areas offer more effective, evidence-based support that is specifically designed to achieve intended impacts and outcomes for the target cohort.</p> <p>Systematic collection of outcomes data is important to attribute impact of education inclusion work on any reduction in SYV or other aspect of children and young people’s lives. This data is not currently available for Bristol VRU’s core education inclusion offer and is under development for the Education Inclusion Project. Development of outcomes measurement frameworks might help capture the wider impact of the education inclusion work and build up the evidence base of “what works” in violence reduction.</p>	<p>2.5.1</p>	<p>Local authority and OPCC stakeholders</p>

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
<p>5. Collect more detailed, consistent and complete profile, intervention and outcomes monitoring data for the cohort.</p>	<p>Within the central data framework reported to the OPCC, there is limited and inconsistent demographic data and data on the form and extent of support⁵¹. In addition, at this stage there was very little data available to the evaluation in relation to the outcomes of the work. This makes it difficult to understand impact and any differential impact for different groups, to unpick what constitutes a successful education inclusion intervention, and to compare progress across the different sites.</p>	<p>3.4.1 5.4.1</p>	<p>Local authority and OPCC stakeholders</p>
<p>6. Consider adopting a 'scoping phase' of implementation for future education inclusion work. This could include time to review best practice examples and guidance.</p>	<p>Local strategic stakeholders shared that more central guidance from Avon and Somerset OPCC, especially sharing evidence about the impact of existing education exclusion and examples of best practice in education inclusion work, may have helped improved relationships with education providers, increase the efficacy of interventions, and refine referral criteria.</p> <p>This guidance could be reviewed as part of an extended scoping phase at the beginning of any future education inclusion work. For Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, EIMs had scoping time at the beginning of the implementation period which enabled them to design the role around local need, reduce duplication, and build positive relationships with education providers.</p>	<p>3.2.2 3.2.3 4.3.5 4.2 8.3.4</p>	<p>Local authority and OPCC stakeholders</p>

⁵¹ The precise nature and quality of the data provided varied across the local areas involved in the Education Inclusion Project.

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
7. Consider opportunities to share learning and resources across local delivery teams more widely.	<p>In Bristol VRU there are three EIMs. The joint working between them has facilitated outcomes on a larger scale, because they each focus on specific issues and outcomes, reducing the duplication of work and increasing capacity.</p> <p>Increased sharing of learning and resources more widely across Bristol and Avon and Somerset might help to further improve the support the delivery teams provide going forwards. Colleagues at Avon and Somerset OPCC may consider creating and disseminating guidance on specific interventions and creating more forums for members of local site delivery teams to share learning.</p>	4.5 6.2	Local authority and OPCC stakeholders and local delivery teams
8. Locate education inclusion delivery teams in organisations with strong links with other providers.	<p>As part of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work, the team are based within Early Help. This was highlighted as a key enabler for successful implementation, because it supports engagement with children and young people and multi-agency partnership working. Across other areas, engagement and co-ordination of support with education providers, and partnership working was more successful in models based in organisations with strong pre-existing relationships with education providers and other agencies, and particularly those all or partly based in the YOS. This can also help with completing onward referrals as part of exit planning.</p>	3.2.3 4.4.3 5.3.1 5.4.1 8.3.1	Local delivery teams
9. Carefully consider the skills of those recruited to delivery roles in future iterations of	<p>There was strong consensus across all areas that the skills and expertise of the EIMs and support workers are central in achieving positive outcomes for children and young people, education, and the wider system. In particular, stakeholders highlighted the importance of the EIMs and support workers having an education background, which can facilitate good relationships with</p>	4.4.1 6.2 8.3.2	Local delivery teams

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
the project or similar workstreams.	education providers due to EIMs' ability to present complex information in ways suitable for and education providers to easily understand. Communication and rapport building skills with children and young people, being representative of the community, and diplomacy, proactiveness and adaptability were also highlighted as important skills to engage children and young people and provide effective support targeted to their needs.		
10. Consider the possibilities of delivering longer interventions.	All delivery stakeholders (support workers and EIMs) agreed that although the Education Inclusion Project could be more effective with and benefit from a whole-family approach, the short-term nature of the intervention does not allow time for this wider approach. A longer intervention period could also result in a wider reach of the project, as it could support children and young people with more complex needs that need consistent support over a longer period of time.	5.4.3 7.2.4 8.2.1	Local authority and OPCC stakeholders
11. Consider offering more regular check-in sessions between education providers and EIMs.	<p>Several education professionals who we interviewed raised that communication and information-sharing within the project is still a challenge, and that improvements in this area might help them coordinate support more effectively.</p> <p>Delivery teams also reported that education providers sometimes make inappropriate referrals, with particular education providers referring many pupils who do not meet the needs thresholds required for support. This was particularly the case in areas where referral criteria have been broadened. This has resulted in demand outweighing the capacity of delivery teams. This is further exacerbated by capacity and resource constraints across the</p>	5.2 5.3.3	Local delivery teams

Recommendation	Evidence base	Report section	For consideration by:
	system, which limits the number of onwards referrals to specialist support which can be made.		
12. Offer training across Avon and Somerset on trauma-informed practice, contextual safeguarding approaches and support for SEND pupils across the system.	<p>There was consensus among stakeholders not in the education sector that more training on trauma-informed methods, supporting SEND needs in school, and contextual safeguarding and contextual risk factors could be useful for all teachers (i.e. not only those with wellbeing or SEN responsibilities) and wider partners. This might help co-ordinate inclusion support being offered to the children and young people by all partners, and in turn help sustain any impact achieved. Consulting education colleagues on their training needs could help inform this training.</p> <p>Stakeholders suggested that SEND training could include training to destigmatise certain presentations of SEND, which might help to reduce exclusions for these children and young people.</p>	4.3.4 5.3.4 6.3 7.3 8.2.3 8.3.5	Local authority and OPCC stakeholders, and local delivery teams

9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1: Evaluation report of Bristol VRU's education inclusion work



AS Phase 2 Bristol
VRU impact report fin

9.2 Appendix 2: Data Study



A&S EI roll out data
appendix final.pdf

9.3 Appendix 3: Local site delivery models



A&S EI roll out site
models appendix final



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