

# DARLINGTON SCHOOLS FORUM

4<sup>th</sup> October 2016

ITEM NO 6

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## SCHOOL FORUM OFFICER – WORK UPDATE

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### Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to update School Forum on the review of the High Needs services and related activity.

### Progress to Date

2. Having now conducted a full year of panels, one of the key changes will be the requirement for base managers to provide a report prior to the panel to accompany the pupil information (targets and progress). This will be completed by base managers and discussed at termly monitoring meetings before the panel.
3. Commissioned places remain the same as in 2015/16. As can be seen from summary of places below as at end of the last Academic Year, not all bases are currently full, but this is a changing position. Heathfield base had a temporary increase of places which this year reduces (from 16 to 14), and Hurworth base also had a temporary increase from 12 to 14 in 2015/16 and discussions will clarify the number of places available in 2016/17.
4. A summary of places is below.

Base	Commissioned Places	Autumn Term 2016/17	Notes
Heathfield (Complex Needs/Cognition & Learning)	14	12	1 place vacant KS1 1 place vacant KS2  1 child transition to secondary
Hurworth (ASD)	12	13	Agreed one place over numbers in 2015/16.
Mount Pleasant (ASD/Social Communication)	20	18	Exits: 1 child to B Hill  2 children transition to Hurworth Resource Base and DSMS  1 child moved to be nearer home  1 entry 2016 into reception
Northwood (Speech & Language)	9	5	Exits: 3 children now SAL age appropriate.  1 child to Beaumont Hill

5. There are new SENCo's to the authority; therefore the next SENCo network meeting will outline the panel process. This will re-enforce the need for up to date information (including annual review of One Plans), specialist reports, and sufficient detail on the 'assess, plan, do' and targets set for children.
6. All schools have worked closely with the SF Officer to ensure reporting is clear and consistent. The SF Officer will be reviewing how schools should track and monitor the children's achievement compared to local, regional and national data.
7. Contracts and service level agreements have been issued for resource bases, and the services listed below in this report.
8. All bases and services listed below will undertake a self-evaluation this year which builds upon the improvement work to date and alongside a summary of progress/achievement; will be reported to a future meeting.
9. **Social Communication Outreach (SCOS)**

Training: Delivery of training for ASD leads can be assessed as having had a positive impact as referrals have dropped lower than 2010/11 data. The service completed its second year of training for all Darlington schools ASD leads finalising in the summer term with workshops to increase knowledge in specific areas which responded to the need identified in evaluation undertaken through surveys. To provide on-going support to the ASD leads the service will set up network meetings throughout the academic year. To retain the higher profile and strategic role of ASD Leads in schools there will be on-going awareness training to ensure Leads understand the objectives of the ASD Lead role in their setting.

Staffing: In July 2016 an assistant coordinator of the service was appointed based at Hurworth School. This post is being funded through agreed negotiation with the School's Forum. It is initially a 1 year funded post from September 2016.

Evaluations: The service has reviewed how it maintains parental involvement and awareness. Plans include the development of parent support groups, as well as the provision of training to enhance the support parents can provide in the home setting. Information booklets will also be developed to support pupils, parents, and schools. Evaluations were followed up in July 2016 where there were identified questions or concerns from parents or schools. These were small in number – one school required a follow-up reply, and one parent.

Service numbers and referrals: There was an increase in children supported to the previous year in Year 11 and a growth in Year 6 involvement. This shows the necessity of support around transitions. The types of involvement in these year groups are also high, with individual work with the child being the highest in number of involvements. The number of consultations with schools about individual children has grown substantially from 117 to 190, as has involvement in reviews (including annual reviews, and CAF). The data will continue to be evaluated alongside the impact of the new co-ordinator arrangements agreed at the last School Forum meeting.

Destinations: The service has been asked to report to the resource base panel on proposed destinations for children in order to plan resource base provision.

10. The **Beaumont Hill outreach service for cognition and learning** needs to monitor intervention times and turnaround of support provided which will contribute to the evaluation of impact in the Annual Review of the service. In-Reach to the hydro therapy pool is being more closely scrutinised and schools are asked to re-refer if children do not attend for more than a period of 3 weeks.

11. **Low Incidence Needs Service**

The service have provided support to 158 children over the past year. The qualified teachers use specialist assessments which are shared with schools, added to pupil profiles and monitored over time. Patterns of development can be analysed (there are now 2-3 years of data), and the service would like to work with schools and the Local Authority in order to set up a database of achievement, this includes the service for children with downs syndrome.

The teachers of the deaf will be working closely with the Speech and Language service in order to identify children/young people with a hearing impairment in order to ensure day to day support from both services is co-ordinated.

The service is developing pages for the Hurworth Primary school website which will be linked to the Local Offer. A new process for physical needs risk assessment, training and environmental assessments is in place. The service is developing a radio aids policy which will be part of the Local Authority specialist equipment loan policy.

12. The **Travellers Education Attainment Service** conducted an audit of schools which has identified where schools require intervention/advice and support. The support requested does vary from school to school, and the service will adapt to meet needs. Where schools do not have a community of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children, support can be provided in the form of assembly, and cultural awareness workshops.

Whilst some schools do not receive regular visits from the service, schools can take advantage of these areas of support. The service can support approaches to the 'respect' agenda – *'exploring, improving understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their tolerance and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities'* (OFSTED Inspection Handbook). The service can be a valuable resource in order to promote inclusive culture, policies and practice that **all** Darlington schools will benefit from.

### **SEND Area Inspection**

13. All resource bases have been asked to ensure that files are complete (using pupil plans, One Plan etc.) and to work on case studies. The SF officer is working with services to undertake a self-evaluation which will identify areas for improvement.

14. The SF officer is involved in the preparation for the SEND Area Inspection and contributes to the group which is looking at the theme of joint commissioning of provision across education, health and social care. The SF Officer undertook a piece of work that mapped the practice in Darlington against the findings in the local areas that have already been inspected. The group considered this report in September 2016 and are looking at areas of best practice, which tells the 'story' to OFSTED.

### **National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)**

15. The NDCS released a campaign report 'Right from the Start' which calls for protection of funding for Education Services – including access to Teachers of the Deaf (ToD) with expertise in Early Years development. The SF Officer has considered the report to find areas of best

practice in Darlington and any areas for improvement. There is still work to consider health and social care however the below are key messages for the School Forum to note in terms of practice of the Low Incidence Needs team (LINS):

*Recommendation: Protection of funding for education services*

The LINS employs two ToD one who works with Early Years specifically. The ToD work with audiology and social care colleagues to support families' whose child may be diagnosed deaf or with hearing loss through the NHS Newborn Hearing Screening Programme. This is a statutory duty.

*Recommendation: Access to a wide range of visual communication support*

The ToD are also a key means of support and advice for parents, giving impartial information on options and access support for communication support.

*Recommendation: Access to additional equipment from the start*

The LINS work with settings to agree the appropriate supportive equipment (in the main radio aids), that is required in an education environment. Funding for this support is available from the LA through a specialist equipment loan policy. The LINS are updating their radio aids policy which will address taking equipment home.

*Recommendation: Access to high quality childcare support to achieve early learning goals*

The ToD can provide specialist support to pre-school and for staff to receive training and advice on adaptation of learning environments.

## **Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing**

16. The SF officer is supporting Public Health in the implementation of the Future in Mind projects: mental health first aid course, peer support grant funding and mindfulness training and delivery of mindfulness courses to students (see paper presented in March 2016). The bid to Health Education England that the SF Officer completed was successful which has extended mindfulness training to primary schools. Schools are participating well, in the main, and encouraged to contact the SF officer if they have not yet signed up to the programmes.

## **Accessibility Strategy**

17. As set out in the DFE guidance 'Statutory policies for schools' governing bodies are legally required to hold an Accessibility plan under the Equality Act 2010 and Disability Discrimination Regulations 2005.
18. As part of this work a 'light touch' review of schools websites was undertaken, the outcome was that 12 schools have plans available on their website. It is noted that schools may include their Accessibility Plan within other strategies/development plans that are not currently on the website, or part of other documents, therefore it is encouraged schools review the availability of this document.
19. A report has been prepared for the Autumn Local Authority school governors briefings which schools are asked to consider. The SF Officer will be in touch with schools to discuss the development of the Local Authority strategy further.

## **Recommendation**

20. The School Forum to note progress on review of services and monitoring activity and other related activity.

**Eleanor Marshall - School Forum Monitoring & Support Officer**