

DARLINGTON SCHOOLS FORUM

12 January 2016

ITEM NO 9

SCHOOL FORUM OFFICER – WORK UPDATE

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.

Background

2. To make best use of DSG resources, services need to be regularly reviewed against appropriate specifications, budgets and targets. Ongoing monitoring against these specifications can then identify the extent to which the activities are delivering what is required, enabling the School Forum to be in a better position to make decisions on future funding or . which services are to be commissioned or de-commissioned.

Progress To Date - General

3. Contracts (in the case of Academies) and Service Level Agreements have now been issued for 2015/16 for all resource bases and outreach services, and work is underway to complete agreements for the Travellers Education Attainment Service and Newly Qualified Teachers support.
4. Independent support to the LAPPS and for the MAPP/RB panel have been appointed.
5. ASD Leads are now established in all schools. The impact of the training will be evaluated by the School Forum Officer following return of a questionnaire sent in December. The aim is that schools meet low level needs as part of their graduated response.
6. The Beaumont Hill Outreach service has re-launched to schools and is fully subscribed for this term.

Low Incidence Needs Service (LINS)

7. The service improvement plan is being implemented and new systems are being put into place. As a consequence the direct management time by the Head of School has increased but once we have embedded systems this should reduce. The service advertised externally for a VI teacher but did not appoint. Different options were investigated and an internal appointment has been made. The teacher will undertake training and will shadow the VI teachers who have been providing interim support until July 2016.
8. The revised specialist equipment policy has been in place since September 2015. The Environment and Equipment Support Worker for Children with Physical Needs at the Low Incidence Needs Service has developed a pathway for children with a new or existing physical disability within schools. The roles and responsibilities of schools include identification of children who require risk assessments, and for liaising with the

support worker in relation to equipment and training etc related to this need. It is recommended that all schools appoint a key worker to undertake this role. The SENCo meeting will be used to launch this model and schools will be asked to confirm who their key worker is.

Resource Base Provision Panel - Changes

9. The first complete round of monitoring meetings considered a review of targets and progress, and a robust consideration of the children who need more/less support, ready for exit/transition. Resource Base managers attended the panel meetings and provided input for this report.
10. The evaluation of the first panel flagged up some process issues that need to be embedded, eg liaison with schools to ensure timescales are met. Further discussions are needed to ensure that managers can report progress of children/young people in resource base provision, both to evidence impact and in order to plan for future provision needs.
11. In general the panel believed the new process would improve quality of requests for provision and ensure that the right children/young people are being placed at the right time. One of the resource base managers commented, *“I came away feeling pleased that I have some recommendations and advice with specific time limits for children whom I need to implement further referrals for. It was good to share my concerns and get a quick response from the panel. I feel the strategic planning and scrutiny of referrals will result in a more productive service for our children and their families.”*
12. A presentation has been provided to the parent forum, Darlington Association on Disability. This reviewed the objectives of the resource bases and clarified criteria for entry and access.

High Needs Services - Budgets

13. Budget meetings have been held. The paper on High Needs Funding considers the outcome of these meetings.

Durham Music Service (DMS)

14. A meeting was held with DMS to discuss the demand from schools and increased costs in delivering support for FSM pupils. The year predictions for the number of FSM pupils in Darlington are as follows:

Total number of pupils receiving tuition	141
Total number of pupils hiring an instrument	102
Total charge per term £9,405 based on three terms per year - £28,215	

This year's current music remissions is £18,000 from the DSG, therefore this means that the shortfall is **£10,215 for this year.**

15. As agreed in the June 2014 School Forum meeting, the EFA rules prevented an increase in funding for the music service from any central underspend (i.e. one payment from the Local Authority).
16. Funding was planned to be used for this purpose (£14,958) which was received by schools in their 2015/16 budget share. The distribution was purely on a per pupil basis.

17. Although the music service funding cannot be funded centrally there is no reason as to why schools themselves cannot either individually or through an agreement between schools, fund an increase to the music service for 2016/17. This is something that could be considered at primary and secondary heads meetings. The music service would be willing to attend these meetings to discuss their services if there was interest to do so. The School Forum Officer would be able to facilitate these discussions.
18. In the future, if these increased costs cannot be found through the DSG or through schools commissioning the service together, as explained above, then the DMS will have to look to introduce a fee for FSM pupils.
19. In Durham the service has an arrangement with all schools whereby they opt to pay for FSM pupils using their pupil premium or they don't, in which case the charge is passed on to the parents. The charge for Durham FSM pupils is £32 tuition per term and £5 per term for hire.
20. It should be noted that there are other musical opportunities that the pupils benefit from that are not included in these charges such as access to 30 ensembles and high quality musical experiences such as the forthcoming Halle in Darlington event.

Scoping of ASD Strategy

21. The outcome of the reviews of the Social Communication Outreach Service, and the Mount Pleasant Resource Base show that there is a 'gap' in provision between primary and secondary which required further investigation. Work has commenced to scope an ASD strategy and three themes have been identified:
 - Identifying need : to predict and analyse the incidence of ASD to plan and distribute funding
 - Allocating funding : to understand current distribution of funding for pupils with ASD
 - Achieving Outcomes : to understand how well the different approaches to funding for ASD meets the needs and do any particular approaches contribute to better outcomes
22. Work has commenced to gather data to assess and audit need and provision but given that the Darlington Commissioning and Development Social Care team are arranging a cross agency Autism Plan for Darlington, it is considered best to attend these initial scoping meetings to ensure work is not done in silos as there could be opportunities for joint planning and/or commissioning of services.

Joint Commissioning

23. The School Forum Officer attended a DFE event hosted by Mott MacDonald on 'Reviewing Provision, Planning and Commissioning – Innovative Ways of Using High Needs Funding' on 25th November. The aim of the event was to share examples of good and developing practice in commissioning for children and young people with SEND and their families but to also identify and develop the key elements of a DFE commissioning model in line with the Children and Families Act 2014.
24. The DFE are considering how to pilot sub-regional or regional approaches to joint strategic commissioning of provision for high need low incidence SEN. They will be piloting their approach in areas where there is a history of successful collaboration. Further detail is awaited.

25. In Spring 2016 the DFE will publish good practice and a framework to help LAs plan and develop provision including how to involve health and social care partners. This will be brought to the attention of the Children Services Joint Commissioning Group.
26. As reported at the October 2015 School Forum meeting, the DFE commissioned ISOS to investigate the way that SEN funding is spent. The recommendations included an improvement to the way funding is allocated. As a consequence the Comprehensive Spending Review announced the introduction of a national funding formula for schools, high needs and early years. There will be a transitional phase to help smooth the implementation of the new schools formula. The government will launch a detailed consultation in 2016 and will implement the new formulae from 2017 to 2018.

Future in Mind – Darlington Transformation Plan 2015-20

27. Darlington's 'Future in Mind' transformation plan has now successfully been approved by NHS England. The transformation plan will be available on both CCG and Darlington Borough Council websites.
28. The School Forum officer is involved to ensure to ensure meaningful engagement with children and young people, parents and carers throughout the design process of all projects that are being supported with the total external investment of £162,000.
29. As part of this funding, an investment of £65,000 has been secured to deliver three projects that could directly impact on schools :
 - a Mindfulness project in schools and communities to increase the number of trained workforce to identify mental health problems and signpost or provide the appropriate support
 - a Peer support project to build resilience for children and young people;
 - a Mental Health first aid project for adults working with children.
30. Schools are asked to consider and provide feedback on the approaches taken. Appendix A summarises these.
31. Feedback from both of the primary and 11-19 forums is welcomed and the School Forum officer will discuss these plans with the SENCo forum. This will feed back into the working group to finalise the specifications in order for delivery to commence.

Recommendation

32. The School Forum to note the scoping work to date on an ASD strategy, but this has been delayed in order to work in line with current strategy development across Darlington. An update will be provided at the next meeting.
33. The School Forum note the progress on review of services and monitoring activity.

Eleanor Marshall
School Forum Monitoring & Support Officer

Future in Mind – Projects for Consultation with Schools

1. Mindfulness in Secondary Schools

Aims of the Project:

- To help young people to overcome difficulties, thrive and flourish
- To experience greater well-being (e.g. feel happier, calmer, more fulfilled)
- To fulfill their potential and pursue their own goals e.g. be more creative, more relaxed, academically, personally
- To improve their concentration and focus, in classes, in exams and tests, on the sports field, when playing games, when paying attention and listening to others
- To work with difficult mental states such as depressive, ruminative and anxious thoughts and low moods
- To cope with the everyday stresses and strains of adolescent life such as exams, relationships, sleep problems, family issues

Delivery of the Project:

By training of school staff to deliver mindfulness.

Each school would receive;

- An introduction to Mindfulness - volunteers come forward (1 staff member per school)
- An 8 week mindfulness within the school that is observed
- 6 month personal practice of mindfulness by volunteers
- 4 day course
- All secondary schools will pilot the project, specific year groups chosen by the school will be targeted. Most likely year 7 transition pupils or year 10 exam time students.

Questions:

- **Are secondary schools the only schools where this would benefit pupils? Eg year 6 transition pupils**
- **What different methods are required for primary school pupils?**
- **How realistic is it for staff to follow a 6 month personal practice and course and disseminate to schools?**
- **How soon could this be delivered?**

2. Peer Support Project in Schools

Aims of the Project:

To improve access to information about what to do and where to go for support, early detection and intervention for children and young people experiencing poor mental health. This includes self-care through digital technology.

Delivery of the Project

Depending on the course taken, schools could identify young volunteers to train in peer support / mental health strategies, and to facilitate events to raise awareness.

Questions:

- **What are the key areas where children/young people would benefit from peer support?**
- **In practice how could peer support work in practice? 1-1, focus groups?**
- **What age ranges should be considered?**

3. Engagement and Consultation with Children, Young People and Parents/Carers

Aims of the Project:

To ensure these groups have the opportunity to tell us what they want; to ensure this forms part of local needs assessments to ensure future provision is in line with local requirements.

Delivery:

Consultation/engagement through questionnaires/survey's; events; focus groups

Questions:

- **What are the current arrangements/forums in schools, or across schools?**