

DARLINGTON SCHOOLS FORUM

19th May 2015

ITEM NO 7

DSG HIGH NEEDS SERVICES REVIEWS – PROGRESS REPORT

Purpose of Report

1. To update Forum regarding the actions following review of the Speech and Language Resource Base (hosted by Northwood Primary School); and the Low Incidence Needs Service.
2. To update Forum on work started with the Social, Communication and Outreach Service (SCOS) hosted by Hurworth School, and the Beaumont Hill Outreach Services to mainstream schools.

Speech and Language Resource Base (SLB)

3. Management are undertaking actions to:
 - review training to all schools with the objective to develop a rolling programme which will have the aim to increase capacity of school staff to identify children requiring Speech and Language outreach support;
 - review staff capacity respecting outreach activity to identify if additional support can be offered, and directed to whom;
 - review communication policy/advice and guidance available and levels of support provided to schools, and monitor schools' engagement of outreach service.
4. The Local Authority have reviewed the process to access the SLB via Provision Panel, this will change for all provision hosted by schools. Discussions to date with provision leads and Head Teachers have expressed a preference for this new model. This will ensure a rolling programme of monitoring at each provision, ensuring places can be planned. This will support implementation of the Speech and Language strategy.
5. A Darlington School's Speech and Language strategy has been developed which outlines the pathways to support in Darlington.
6. The Speech and Language NHS service have commenced a restructure. The manager of the service will attend SENCo and/or any other forum as required, to present the service model. The Local Authority are in discussions regarding capacity requirements for the Speech and Language Base.
7. The School Forum requested investigation into the possibility of children's places being held open whilst they attend the Northwood SLB.
8. Currently six out of the nine children registered at Northwood School and accessing the SLB were transferred from different schools. One child has exited provision in this Academic Year and has returned to their home school. Four of the children entered the base at reception, two of whom were already registered at Northwood.

9. Currently, the SLB is classed as 'SEN Resourced Provision'. This is normally reserved at mainstream schools for pupils with specific type of SEN taught mainly in mainstream classes, but requiring a base and some specialist facilities around the school. For Census purposes, pupils in the SLB are recorded as 'current single' registration with the school and therefore a parent requesting that the child return to their 'home' school, would need to apply via the normal admission route.
10. The School Census guidance explains that the following other registration status' may be used by schools:
 - A. **Dual Registration:** The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a *temporary* basis. When a pupil is dual registered it is the main registration school that attracts DFE funding and any pupil premium. The DFE will not allow dual funding.
 - B. **Managed/negotiated transfer.** A pupil may be transferred to another school on a trial basis. In such a case, the original school will maintain the pupil's registration and attract the DFE funding and any pupil premium. The child could not also receive a place in a resource base which is funded by High Needs. Financial matters would be between schools for their mutual agreement.
 - C. **Guest Placement.** Schools can register pupils as 'guests', where the pupil receives support from another school, for example in a specialist unit. SEN Units are normally special provisions in a mainstream school where the children are taught mainly within separate classes. The providing school, if it wishes to do so, maintains the pupil's record with an enrolment status of 'G' (guest - pupil not registered at this school but attending some lessons or sessions.) In the scenario where a child has been recommended for a place in a resource base, but the parent is unwilling for the child to move school, a guest placement could be appropriate, if applied on an 'in-reach' basis, but this is not currently provided by the resource base.
11. As can be seen in para 10 above, it is not a straight forward process hence the reason why children need to leave their home school. If schools did wish to keep a place open this will be unfunded unless an adjustment to the funding formula is made ie the total number of pupils in the formula will be more than we are funded for and hence the AWPU will need to be reduced to balance the budget.
12. It is recommended that the current arrangement continue and ensure that when children are recommended for a place in the resource base, that the full continuum of support from the service has previously been accessed, and the school have provided the individualised and intensive programmes involving more specialist expertise in delivery, and/or individual support.

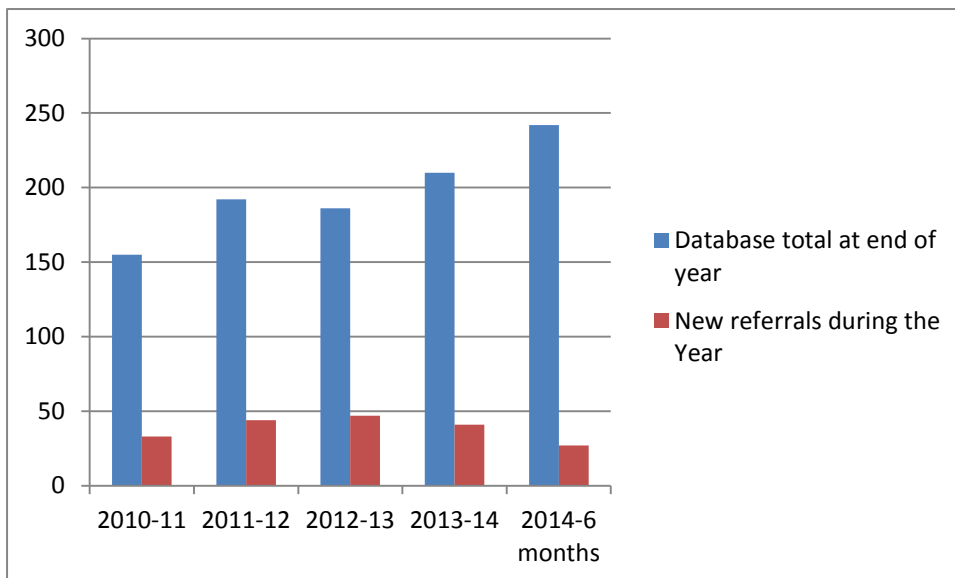
Low Incidence Needs Service

13. Due to retirement, a new teacher for the visually impaired will be advertised (3.5 days/week from Sept 2015).
14. The existing staff member also carried out various other roles which will not be included in the job role, for which the best model for provision needs to be considered:
 - dynamic risk assessments and training following school environmental assessments for provision of equipment and adaptations liaising with all SENCOs & Inclusion teams and provide written reports with recommendations for schools to consider;

- Training in the safe use of the equipment supplied in schools
 - Support to schools in request to LA for specialist equipment
15. There remains a gap in provision of OT related environmental assessments in schools, as the OT service no longer provides this service. The incidence of this has been low. The LA have agreed a short term solution, however a longer term solution needs to be found.
 16. The School Forum officer is supporting the Head Teacher as required and support for interview and selection.
 17. The LINS team will meet with the School Forum officer in the Summer term, to undertake review and monitoring against the improvement plan and specification.
 18. When a new model is known following recruitment, a revised specification will be agreed.
 19. The LA are reviewing the specialist equipment loan policy, and this will be re-issued in preparation for introduction in September 2015.

Social Communication and Outreach Service (SCOS)

20. This service is co-ordinated from Hurworth School, with staff from Beaumont Hill providing support. The SCOS support children with a complex social communication difficulty, including difficulty understanding and using verbal and non-verbal language, thinking and behaviour shown by restricted, obsessional or repetitive activities.
21. The outreach service also supports children having a statement of SEN who have a diagnosed Autism Spectrum disorder identified as a primary need.
22. The referrals for the service are increasing year on year as is evidenced by the average number of young people held on the SCOS database and accessing the support of SCOS. As can be noted, the referrals in the last six months almost equal that of the previous year.



23. The service is highly valued and well-regarded by schools, however the provision of training in schools has not been requested in the majority of cases with only 2 schools

requesting training to be completed in 2014. This has been an area for development in 2015, as the service would like to improve the expertise of school staff to provide interventions with more awareness of individual needs. A rolling programme of training has been developed and has commenced in Spring term 2015.

24. Evaluation questionnaires are used to seek views of parents of pupils who were asked whether the support and advice from SCOS has had a positive impact on their child in school and at home. Again, the service is positively received, often parents citing the service as the only external support the child benefits from.
25. Meetings have also been held with the Assistant Head at Beaumont Hill Academy to discuss joint working between LINS, SCOS and BH, and it has been found that some of the referrals to the SCOS are at a lower level and can be supported by the BH outreach service (see below).

Beaumont Hill Outreach Services

26. The service provides for support in 3 areas on an outreach basis:
 - support for inclusive practice (cognition and learning);
 - social communication outreach (working as part of the SCOS team) and
 - VI and additional needs working with the LINS team
27. Beaumont Hill also provide an in-reach service for children with physical and/or sensory difficulties who need access to therapeutic programmes and facilities not available in mainstream schools including hydrotherapy.
28. The service has had a low demand for support for cognition and learning. This could be for two reasons being that schools may not aware of the level of support that can be accessed, or if schools have been referring children to the SCOS. This has been discussed and alongside awareness raising of the service at the current ASD training, the two services will work together to ensure the best use of capacity. This will be reviewed later in the Summer term.
29. There is a need for monitoring meetings with the LINS and this will be reviewed alongside the new delivery model when recruitment is finalised (as explained above).

Procurement and Contracts

30. The LA has a statutory duty to deliver high needs services and is the accountable body as it compiles returns to the DFE. The School Forum is a legal body and LA has responsibility to consult on DSG spend.
31. As such, some high needs services funded by the DSG, are subject to the LA procurement and legal EU procurement regulations. The services affected depend on whether they are delivered by Academy or maintained schools.
32. Some of the services are based on commissioned places, which the DFE pay the Academy direct for, thereby, these are deemed not to be contracts under the EU regulations. The same applies to services provided by maintained schools.

33. All outreach services would need to review their performance, but as these are connected to schools providing commissioned places, then they are not likely to be covered by the procurement process, however this will be clarified moving forward.
34. The services below could be delivered by other schools, or other providers, and as such would need to be openly procured.

LINS Outreach Service
Travellers Service (Rydal Academy)
Durham Music Service
Virtual Head Teacher
Beaumont Hill outreach service
Hurworth Secondary School Outreach Service (ASD)
Newly Qualified Teachers

35. As previously discussed with School Forum, a key part of the current review is to agree service specifications for 2014/15 to enable to stabilise the services, ensure baselines are set and monitoring takes place.
36. As previously explained to the School Forum, we need to regularise contracts and ensure that the level of services are value for money. As an interim position, the LA legal team have advised that as these services have been directly procured they must be 'waivered' from the full procurement process for 2015/16. The procedure would be to backdate to when the services were originally put into place.
37. The School Forum Officer, will complete the applications for these services and present to procurement board. Services will then receive a formal contract for 2015/16 and will be required to sign and return the contract. Updated specifications for 2014/15 will be used for the 2014/15 Academic Year annual reviews and these will be updated for 2015/16.
38. A final list of services which will require open procurement will be need to be agreed by the School Forum by Spring Term 2016.

Recommendations

39. The School Forum note progress on these matters.

Eleanor Marshall
School Forum Monitoring & Support Officer