

6th December 2018**Item 4****TITLE OF REPORT: De – Delegation Behaviour Support and Fair Access**

Purpose of the Report

Over the past several years Schools Forum has agreed to the de-delegation of primary funding to support the existing Primary Behaviour Support Team (formally In School Support) which has provided for 4 teaching assistants to work alongside the 2 teachers in the team. Due to increased demand on the team, last year 2017/18 Schools Forum also agreed to a 1-year fixed term contract to provide an additional teaching assistant to the Primary Behaviour Support Team.

Since 2014 School Forum have also agreed to the de-delegation of funds to create a post for an educational psychologist to work to the primary Fair Access process.

The purpose of this report is to bring to Schools Forum an update on existing services (FAP EP and Primary Behaviour Support) that they currently fund through de-delegation so that they can consider further de-delegation for the 2019/20 financial year.

Background

Revenue funding arrangements for schools have changed following the school funding review which started in 2013/14. It is now not permissible for LA's to hold budgets centrally for the provision of some services to schools. This previously centrally held funding has been delegated to schools on a per pupil basis.

However, there are some areas that schools have the option for de-delegation.

These are: -

- a) Contingencies, (including support for schools in financial difficulties, new/closing/amalgamating schools, closing school deficits)
- b) Behaviour Support Services
- c) Support for minority ethnic minority pupils or underachieving groups
- b) Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility
- c) Insurance
- d) Library and museum services
- e) Licences/subscriptions
- f) Staff costs – supply cover (long term sickness, maternity, trade union and public duties)

For each of these areas, it would be for the Schools Forum members in the relevant phase (primary or secondary) to decide whether that service should be retained centrally.

The decision would apply to all maintained schools in that phase and would mean that the funding for these services was removed from individual school budgets before they are issued to schools. There can be different decisions for each phase.

Academies, special schools and nursery schools can buy back into these services if they wish too.

Primary Behaviour Support Team

The Primary Behaviour Support Team work with primary schools, mainly, but not exclusively on early intervention in the area of behaviour. At the request of Headteachers in September 2018 a Rapid Response Service was developed to meet the needs of children in 'crisis'. The team consists of 5 special needs teaching assistants and two teachers; 4 of the teaching assistants are on permanent contracts and 1 is on a year fixed term contract. The team work principally with primary aged children in their school setting offering direct intervention and support with children alongside consultancy for primary Headteachers and teaching staff. This work includes assessment of pupils' needs, strategies, whole class modelling, small group and individual support and training for staff where this is identified as a need.

The work of the team is non-statutory and since April 2013, the special needs support assistants' element of the team has been subject to a buy back arrangement.

The buy-back was calculated on the basis of a 100% uptake by the primary schools.

Since 2013 funding has also been provided from the High Needs Block for the two teacher posts (to maintain consultancy and guidance for all primaries).

Referrals to the team continue to rise; in the academic year 2017/18 the team worked with 90 children, which is an increase on the 81 from the previous academic year.

During the 2017/18 academic year 70% of primary schools received input from the team, which is an increase from 67% of schools the previous year. Comments from schools included:

We had first class support last year. The children supported benefited greatly from 1:1 and it was great for staff to know that help and understanding was just a phone call away. Thank you.

The guidance and advice given by the Primary Behaviour Support Service this year has been of great benefit to some of our most vulnerable pupils. The intervention provided has allowed individuals to build up strategies to help them to make better choices as well as having the opportunity to explore their feelings and emotions.

'Primary Behaviour Support has always responded promptly and supportively to every request, from immediate advice on the phone to support sessions in school and reports for EHCP (sometimes at very short notice). Many thanks to the team. You are often key to enabling us to do our jobs and meet the needs of children with difficulties.'

Advice and support has been provided in a number of areas including

- a. Behaviour management, advice and assessment
- b. Bereavement
- c. Anger management
- d. Self-esteem, emotional support, friendship
- e. Social skills
- f. ADHD

The team worked with 114 children during the 2017/18 academic year. Of the 68 cases which were closed at the end of the academic year;

- a. 50 returned to School Support - ***this means that 74% of the closed cases showed sufficiently improved behaviour to require no further action***
- b. 2 returned to school action following a managed move
- c. 7 returned to school action with a single plan
- d. 3 were placed in Bede ARMS
- e. 4 were placed in specialist provision (Eslington School)
- f. 1 moved out of borough and into a specialist EBD provision
- g. 0 were permanently excluded
- h. 1 went out of borough

Of the remaining 42 cases which remained open at the start of the 2018/19 academic year:

- g. 19 remained open as work was still ongoing (Referred less than two terms previously)
- h. 6 were open for monitoring purposes only and are expected to close at October half term
- i. 3 were long running complex cases and required continuing support
- j. 3 were waiting for an EHCP and required continued support
- k. 11 new referrals in July 2018 to begin assessment in September

Staff provide transition support in the summer term for Y6 children to aid in their successful transition to secondary school, all of which to date have made successful transitions into secondary school.

Staff also work alongside the primary Fair Access process in both the referring and receiving schools, supporting managed moves which have enabled the moves to be successful.

The teaching assistant who was agreed on a 1-year fixed term contract has a skill set based in mental health. She has brought a therapeutic dimension of support into the team. A qualified children and young person's psychological wellbeing practitioner she can offer low intensity cognitive behaviour therapy for children as well as anxiety assessment and programmes including: exposure work, behavioural activation for low mood, parent led CBT for anxiety in young children, OCD, low mood and conduct issues. Within the short time she has been with the team she has been able to use her knowledge and skills to carry out new assessments and therapeutic work which the team could not previously offer. This has meant that several children have already benefitted from her work with them and have made considerable progress.

Staff have also worked with schools to identify a number of additional areas of support for the academic year 2018/19 which include:

- l. The establishment of a behaviour network which meets termly
- m. The development of a series of 'tip' sheets on specific areas for concern including supporting:
 - i. Pupils with concentration problems

- ii. Young children with challenging behaviour
- iii. Pupils with low self esteem
- iv. Pupils in Y6
- n. The piloting of a 'rapid' response service

A more detailed breakdown of the work of the Primary Behaviour Support Team can be found in the annual report which was sent to schools in September 2018.

Primary Fair Access Educational Psychologist (FAP EP)

Every local authority is required to have in place a Fair Access Protocol (Schools Admissions Code 2012 article 3.9), developed in partnership and agreed with the majority of its schools, in which all schools (including Academies) must participate since it is binding on all schools.

The purpose of Fair Access Protocols is to ensure that, outside the normal admissions round, unplaced children/young people, especially the most vulnerable, are found and offered a place as quickly as possible to minimise the time they are kept out of school.

In 2014 Schools Forum agreed to de-delegate funds for an Educational Psychologist to work to the primary Fair Access Panel.

In 2017/18 academic year there were 155 referrals to the primary Fair Access Panel which is a steady increase from the 143 referrals made in 2016/17; the 102 children referred in 2015/16 and the 60 children referred in 2014/15.

Over the past two years there has been a steady increase in the need for EP assessments for the children placed by the panel. Headteacher have stated...

'We simply would not have had the time available at short notice for the school EP to assess him in the way that the FAP EP could...'

"EP's work undoubtedly affected X's ability to settle in and be accepted socially."

By the end of the 2017/18 academic year 78 pupils had been referred to the FAP EP; of these 28 were referred in the 2017/18 academic year and 29 had been referred during the 2016/17 academic year. There continues to be a year on year increase in the number of referrals made to the FAP EP.

The primary needs of these 28 children were in the following areas:

- o. Social communication difficulties (8)
- p. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties (9)
- q. Speech, language and communication difficulties (3)
- r. Learning difficulties (various) (6)
- s. Sensory impairment (1)
- t. Poor attendance (1)

Of these 28

- a. 6 EP assessments are underway, including 4 cases where the child is undergoing an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment.
- b. 12 children have remained in their mainstream school placements; their needs have been identified and are being met within school.

- c. 3 children had their needs identified and met within mainstream primary school and have now transferred to mainstream secondary school.
- d. 2 children have remained in their mainstream school placements with additional support funded through an Education, Health and Care Plan.
- e. 1 child transferred to a specialist provision as a result of the recommendations made following an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment.
- f. 3 children moved out of authority before or during their assessment and so assessment could not be completed.
- g. 1 child was referred late in Year 6 and so assessment was not possible prior to moving to secondary school.

Types of support/intervention from the educational psychologist included:

- h. Initial home visits made with members of the Fair Access Team to assess need
- i. On-call facility should EP input be needed at short notice
- j. Initial observations and assessment
- k. Advice to schools and staff
 - i. SEN needs
 - ii. Behaviour
 - iii. Anxiety
- l. Transition
- m. Training
 - i. Behaviour
 - ii. Attachment
 - iii. Anger management
- n. Problem solving workshops
- o. Attending TAF/review meetings
- p. Preparing resources to support children

Referrals continue to rise steadily in this academic year 2018/19 and because EP time is allocated on a weekly basis, this time is now used in a variety of ways. The time is being used to assess needs prior to a child coming to the panel as well as allowing EP's to be more proactive in supporting the needs of FAP children. This means using this time to provide direct support both to the child, while building up staff skills as well.

In 2017/18 whole cluster training has been delivered to schools on:

- a. Staff mental health
- b. Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- c. Supporting Mental Health and Resilience in children
- d. Refugees and Asylum Seekers
- e. Inclusive Behaviour Management Strategies
- f. Using Play Therapeutically
- g. Introduction to Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) (for anxious children)
- h. Social interventions

The feedback from the training was overwhelming positive; in total 464 people attended the training between September 2017 and July 2018.

Training for this academic year is a rolling programme based upon feedback from schools. To date schools have requested further interactive workshops on the following topics:

- An introduction to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (for anxious pupils).
- Social interventions.
- Using play therapeutically.
- Inclusive behaviour management strategies.
- Staff mental health and wellbeing.
- Bespoke training packages can also be requested by schools in relation to the needs of children they receive via the Primary Fair Access Panel.

This training is cluster based, at no costs to schools and schools can send as many staff as they wish to the sessions.

A more detailed breakdown of the work of the Primary Fair Access EP can be found in the annual report which was sent to schools in September 2018.

Proposal

It is proposed that Schools Forum de-delegate funding for 2017/18.

Proposed de-delegation values are: -

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| • Fair Access Educational Psychologist | £5.00 per pupil (primary only) |
| • Primary Behaviour Support (5 TA's) | £4.00 per pupil (primary only) |
| • Primary Behaviour Support (5TA's) | £26.00 per low prior attainment pupil (primary only) |

Recommendations

That School Forum provides feedback from mainstream maintained primary schools and makes a decision on the de-delegation of funds to continue with the Primary Fair Access Educational Psychologist and the Primary Behaviour Support Team special needs assistants.

For the following reason(s):

To ensure that all children and young people in Gateshead receive an education that is suitable and appropriate to their needs and abilities.

To enable schools to receive the support to accurately identify the needs of children and young people and implement support strategies as/when appropriate

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