

TITLE OF REPORT: De– Delegation Behaviour Support and Fair Access EP

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, in 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, which was continued during the 2018/19 academic year.

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 2012/21 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. 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. Since April 2013 funding has been provided from the High Needs Block for the two teacher posts (to maintain consultancy and guidance for all primaries) and the special needs support assistants' element of the team has been subject to a buy back arrangement.

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

Currently a large number of schools access support from the team. During the 2018/19 academic year 68% of primary schools accessed support, including recently 2 of our Jewish schools who were provided with advice and guidance from our teaching staff.

Comments from Headteachers include:

During the past year we have benefitted from excellent support through the Behaviour Support Team. Referral was straightforward, observation thorough and supportive, direct work was arranged quickly and the resilience of support staff little short of incredible.

We had rapid intervention for a very vulnerable pupil. The support for the pupil, family and our school was first class. Consequently, the pupil is still with us and thriving.

We had a child in KS1 last year who was really struggling with routines in school due to really bad experiences out of school. Response from behaviour support was rapid and the little boy received 1 to 1 support for 2 half days a week. He made excellent progress with the 1 to 1 support which was eventually removed in the Summer term due to the progress made!

Advice and support have been provided in the following areas:

- a. Behaviour assessment and management – acting out, withdrawn, aggression, noncompliance, refusals,
- b. Social skills
- c. Bereavement
- d. Self –esteem and anxiety
- e. Anger management
- f. Friendship problems

- g. Advice with issues such as ADHD or Attachment difficulties
- h. Emotional support

In additional, a number of information brochures for schools have also been developed in the areas of:

- Supporting pupils with concentration problems
- Supporting young children with challenging behaviour
- Supporting pupils with low self esteem
- Supporting pupils in Y6
- Supporting primary children with relationship difficulties
- Helping parents and carers to understand challenging behaviour in schools
- Supporting primary children with sensory modulation needs in schools
- Supporting vulnerable students including students in care

A further brochure on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) is currently being developed.

During 2018/19 academic year, the team worked with 84 children. Of the 50 cases which were closed at the end of the 2018/19 academic year;

- a. 74% returned to School Support - ***this means that 74% of the closed cases showed sufficiently improved behaviour to require no further action***
- b. 3% were managed move
- c. 10% returned to school action with a single plan
- d. 4% were placed in Bede ARMS
- e. 2% moved out of borough
- f. 0% were permanently excluded
- g. 7% specialist provision

Of the remaining 34 cases which remained open at the start of the 2018/19 academic year:

- i. 12 were ongoing and referred less than two terms previously
- j. 8 were monitoring only and expected to close by October
- k. 3 were long running complex
- l. 2 were awaiting EHCP
- m. 9 were new and referred only in July

Staff also provided transition support in the summer term for Y6 children to aid in their successful transition to secondary school. Of the 7 children worked with, 6 have made successful transitions into secondary school and 1 is struggling even with support. Further work on transition will be undertaken by the team during the 2019/20 academic year. This work is being undertaken in partnership with schools and with HINT.

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.

Previously staff have worked with schools to identify a number of additional areas of support for the academic year 2018/19 which included:

- The establishment of a behaviour network which meets termly; the areas discussed have included:
 - The work of and referrals for Primary Behaviour Support Intervention
 - Systems and paperwork (SEN, FAP, exclusions etc
 - Transition into secondary school
 - Good practice from other primary schools
- The development of a series of 'tip' sheets on specific areas for concern
- The piloting of a 'rapid' response service-in discussion with HT it was agreed however at the end of the summer term 2019, that due to the rapid response given to all referrals to the service a 'specialist' rapid response service was not required

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 2019.

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.

Following the introduction of the Primary Fair Access Protocols in June 2014, in November 2014 Schools Forum agreed to de-delegate funds for an Educational Psychologist to work to the primary Fair Access Panel.

In 2018/19 177 referrals to the primary Fair Access Panel which is a steady increase from the 155 referrals to the Panel in 2017/18, 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 several 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 2018/19 academic year 99 pupils had been referred to the FAP EP; of these 20 were referred in the 2018/19 academic year, 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 20 children were in the following areas:

- n. Social communication difficulties (4)
- o. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties (7)
- p. Speech, language and communication difficulties (1)
- q. Learning difficulties (various) (5)
- r. Sensory impairment (3)

Of these 20

- 1. Child's need identified and being met in mainstream school (7)
- 2. Child's needs identified and being met in mainstream school. Child transferring to secondary school (2)
- 3. Education, health and care needs assessment planned / underway (5)
- 4. Moved out of authority during assessment (1)
- 5. Assessment ongoing (5)

Types of support/intervention from the educational psychologist included:

- s. Initial home visits made with members of the Fair Access Team to assess need
- t. On-call facility should EP input be needed at short notice
- u. Initial observations and assessment
- v. Advice to schools and staff
 - i. SEN needs
 - ii. Behaviour
 - iii. Anxiety
- w. Transition
- x. Training
 - i. Behaviour
 - ii. Attachment
 - iii. Anger management
- y. Problem solving workshops
- z. Attending TAF/review meetings
- aa. Preparing resources to support children

Referrals continue to rise steadily in this academic year 2019/20 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 2018/19 training has been delivered to schools on:

- a. An introduction to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (for anxious pupils).
- b. Social interventions.
- c. Using play therapeutically.
- d. Inclusive behaviour management strategies.
- e. Supporting staff wellbeing and resilience.
- f. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

- g. Attachment.
- h. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- i. Bereavement and loss.
- j. Bespoke training packages were also delivered to individual schools in relation to the needs of the children they received via the Primary Fair Access Panel.

The feedback from the training was overwhelming positive; in total 220 people attended the 19 training sessions between September 2018 and July 2019.

Training for this academic year is a rolling programme based upon feedback from schools. To date, schools have registered a preference for further interactive workshops. Topics for this academic year are:

- Managing strong emotions.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and resilience.
- Using LEGO therapeutically.
- An introduction to restorative approaches (offered in a training as opposed to workshop format due to the content).
- 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 hosted authority wide at no extra cost to schools and schools can apply to send as many staff as they wish to the sessions, although the preferred practical workshop format limits the number of attendees at such sessions to 20. These sessions are being repeated several times across the year in an effort to meet demand.

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 2019.

Proposal

In 2019/20 Schools Forum agreed to de-delegate additional funding for a 5th Teaching assistant. The additional post could not be recruited into so it is proposed that the funding for this TA is rolled forward for 2020/21 and the funding rates reduced to reflect the cost of funding 4 TA's for 2020/21. This will be reviewed again during 2020/21.

It is proposed that Schools Forum de-delegate funding for 2020/21.

Proposed de-delegation values are: -

- Fair Access Educational Psychologist £5.00 per pupil (primary only) (same as 2019/20)
- Primary Behaviour Support (5 TA's) £2.00 per pupil (primary only) 2019/20 £4.00)
- Primary Behaviour Support (5TA's) £20.00 per low prior attainment pupil (primary only) (2019/20 £26.00)

These amount could change if the data in the updated APT is significantly different to 2019/20 APT data.

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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