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

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**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 five teaching assistants to work alongside the two teachers in the 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 2021/22 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 five specialist behaviour teaching assistants and two teachers.

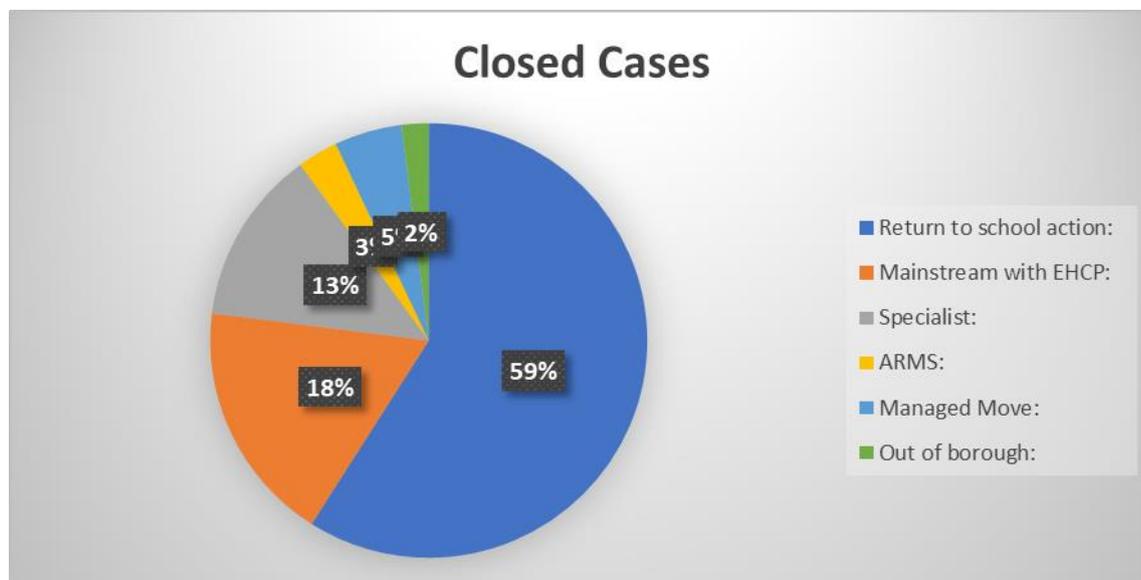
The team work principally with primary aged children in their school setting offering direct intervention and support with children alongside consultancy for primary Headteachers and teaching staff. This work includes assessment of pupils' needs, strategies, whole class modelling, small group and individual 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.

Over the past few years a large number of schools have accessed support from the team, including two of our Jewish Schools.

Due to COVID it is difficult to compare year on year data. The table below shows that following input from the Primary Behaviour Support Team 59% of children worked with returned to school action and 18% continued in mainstream with an EHCP. 13% of children went into specialist provision which is a fraction above percentages for the year before (11% 2018/19) with 3% going to Bede ARMS



Due to COVID and the 'closure' of schools to all but the most vulnerable children and those of key workers, there were also less referrals to the service than in previous years. In 2019/20 a total of 55 children were referred, before the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2020. Broken down by year group, we again see high numbers of referrals in year one and less in Reception in comparison to the very high numbers of Reception referrals in recent years. We had fewer Y6 referrals as well which may represent efforts by the team and schools to identify children earlier so their needs can be addressed.

Whilst life has been very different due to COVID 19, the team has continued to work to support primary schools in various ways including:

- Three staff who worked within two of our specialist provisions with the vulnerable children there who continued to attend school. (Eslington and Hilltop)
- Staff have continued to be available through telephone, email or through TEAMS for advice and support.
- Attendance at EHCP and other meetings via TEAMS
- Attendance at SEN panel via TEAMS and the July FAP meeting which took place at Dryden.
- Completion of reports, behaviour plans and risk assessments for individual pupils taking into account COVID guidelines
- Written advice to help schools manage the emotional needs of children as they return to schools post COVID and to assist in ensuring smooth transitions to secondary schools for children in year 6 during extraordinary circumstances.

The team have also developed new information leaflets for schools on a range of topics including: -

- Advice for supporting children and young people back into school during the Covid-19 pandemic
- Stages of childhood development in the primary years
- Supporting pupils in year 6
- Transition from primary to secondary school
- Supporting transition during extraordinary circumstances.
- Understanding the developmental changes in 10 and 11 year olds
- Support for primary schools to understand Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)
- Managing anger: recommendations for teachers and parents
- Supporting children with separation anxiety disorder in school
- Supporting children with foetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) in school
- Creating a sensory friendly classroom to support learning
- Restorative justice in schools
- Promoting positive lunchtimes
- The role of the key adult in school

These can be found on the Education Support website alongside existing leaflets which have been developed in previous years and include:

- Supporting vulnerable children with challenging behaviour, including children in care
- Supporting children with low self esteem
- Supporting children with concentration difficulties
- Supporting children with relationship difficulties
- Creating an effective classroom climate to support young children with challenging behaviour
- Helping parents and carers understand challenging behaviour in school

Now in its second year, the Primary Behaviour Network met on two occasions last year, one of which was online. The network was developed to share good practice among schools and keep abreast of training and developments in the area of behaviour and social and emotional issues. Last year, the themes were Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and Girls with Autism. Network meetings will continue to be delivered online until such time as the COVID situation has resolved itself.

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.

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 October 2020.

### **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 (PFAP).

The workload and responsibilities relating to this post have been distributed within the Psychological Service so that most EPs have taken on work relating to referrals coming through from PFAP. In addition to direct work with pupils and teachers (individual assessment with children, consultations with teachers and parents/carers, training for staff in specialist areas, problem solving discussions with groups of staff about individual needs, group work with children, therapeutic work with individuals, attendance at meetings, etc.), the workload and responsibilities of the PFAP EP include:

- Reading panel papers and attending the Primary Fair Access Panel meeting each month;
- Coordinating the PFAP EP on-call rota;
- Preparing a monthly update document which is distributed to all primary schools with the minutes of the panel meeting to offer an update on PFAP EP work;
- Liaising with colleagues from the Education Support Service and from within the Psychological Service regarding casework that comes through from PFAP;
- Home visits to explore the needs of individual children whose paperwork clearly indicates a significant level of SEND (including children at risk of permanent exclusion) prior to these children coming to PFAP, and referral on to SEND systems where appropriate; and
- Development and coordination of various training packages for primary schools relevant to the PFAP remit.

To the end of academic year 2019-2020, the PFAP EP had accepted **112** individual pupil referrals overall. During academic year 2019-2020, **12** referrals were still ongoing from

academic year 2018-2019 and **13** new referrals were initiated, totalling **25** active cases with the PFAP EP this academic year. A greater number of referrals would have been expected this academic year had the COVID-19 restrictions not been in place.

The primary needs of these children have been loosely categorised in the table below. However, please note that it is difficult to categorise very complex children into one category of need only and particularly as some are still undergoing assessment in order to identify and meet their needs.

Area of Need	Number of Children
Social, emotional and mental health	6
General learning	2
Social communication	3
Physical / sensory / medical	1
Speech, language and communication (including EAL)	1

The outcomes of each referred case this academic year are summarised in the table below, although a number of cases are still ongoing and so their overall outcome is yet to be established.

Outcome	Number of Children
Child's need identified and being met in mainstream school.	1
Child's needs identified and being met in mainstream school with an Education, Health and Care Plan.	2
Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment planned / underway.	2
Parents removed child from education.	1
Assessment ongoing.	7

In recognition that all primary schools have contributed funding to the PFAP EP post, but that children coming through the panel tend to be clustered within certain geographical areas (meaning that schools in some areas are rarely required to admit children through the panel, so haven't needed to access PFAP EP time) the panel agreed, in January 2016, to roll out a training programme in key areas identified as relevant to children coming through the PFAP process. To date, **102** training sessions with **over 2,000** attendees have been offered across the authority covering the topics of:

- Bereavement and Loss;
- Attachment;
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD);
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD);
- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD);
- Staff Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing;
- Promoting Positive Mental Health in Children and Young People;
- Supporting Asylum Seekers and Refugees;
- Introduction to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy;
- Using Play Therapeutically;

- Inclusive Behaviour Management;
- Social Interventions;
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Resilience;
- Managing Strong Emotions;
- Using LEGO Therapeutically; and
- Introduction to Restorative Approaches.

A virtual training programme has been created for academic year 2020-2021 to enable all schools to continue to access training via PFAP EP time but in a safe and convenient manner given current COVID-19 restrictions. The topics currently available in virtual format are:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Resilience;
- Managing Strong Emotions;
- Bereavement and Loss; and
- Trauma Informed Practice.

It is hoped that, as a result of the ongoing training programme, all of our primary schools will feel better equipped to meet the needs of individual pupils with complex needs, regardless of whether or not they have come through the PFAP system.

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 2020.

### **De-Delegation**

The projected outturn at the end of 2020/21 for FAP is to budget due to the reduction in primary pupil numbers (estimated drop of over 250) it is proposed that there is a slight increase of £0.50 per primary pupil. For Behaviour Support there is a projected underspend on the budget and therefore it is proposed that this underspend is carried forward enabling the rates to be reduced from £2.00 per pupil to £1.00 per pupil and a reduction of £5.00 on the lower prior attainment factor from £20.00 per factor to £15.00 per factor.

### **Proposal**

It is proposed that Schools Forum de-delegate funding for 2021/22.

Proposed de-delegation values are: -

- Fair Access Educational Psychologist £5.50 per pupil (primary only)  
(2020/21 £5.00)
- Primary Behaviour Support (five TA's) £1.00 per pupil (primary only)  
2020/21 £2.00)
- Primary Behaviour Support (five TA's) £15.00 per low prior attainment  
pupil (primary only) (2020/21 £20.00)

These amount could change if the data in the updated APT is significantly different to 2020/21 APT data.

## **Recommendations**

That School Forum approves the de-delegation of funds for 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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