



Briefing Paper for the 4th February 2013

Mental Health Toolkit for Secondary Schools

Lesley White – Health and Community Consultant

School Improvement Service

Background Summary:

The Health and Community Consultant undertook a review of the provision of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) with the PSHE Leads in all 10 secondary schools, and also the special school and education support centre. This work commenced in May 2010 and was completed in September 2011. The initial analysis was to provide the Local Authority with information regarding the provision of Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Education (DATE), and also Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) on a school and city-wide basis, and to help individual schools identify their present provision and any future actions to further improve this area of PSHE. Each school was provided with a report of the findings and ways to progress any weak areas.

The findings of the analysis highlighted amongst many things the following:

- Many schools were “working at” levels consistent with minimum criteria for DATE and SRE as outlined by the Healthy Schools programme
- Many schools had made insufficient use of National and Local data to inform programme planning
- Wider provision of information about health services to support young people in areas readily accessible to students was evident in the majority of schools
- Very few schools had a dedicated team approach to PSHE. Research suggests that this is the most effective model for delivery of DATE

- Whilst assessment of DATE and SRE in PSHE takes place informally in some schools, there is often no standard procedure for recording this, (although students do have a good idea of the progress they are making despite this).
- The consideration of the needs' of staff for in-service training on basic drugs awareness, drugs education, SRE, relationships, healthy eating, financial capability and emotional health issues is addressed through the curriculum, but often teaching staff were concerned about their lack of knowledge in certain areas.
- Teaching staff were concerned about the number of young people who were presenting possible signs of mental health, emotional health and wellbeing issues, which they often felt ill-equipped to deal with in the short term.
- Teaching staff expressed the need for training on signs and symptoms of mental health, but also specifically around self-harm and body image. The suggestion of training and a lesson plan Toolkit was felt to be an option to explore overtime. The success of the Sexual Relationship Toolkit for young people with learning difficulties, and having a shared vision and understanding with professionals from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service were felt to have been very successful. As a consequence, it was felt that a similar approach would be a good starting point for issues raised around mental health and emotional health and well-being.

Our Work:

The findings from the analysis were shared with individual schools and then key findings were shared with partners from across the City with agreement of the schools. Individual school information remained confidential between the school and the Health and Community Consultant.

A small evidence review was undertaken to help focus the priorities of the work, and to also ensure we had priority outcomes.

The Assistant Director (Eoin Rush) was informed of the findings and an agreement was reached to establish a Mental Health Toolkit for Schools with the support of teaching staff.

A meeting was arranged with professionals from across the city to cascade the findings from the analysis and to establish ways forward.

It was agreed at the meeting that the action plan would benefit from sitting with the Social, Emotional Working Group (SEWG), for monitoring and future planning.

Two sub-groups were established, with one group covering the training needs of teaching staff and the other the Mental Health Toolkit. There have been two meetings for both groups and work is now underway to ensure effective delivery to young people.

The Youth Council have shared their work and it is anticipated that this will form some of the lesson plans, but not all. Further consultation has occurred with young people in schools across the city to establish their views and this will be instrumental in filling in the gaps to ensure the effective delivery of mental health and emotional health and well-being in schools.

Further support has been offered from University College London - Institute of Health Equity (Marmot Team), to ensure that we have the most relevant and up to date research for our work.

The Next Steps:

Following on from the meetings, a bid for £15,000 was proposed to establish a Theatre in Education (TIE) to work with and alongside the lesson plans, as young people stated they would like interactive lessons. The bid was successful, and an advert has been placed to find the most appropriate company/artist(s).

Initial thoughts for the Toolkit will show a focus on Year 10 with 6 lesson plans perhaps covering:

- What is mental health and what is emotional health?
- DVD (Youth Council and/or TIE) – with discussion
- Monologues from the DVDs on areas to be ascertained at the next meeting.
- Lesson plans to be offered on various issues i.e, body image, peer pressure, stress etc. This covers the areas suggested by the Youth Council.
- TIE tour – yet to be discussed.
- Lesson – Where do I go to get help?
- Lesson – specific issues with, query input from the Primary Mental Health Workers (PMHW).

After the work with Year 10 it is anticipated that there will be a focus for Year 8, and then other year groups.

Consultation with young people has already commenced and further student voice work has been agreed in other schools across the city. It is anticipated that a larger piece of consultation will occur over a number of sessions with one school. This will focus on Year 11 and be based around the TIE.

Training to be offered with three levels:

- Level 1 – Mental health and Emotional Health and Well-Being
- Level 2 – Working with the Mental Health Toolkit
- Level 3 – Bespoke twilight training to cover the Toolkit and any misunderstood information from the training above
(We will need to establish if the expectation is that staff will need to attend both Level 1 and 2 training, or whether those not delivering lessons can also attend Level 1. The issue may well be a high number of attendees, but could easily be overcome).

Further meetings have been set for both sub groups and will continue with the hope that work will commence in the autumn term.

The proposed framework is practical and aligned to the various National and Local strategies (Children and Young People's Plan; Children and Young People's Strategy; Council Plan; Health and Well-Being Strategy; NICE Guidelines; Department of Health, Healthy Child Programme; Department of Health, Public Health Outcomes) and will ensure that we can guarantee our suggested programme is of the highest quality for children and young people in our city.

25th January 2013