

16 March 2010

Executive Member for Children & Young People's Services

Report of the Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services

Parent Support Advisers: The City of York Experience

Summary

1. This report updates the Executive Member on the Parent Support Adviser programme being delivered as a pilot with three small clusters of schools in York.

Background

2. One of the five principles underpinning the Children's Plan states that the government does not bring up children – parents do. The government is wanting to do more to support children and families, and parenting is one of the key components of the core offer for Extended Services. The DCSF has funded a national roll out of parental support by committing resources distributed as part of the Extended Services programme. The funding is specifically to support the appointment of Parent Support Advisers (PSAs).
3. The role of the PSA is to remove barriers to learning, enabling access to the full range of learning opportunities, as well as increasing schools' capacities to provide access to Extended Services. In particular, PSAs support parenting, and swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services.
4. In York, three PSAs have been employed and they work at Levels 1 and 2 of the "Tiers of Intervention" to increase parental engagement in their child's learning and help overcome barriers to engagement. As part of this they respond early to indications that children and families could benefit from additional help, providing them with personalised support to access targeted and specialist services. Individual work with families is clearly focused on early intervention/prevention, where needs are below the threshold that triggers the involvement of other specialist services/agencies.

5. The PSAs are each working with a small cluster of schools where data shows the greatest need for this type of support, particularly on attendance/absence. The cluster schools are:

Cluster 1: Burton Green, Haxby Road, Yearsley Grove, and Clifton Green primary schools, with support for transitions to Huntington and Canon Lee secondary Schools.

Cluster 2: Derwent, Tang Hall, Osbaldwick, and Badger Hill primaries, with support for transitions to Burnholme.

Cluster 3: Hob Moor, Westfield, and Woodthorpe primaries, Hob Moor Oaks Special School, with support for transitions to York High.

Progress

6. Our PSAs have had an intense period of induction to their role. They have been fully briefed on the range of services that families can access, and they have been proactive in networking with other agencies and services to ensure that knowledge and relationships are in place to support integrated working. This has been supported by role-specific training developed by the Training and Development Agency (TDA) and delivered in partnership with North Yorkshire.
7. The PSAs have generally been enthusiastically welcomed by schools, who have themselves provided inductions to school staff, ethos, policies and procedures. This has enabled the PSAs to work in a way that is complementary to each school.
8. During the first half term the team have worked on a number of cases with existing school staff to encourage the use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as a tool to work with families to identify needs for support. Increasing the use and understanding of the CAF process is a target theme for the PSAs, and early signs are positive that PSAs are in a position to work with families and schools to broker this. Each PSA will have a theme for their cluster such as the “brokering of CAF”, “transitions support”, and “promoting attendance on parenting programmes”. They will also develop a themed area of work such as working with BME families, fathers, or the extended family.

Early Impact

9. Feedback so far suggests that PSAs have been involved with a range of interventions including 1:1 support for families, general advice, support, and signposting to services. A number of interventions have resulted in CAFs being completed or reviewed, and in a couple of cases Team Around the Child meetings being convened, with positive outcomes for the families involved. As increasing awareness and use of the CAF in schools is an objective of the post, early indications suggest that the PSAs could make positive progress in this area.
10. There has been some really positive feedback from teachers, parents and the Children’s Trust on the impact of their interventions. Some of

these interventions have been quite complex in their nature; as relationships build between the family and the PSA, more information is uncovered and disclosed. In these instances the PSA has worked closely with other services and agencies as well as the Children's Trust to ensure the families are supported, and information is shared appropriately.

11. The PSAs' work is being carefully measured to assess the difference being made to outcomes for children and young people. Sample case studies are attached at Annex A to highlight the breadth of support that can be offered by the PSAs.

Consultation

12. There is regular consultation with the cluster schools to ensure that the role of the PSA is tailored to meet the needs of the particular cluster group.

Options

13. As this report is for information, no options are appropriate.

Analysis

14. Early analysis of the project is contained as part of the body of the report.

Corporate Priorities

15. This work will contribute to the corporate objectives around Learning City, Inclusive City and Healthy city, through its focus on improved outcomes for children and their families.

Implications

16. (a) **Financial** –Extended Services is funded by a mixture of budget from the Area Based Grant and the Standards Fund Grant allocated for Extended Schools Sustainability. In 2010/11 this provides a total budget of £341,930. The 3 posts of Parent Support Advisor have been included in the costings for this budget. The table below shows the amounts for 2010/11 and the maximum cost.

			2010/11 TOTAL INC ON COSTS	MAXIMUM TOTAL INC ON COSTS
			£	£
PARENT SUPPORT ADVISOR	GRADE07	3FTE	86,197	90,055

(b) **Human Resources (HR)** – There are no implications arising from this report.

There are no other implications.

Risk Management

17. The risks associated with the PSA programme are acceptable – the cluster schools are committed to the pilot programme and aware of the parameters of the PSAs’ work. The Extended Services Unit line manages the PSAs, and they receive clinical supervision from the Parenting arm of the Children’s Trust. Ongoing support and additional input also comes from the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), as well as support and guidance from Pathfinder Authorities.

Recommendations

18. The Executive Member is asked to note the contents of this report.

Reason: So that York schools and families can benefit from the PSA role.

Contact Details

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Wards Affected: <i>List wards or tick box to indicate all</i>			All √
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Background Papers: There are no background papers

Annexes

Annex A: PSAs’ Case Studies