

## EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL 29 March 2017

### **Migration Funding Bid Success**

Working with schools and council officers, the Director for Education submitted a bid to the DfE to meet the needs of schools who are struggling to manage the demands of school churn created by the increased number of international new arrivals. The bid has been successful and work will begin in April 2017 to give greater support to pupils and their families.

### **Background Information**

Schools in our area are struggling to cope with the high levels of mobility, particularly those schools in the centre of town. International new arrivals are largely high levels of asylum seekers and economic migrants. Some pupils arrive having had no formal education and most arrive with little or no English. The range of languages represented in our schools has increased dramatically in the last 7 years. Some schools have increased from supporting children with 11 different home languages to the support for children with 33 different languages. 8 schools teach children with more than 15 different home languages and the new arrivals are presenting challenges in that staff do not have the languages necessary to settle children e.g. Czech and Polish.

‘School ‘churn’ is extreme in some schools with some schools seeing more than 100 children joining a cohort during the primary years and a similar number leaving before the end of Year 6. School and LA staff are stretched to provide care support and learning to children and their families. For children arriving in KS2 and KS3 particularly, it is vital to establish English quickly and support emotional and curriculum learning effectively. Some year groups are particularly crucial e.g. those year groups where pupils arrive more than 2 years before the end of a Key stage e.g. Year 4. Children need to learn English quickly in order to be able to access the curriculum before moving into the next Key Stage. Schools use teaching assistants to support learning for new arrivals effectively but capacity is stretched and more support is required.

The sheer number of new arrivals puts pressure on teachers, teaching assistants and school leaders. The focus for teaching and operational leadership focuses on managing these challenges whilst maintaining school stability. Consequently children from the resident community may receive less support than similar children outside of the central Middlesbrough zone. These schools struggle to meet National averages for resident children.

Some children require specific support to settle and manage the emotional trauma of fleeing their home country. Specialist support is often required to define emotional, and communication, or learning difficulties and whilst this available, it is rarely sufficient and funding required leaves schools with challenges in providing for the needs of resident children who may not have the same acute needs. The bid will allow us to retain the quality of services to resident Middlesbrough pupils, whilst meeting the needs for new arrivals. Some excellent practice is developing through services working together to provide for both children and their parents but this must be extended to cope with the current demands.

## The Funding Agreement

Financial Year	2016-17	2017-2018	2018-19 inc 1% inflation estimate	TOTAL
Amount in £	£10,000	£384,300	£327,543	£721,843

### Extra Provision

The funding will provide a diverse range of extra services to enable families to settle quickly, gain access to appropriate services and have learning needs assessed. Community cohesion is also an important element of the work to ensure that children and their families feel valued and that the resident children can welcome and support in schools and beyond. Some of the main aspects for the funding are:

**The development of two specialist Sanctuary bases in local schools**

**Teaching staff to support the development of excellent teaching**

**2 x Additional Family Support Workers employed by EMAT. (Ethnic Minority Achievement Team)**

**Play Therapy training for 2 x EMAT staff.**

**Educational Psychologist and health worker support**

**Staff training programme including an Annual conference for supporting staff development in EAL (English as an Additional Language) teaching, building resilience/emotional well-being, sharing of best practice**

**Community Cohesion Support officer**

**Magnificent Middlesbrough event to celebrate diversity and skills in our schools**

**10 Further ESOL classes**

### School Improvement

#### **An update on the proposed spend for the agreed Council investment**

Earlier this year Middlesbrough Council agreed to spend £2 million over the next three years to support school improvement. Council officers and school leaders have worked hard over the last 4 months to develop a project proposal which will be a sustainable model of improvement for the coming years.

A broad project timescale has been agreed which is on track. A steering group comprising representation from a range of groups in the town, including governors and

the executive member, has been very clear about ensuring we have a compelling vision of how we can support schools to achieve better pupil outcomes. A consultation exercise has been carried out which was sent to all head teachers and chairs of governors to elicit their responses to the proposed aims.

The proposed aims have been agreed as:

1. Increase the capacity in school leadership in Middlesbrough to ensure that leaders at all levels are effective.
2. Quality assure the teaching and learning across all schools to ensure that practice leads to improved outcomes for all students.
3. Engage the community and ensure that there is a positive profile of education in Middlesbrough

The aims should lead to 2 key outcomes, diminishing of the difference between the performance of all pupils in Middlesbrough and their peers nationally and that the leadership capacity in the town is sufficient to support all school and provides a wealth of talent to fill vacant positions.

Respondents to the consultation were clear that all settings should be able to access targeted support and that the project and spend should be focused on all schools.

The current piece of work is to establish areas of best practice across the town and to identify how these could be formed into 'best practice hubs or 'centres of excellence' to drive out focused school improvement. The intention is to report on progress to all head teachers by the end of this term.

### **Permanent Exclusions**

The number of permanent exclusions in Middlesbrough schools has been at a very high rate for the last 2 years. Following a great deal of hard work by LA officers, in partnership with schools, we are now seeing a reduction in permanent exclusions (Pex) and in 2017 we have had only one pupil Pex. So far in this academic year we have had 28 permanent exclusions but at the same point in the 15/16 academic year we had 48.

To achieve this reduction a range of measures have been implemented: Local authority officers have challenged schools in their procedures, schools have been encouraged to develop their own learning support units to help them manage behaviour more effectively in school, a directory of alternative education providers has been developed for schools to use and is now in place, a new assessment unit for Pex pupils and new vocational pathways have been put into operation.

The development of a new financial model to provide clarity on costs and charges for Alternative Education has been completed and this will be implemented from 1st April, this together with putting into operation a new referral pathway for pupils with behaviour issues should secure these reductions in the permanent exclusion of pupils going forward.

**Councillor Janice Brunton**  
**Executive Member for Education & Skills**