

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL 6th September 2017

Middlesbrough School Improvement Project

The first applications to the school improvement project funding have been reviewed by the steering group. Funding has been agreed to establish Centres of Excellence/Learning Hubs for Leadership (Acklam Grange and Linthorpe Primary working closely with the teaching school alliances), English (Newham Bridge Primary) and Data and assessment (Park End and Green Lane Primaries). There are further considerations for a Maths hub and a centre for the Arts to be reviewed in the Autumn Term.

There were eight research applications covering a wide range of topics from transition to improving pedagogy and practice. Research projects have been asked to report progress after the first year. One school has applied for support to build leadership capacity.

We have had some recent interest from York and Ripon St John University regarding the evaluation of the project. They commended the project for its innovation and commented on the potential for this model of school improvement to become a national flagship if outcomes are positive. We will be looking for both qualitative and quantitative evidence of improvement across the strands of the project.

Staffing

We have made some new appointments to the team, Georgina Chinaka has been appointed as Ethnic Minority Achievement Manager and is based at Newport Hub and takes over from Stacey Carlisle. Trevor Dunn has been appointed as Virtual School Head Teacher to succeed Julie Bunn and Victoria Banks has been appointed as Virtual School project officer. We have made a new temporary appointed for a project officer to manage the migration funding bid and to work closely with Georgina with a focus on our vulnerable new arrivals. We hope that Jackie Dent will be in post as soon as clearances are in place.

SEND Implementation Group

The SEND Implementation Group which was set up to address the outcome of the Local Area SEND Inspection has a strong membership from across all required stakeholders. The Implementation group have been working on completing the Written Statement of Action which addresses the key areas of concerns identified within the Local Area Inspection. The group is now awaiting feedback from the DfE and CQC representatives before submitting the final plan to Ofsted for the 20th September deadline.

The plan has clear actions to address Ofsted's main findings for development:

- Weaknesses in the strategic leadership, governance and implementation of the disability and special educational needs reforms in the local area.

- Children, young people and families have too little involvement in discussion and decision-making about the services and support they need. The local offer is poor and, as a result, children, young people and families have a weak understanding of the resources and support available in Middlesbrough.
- Leaders have an inaccurate view of the local area's effectiveness. They do not gather, analyse and use information and data to drive improvement in provision and outcomes for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in the local area.
- Strategic planning is weak and there is no strategy for jointly commissioning services across education, health and social care.

The Director for Education and Chief Executive Officer attended a meeting in Darlington at the end of July with senior health representatives, DfE and CQC officers. The LA and Health officers were questioned on the development of the action plan and the progress made since the inspection. This meeting was very positive with encouraging feedback on the work already committed in terms of the development of a Children's Trust, the Steering group to lead on the action plan and clear commitment by all parties to work together with the appropriate level of resource.

Early Years Specialist Support Model

Through the SEND and Vulnerable Learners review 2016 it was recognised that there were some key strengths and areas of good practice across Middlesbrough as well as some key areas for development. One of these areas of development was the need to increase the capacity for inclusion for children with SEND within mainstream settings.

The LA has been consulting with stakeholders over the restructure of the Cleveland Unit and the Inclusion Support Team to develop and implement one Early Years Specialist Support Service which will support the building of inclusive capacity within the Early Year Sector.

The model was developed using feedback from colleagues, stakeholders and a consultation with early year's providers/settings which was sent out twice to PVI settings in July & September 2016 and once to school settings in September 2016. This consultation identified that more outreach/CPD and inclusion support was required, and that a different, more personalised approach was needed to enable a more timely and responsive offer of support.

Within this new model which has been consulted on with staff and stakeholders and will be implemented in September 2017 further reviewed in April 2018:

- There will be key leads in Communication & Interaction Needs, Social, Emotional & Mental Health Needs, Cognition & Learning Needs and Physical & Sensory Needs.
- All staff from both services will become one team and work for one service. They would be able to provide support wherever it is needed whether that is in mainstream early years settings, within the Cleveland Unit or in family homes.
- The new service will provide both outreach and inclusion support.
- Outreach support will be provided to the setting by an outreach worker, this would include support with identifying and assessing children's individual needs and accessing appropriate strategies, resources and equipment to support them.

- Inclusion support will be provided in the form of a member of staff who will work with the child for a period of time alongside staff from the setting.
- The new service will provide a personalised approach to meeting a child's needs within early years settings, moving away from the current 3 hours per week for 12 weeks.
- Children will be supported through the transition from early year providers into school.
- Funding will be in place to support settings to further build inclusive capacity.

Exclusions

The rate of permanent exclusion of pupils from Middlesbrough schools has been reduced by 50% in the last academic year. In the 15/16 academic year 80 pupils were permanently excluded from Middlesbrough schools and in the last academic year 16/17 this number fell to 39. Schools are now working more closely with the LA to identify pupils at risk of permanent exclusion and earlier interventions are taking place to provide more suitable alternative education pathways for this group of children. Since January 2017 there have been less than 10 permanent exclusions.

A recent report by the overview and scrutiny panel has recognised the considerable work accomplished by LA officers working closely with schools to develop a proactive model of intervention to support pupils nearing exclusion. This enables the LA to challenge the reason for exclusion, work with the school to add any extra support and find appropriate placements should mainstream schooling no longer be possible. We have also seen a number of schools and academies accepting children back to their mainstream education following a period of external intervention. 10 children have been successfully reintegrated back to mainstream education this year.

Early Help Family Team

To enable frontline early help casework teams to deliver the best quality provision to families Stronger Families are commissioning the services of a suitably qualified and experienced Clinical Psychologist to provide specialist advice to the Family Case Work Team Practitioners. The provider will deliver training and development which will include:

- a) Attachment Theory
- b) Impact of Parental Mental Health on Parenting Capacity
- c) Impact of Domestic Abuse on Parenting
- d) Impact of Drug and Alcohol use on Parenting Capacity
- e) Communicating with Children:
 - i. Developmental Framework
 - ii. Tools in working with children
 - iii. Tools in working with teenagers
 - iv. How to analyse information and create meaning

The provider will also offer clinical support to frontline staff members engaged with delivery of Early Help interventions to parents and children living in the Middlesbrough, this will include:

- a) Group Case Discussion
- b) One to One Case Consultations
- c) One to One Support for Managers Supervising Complex Cases

30 Hours Childcare Offer – new provision opening

Parkway Day Nursery were successful in their tender quotation to deliver the 30 hours childcare entitlement at Acklam Whin Primary School. An open day was held in March for the PVI sector to view the space and they were then asked to express their interest to the LA. The LA worked closely with Commissioning in putting together the quotation documents and displaying them on the NEPO portal, all of the providers who expressed their interest were informed about the tender process. We received 4 tender quotations which were evaluated by the LA and the school resulting in Parkway Day Nursery being awarded the provision.

Parkway Day Nursery will be working in partnership with the school to deliver the 30 hours entitlement. The eligible 3 and 4 year old children of the school will take up their 15 hours nursery education in the school nursery and the additional 15 hours with Parkway Day Nursery. The nursery will work closely with the school to ensure that the children's learning objectives are met. Parkway Day Nursery have been working tirelessly over the summer to ensure that the provision is ready to commence on the 4th September. Currently 11 families have validated their 30 hours codes at Acklam Whin School.

Councillor Janice Brunton
Executive Member for Education & Skills