

Special Educational Needs

There has been a great deal of work taking place within the Local Area to fully implement the actions within the Written Statement of Action which was a result of the Local Area SEND Inspection in March 2017. On the 4th July a monitoring meeting will take place between the LA, Health the DfE and NHS England to discuss the progress to date. There has been much improvement to date which includes

- Robust Strategic Leadership across Education, Health and Care with regular updates presented to the Children's Trust.
- Improved work around the Voice of the Child and the Local Offer. The Local Offer website is much improved and will continue to be further improved based on feedback from children, young people and their families.
- Improved Joint Commissioning arrangements.
- Improved data sharing. The Data, Quality and Outcomes work stream presented at a regional event in June the development of a Health Data Dashboard which is one of a kind regionally and only one of two nationally. This Dashboard will be joined to the Education and Social Care Dashboard which will support long term strategic planning.

Alongside this the SEND Assessment Team continue to maintain the high rate of 98% completion of new Education Health and Care Assessments within the 20 week statutory timescale. Early in the implementation phase of the reforms, in calendar year 2015, the team completed only 15% of assessments within 20 weeks but this was followed by sustained improvements to 52% in 2016 and over 94% in 2017.

Raising Achievement and Aspirations through Shakespeare- Karen Smith Senior Advisor

Last week Karen had the absolute privilege of attending a Royal Shakespeare symposium event in Stratford, learning from a range of speakers who shared their views and expertise on the importance of developing pupils' language skills. Speakers included Patsy Rodenburg OBE, previously Head of Voice at the Guildhall School, who gave a fascinating insight into the effects of speech and drama and the training of young actors, focusing on oracy.

Children of all ages were involved in the event, including Archibald Primary School who brilliantly exemplified their use of Shakespeare's work and pedagogies which have been developed by the Royal Shakespeare Company. The combination of Shakespeare's language, with all its complexities, challenge and beauty, and a pedagogy rooted in rehearsal room practice, has proven to unlock potential in young people, particularly those who are least confident with words.

The symposium, which began with a powerful depiction of Merlin by Year 6 pupils, not only shared school experiences but also offered continued professional development for colleagues that seek to develop creativity within the learning environment.

After learning of the significant impact of the rehearsal room's pedagogies, Archibald Primary School first started working intensively with the Royal Shakespeare Company in 2012. Over time they found that Shakespeare's language had such an incredible impact on pupils they went on to develop a unit of work based on the plays for every year group from Reception to Year 6. In recognition of the impact Archibald have made to reading and writing, the Royal Shakespeare Company invited them to become a Lead Associate School and they now support other schools through highly effective professional development. Archibald have been instrumental creating innovative ways of working with Shakespeare and young people, exploring ways of developing personalised learning in order to connect learning and classroom practice. As well, colleagues from Archibald, Middlesbrough was very well represented by: Breckon Hill Primary School, Sunnyside Primary Academy, Acklam Grange School and Priory Woods School and the Art College; all of whom have been supported by Archibald to raise attainment in literacy through Shakespeare.

The symposium has left the feeling of being exceptionally proud to see the ambition and high expectations of schools within Middlesbrough who, inspired by Shakespeare, are tackling key learning issues with passion and commitment.

Healthy Minded Conference 25th May 2018

On the 25th May Schools North East organised their first Healthy Minded Conference, this was well attended with in excess of 120 colleagues from local authorities and schools across the North East. A representative from the Middlesbrough Achievement Partnership attended on behalf of the Local Authority.

Matthew Hopkinson from the DFE and part of the ministerial advisory group on the mental health strategy gave the opening address, stating the importance of bringing health and education together in a collaborative process to support all young people, whilst improving access to mental health services that respond quickly to need. He recognised the importance of peer support in schools, which resonated with our ASDAN accredited Headstarters project, which is already up and running in Middlesbrough Schools. It was reassuring to hear that much of what is being considered good practice is already on offer or being planned for in Middlesbrough. It is expected that the outcomes from the consultation on the green paper will be available before the end of the summer.

Dr Peter Mulholland from Durham University and Mike Parker from Schools North East gave an update on the voice of the pupil working group of school leaders. This is a pilot project working in both primary and secondary schools in the North East giving children an opportunity through skilful questioning to talk about their mental health and the impact of external influences on this. There is an opportunity for schools in Middlesbrough to take part in this project with training and support available for staff. Following the conference further discussion is currently taking place.

The day continued with a variety of very useful workshop sessions.

In conclusion the day confirmed that Middlesbrough is proactively seeking appropriate solutions to support the mental health needs of its young people, some of which are well established, whilst others are developing. The networking opportunities were invaluable

in making connections with colleagues who we can work in partnership with in developing strategy, as well as giving opportunities to discuss aspects of good practice that are of interest in moving our offer forward.

Stronger Families: School Readiness team

30 Hours Funded Childcare entitlement: in addition to the universal Nursery Education Grant which all 3 and 4 year old children are entitled to, in September 2017 the Government rolled out a programme of an extra 15 hours childcare for working parents. Local Authorities are measured on the validation of the codes which are issued to eligible parents and in Middlesbrough we have seen a steady increase each term, going from 77% to 90% and the most recent figure for the Summer term is 96%. This puts us joint 3rd with our statistical neighbours. We have also seen a steady increase in schools delivering 30 hours provision.

Day Care providers (PVI's) and childminders: The team support the local childcare sector to ensure that early education provision for children is of the highest quality. Recent movement can be seen in terms of the number of Requires Improvement and Inadequate Ofsted grades are decreasing:

Ofsted Grade	PVI's	Childminder's
Outstanding	5	14
Good	28	37
Requires improvement	0	1
Inadequate	0	0
Newly registered	8	14

Boro Baby Fayre: School Readiness staff worked collaboratively with Health and Library colleagues on this event, which was also an opportunity to involve local businesses. 85 families attended the event and feedback from parents was very positive, some of which are outlined below:

- *What a fantastic event, we have had a great day and really enjoyed finding out about classes and events locally plus a chance to meet other mums. Please run again next year, thanks for your hard work organising this event.*
- *Really good, found out loads of free information.*
- *Lots to see and do, was better than I expected.*
- *Some really useful information, everybody helpful & friendly.*
- *I learned new things and definitely got a recap.*

Stronger Families: Work Readiness team Young Carers

Stronger Families commission The Junction to deliver the Young Carers service in Middlesbrough which has been since April 2016. There were 119 referrals between 31st March 2017 and 1st April 2018 the biggest referrers were from Stronger Families and Children's Social care.

The service has had contact with 283 Young Carers aged 5 to 18 in this period and over 959 attendances. The greatest percentage of referrals were for children between the ages of 8-14 years of age.

They have delivered 72 leisure group activities with 426 attendances, including three, 2 night residential trips to Peat Rigg Outdoor Activity Centre and summer day trips. They have also delivered a number of small group sessions, including some specifically targeting issues around child sexual exploitation working collaboratively with Barnardo's. The Friends programme has taken place to build resilience and improve emotional wellbeing, and ran as a 5 week course. They also delivered 'I'm a Young Carer' groups where young carers with similar caring roles come together to learn from each other and realise that they are not the only ones in that situation.

The young people have been involved in the following over the last year;

- staff recruitment at The Junction
- Been interviewed for BBC radio for Children in Need and creating a short film for Children in Need which is on their website.
- Started to work towards an ASDAN award in Peer Mentoring
- Attended Philanthropic award events
- Are developing resources for school notice boards to raise awareness in schools
- Are developing a young carers school pledge
- Have worked with MVDA on producing a young carers 'you care, we care' booklet which is now being used across the South Tees.
- Instigated a young carers photo shoot for the booklet
- Recently the photos from the photo shoot have been displayed in the Town Hall during Carers week and will be shown in the Town centre library too.

Stronger Families: Family Casework team Restorative Practice

In Stronger Families, the Family Casework team have all completed the Restorative Practice training, the foundation of the training is relationship based which enables ownership of conversations.

The Restorative approach does not only work with the families we are engaging, the model is a culture within the service. Therefore to embed the model the team have changed the following:

- Team meeting – these are now delivered in centric circles, this approach is to focus everyone's attention on the person who is speaking, it provides an equal chance to participate, it encourages careful listening, patience and thoughtful responses. The meetings are a safe space for sharing.
- Allocations – previously the new cases for allocation from the MAST were undertaken by managers and staff were identified as lead practitioners. With the new restorative approach to allocation, staff themselves are choosing the cases which enables strengths and individuals skills to be utilised more effectively. This also promotes ownership of the staff.
- Supervisions with staff are now a restorative conversation which are solution focused.
- Teams have weekly check-ins to ensure all staff are ok – this process provides the opportunity in a fun way to raise staffs motivation and provide support where necessary
- For the families the 'My Family Plan' tool supports the restorative approach in identifying goals and gaining the Voice of the Child.

- Restorative Conferences – staff are now facilitating restorative conference with families, although time intensive these conferences have a positive impact where there is family conflict or relationship breakdowns. The meetings focus on how the individuals feel and what needs to happen to make things better. The preparation for the conference is vital to successful outcomes.

Councillor Janice Brunton Dobson
Executive Member for Education & Skills