

# Schools Forum –3 July 2018

## Early Help Dedicated Schools Grant Update

### 1. Recommendations

1.1 The School Forum agrees that this funding continues to be allocated for a further 12 months on a district footprint covering all phases

1.2 The School Forum recommends that for a further 12 months the funding continue to fund family support using the current contractual arrangements

### PART A

### 2. Why is it coming here – what decision is required?

2.1 Schools forum are required to make an annual decision on the use of the DSG funding. This decision was due to be in October however from a commissioning perspective this creates tight timelines to work with providers and ensure staff are in place. Therefore an early decision will help in any planning for the coming year.

### 3. Reasons for recommendation

3.1 The new arrangements came into place in April 2018 and even at this early stage are starting to show positive ways of working between schools, the new providers and wider partnership. In some districts this is starting to lead to join up between the development of the SEND prototype work and the DIPs. This has taken considerable capacity from all engaged and therefore we are keen to continue to develop this model for the coming year.

### PART B

### 4. Background

4.1 It was agreed that the Dedicated School Grant for Early Help (£1.44m) previously top sliced at a county level to partly fund LSTs to deliver tier 2 family support be used differently in the financial year 2018/19.

4.2 The Schools Forum agreed that the County Council act as a broker, working with schools in each district to commission the provision of support to children and families in the district requiring early help.

### 5. Commissioning Decisions

5.1 The County council had a 6 month period to work with schools on a district footprint to enable schools to make a decision on the most appropriate use of resource for each district. To help schools with the decision process meetings were held in each district with primary, middle and secondary schools using a variety of forums. Advice was sought from some members of the Forum as to the best way to work with schools at a district level.

5.2 To enable effective decision making we shared; District level data and information, mapping of resources available at district level across the whole system, procurement guidance based on funding thresholds, identification of pre-existing contracts available to schools to buy additional capacity, governance arrangements for collective decision making

### 6. Outcome of locality conversations

6.1 Across all districts schools agreed to fund additional family support to compliment the existing funding available from Staffordshire County Council from both Building Resilient Families and Communities and Children's Centre's who both commission the Family Support Service to a value of £1.4 million. Seven out of 8 districts have purchased additional activity from the County Council's Family Support contract and one district, Tamworth, extend an existing pilot project

that had been developed with local schools that focused on providing support and interventions to families at tier 2 level .

- 6.2 The remaining districts purchased Family Support, this delivers early help to families in Staffordshire with a child aged 0-19. The support varies depending on the needs of families, but is predominantly home visiting to provide early help which may include the use of evidence based parenting programs.

## 7. What is Family Support?

- 7.1 Tier two means the family are dealing with additional needs that are unable to be resolved without support. We do not prescribe what this looks like as the needs of families are varied but families are likely to be trying new solutions and willing to change but need help to find the right solutions to improve their family's lives. So for example a family have been turning up for school late, the attendance is sporadic, dad is trying to get the child there but does not understand what boundaries and routines need to be instilled to help lead to a positive outcome such as earlier bedtimes, positive parenting and enforcing boundaries etc.
- 7.2 The service will integrate support around the families, having one person focusing on the family (one worker), ensuring that their needs are treated within the context of the whole family. Therefore each individual will have their own needs dealt with, within their family context (one family) and ensure that services working with the family understand and deliver appropriate support to the family (one plan).
- 7.3 The service is in place are using the new Early Help Assessment.

## 8. How much money has been allocated to this service?

- 8.1 This allocation is part of a much bigger contract. The total investment to this service is now £2,595,097.
- 8.2 As such we have worked with the providers to ensure that any referrals that come into this service are screened and that they use the total allocation to best effect. This means that if a referral is received from a school then the provider checks first if there is a child under 5 within the household or if they meet the BRFC criteria. If either criterion applies the provider uses the SCC allocation first to maximize the schools based allocation.
- 8.3 The district allocations and volume expected is outlined below;

District	Provider	How many families can this support?	Maximum Budget Allocation
Cannock	Family Support by SCTSP	144	£180,000
East Staffordshire	Harvey Girls	200	£220,000
Lichfield	Family Support by SCTSP	105	£136,500
Newcastle	Home-Start Newcastle Borough	168	£226,296
South Staffordshire	Family Support by SCTSP	112	£143,920
Stafford	Family Support by SCTSP	133	£166,250
Staffordshire Moorlands	Home-Start Staffordshire Moorlands	114	£154,677
Tamworth	Malachi	240	£170,677
<b>Total allocation to this service</b>		<b>976</b>	<b>£1,195,097</b>

## 9. How do the providers get paid?

- 9.1 We have introduced a payment by results mechanism for all providers and therefore they get paid based on two major points; upon engagement and upon successful completion.
- 9.2 For an example of what determines payment please see **appendix A**.

## 10. Monitoring

- 10.1 The fully populated monitoring reports are submitted to Staffordshire County Council in July 2018, October 2018, January 2019 and April 2019.
- 10.2 We are holding regular forums with the Family Support Providers to enable an opportunity to share good practise, discuss any issues or concerns and provide feedback to them that we may receive from schools and localities.
- 10.3 District Commissioning Officers are liaising with schools at a local level providing feedback on performance and will also support links between schools and place based working.

## **11. What have we learned working with schools to deliver this?**

- 11.1 There is not a single mechanism for making local decisions and so in two districts the decisions were not made until 1<sup>st</sup> April and therefore this caused a delay to the actual commencement of services which we tried hard to mitigate by talking well in advance with providers.
- 11.2 Through delivering this service we have established that there is a real difference between individual schools; some want to participate, be actively involved and want to understand detail, whilst at the other extreme some schools just need assurance it is being delivered and therefore pitching the communication has been difficult to get this right for everyone.
- 11.3 We have worked with the local officers based in the districts to try and ensure that any communication sent to schools is reflective of local work however this hasn't always been effective and so in some cases we have started to work in new ways for example in South Staffs any communication sent to schools is sent via the SEND prototype steering group.
- 11.4 We have worked with the Providers to ensure that they are aware of the importance of communicating well with schools and are hopeful that this will lead to good communication from the Providers themselves as they are a key point of contact for schools within their areas.
- 11.5 We have started to receive referrals from schools for children outside of the County and whilst we have tried to work with all cases, this does present a challenge for Providers as this will require additional travel, working with neighbouring authorities' systems and there is in some districts a duplication with the services provided for these children within their own resident local authority.
- 11.6 We are looking to establish a task and finish group from across schools to promote best practice. We want this group to consider what a good referral look like and what would we expect a school to do before making a referral to this service. Any nominees to take part in this work should be sent to [natasha.moody@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:natasha.moody@staffordshire.gov.uk)
- 11.7 There are still several areas that need joining up to ensure that the conversation is clear from a schools perspective as to the wider links for example with the SEND Transformation, the developing locality governance arrangements including Placed Based Approach and we will continue to ensure that this is developed over the coming months.

## **12. Earned Autonomy**

- 12.1 On the 1st April 2018, Staffordshire County Council were formally granted 'Earned Autonomy' status from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG).
- 12.2 Achieving Earned Autonomy removes the Payment by Results (PBR) Model from BRFC and enables Staffordshire to benefit from the full allocated BRFC grant. Earned Autonomy generates significant additional investment in Staffordshire and enables our partnership to accelerate our Earliest and Early Help Transformation including the development of District Investment Plans and Effective Practice Leads.
- 12.3 The Earned Autonomy investment will complement and enhance the Early Help Offer in districts and will align its self with the Family Support Service and the wider education partnership.

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