

Schools Forum – 17 October 2019

Minority Ethnic Achievement Service (MEAS) 2019

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

PART A

Reasons for the recommendations;

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Schools Forum of the current MEAS offer to maintained school.

PART B

Background

2. The Minority Ethnic Achievement Service was a centrally retained service until 2012/2013, when it became a de-delegated service under Exception 1 of the Funding Reform requirements. The School Forum have since voted annually to agree that the service should be provided centrally. The service is managed by Entrust Education Services, Staffordshire County Council's joint venture partner.
3. The Minority Ethnic Achievement Service is available to primary and secondary Academies at a cost and can be purchased on a case by case basis or as a combined package of Inclusion Support and other services from the SENIS team.

Context

4. Maintained schools are divided into two categories to determine the support they receive from MEAS.
 - EMAG (Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant) schools are identified annually based on a formula which considers the number of EAL pupils and also their country of origin. EMAG schools receive funding directly and are not entitled to support for new arrivals from MEAS.
 - Non EMAG schools can refer new arrivals to MEAS and also receive a nominal funding allowance for each pupil, this is used to fund additional resources such as dictionaries, dual language books or apps.
5. All maintained schools are able to request support for pupils causing concern, ie those who are not making the expected progress in learning English.
6. All schools send their referrals for the Minority Ethnic Achievement Service to a central inbox MEAS@entrust-ed.co.uk. Referrals are systematically reviewed and allocated to a caseworker based on the language spoken by the pupil.

7. Once pupils are allocated the case worker will arrange a visit to the school. During this visit the pupil will be observed in class and an assessment will usually be conducted. The nature of this assessment depends on the age of the pupil and the language spoken. Where the caseworker speaks the pupil's language a home language assessment will be conducted. During the visit there will be a conversation with an appropriate person from the staff to identify any particular issues for the pupil and where possible with the parent/carer. Following the visit, a comprehensive report is sent to the school which includes strategies and resources which can be used to support the pupil.
8. In addition to the initial visit MEAS will also attend meetings with parents, this is particularly useful where the team member speaks the home language but can also be useful in other cases. For example, many parents do not understand the benefits of the child talking their own language at home or how the English education system works. The team's experience of working with EAL pupils can help to overcome these issues.
9. Schools also use the MEAS translation and interpretation service for other meetings including those with other professionals such as school nurses.
10. The number of referrals to MEAS have decreased over the last 3 academic years however, the number of maintained schools has also decreased. In the last twelve months uncertainty around Brexit may also have had an impact on the number of new arrivals. The number of pupils causing concern has remained fairly consistent.

Figure 1 – Referrals from Maintained Schools

Academic Year	New Arrivals Primary	New Arrivals Secondary	Pupils causing concern Primary	Pupils causing concern Secondary
2015 –16	161	21	28	0
2016 - 17	80	17	36	4
2017 - 18	47	6	29	3
2018 -19	26	13	20	2

Figure 2 – Comparison of Academy and Maintained Schools

Primary Schools				
Academic Year	Academies		Maintained	
	Schools	%	Schools	%
2015/16	73	24.4%	226	75.6%
2016/17	97	32.4%	202	67.6%
2017/18	122	40.8%	177	59.2%

2018/19	148	49.7%	150	50.4%
Secondary Schools				
2015/16	36	51.4%	34	48.6%
2016/17	42	60.0%	28	40.0%
2017/18	47	67.1%	23	32.9%
2018/19	53	74.6%	18	25.4%

11. Beyond the individual case work schools are also supported to develop their provision for EAL learners through a range of approaches including learning walks, modelling good practice for staff and resources such as guidance for welcoming refugees.

Impact of the MEAS service

12. During the annual SENIS survey 86.7% of respondents rated the support from MEAS as either good or outstanding. This reflects their views during the academic year 2017-18.
13. During this academic year some additional resources were written to support schools with EAL learners. The three documents are available to download from the local offer website:

<https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/advice.page?id=O9v5ARG4J0Y>

- EAL Good Practice Guide for Schools and Settings
- Working with parents and carers guidance for schools and settings
- Leaflet for parents and carers of EAL learners

14. At the end of the Summer term 2019 schools who had used the MEAS service were asked for some feedback on the qualities of the services as well as the areas which could be improved. The following comments were received;

“EAL is still a developing area within our school and still an area we find we will need further support in the future. We have put a new specialist TA in place who has been using recommendations from MEAS to support these children. We appreciate the visits to school and the recommendations but would also be very grateful of any resources or information on where to source these where possible.”

“As a school we have used Behaviour Support and MEAS this academic year. Both services have been very prompt in returning my requests for support and discussions before and afterwards have been helpful.”

Recommendations and new service offer

15. Provide additional follow up visits to work with individual pupils and model effective strategies for school staff to implement. This is allocated on a needs basis for example where the pupil is causing concern or where the school have little experience of working with EAL pupils
16. Additional support to schools to work with parents such as running parent workshops
17. The team continue to research and keep up to date on resources available schools to ensure staff have access to the most effective ideas and strategies to use with pupils.

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