

Report of the Deputy Director (Children's Social Care) to the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 8th November 2017.

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Subject:

B Postive Pathways – Bradford DfE Innovation Grant

Summary statement:

In January 2017, Bradford was awarded £3.2m over 2 years from the DfE Innovation Fund. There are 3 elements to the award.

- Reducing the number of children in care through stronger edge of care work
- Improving our ability to provide high levels of care within our residential homes through embedding a therapeutic “PACE” approach.
- Setting up two “mockingbird” hubs to improve support to foster carers working with children with more complex needs.

This report provides a summary of the developments of the B Positive Pathways Programme, particularly the developments since it was last reported to Corporate Parenting Panel in July 2017.

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Portfolio:

Children's Services

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 In January 2017, Bradford was awarded £3.2 million over 2 years from the Department for Education (DfE) innovation fund. There are 3 elements to the award.

- Reducing the number of children in care through stronger edge of care work
- Improving our ability to provide high levels of care within our residential homes through embedding a therapeutic “PACE” approach
- Setting up two “Mockingbird” hubs to provide support to foster carers working with children with more complex needs.

After consultation with the Children in Care Council, the programme was named B Positive Pathways.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 B Positive Pathways Programme (BPP) is a £3.2m innovation funded project that scales the successful North Yorkshire ‘No Wrong Door’ innovation project to Bradford. It aims to build on the learning from North Yorkshire and enable Bradford to develop a different approach to working with some adolescents to prevent them entering the care system and to improve their long term outcomes. The model centres on a hub home with wrap around multi agency professionals working together. The North Yorkshire No Wrong Door model has been evaluated by a consortium of universities which demonstrate that the approach has resulted in a significant saving to the public purse in the approach that has been taken. Bradford is one of a number of Local Authorities which are looking to replicate this approach.
- 2.2 BPP is fully funded in the first two years and by year three we will be aiming to show the significant savings that have been made to ensure that the programme is supported financially for years three and four. A consortium of universities led by Dr Lisa Holmes (University of Oxford) have been awarded a contract to evaluate the impact of the Bradford programme.
- 2.3 BPP has three key elements; 1) Hub Home & Specialist Children’s Homes, 2) Mockingbird Fostering Model 3) Pace Model of Care

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

B Positive Pathway Hub Home & Specialist Children’s Homes

- 3.1 The BPP service will be based at a hub home which is The Willows – one of Bradford’s LA children homes, currently judged by OFSTED as good. The home is already up and running and providing both a respite and outreach model. The team will consist of residential staff (already in post) and outreach workers (already in post), supported by dedicated Police Officers (already in post) Psychologist “Life coaches” (currently in recruitment), Speech & Language therapists (currently in recruitment) and occupational therapists (currently in recruitment). In addition, the model emphasises the need for close links with the Virtual School and Youth Service.

- 3.2 The BPP service will work at the edge of care and respond proactively and innovatively to cases that at the moment quickly escalate to full time care. We envisage that there will be a significant caseload of families and young people accessing this service. We will expect outreach workers to support young people and families in their own homes responding at the time of crisis and to call on the wrap around support to enable families to work through their issues without statutory intervention. As part of BPP we are recruiting additional outreach staff but have also transferred in existing Placement Support staff. This team is already working with adolescents, including those referred to the service out of hours via the police and our emergency duty team with the aim of keeping adolescents out of care.
- 3.3. Although we had applicants, we did not assess there were applicants of sufficient quality to enable us to recruit to the BPP Programme Manager and this post is being re-advertised and we are looking at an internal interim secondment opportunity. Recruitment has taken place to identify the 3 hub home unit managers and assistant unit managers. Recruitment has already taken place for a project officer and police officers. Health posts and an intelligence officer to aid the evaluation are currently out for recruitment.
- 3.4 As part of the model we have agreed that there will be three specialist homes in Bradford (Newholme, Hollybank Road and Meadowlea). These homes will have a greater level of staffing, will have a reduced number of residents and will call on the specialist roles within the BPP hub. The aim is to return children from external homes to live in this provision and create resilient long term placements. There have been significant and frustrating delays in the legal processes of agreeing the lease for Hollybank Road from Catholic Care but these have now been resolved. An application has now been submitted to OFSTED to register the home and we have asked our regional OFSTED Regulatory Inspection Manager (RIM) to expedite this approval process.
- 3.5 One of the innovative approaches of the North Yorkshire No Wrong Door model has been recruiting foster carers on casual contracts to work as part of the residential teams. If successful relationships are built, there will be the possibility that young people can be fostered from the homes in a similar way as connected persons become foster carers. Many of the adolescents in our residential care have experienced foster care breakdown and less easy to place in foster care. This approach may enable some adolescents to return to live in family units – which is our ambition for the vast majority of our looked after children.

Mockingbird Fostering

- 3.6 Mockingbird is a fostering model first used in America. It uses the concept of a hub carer being at the centre of a constellation of foster families. The hub carer becomes the 'grandparent' figure and provides regular sleep overs to the young people in the constellation and arranges a regular get together of the whole constellation. The hub carer is supported by a liaison worker. A constellation is made up of between 6 – 8 foster families. The model has been embedded in a number of Local Authorities as part of the first tranche of innovation and has resulted in greater placement stability and outcomes for the young people.

- 3.7 We are currently at an advanced stage of a six stage process to implement Mockingbird and being supported by the Fostering Network. Our plan is to develop two Mockingbird constellations in Bradford and Keighley and will support these arrangements further by linking them to the BPP hub home. In September we held an information event attended by 20 fostering households. A number went on to formally apply to become hub carers. Shortlisting is currently underway and we are being supported in this by the Fostering Network. Once recruited the hub carers will receive training from the Fostering Network with the aim of going live in January.

Model of Care

- 3.8 As a result of an external review of our residential provision in 2015, we developed a model for Looked After children in Bradford. Within our bid to the DfE innovation fund, we agreed that the basis of our model of care would be DPP (Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy) PACE. This model has been developed as an approach to working with children who have suffered early trauma and attachment in all placements alongside our other key models which are part of our offer and supported by OFSTED.

- Attachment (PACE – playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, empathy)
- Resilience
- Team Teach
- Outcome Star
- Signs of Safety
- Building life skills for independence

- 3.9 A Workforce Development Plan has been implemented to embed the approaches above within the staff teams. This will provide staff with the skills to fully support children and young people.

- 3.10 Training in the elements of the model is on-going. Most Residential staff have completed Signs of Safety training, PACE training, Outcome Star training and Developing Resilience in Children training. Arrangements are in place for newly recruited staff to undertake this development.

- 3.11 All of the homes have PACE Champions and Signs of Safety Practice Leads. Additionally, some staff have had the opportunity to train in Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy – level 1 and level 2 – the therapy that incorporates PACE. Approximately 16 of these staff have done ‘training for trainers’ and are training all staff over 6 sessions in Foundations for Attachment, a more in depth attachment based programme informed by PACE.

BPP Programme Launch

- 3.12 BPP will be officially launched on 2nd November 2017. Robert Goodwill MP, , Minister of State at the Department for Education has agreed to be the keynote speaker. Contributions from partners will also be included. Following the launch the Minister has asked to meet some looked after children via a private visit to one of Bradford's children's homes.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 Evidence suggests that teenagers that enter care often experience poor outcomes, including disruptions in contact with families and disruptions in education. In addition risks of missing, offending, substance misuse and exploitation can be increased. Children who enter care as teenagers are disproportionately likely to be placed in residential care (as opposed to family settings), including out of authority placements. As well as being exceptionally expensive, out of authority placements can further disrupt family ties and educational outcomes. The DfE innovation Funded B Positive Pathways programme has the potential to contribute to our strategic priorities associated with Better Health – Better Lives as well as Great Start – Good Schools by safely, and appropriately, reducing the number of children in care as well as reducing expenditure on high cost residential placements.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

N/A.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

N/A

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

N/A.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

N/A.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

N/A.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

N/A.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

N/A.

7.6 TRADE UNION

N/A.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

N/A.

**7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS
(for reports to Area Committees only)**

N/A.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

N/A.

9. OPTIONS

N/A

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That the Corporate Parenting Panel notes the content of this report and the creation of B Positive Pathways.

11. APPENDICES

None.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.