

Report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services to the meeting of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 4th November 2020

AI

Subject:

Education Covid Recovery Improvement Programme

Summary statement:

This report provides an update on the work that forms part of the Education Covid Recovery Improvement Programme. It updates the status of work to date along with the approach to be taken for further development.

Mark Douglas
Strategic Director Children's Services

Portfolio:

Children and Families

Report Contact: Marium Haque
Deputy Director

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Phone: (01274) 431078
E-mail: Marium.haque@bradford.gov.uk

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides an update on the work of the Education Covid Recovery Improvement Programme.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 During the period of school closure from 23rd March 2020 to September 2020, schools were required to ensure that learning opportunities were provided for all children on their roll. This was done in a number of different ways and almost all schools were successful in engaging with the majority of their learners.

2.2 However, it is recognised that the impact of the closure of schools will have undoubtedly had a negative impact on the learning for many children, especially those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. It should also be noted, that non-disadvantaged children will also have also been negatively impacted by the closures. Therefore, whilst the post Covid funding will naturally focus on the impact for disadvantaged children, aspects of this recovery process will benefit a wider group of children.

2.3 All pupils were supported to return to school for face to face learning from September 2020. However, as we move into the autumn and winter there is an expectation that there will be a further need for distanced learning to continue as schools manage closures of school bubbles or full school closures, where pupils or staff are identified as having symptoms or confirmed cases of coronavirus.

2.4 In June 2020, the Executive agreed for funding to be allocated to support the delivery of several strategies that would help to reduce the medium-term impact of the closures.

2.5 This included the creation of the Education Covid Recovery Improvement Programme. An Interim Programme Manager, Sharon Sanders, was appointed in October 2020 and will be responsible for ensuring the delivery of the Programme. This will include the provision of a robust framework to capture activity and measure progress against identified outcomes.

2.6 The Education Covid Recovery Improvement programme includes the following workstreams:

- Digital Inclusion;
- Extended Summer Tuition Programme – Maths and English Year 11 GCSE;
- Supporting Mental Health for Learning.

2.7 Digital Inclusion

2.7.1 The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for online access for communication, education and wellbeing in the district, making digital inclusion more imperative both in the response and the recovery for children, young people and families in the District.

2.7.2 In May 2020 the Government announced a national programme to roll out laptops and devices for all children with a social worker and disadvantaged Y10 pupils. This programme also included internet access for those with no wifi access. A process was used by the DfE based on trend data to determine the numbers of laptops or devices to be allocated to each Local Authority.

2.7.3 In the case of Bradford, the total number of laptops or devices allocated was just over 2000 against just over 5000 children, including Care Leavers, who have a social worker. Therefore, it was recognised that there was a gap in the provision of devices to support remote learning for vulnerable children and young people.

2.7.4 The Education Covid Recovery Improvement Programme will be widening the provision of connectivity and digital devices to support learning.

2.7.5 This will include the following:

- Our 2000 younger children under the age of 5 across the district access to an age appropriate device to support children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- Children who have since been allocated a social worker.
- Post 16 (Years 12 and 13) who need to access a device for college.
- Ongoing support and maintenance of the existing 4G connections provided in the DFE scheme, as well as the provision of additional connections for the extra devices. Ensuring that these are extended to the end of the current academic year in the first instance.

2.7.6 The newly appointed Programme Manager will work with Education Strategic Leads; Social Workers; Early Help and Schools to identify the priority order for allocation. Work will also commence on the identification of suitable devices for the under 5's that will enable them to engage with learning.

2.7.7 To ensure consistency in device provision an assessment of devices issued via the DFE programme will be completed for each year group. This information will enable the most appropriate devices to be procured.

2.7.8 This will also support in the identification of children and young people that will need a change in device as they progress through their school journey. This information will assist in the development of a device refresh schedule, ensuring devices are current and can be reused when no longer required.

2.7.9 Mobile wifi device provision will be reviewed in parallel. This is to ensure allocation is provided and extensions to service provision are made where needed. Ensuring no disruption to teaching and learning.

2.8 Tuition Programme – Mathematics and English

2.8.1 The Opportunity Area, in partnership with Born in Bradford delivered a programme of summer tuition in GCSE mathematics in 2019.

2.8.2 To extend tuition for GCSE Mathematics and English, Bradford Council has committed £400k, in addition to Opportunity Area funding, to improve outcomes at

Key Stage 4. This is a combined investment of £600,000

2.8.3 Mathematics Tuition

The focus of the Maths Tuition Programme is to improve attainment at Grade 4 or above in GCSE in 2021. The intention is for the tutoring sessions to start after October half term and will be for a duration of 20 weeks. Tutoring sessions will take place at weekends.

School selection for participation in the Maths project was based on low attainment in mathematics grade 4+ and with large cohort sizes to ensure maximum impact. Letters have been issued to all 17 schools encouraging them to select students who will achieve at least grade 4 with this intervention. There are between 30 and 55 pupil places available per school making 800 places available in total.

Bradford University is leading on the recruitment of tutors and have received 40 applications to date from year 2 and 3 undergraduates. Most applicants are from Life Sciences and Informatics students and come from a range of communities. Tutors will be paid above the minimum wage, will be trained and also provided with mentor support. All tutors will receive hygiene training from hospital tutors to ensure adherence to Covid guidelines

Venues for tutor sessions have been booked. Most are in libraries where there has been a positive uptake in wanting to offer homework quiet spaces as well as rooms for tutoring. Plans are in place for tutoring to be delivered online if this becomes necessary. An assessment of access to technology will be completed when students are identified and appropriate provision put in place to support any move to remote learning due to Covid.

Evaluation by CAER has been built into the project to enable replication for future years

2.8.4 English Tuition

The Post Covid Education Recovery programme has also committed an equivalent sum of money to provide funding to develop a parallel system to support rapid improvements to prepare students for the Y11 GCSE English language examinations.

Focus will be on examination technique, question analysis and efficient and effective text analysis. Delivery of the English Language tuition project will be by suitably qualified staff who will be trained to deliver a programme to meet specific requirements.

2.9 **Supporting Mental Health for Learning**

2.9.1 It is recognised that many children will have been impacted by the restrictions imposed during the lockdown period and sadly, some children may have experienced the death of family members during Covid-19.

2.9.2 It is well documented that children will often use schools and adults in school as “safe spaces” in which to explore their feelings. Therefore, specialist advice will

need to be in place to support schools directly and indirectly to help children work through feelings. Disadvantaged children and families may need more targeted and specialist support.

- 2.9.3 The aspiration is to provide a comprehensive response to children and young peoples' mental health and emotional wellbeing needs at all levels within schools (whole school, class/form and individual pupils). There is insufficient mental health capacity within the locality, which is evident in the extensive waiting time for existing services.
- 2.9.4 The Education Covid Recovery Improvement programme will establish a team of 5 Education Therapeutic Officers (ETO) to deliver therapeutic interventions to both individuals and small groups, and be based within the Educational Psychology Service.
- 2.9.5 ETO will not replace services already in place. Their focus will be to provide support to families that need specialist and bespoke support . The decision making process for identifying families includes a range indicators (EHCP; Education Psychology) as well as discussions with the family, social worker, health service etc.
- 2.9.6 ETO interviews have been completed with the aim of 9th November start date for the lead practitioner and the 4 others shortly afterwards.
- 2.9.7 A referral process to the ETO team is in final stages of development to support schools in accessing the service.
- 2.9.8 Communication around the ETO service has been shared with schools on BSO and via SENDCo Network and other communications with settings. Expressions of interest have already been received. This includes feedback where staff are experiencing difficulties and so we are looking at whether we can encompass some element of staff support into the project provision.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 None.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 £1.2 Million additional Capital funding has been committed by the council to support post COVID recovery for the provision of digital devices. In addition, revenue funding of £715k has been identified to provide tuition programmes and the creation of a small team of Education Therapeutic Officers

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 5.1 If there are no significant risks arising out of the implementation of the proposed recommendations it should be stated but only on advice of the Assistant Director Finance and Procurement and the City Solicitor.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.1 All advice to schools given in line with National Government Guidance and the Education Act.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Impacts on all children and young people of statutory school age. Specific focus on supporting vulnerable children to reengage with learning positively.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

Not applicable.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

All children have the right to an education.

7.6 TRADE UNION

All establishments of posts have been done via the appropriate engagement with Trade Unions.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

All wards.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

Children Looked After are a specific cohort that will benefit from this work.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

Not applicable.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

8.1 None.

9. OPTIONS

9.1 Not Applicable.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Members of the committee to note the contents of this report and to support the delivery of the Education Covid Recovery Improvement Programme.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1: Education Covid Recovery Improvement Programme – Action Plan.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 12.1 None.

Education Covid Recovery Improvement Programme - Action Plan
 Programme Manager: Sharon Sanders

RAG:	
R	Off target
A	Started/ work in progress
G	Completed and signed off
	Not yet started

Progress update 13th October 2020

ACTION AREA		ACTION	OWNER	PROGRESS	R A G	SIGN-OFF
1	Digital Inclusion Workstream.					
1.0	Develop the detailed scope and associated implementation plan detail for this workstream	Review provision of devices and associated usage data under the DFE initial scheme	Programme Manager and Innovation and Improvement Lead	Initial discussions with Innovation lead have taken place and follow on meeting is scheduled in October This discussion will provide valuable insight into the success of various device type utilisation. Supporting the measurement of outcomes and next phase procurement decisions		
		Review device types against DFE updated guidelines	Programme Manager Innovation and Improvement Lead	Ensure recommended devices within DFE are aligned to the first phase delivery for consistency. Follow on meeting October		
		Review Wi-Fi devices and assess utilisation and ongoing support and maintenance for current devices	Programme Manager Innovation and Strategy Lead	This discussion will provide valuable insight into the success of various device type utilisation. Supporting the measurement of outcomes and next phase procurement decisions Meeting in October		

ACTION AREA		ACTION	OWNER	PROGRESS	R A G	SIGN-OFF
1.1	Agree under 5 cohort criteria for provision of devices. Including device type and associated software to be loaded onto the device	To identify the 2000 under 5's who will benefit from a device To confirm the device type and software recommended based on practitioner expertise. This will support procurement requirements	Early Years Lead and Programme Manager	Initial meeting to be scheduled for October		
1.2	Identify new care leavers since initial DFE rollout	To identify the individuals requiring a device. To ensure appropriate device procurement and allocation	Programme Manager Virtual School	Initial meeting held with Virtual School Head and Innovation and Strategy lead in October Follow on meeting to be scheduled		
1.3	Identify Post 16 Care Leavers	To identify the individuals requiring a device and the type of usage needed e.g. college work. To ensure appropriate device procurement and allocation	Programme Manager Virtual School	Initial meeting held with Virtual School Head and Innovation and Strategy lead in October Follow on meeting to be scheduled for October		
2: Extended Summer School – Maths and English						
2.1	Recruitment and training of Tutors	Bradford University to manage the recruitment of undergraduate tutors Training to be provided by Maths Hub	Bradford University	40 applications received to date from Year 3 and 4 undergraduates Interviews to be scheduled for October with Bradford University and Maths Hub		

ACTION AREA		ACTION	OWNER	PROGRESS	R A G	SIGN-OFF
2.2	Venue Booking	Book venues across the District	Bradford University	Venues are booked and are primarily in libraries that are keen to provide homeworking space and tutor room availability		
2.3	School Selection	School selection criteria to be applied and letters issued to those schools	School Standards and Performance Bradford University	School criteria identified as low performing on attainment of grade 4 or above for Maths. This is 17 schools Letters issued to offer 30 – 55 pupil places per school. Bradford University awaiting responses		
2.4	English Tutoring Detailed Scoping	To define the detailed scope of the English Tutoring project. Including the identification of tutors; pupil cohort; school selection; venues and associated timelines	Programme Manager School Standards and Performance	Meeting to be scheduled with School Standards and Performance Team; Opportunity Area Project Lead for October		
3: Supporting Mental Health for Learning						
3.1	Education Therapeutic Officers (ETO) Recruitment	Advertise vacancies for 5 ETO posts to include 1 Lead Practitioner. Interview and appoint for a post October half term start	Integrated Assessment and Psychology Team	ETO interviews have been completed and preferred candidates identified. The appointments are in the process of being finalised, with the aim of 9 th November start date for the lead practitioner and the 4 others shortly		

ACTION AREA		ACTION	OWNER	PROGRESS	R A G	SIGN-OFF
				afterwards.		
3.2	Schools access to ETO provision	Agree a process that supports schools to access ETO provision	Integrated Assessment and Psychology Team	<p>A referral process to the ETO team is in final stages of development to support schools in accessing the service</p> <p>Communication around the ETO service has been shared with schools on BSOL and via Senco Network and other communications with settings.</p> <p>Expressions of interest have already been received. This includes feedback that staff are experiencing difficulties and so we are looking at whether we can encompass some element of staff support into the project provision.</p>		