

Report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services to the meeting of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on Wednesday 2 December 2020

AO

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.

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Portfolio:

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

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. The introduction of a 2nd lockdown in November may result in schools adopting flexible methods of teaching, including face to face and remote learning dependent upon Covid outbreak levels of their schools
- 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 which includes the following workstreams:
- Digital Inclusion
 - Extended Summer Tuition Programme – Maths and English Year 11 GCSE;
 - Supporting Mental Health for Learning.
- 2.6 **Digital Inclusion**
- 2.6.1 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.

2.6.2 In May 2020 the Government national roll out of devices to all children with a social worker and disadvantaged Y10 pupils did not match the need across the Bradford District. The total allocation was 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.

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

2.6.4 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.

2.6.5 The Programme Manager is working with Education Strategic Leads; Social Workers; Early Help and Schools to identify the device requirements; software needs and associated priorities.

2.6.6 Schools can request devices directly from the DFE. However, recent criteria changes have meant that the number of devices allocated is significantly reduced. DFE will only provide devices to schools that have had to close due to Covid or have 15 or more children isolating. Devices can be provided for children who are shielding.

2.6.7 Given the introduction of lockdown and the DFE criteria change for Schools. The Programme Manager has worked with Innovation Services to identify how devices could be provided for those urgently in need. We have a limited number of Chromebooks ,iPads and WiFi devices available for distribution. Monitoring of the school covid reports enables us to identify schools where large numbers are noted as isolating and may need digital devices.

2.6.8 Lockdown notification has seen the demand for digital devices rise sharply and the ability to buy devices quickly is challenging. Innovation Services are working with the procurement team, to expand the purchasing frameworks we use, to maximise on our ability to access wider supply chains

2.6.9 The expansion of devices in addition to Chromebooks and iPads needs consideration. Discussions will be taking place aligned with the Digital Strategy to assess the options; how system build and user support can be provided. Safeguarding software will be a key consideration

2.7 Tuition Programme – Mathematics and English

2.7.1 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

2.7.2 Mathematics Tuition

The focus of the Maths Tuition Programme is to improve attainment at Grade 4 or above in GCSE in 2021.

School selection for participation in the Mathematics project was based on low attainment in mathematics grade 4+ and with large cohort sizes to ensure maximum impact. 17 Schools received letters offering them places with 15 accepting. The number of tutoring places available is 800

Bradford University is leading on the provision of tutors. 34 have been appointed and their training has started with completion on 11th November. Tutoring sessions will be delivered in groups of 4 and are planned to start on 24th November for a period of 20 weeks. This will include school holidays?

The Government lockdown from 5th November to the 2nd December still allows for education to take place in out of school settings. The tutoring programme meets the government 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. We are also working with Community Centres to establish how they can support as venues. Bradford University are speaking to all booked venues to determine their availability during Lockdown. As a contingency the education team are also looking at alternative venues using council owned properties across the district.

Plans are also in place for tutoring to be delivered online if this becomes necessary. An assessment of access to technology will be completed through university engagement with schools. Support may need to be provided for some children through the digital device provision, as part of the Education Covid Recovery and Improvement Programme.

2.7.3 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.

The approach to the identification of tutor resource and associated delivery planning will be progressed during November. Experience from the Mathematics tuition process will be used to inform planning

2.8 Supporting Mental Health for Learning

- 2.8.1 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.
- 2.8.2 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.
- 2.8.3 Covid has highlighted the need to provide an Education led service offer that has a whole family approach. This will be aligned to Education Psychology services and will work with the child; school and family to identify the issues encountered in engaging with learning.
- 2.8.4 The Education Covid Recovery Improvement programme has appointed a team of 5 Education Therapeutic Officers (ETO) on 12 month contracts, to deliver this whole family therapeutic service. The lead practitioner will start on the 30th November with the remaining staff on the 7th December.
- 2.8.5 A referral process to the ETO team is in the final stages of development to support schools in accessing the service. In the first instance an ETO will make contact with schools in their locality to introduce themselves and outline the scope of the service offer including referral pathway. Full service delivery will commence January 2021
- 2.8.6 The education led service offer, provided by the ETO team, is not a replacement for other support currently available. Children will still be able to access existing services including CAMHS, school based services and the enhanced training that has been provided to schools with mental health champions
- 2.8.7 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 which is positive.

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 Action Plan is embedded in the report

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

12.1 None.

Education Covid Recovery Improvement Programme - Action Plan

Programme Manager: Sharon Sanders

Progress update: 4th November 2020

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

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	Innovation Services have started to collate the usage data which will be available during November Information will identify where targeted support is needed with pupils to engage with learning using devices. It will also identify devices that can be redistributed across the District		
		Review device types against DFE updated guidelines	Programme Manager Innovation and Improvement Lead	DFE device provision is primarily Chromebooks and I pads. Innovation Services are able to support these devices.		
		Review Wi-Fi devices and assess utilisation and ongoing support and maintenance for current devices	Programme Manager Innovation and Strategy Lead	200 WiFi devices available for distribution. Work is in progress with Virtual School & Childrens Services to identify care leavers; Post 16; new to care in the first instance. This will support NEET; engagement with learning and social isolation		

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	October meeting did not take place an initial discussion will happen in November.		
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 completed and 21 devices were allocated as priority		
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	Follow on meeting completed and devices were allocated as part of item 1.2 and need will be continually reviewed Device request has now been automated via an online form. This will support with speed of response and improved data		

ACTION AREA		ACTION	OWNER	PROGRESS	R A G	SIGN-OFF
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	34 Tutors recruited Training has started and is scheduled for completion on 11 th November		
2.2	Venue Booking	Book venues across the District	Bradford University	Venues are booked and are primarily in libraries providing homeworking space and tutor room availability. Lockdown may impact on Library availability so alternative locations are being considered. Online tutoring is also planned as contingency		Changed to amber to reflect lockdown Risks to venues
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 and 800 tutoring spaces 15 schools have confirmed participation		

ACTION AREA		ACTION	OWNER	PROGRESS	R A G	SIGN-OFF
2.4	English Tutoring Detailed Scoping	To define the English Tutoring project. Identification of tutors; pupil cohort; school selection; venues and timelines	Programme Manager School Standards and Performance	Meeting to be re-scheduled with School Standards and Performance Team; Opportunity Area Project Lead for November		
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 appointments have been made on 12 month contracts Lead practitioner starts on 30 th November and all other practitioners on 7 th December. This is due to notice periods. Induction will then take place and the service will start in Jan 2021		
3.2	Schools access to ETO provision	Agree a process that supports schools to access ETO provision	Integrated Assessment and Psychology Team	A referral process to the ETO team is in final stages of development to support schools in accessing the service In the first instance ETO practitioners will make contact with schools in their locality to introduce themselves and outline the scope of the offer including referral pathway		

