

Report of the Strategic Director Children's Services to the meeting of the Children's Services Overview & Intervention Committee to be held on 2nd December 2020

AP

Subject:

Update on the Early Help and Prevention Service

Summary statement:

This report provides an update on the implementation of Family Hubs and effectiveness of the Early Help and Prevention Service from 4th September 2019.

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the implementation of Family Hubs and effectiveness of the Early Help and Prevention Service from 4th September 2019.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Prevention and Early Help service, in its current structure, went live from January 2020. The structure includes a Head of Service, 1 Service Manager, 4 Locality Hub Managers and 12 Early Help Coordinators.

There are Four Locality Family Hubs which serve families and communities across Bradford district

- 2.2 Family Hubs are developing an integrated local offer to families within each locality. Professionals from a number of statutory, voluntary and community based organisations collaborate to ensure that there is a joined up and locally responsive offer to support all families, children and young people in their locality.
- 2.3 The Early Help Coordinators (EHC) are working to ensure all services take up the role of being a Lead Practitioner (LP) A Lead Practitioner is the named professional identified as the person who will be the family's main point of contact while the family need a coordinated early help package of support. An LP will be one of a number of practitioners already working with the family.
- 2.4 Lead Practitioners play a key role in the effective frontline delivery of services for vulnerable children with a range of additional needs. They are vital in ensuring that support is well coordinated, resources are used effectively and good early decision making leads to better outcomes for both children and their families.
- 2.5 In order to support the LP's An Early Help Toolkit was developed by the Early Help Coordinators (EHCs): The toolkits provide advice and information about tackling a wide range of needs that children and their families are likely to experience and that may negatively impact on family outcomes, such as debt, benefits, and housing and health services. **(Appendix 1)**
- 2.6 We know our engagement strategy is working because we have supported schools over 2, 000 times since 1st June. Although we can not say absolutely that each of these contacts has lead to a Lead Practitioner role, we hope that the information provided has been used to support families. We have delivered over 1000 toolkits and we have started to use a feedback loop that demonstrates that these have been used successfully with good outcomes for families over 143 times.
- 2.7 Support throughout March – June was very much around Covid 19, with advice, activities for children and signposting. We have, since the schools reopened in September supported with more than advice and we are starting to see some Early Help Assessments coming in to be registered. An Early Help Assessment demonstrates that the Lead Practitioner role has been taken on board and families are getting the early help they need.

Hub area	Covid support to schools -March to June – family support	Nos of school supported	Toolkits supplied	Nos of EHA families Nov 12 th	Children Nov 12 th
Keighley/ Shipley	516	325	419	8	22
West	764	186	135	2	5
South	348 all new staff	478	500	6	13
East	1,094 well established team from the start.	171	168	5	12

NB the data we are gathering is manually inputted so some variations of counting does occur

2.8 Feedback from partners:

- *“We really do value your support, this is just what we needed” and “We now understand the difference between the levels of need and know when we need to be providing support and when we need to refer”.*
- *One high school has told us that they have avoided making seven referrals to CSC front door, through using the toolkit. “I referred 2 parents for drug support, organised food bank vouchers and gave out the benefits contact number, all quicker than it would take me to complete one MARF”.*
- *The support you have given me as DSL has been superb, you have been on the end of the phone to answer any queries or provide clarification on specific issues, you have also been into school which has been really useful - to have a face to the voice on the phone helps to develop a strong professional relationship. Having someone to talk through concerns and help with signposting has been extremely valuable to me, particularly during this difficult time. I really value your support and would really hope that your link to our school and your role continues in the future. Vice principle BPL Academy*
- *I really appreciate your support regarding this case as it was stuck. School and other agencies were not in contact. With your help thing have moved very quickly. The case is now stepped up and it will help child with the transition to his secondary school as well.*

2.9 Fortnightly Family Hub Panel meetings bring a wide range of agencies together to consider the needs of families with additional needs. Locality based network meetings will start virtually in the New Year if lockdown continues. These will be coordinated by the Early Help Co-ordinators to support practice development and learning for all professionals working with children and families in the locality.

2.10 Early Help Coordinators (EHC)

During lockdown and before the reopening of schools most of the activity of the

Early Help Co-ordinators (EHC) was supporting other agencies with information and advice.

From the 1st September the EHC's moved to introduce the methodology of the Lead Practitioner (LP) role with all schools, to our colleagues within the VCS our local PCSO's and safer school's officers.

On w/c 12th October we engaged with the allocated targeted Early Help Health visitors to enable them to start to take on the role of the Lead Practitioner (LP)

- 2.11 The proven methodology from the pilot stage in 2019 consists of introductions and explanation about roles of EHC's and LP, introducing toolkits for single agency issues for families, these were hugely successful during lockdown when schools had limited access. Progressing to introducing the handbook and encouraging agencies to become LP's with support, leading to assessments, plans and reviews for families in need of a more co-ordinated approach.
- 2.12 All the details of LP and EHC have been put on Bradford Schools On Line, safeguarding website, family hub websites and the local offer and checks have been completed to ensure other agencies can access this information.
- 2.13 The EHC's support LP's with on line modules which commenced on the 28th October with 4 places due to the practicalities of having only limited access to Webex on mobile phones. From 12th October the courses have been increased to 8 participants per module to accommodate demand and will increase further now confidence in delivery has been reached. Our virtual training will be ready for November.
- 2.9 The introduction of panels for 'stuck cases' is ready to begin, no cases have been brought as yet. The family hub panels will discuss cases where the Lead Practitioner and EHC both feel a family needs more support from another service.
- 2.10 The Early Help Module is supporting with registering assessments and plans for other agencies now whilst we await the development of the Partner Portal, which will take 12months.

2.11 **Families First**

We have exceeded the Families First (Troubled Families) Programme forecast for achieving sustained and significant outcomes for families and therefore for income generation through. We have already achieved 65% of our projected target for the 12 months and are on track to achieve 100% by Dec/Jan 2021.

2.12 Parenting

Since start of Covid, majority of parenting interventions were delivered one-to-one with parents virtually, we know this has made a difference to families from the feedback we have received.

2.13 Keyworkers for Family Support

We know we have made marginal improvement in cases that are graded 'good' but the pace of improvement has been slow. We can measure from analysis of the audits that the areas of concerns are around case file assessments and reviews. We know that overall our audit analysis shows improvement has been seen in the impact of Early Help and in Management oversight sections of the audits across all 4 hubs.

We know that audits are reflecting that our staff need help to capture the lived experience for children it is evident that the pandemic has made this more difficult. We know from our Practice Leads weekly workflow meeting with VCS that key work team's cases transfer and capacity across both internal and external key work and family support are maximised.

We know from dip sampling of re-referrals in Quarter Two 20/21 that a significant number of cases could have been managed by a LP or a parenting service rather than re-referral for family support/key workers.

We know that timescales have been fully reinstated in June.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Impact

- 3.1 We know we are making a difference through the case studies we are gathering. These demonstrate the impact on professionals as they begin to understand the concept of the lead practitioner role. Our activity shows we have positive engagement from our partner agencies and that they have found the toolkit for single issues very useful in dealing with issues such as debt and housing for families. They tell us the toolkit has enabled them to tackle issues without having to go through the integrated front door.

The parent was very happy as her son was able to have contact with his dad which helped his behaviour, mum's mental health was a lot stable. She also accepted a place at school during the COVID19 period.

- 3.2 We are following up schools who are struggling with the LP concept with face to face meetings as we realise the importance of relationships and understanding between professionals to make a real difference to families. We have supported schools with 316 different cases giving advice at tier 2 for emerging needs.
- 3.3 We know we are making a difference because our information on the role of EHC and LP on Bradford schools on line has been visited over 3,000 times since the 1st September.

- 3.4 The emergence of early help assessments is a very positive sign for children and families.

A parent who was initially anxious about her child's behaviour is now accessing support through a parenting programme. (St Winfried's Primary)

- 3.5 We know our face to face modules are working because we have had really positive engagement from schools and others. We have supported 59 people on the sessions to date 21st October with 101 people planned to attend and 7 on a waiting list that we will allocate to more sessions planned throughout Nov and Dec.

MC (Barnardos) re scaling and impact measuring tool.

The document is great! All agencies including voluntary etc. should implement it.

- 3.6 For our Families First programme we know we are making a difference to children and families because since April 2020 because:

- 1,688 eligible families have been attached to the programme.
- 662 successful PBR claims have been made- resulting in £529,600 generated income for the LA.
- We will continue to achieve/over achieve the projected monthly target of 85 successful PBR claims to ensure the programme reaches its maximum funding entitlement.

- 3.7 From our Parenting groups, we know we have made a difference due to the comments we have received.

Group feedback: 'It's amazing what 10 weeks can do. From attending this programme, I know how to use my tone of voice, I listen more, I understand how to read the feelings behind the behaviour. I empathise with people. I feel like I am more considerate and understand emotional Health. I would encourage other parents by saying 'go for it' it gives you more knowledge, understanding and patients.'

1:1 feedback; "When I first started the course. I was at rock bottom I didn't know which way to turn. The worker has helped me so much to understand meltdowns. She's given me confidence. Our family seem to be getting on a lot more now they isn't much meltdowns. It's the best thing I ever did has helped me so much.

We have now moved to on line support as this is proved to be the most effective way of delivering a parenting course.

- 3.8 From feedback from the Freedom Parenting Programme which is about reducing domestic abuse.

'The Freedom group has had a positive impact on myself and my families wellbeing. At first I was very negative and anxious about attending the group and meeting other people and worried about sharing my story. The group was amazing and all the ladies in the group are survivors of domestic violence. We all become friends with each other and support each other in a positive way. Maybe with the awareness many people can be saved. The hosts talked through all the topics and provided us support according to our needs.

We also know we are delivering quality services due to our direct observations of group which are mostly observed to be good or outstanding.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

Not applicable.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

Not applicable.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

Not applicable.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Not applicable.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

Not applicable.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATION

Not applicable.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Not applicable.

7.6 TRADE UNION

Not applicable.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

Not applicable.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

Not applicable.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

Not applicable.

9. OPTIONS

Not applicable.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

No recommendation as report is for information.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Lead Practitioner Toolkit.