

Report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services to the meeting of Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 19th January 2022

Subject:

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Raising Attainment Strategy

Summary statement:

This report provides an update on the Raising Attainment Strategy. It updates the status of work to date along with the approach to be taken for further development.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

Impacts on all children and young people. Specific focus on supporting children to engage with learning and achieve following pandemic disruption.

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Portfolio:

Children and Families

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the work of the Raising Attainment Strategy. It outlines the status of work to date along with the approach to be taken for further development.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Raising Attainment Strategy is a 5 Year plan and this period is Year 1 of delivery. The first 12 months will represent the building of the foundation for future improvements and cover the academic year from Sept 2021 to July 2022.

- 2.2 The Raising Attainment programme includes the following workstreams:

- Early Years Intervention – Language for Learning
- Primary Intervention
- Secondary Intervention
- Reducing Persistent Absence

- 2.3 Given the scope of the projects and the need for implementation it was decided to commission successful existing programmes and projects from providers with known track records rather than develop and staff our own projects. The advantage of this approach is that individual workstreams would need only project leads and the whole strategy would be managed by the Education and Learning Programme Management Team. This would be more cost effective and place more of the funds in settings and schools for maximum impact and value for money.

2.4 Early Years Intervention – Language for Learning

- 2.4.1 The focus is on the development of language to support learning in the Early Years age range 0-5. Opportunities to hear and engage in language at an early age supports children with their capacity to learn and ultimately their readiness for Primary School

- 2.4.2 Research shows that Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are on average exposed to around 30 million fewer words than their advantaged peers. This impacts on the child's ability to engage with the curriculum as a whole. This project seeks to address this language deficit across Bradford PVI and school nursery settings. Whilst aligning to other initiatives across the district

- 2.4.3 Language for Learning will:

- Empower parents, through training and access to resources, to support the development of early language skills for their children
- Provide fully subsidised staff development and training, for key workers in the PVI and school based nursery schools. This will enable work to take place with identified children and families
- Develop top quality resources to support families; PVI and school based nursery schools to improve language in preparation for learning

- Support young children to be school and learning ready via proven targeted learning interventions

2.4.4 Current Status

To achieve the intended outcomes, there will be 2 forms of early years' interventions:

- The first is to invest in CPD to equip staff with the right skills and training to lead high quality interactions with children, starting in the areas most in need of support. Recent evidence shows that investing in focussed professional development activity in the early years, to improve skills and practice in the existing workforce, can lead to rapid improvements in children's cognitive outcomes and socio-emotional development.
- The second is to invest and focus on 2 year olds and their families across the district, in areas of highest need to support delay in language development.

Intervention 1

- **All** pre- Reception setting data was analysed to identify the target cohort for practitioner training to promote early language development. The following criteria was used to identify settings in the areas of greatest need.
 - Early Years (EY) providers that have been judged Requires Improvement (RI) or inadequate in the last 3 years
 - EY providers with high numbers of children in receipt of EY Pupil Premium
 - EY providers with high numbers of children with SEND needs
 - EY providers with high numbers of children taking up the disadvantaged 2-year-old offer
 - EY providers where local intelligence suggests disadvantaged children would benefit from their practitioners receiving additional CPD support.
- 68 settings are eligible for the language development training; of these settings 20 will be offered the training and support in the first year.
- When recruiting settings to the Programme, the setting must not already be engaged in other programmes which work towards similar objectives and outcomes.
- Settings will need to be committed to participate in whole setting training activities and will need to be open to change, to embed the shared learning within the setting. Managers will need to ensure the whole staff team work together towards this common goal.
- The language development training criteria has been set. The tender process will begin in early February, with an aim to commence the training in April 2022.

Intervention 2 – Talking Together

Commissioned and delivered by : BHT Early Education and Training – Cost £687,132

- **This project is for:** families with two year olds.

- This programme has been developed and delivered in the Better Start area and evaluated by the University of York. This unique, successful programme will be delivered across the district, offered to families most in need to support children's language delay.
- Talking Together will offer language assessments for all two-year-olds identified in areas of need. Families who would benefit from extra support are then offered one-to-one sessions at home over a six-week period. These sessions help parents and carers engage their children in activities, play and conversation to help their communication and language development as well as their ability to interact positively with people around them. This can help children be better prepared for starting school and have a long-term impact on their literacy skills.
- The language assessments are carried out in the home shortly after the child's second birthday. The one-to-one sessions, if needed, are then provided in the home or other convenient location.
- Using birth data and working collaboratively with Public health, the NHS Health Visiting teams and the SALT team; the children in the areas of high deprivation will be offered the programme. The aim in the first year is to reach approximately 1500 children and their families.
- Public Health have recently approached us to arrange a joint commissioning of the Talking Together programme; they are able to commit a further £300,000 a year for the duration of the project. This means we are able to extend our reach further to more children and families needing support with language delay.
- We are currently submitting an 'Exception to Competition' with Children's Commissioning. This process could take 2 months to approve.

2.5 Primary Intervention – Phonics; Literacy and Numeracy

2.5.1 The focus is on improving attainment at KS1 and KS2 in Phonics; Literacy and Numeracy. Providing a solid platform for children to thrive as they progress through Primary School. Ultimately achieving well in their Y6 Stats offering a good start at Secondary School.

2.5.2 The Primary Intervention Programme will:

- Identify targeted pupils in schools and provide intensive programmes to support improved outcomes and attainment.
- Provide out of school support for disadvantaged pupils who do not readily have access to support their learning at home.
- Develop training for staff in school to build on assessment and provision of high quality interventions to improve outcomes in the classroom.

2.5.3 The impact of the Primary Intervention Programme will be measured by improved performance at the end of KS1 and also KS2. The importance of success at the end of Primary school cannot be understated as good performance at the end of KS2, particularly in literacy and numeracy, enables children to successfully access the secondary curriculum.

2.5.4 The LA is commissioning support for primary schools for English and mathematics from local DfE Literacy and Numeracy Hubs – White Rose Maths Hub, Burleigh Woodhead English Hub to deliver proven programmes of support and intervention for identified schools and year groups in identified schools. Training for teachers and leaders in identified schools will improve teaching of English or mathematics

2.5.5 **Current Status**

- 31 schools selected and invited to engage with the project according to trend data and LA intelligence.
- Launch of project deferred until February half term 2022 (from January 11th) due to on-going Covid disruptions to staffing and Specialist Leader of Education (SLE) availability.
- Project Lead seconded from school leadership position and is now in post.
- Project Lead has begun to contact the 31 identified schools to discuss the project and encourage take up.
- Project Lead has begun analysis of school data on Nexus in order to check the right schools are being invited to participate.
- Project Lead liaise with the Hub leads about the support which can be given/recommended and match to schools.
- Audits will be undertaken in the Spring term.
- Launch to the schools is planned for the week commencing 14/02/2022 at which Hub and school colleagues can begin discussions.
- Hubs will begin with a smaller cohort in the first instance and then a rolling programme will commence as SLEs become available for support.
- Hubs will be more able to provide more support from September.

2.5.6 **Next steps**

- Need to look at future planning and have money ring-fenced for the support which will take place later in the year
- An updated summary of cost/expenditure will be undertaken in light of the change of approach
- Consider capacity issues and if necessary look further afield to other Hubs for potential SLE support

2.6 **Secondary Intervention – Maths and English**

2.6.1 The Secondary Intervention Programme will target identified cohorts of children and young people at risk of underperforming, from Y7 onwards to support improved outcomes in the core skills of Maths and English. In order for more young people to be able to progress successfully into Further Education, apprenticeships or training.

2.6.2 **Progress to date**

- Data collected for attainment in English and Maths at grades 4 and 5 in schools.
- Meeting held with local HT and Project Lead to evaluate planning so far:

- HT surveyed all disadvantaged students: 100% agreement that delivery model should be in school with school staff. Students reported they would be much more comfortable in familiar surroundings and therefore more likely to attend.
 - Models of delivery discussed - small project of approximately 4/5 schools to target for maximum impact.
 - Initial planning in place to support one other High school currently.
 - School to school model of support for improving approaches to Teaching and Learning, using existing staff to share best practice.
- Parallel project planned by Bradford University and CAER to be assessed by Project Lead to ensure no overlap.

2.6.3 Next steps

- Identify other schools to be involve through data analysis.
- Work with OA to ensure separate projects with no overlap or tension for schools.
- Identify cohort in each school and identify baseline assessment (Mock grades, TAGs).
- Begin sharing best practice with staff in schools.

2.7 Persistent Absence

2.7.2 Long periods of absence from school will have created a lack of routine and structure in children's lives which regular school attendance provides. Some children will not have had positive experiences of home learning, thus feeling further behind academically than their peers

2.7.3 Our objective is to develop a multi-agency response to support increased attendance at school, alongside building confidence and promoting healthy approaches to attendance with parents of pre-school aged children who attend nursery. Collaboration with schools, health, early help, children's social care, youth offending and the voluntary sector agencies will enable a wraparound service to build resilience and increase school attendance at all phases.

2.7.4 To achieve this, we need to develop a highly skilled Specialist Attendance Team with experience of intensive family engagement to improve access to education. Our ambition will be to create platforms for sharing of good practice in improving engagement and reduce rates of persistent absence across the district

2.7.5 Current Status

- Service Manager started end of November and has made swift recommendations and plans.
- Additional staff have started January – focus for Persistent Absence (PA) will be one Senior Attendance Improvement Officer and 4 Attendance Improvement Officers.
- Team will use supporting data to identify children with vulnerabilities who are persistently absence. Interventions will be short, to safeguard, remove barriers to attendance and support schools to ensure best practice.

- 4 Officers will be aligned with localities and will tie in with various services across the district, including Early Help, YJS and Breaking the Cycle.
- Cohorts of children will be identified, an assessment will be made and action plan discussed with school. A review will take place in 12 weeks' time, with follow up actions.
- Team will take advantage of huge amount of data to target children and will set high expectations.

2.7.6 Next steps

- Impact will be constantly monitored to ensure effectiveness against a number of individual and system level measures.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 None.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.1 Funding was allocated from the budget consultation process.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 None.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.1 Not applicable.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

Not applicable.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

All children have the right to an education.

7.5 TRADE UNION

Not Applicable.

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.7 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children Looked After will also benefit from this work.

7.8 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 are asked to accept the reports and note the progress of the Raising Attainment Strategy implementation.

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

12.1 None.