

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM 27th September 2017

REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

SEND SUPPORT SERVICE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Local Authority has had a number of unfilled vacancies within SEN support and is now proposing to utilize this funding to create a 'Systemic analysis and therapeutic school partnership Team'. This team will provide a unique service drawing in expertise from Clinical Psychology and Education to Primary Schools.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Local Authority has been in a similar position to other Local Authorities in that it has had difficulty in recruiting into vacant educational psychologists posts. This is currently being addressed by recruiting educational psychologist assistants from schools who will support children and young people in schools. In addition to this pressure there have been added demands on the Service as the number of Statutory Assessments completed rose from 203 in 14-15, 285 in 15-16 to 355 in 16-17. There are currently 67 already in the system with less than a month into the new term. This significant increase in numbers in the recent past has impacted on the educational psychologist's ability to engage in more preventative work.

2.0 Proposed New Service

To address this and to ensure that children receive the necessary support the LA is planning to provide an evidenced based and effective service for primary schools. The priority will be to develop schools capacity to actively work with all children to manage their emotions, behaviour and relationships, in order to create positive motivational learning environments. The service will work collaboratively with individual schools to formulate a plan that encompasses profiling the individual children's needs, classroom approaches, whole school approaches and engaging families or a combination of these dependent on the joint analysis with the schools.

The service will aim to develop treatment plans for children with complex needs through the use of effective models of intervention. The service will work closely with Gilbrook Outreach Service to ensure that there is a joined up service that delivers the same training and support to schools. Training materials are being produced that will be able to be accessed by school staff to support them in the delivery of the suggested strategies.

3.0 Project Aims

- To ensure that a growing number of children are successfully maintained in mainstream provision;

- To gain a clear picture of the complexities of the child and the challenges that these present to the school by completing a thorough assessment. This will include carrying out observations, working collaboratively with school personnel, conducting interviews with family and child and completing any relevant assessments for example: Connors, Cognitive assessments, Boxhall profile, Beck's youth inventory;
- To use the assessment to formulate the child's strengths and struggles especially in relation to the demands of the school environment and use this to raise staff awareness of the child's needs;
- To use the formulation to drive targeted interventions that are strength focused and take into account, the effects of any neuro developmental, attachment, trauma and mental health issues, and resulting specific skill deficits;
- To work with staff to plan and predict any potential pitfalls with plans and adapt as necessary to ensure success;
- To equip staff to identify barriers and advances to any intervention through robust and continuous evaluation and empower staff to be able to adapt plans, initially under supervision;
- To embed a process to sustain success and have the skills and understanding to adapt plans to meet future challenges;
- To identify any training needs and provide bespoke training sessions for school personnel that may include psycho-education on trauma, shaping behavior, effects of brain development on behaviour, attachment, skills training, emotional regulation, mental health, social and emotional mental health;
- To provide training materials in order to embed knowledge and drive future developments;
- To support the skill development of teachers on an individual level in the classroom to embed agreed intervention plan;
- To help staff develop and practice the skills to work with violence and aggression, through de-escalation techniques and plans;
- To raise awareness and skill levels of staff in how to shape children's behaviour from both a theoretical and practical perspective;
- To raise awareness of how group work can be used for specific skill development both in groups that target a skill and in recreational groups;
- To support schools to evaluate the effectiveness of whole school approaches and adapt the implementation to increase effectiveness for children with complex needs;

- To offer on a priority basis, support to embed an effective whole school approach to reduce any behavioural issues;
- To provide specialist therapeutic and rehabilitative interventions for the children, and limited interventions/training with families, to address specific areas such as anxiety, emotional regulation, family conflict and violence, significant emotional trauma, severe behaviour difficulties at school, at home and in a community setting.
- To provide specialist support to embed systemic change for improved long term positive outcomes for children, teachers and the school community.

4.0 Proposed Team

Team Leaders and Specialist Practitioners

- The Team will be led by a Consultant Clinical Psychologist and a Specialist Teacher with masters level speciality in SEBD;

Practitioners

- The practitioners will consist of Band 4, Band 6 and Band 7 Clinical psychologists. The total number of staffing will be finalised once budgets are confirmed.

Recommendation

The Forum notes the report and refers it to the High Needs Working Group

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