

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM 21st NOVEMBER 2023

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

DELEGATED BUDGET FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT UPDATE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Forum on the services delivered from the Behaviour Support and School Improvement functions funded by de-delegated school budgets.
- 1.2 For the financial year the following breakdown highlights the funds that are allocated to the de-delegated budgets for schools' improvement and behaviour support.

School improvement - £149,600
Behaviour support - £140,133
- 1.3 The local authority has a responsibility to have regard to the Schools Causing Concern statutory guidance. This guidance is clear, local authorities must exercise its education functions with a view to promoting high standards.
- 1.4 The school improvement strategy is now fully embedded and being further developed across Wirral schools with significantly increased capacity within the school improvement team. External school assurance professionals have been commissioned to all maintained school and a comprehensive CPD programme offered to all schools. System leadership is being developed from staff within schools to enable a self-sustaining system.
- 1.5 In relation to Behaviour Support the Local Authority has an Inclusion Team consisting of a Senior Manager, three Strategy Managers and three Officers. There has also been a recent recruitment of two additional officers to support managed moves and in school support. The teams also have access to a Behaviour and Support officer who administers the paperwork linked to Permanent Exclusions. The team has a wide range of experience including Primary, Secondary, Specialist and Alternative Provisions.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The local authority has several statutory duties and must exercise its function in these areas. In relation to oversight of Standard Assessment Tests:
 - 2.1.1 Moderating of the teacher assessments carried out at the end of key stage 1 and 2 by schools in at least 25% of maintained schools each school year and ensure that every school will be subject to moderation at least once every four

years.

- 2.1.2 Appointing a person to complete the assessment moderations who has recent experience of provision of the National Curriculum in primary schools.
- 2.1.3 Monitor the administration of the phonics screening check in accordance with Key stage 2 tests and phonics screening check.
- 2.2 The local authority has responsibility to support higher standards of education across the school it maintains. In addition, the local authority should work in partnership with the Regional Schools Commissioner to share any concerns they may have in relation to a local academy. To support this the local authority is embedding the school improvement strategy approved by committee last year.
- 2.3 The Strategy sets out a vision for school improvement to: raise aspirations and improve outcomes for all children in Wirral. It aligned to the proposed Wirral Plan 2026 and the priority to secure brighter futures for all regardless of their background.
- 2.4 The Head of School Effectiveness has had the support of three additional officers as Senior Schools advisors. They have supported schools in relation to strategic objectives regarding improvement areas. In addition, they will be the main link between the schools and the commissioned School Assurance Professional and any CPD opportunities that are available to the school.
- 2.5 The school improvement team have commissioned a comprehensive CPD programme for Early Years, English, Maths, Science and Humanities along with well-being course for headteachers to support primary schools and leaders for the remainder of the academic year. The training is being led by educational professionals who have a background of expertise in the given area.
- 2.6 A key cornerstone of the school improvement strategy is the support of a school assurance professionals to quality assure the current position of our maintained schools. This will be facilitated by education professional with the relevant experience to articulate with schools' leaders and governors' areas each school should be developing during the current academic year. This offer will be free for all maintained schools, academies can access this support, but this will have a cost associated.
- 2.6(a) An intensive support programme is being offered to schools in Bands 3 and 4 which will compliment the full CPD offer and include thorough data analysis of the previous years' SATs examinations.
- 2.7 The work of the Inclusion Team has increased significantly since the last the academic year. Catherine Kerr, in the role as Head of Inclusion and Attendance is overseeing support for schools within this area.
- 2.8 The service is developing and implementing effective strategies to increase school's capacity to include young people experiencing difficulties with their emotional well-being and behaviour regulation with clear referral routes into the team. The team also hold weekly drop-in sessions for schools, and this will

continue in partnership with the Educational Psychologist Team in the near future.

- 2.9 The service continues to deliver LA wide training to educational professionals to support in managing young people with behavioural difficulties, for example Team Teach and Restorative Justice, of which the team are qualified in to deliver.
- 2.10 The Inclusion Team are working on a three footprint model which aligns to the same clusters as the Senior School Advisors to allow collaboration between school improvement and inclusion. Each of the three groups has an Inclusion Strategy Manager who triage the referrals and allocate the relevant officer.
- 2.11 In addition, the Senior Officer for Inclusion and Alternative provision leads on the continuous development of Alternative Provision linked to the Wirral Guild with strengthened Quality Assurance and challenge and will be the point of contact with Progress Schools, the new Estart provision and Key Stage 2 Provision at St Peters Primary School – The LA commissioned provisions for its statutory requirements for permanently excluded young people.
- 2.12 To date the team have trained 191 practitioners in Team Teach and referrals from schools last year was 150.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Endorse the developments in relation to the strategic use of de-delegated budgets to support school improvement and behaviour support.
- 3.2 Receive a further update in relation to de-delegated budgets in six months.

James Backhouse,
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