

REPORT ON 1ST APRIL JOINT WORKSHOP

To: **Cambridgeshire Schools Forum**

Date: **17th May 2019**

From: **Jonathan Lewis – Service Director – Education
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Purpose: **To provide Schools Forum with an overview of the joint workshop between Schools Forum members and Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) Review working parties, on the 1st April 2019**

Recommendation:

Schools Forum to consider

- a) the questions arising from the workshop (as set out in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3)
- b) whether to agree in principle to invest the additional funding received from the Department for Education (DfE) into start up costs for primary resource bases and a training bursary for schools and services.

1.0 Background and Context

- 1.1. The Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) Review was originally commissioned in 2017 with the remit to examine and evaluate provision for children with SEMH needs in Cambridgeshire including three key areas:
 - The need for clearer guidance and a Graduated Response to Need
 - The exploration of Primary Resource Bases
 - The location and offer from our SEMH Special Schools.
- 1.2 An SEMH Steering Group is now well established plus a Primary Heads and SEMH Heads Group. A Secondary Heads group has been formed more recently.
- 1.3 Since September 2018, Schools Forum have also held a number of workshops looking at the pressure on key budgets within the High Needs Block. It was determined that there was some duplication of discussion around the mitigating actions which might be required to reduce overspend on the High Needs Block, particularly in these areas:
 - Use of Out of School Tuition providers for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), where placement had broken down.
 - Use of Out of School Tuition providers for primary aged pupils without an EHCP (Medical Needs or Permanent Exclusion), where SEND District Teachers have no available capacity or where no new placement had yet been found (mainstream to mainstream or mainstream to special).
 - The higher than national numbers of children placed in SEMH Special Schools in Cambridgeshire.
 - The pressure on the Independent Special Schools Budget (in county but mainly out of county).
 - Increasing numbers of pupils accessing Alternative Provision (secondary).
 - Reduced capacity of support services providing exclusion-prevention work rather than earlier preventative intervention, particularly in the mainstream primary sector.
- 1.4 It was agreed, at a Schools Forum Workshop to bring Schools Forum Workshop representatives together with SEMH Review Steering Group and Working Party representatives to make some key decisions.

2.0 The workshop

- 2.1 A full day workshop was held at Cambridge Regional College (CRC) Huntingdon Campus and was well attended. Attendees worked together at tables and were given packs of data collated thus far, as well as six models for possible Primary Resource bases, using examples gleaned from other authorities. Mary Rayner (Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust - CMAT) presented on themes from her work as an Inspector to share what good and poor provision looks like across the country. The Educational Psychology Service led the group in a “Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope” activity, better known as PATH, with the aim of coproducing a vision and working backwards in terms of tangible steps to implement.

3.0 Outcomes of the workshop

3.1: Outcomes/decisions made to actively pursue the following:

- “Centres of Expertise” – local/district and partnership based panels/forums made up of key stakeholders (Headteachers, Special Schools, Teaching School Alliances, Local Authority Officers (LA) officers, Eps/Specialist Teachers etc) to look at individual cases and provide peer support and challenge, training offers, bespoke pathways and intervention. Onus on accessing the wider Local Offer and shared expertise of all, rather than just the LA.
- Primary age assessment/resource centres offering multiple tiers of time-limited intervention (in-reach, outreach, teaching, assessment, respite) – based in existing primary schools but children remaining on roll of own school.
- The coproduction of a Graduated Response Guidance as well as a set of “Standards for Inclusion”, which set out the minimum expectations for schools in Cambridgeshire in terms of Special Educational Needs (SEND) knowledge and expertise, including completion/sign up to recognised and evidence based training for the workforce.

3.2 Issues arising from the Workshop for Secondary Schools:

- SEMH Review has been, to date, rather primary focused – what impact does this work stream have for secondary aged pupils?
- How could the BAIPs model feed into the “Centres of Expertise” – could this idea be extended to be “all-age”? Could these panels also fulfil the Fair Access function, but on a more localised level? This kind of local, multi-agency forum approach has been shared as a model of good practice in the Review of Exclusions Review by Edward Timpson (published 7.5.19).
- Some secondary heads asked:
 - Is the BAIP model still fit for purpose?
 - What is the impact if some schools choose not to sign up to a county-wide set of SEND/Inclusion standards and exclude anyway?
- Number of pupils accessing Alternative Provision (AP) are rising – how can this be addressed?
- Do we understand, assess and address the SEND needs of our AP population well enough?

3.3 Issues arising from the Workshop with regard to addressing pressure on the High Needs Block budgets:

- The workshop did not address all of the pressures on the High Needs Block
- Whilst we have a clear vision now for primary provision, we are not yet clear how we will fund it: do we invest some of the additional funding from the Department for Education (EDfE) into start up costs?
- There is still a lack of understanding about the financial position of the High Needs Block.
- How do we avoid the use of tuition packages for secondary aged pupils with an EHCP, not currently funded via the BAIP devolved funding?
- Pupils with EHCPs are rarely permanent excluded from mainstream schools but significant and lengthy tuition packages are commissioned.
- Can we address the primary aspect of the system in isolation of the secondary and special? Is this time for a full-system overhaul?
- Should we invest some of the additional funding from the DfE on a SEND Training Bursary to support the upskilling of staff in schools and services, in order to support schools to meet a baseline standard around SEMH and SEND?

4.0 Next Steps

4.1 Since the workshop, the following work has been undertaken:

- the SEMH Review Action Plan has been updated to incorporate the actions agreed on the day.
- A Resource base “expressions of interest” pack has also been developed to support primary schools in considering whether their school could host, based on the preferred model agreed on the day.
- SEND Service District Team leads have been working on a new model of service delivery in order to support and accelerate progress against the three areas agreed at 3.1.

4.2 Next steps to be undertaken:

- SEND Services leads are arranging a set of focus groups to consult on improved model of delivery with staff and key stakeholders
- A task finish group will be arranged to look at the Cambridgeshire Standards idea and how this links to the SEND Strategy and Cambridgeshire Expects Pledge work that is already underway.
- A task finish group will be expanded to look at existing guidance for a Graduated Response to Need and where this can be improved/updated/refreshed.