

Paper 3 - for information and agreement

Mainstream Inclusion and SEND – Update June 2021

Key Messages

Forum members are asked to:

- Note the progress and planned commissioning activity for the £1.5m prevention funding since the December Forum.
- Note the update of the SEND funding review.
- Note proposals and recommended actions for the EHCP funding following the child to the PRU.
- Note the current position on the historical PRU debt and the recommendation for pursuing this.

1. Introduction/background

- 1.1. The Sheffield Schools Forum approved a transfer of £1.5m from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2019/20. This agreement was repeated the following year and for the financial year 2021/2022. The focus of this investment is to increase inclusive provision and reduce unnecessary school exclusions. To do this we have established a number of support offers, including a coherent city-wide nurture offer across primary and secondary schools through establishment of four primary hubs and one secondary hub. The Schools Forum approved the funding for 2021/22 in December on the basis that there be a review of this work. A presentation detailing the outcomes and impact of each of the areas of work was then given at the February Schools Forum, with further detail presented to the Funding Working Group – see Appendix 1.
- 1.2. Commissioners are working to develop the Inclusion model for the city and the work funded above is a part of this broader work to look at nurture / SEMH hubs, whole school inclusion work, and advice and support services.
- 1.3. A key part of commissioning work to support inclusion is a review of the SEND funding model in mainstream schools. The purpose of this is to ensure that we are able to meet the needs of children with SEND / EHC plans.

2. Prevention Fund – High Needs Block Transfer

The funding allocation is broadly categorised into two areas:

- The Inclusion Model
- Sector Leadership and Development

The following expenditure table shows the detail of spend and which section of the plan this relates to. The following sections in this paper details the provision and developments since the last update to Schools Forum.

Provision 2021 / 2022	Budgeted costs
Inclusion provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheffield Inclusion Centre Hubs and outreach support • Locality A nurture Hub • Rowan ASD outreach and advice service 	£923,401
Sector Leadership and development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector leadership • Specialist input to PIP and SIP from CAMHS and SALT • Trauma informed practice training to schools • Gateway funding and Think for the Future mentoring • City Wide SENCOS 	£576,599
TOTAL	£1,500,000

2.1. The Inclusion Model - Review and re-design:

- Data and evidence of need indicates that SEMH hub provision is required to meet the needs of children and young people in mainstream. We are looking to work with the localities to further develop the model into more of a localised model that is better linked to schools.
- As part of our strategy to increase inclusion and provide quality support in mainstream, we believe the COIT hub model and the Earl Marshall Step Out linked to local schools are more able to support mainstream due to locality connections. These models show greater impact and outcomes than city-wide provision and are more able to engage with the whole family. We currently have similar models that are funded through other sources and are seeking to create a more coherent city-wide strategy.
- This work will progress over the next 12 months as will require redesign of the intervention, and a commissioning process. We anticipate changes to the delivery model in stages from the autumn.
- We need to consider how this is funded on a long-term basis as the current annual funding causes challenges.
- **Locality A nurture Hub:** This provision shows positive impact and has been recommissioned for the next year. This is in line with the aim to develop provision within localities.
- **Rowan Outreach:** The provision need adds capacity to ASD advice and support and is showing positive impact and feedback from schools. This work will be reviewed alongside other ASD advice and support services later in the year.

2.2. Sector Leadership and Development

The following is currently under review and development, to be in place for September 2021:

- New specifications for **Sector Leads** are being agreed alongside Education and Skills and these will be agreed through an SLA process to align with priorities.
- **Trauma Informed** training is to be recommissioned next academic year following positive feedback from schools. We aim for the majority of schools in the city to have had Trauma Informed training by the end of the academic year 2021/22. This provides a foundation for inclusive practice.
- From September we have a 2nd year of contract with **Think for The Future** mentoring which we will be testing further with schools over the next academic year as part of the support to young people who are vulnerable to exclusion or poor engagement with school.
- The **Gateway funding** was underused in 2020/21 due to COVID. We are working with the Gateway and sector leads to consider an alternative focus by purchasing interventions that can be allocated through the Gateway.
- **City-wide SENCOS** – consultation with the group is currently underway. SLAs to be put in place to align the work and enable tracking and evaluation.

2.3 Longer term planning

The short-term nature of this funding is a challenge due to commissioning time scales and the ability to develop, embed, and evaluate new areas of work at speed. Much of the work is focused on building capacity and skills within the sector, and intervening with children and young people where there are entrenched needs. This work takes time to embed and evaluate which is in conflict with the short-term cycle of funding.

A further update will be presented to Schools Forum in September to address the long-term plans, and it is recommended that consideration be given as to the term and cycle of decision making.

3. SEND Funding Review

3.1 The Locality Funding Model:

- The Sheffield model for allocating element 3 SEND funding is through seven locality panels led by locality SEND lead headteachers. This arrangement was initiated by the local authority in order to collaborate and encourage innovation with the sector.
- As a result, partnerships between schools and professionals in localities are positive and the model incorporates a collaborative approach to workforce development and change with a group of locality SENCOS and lead headteachers leading training, support and challenge.
- Through this model, localities have developed their approaches to meeting the needs of children both by responding to individual plans, and by using

resource to respond creatively to groups of need (for example, through group-based interventions in school, and buying specialist input).

- The localities have worked across the city to embed the Sheffield Support Grid, and to commission training that responds to collective need.
- Our locality model has achieved increased collaboration and partnership which means we are better able to understand the needs of the children and schools in our city.

3.2 Developing the model:

Although there are many positives to the current model, there are differences between the localities in terms of the method for requesting and allocating funding. There are also some challenges in engaging with all schools in the city to ensure that funding is accessible and targeted to children with SEND, and specifically to meet the needs set out in EHC plans.

The review of the funding model has involved the following, working with our locality lead Headteachers:

- Case study research looking at child level information where funding has been allocated.
- Data analysis.
- Focus group of locality leads and education and skills leaders.
- Audits of each of the seven locality funding processes.

The above has given us a good picture of the current strengths and challenges. We are now working with the localities to agree where changes need to be made and identify where additional support / provision needs to be put in place.

To develop our ability to meet the needs of children with SEND through locality panels, we have also made an increased the allocation of funding by £950,000, making a total city-wide Locality SEND allocation of £4.32m.

4. EHC funding following the child

Background:

- At the December Schools Forum we discussed the need for EHC funding to follow the child to the Sheffield Inclusion Centre when a child is excluded. This is essential in ensuring the provision can be met as identified within the EHC Plan.
- Members of the Forum agreed in principle to this suggestion but were concerned about the practical implications where funding had been allocated to provision which could not be ceased immediately at the point where a child is excluded and transferred into SIC. As a result, we agreed to consider a process by which the principle could be followed without detriment to the school.

Proposed way forward:

- We are proposing that funding be set aside from the Locality Funding allocation that will be transferred as needed to SIC separately to the funding that has been allocated to the school.
- We have made an additional allocation of £1.1M within the locality SEND funding pot for 2021/2022, which means we can increase our commitment to locality funding by £950,000 and allocate a separate amount of £150,000 to support children with EHCPs that transfer into SIC.
- The excluding school will be expected to return the locality SEND funding to the locality as soon as possible, this will mean that if funding has been spent for that term in the mainstream school, there is enough flexibility to enable funding for the child to continue.
- Funding will be audited annually to ensure that this is taking place within an appropriate timescale.

5. Historical PRU Debt

The PRU currently has an outstanding debt of £634k accumulated over a number of years – see Appendix 2. The February 2019 Forum agreed to set aside £351k, from the Growth Funding underspend, towards the legacy write-off and we will continue to hold this provision.

In line with our discussion at the Funding Working Group in June 2021, we are recommending that a joint communication is drafted on behalf of the Schools Forum and the Council requesting that all schools/trustees settle these historical debts.

6. Recommendations

Forum members are asked to:

- **Note** the progress and planned commissioning activity for the £1.5m prevention funding.
- **Note** the update of the SEND funding review.
- **Agree** the proposal for EHCP funding allocation where a child is excluded.
- **Agree** to send a joint communication to schools/academy trusts to pursue the historical PRU debts.