

Schools Management Forum

Report of: John Scadden

Subject: School Family Practitioners – update report

Date: 19th March 2019

Purpose of the report

1. To provide the School Management Forum with an update on the four Family Practitioners which were approved to work exclusively with schools to support children experiencing barriers to learning, prevent problems becoming worse and escalating to specialist services.

Context

2. In July 2018, a report was presented to the School Management Forum with a proposal to fund four Early Help Practitioners as many schools were reporting that they were experiencing difficulties in managing the level of demand at early help, particularly with the range of complex issues presented which can include domestic abuse, parental mental health, drug and alcohol issues and neglect.
3. The School Management Forum agreed to fund four School Family Practitioners, to be based in the Stronger Families department in Middlesbrough Council. By funding the posts it was hoped the case management of early help in schools would increase and that schools would gain more capacity to provide support to children and families.
4. Funding was granted in August and recruitment started in September 2018 with staff starting employment between in October and November due to notice periods from their previous employment and DBS checks.

Training and induction

5. Upon starting employment staff undertook four weeks of induction training in the Council which included:
 - Case management systems;
 - Use of My Family Plan (Early Help interagency assessment);
 - Thresholds training;
 - Trauma Informed Practice;
 - ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences);
 - Achieving Sustainable Changes Approach (Motivational Interviewing and Solution Focus Approach to engage resistant/hard to engage families);

- Shadowing of teams; and
- Introduction to PSA/SENCO in their respective clusters in November 2018.

Referral criteria

6. During a Head Teacher Briefing in October the caseload criteria was agreed for the four practitioners. This included:

- That the four practitioners would assume the direct management of any complex Level 2 cases (as defined by MSCB Threshold document) who are in a school in Middlesbrough where there is a risk of escalating to Level 3
- Where the Education Safeguarding Information & Compliance Officer identifies a family in crisis.
- That the school practitioners will work with families who attend either Primary or Secondary schools.
- Cases referred from the 'Front Door', Early Help Forum or Stronger Families Family Casework Team requiring school based intervention

To date only Pallister Park School has referred any cases to the team (two cases via the Forum in December 2018). Both of these cases were successful in transitioning from the school to the School Family Practitioners.

Team Around the School (TAS) model and cluster links

7. Each practitioner has been assigned a cluster of schools as outlined in Appendix B

Numbers of children worked with

8. The four practitioners have carried a caseload since mid-December 2018 and caseloads are overseen by the Stronger Families department in Middlesbrough Council and adhere to the same case management framework.

9. The types of families the team work with include children with behavioural issues and/or poor school attendance, complex needs such as trauma, child mental health, CWDs, Dyslexia/ADHS/ASD, developmental delay, parental mental health, parental substance misuse, domestic violence and neglect. Case study example - Appendix A

10. Since mid-December **138** children have been open to the four School Family Practitioners.

- 1 child has closed due to work completed (an average case is open 6 months)
- 67 children have had My Family Plan completed;
- 7 children (5 families) have escalated up to Children Social Care due to Safeguarding concerns; and

- Case consultations and Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) is offered on a daily basis to 55 schools and also via the Early Help Forum which meets fortnightly.

Schools worked with/currently open and Pupil Numbers:

Macmillan	5 (plus 1 – see RTMAT)
RTMAT	2 (plus 1 which is a dual registration with RTMAT)
Acklam Grange School	5
Trinity Catholic College	8
Outwood Academy Ormesby	9
Outwood Academy Acklam	4
Kings Academy	4
UCA	3
North Ormesby Academy	1
Pallister Park Primary	2
Marton Manor Primary	2
Easterside Primary	2
Pennyman Primary	3
Sunnyside Academy	4
Ayresome Primary	7
Acklam Whinn School	1
Chandler's Ridge	3
Corpus Christi RC	6
Viewley Hill Academy	2
Linthorpe Primary	1
St Joseph RC	2
St Pius RC	4
Whinney Banks Primary	5
Archibald Primary	1
St Gerard's Primary	1
Hemlington Hall Primary	2
St Thomas Moore	2

Berwick Hills Primary	4
Holmwood School	2
Beverley School	1
Park End Primary	7
Brambles Farm Primary	1
Caldicotes Primary Academy	1
Priory Woods Primary	1
St Peters Primary	1
*Middlesbrough College	1
*Nunthorpe Academy	4

**These families had been supported before the team were made aware that they do not fall within the remit of SMF. They are now either closed or transferred to a Stronger Families Team.*

Caseload sizes

11. Currently the four School Family Practitioners caseloads are:

- Clare Wilson – 18 children
- Holly Johnson – 39 children
- Michelle Povey – 38 children
- Sam Featherstone – 4 children (currently low as on 3-4 weeks sick leave for surgery)

Conclusion

12. The team have developed a large caseload in short space of time and are working well within the early help framework. Although it is early days, the caseloads have increased to expected size and positive outcomes for families are anticipated within the next few months.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

There is significant challenge as there are four School Family Practitioners working with families from a high number of schools. It is proposed that the School Family Practitioners target three schools: UCA, Trinity Catholic College and Outwood Ormesby, due to the high rate of pupil exclusions and the complexity of the needs of the children and families in those schools. The practitioners would work with other families as time allows.

Recommendation 2

It is proposed that the School Family Practitioners work alongside Education Psychology, Police, CAMHS and Headstart who are helping those families by offering interventions to support the Schools.

Recommendation 3

A further update report is made to SMF in July to demonstrate the positive outcomes achieved by the team for children, young people and families.

Recommendation 4

A report is made to SMF in September 2019 to consider the continued funding of the posts beyond November 2019.

Appendix A**Case Study example**

From allocation it has taken the School Family Practitioner several weeks to establish trusting relationship with parents.

3 male children. Presenting issues for school were poor school attendance, anti-social behaviours and Special Education Needs (SENs)

Poor parental mental health and substance misuse resulting in parents struggling to engage with schools. Family have limited support from extended family members due to their own needs.

One of the parents is at risk of deportation from UK and has detached themselves from the family and moved out of the family home as a result. Consequently this has traumatised the children.

School Family Practitioner has worked closely with schools to complete My Family Plan and put together a Family Action Plan. They are coordinating a Team Around the Family to ensure the individual members of the family receive the correct support they require.

They are completing 1:2:1 sessions with each child using their views to improve home and school life.

Working with both parents to help them understand the impact of their behaviours upon the children.

The children want to have a family life with their mother and father. The children feel blamed by parents, family members and professionals for their behaviours rather than those people understanding why those behaviours have been happening.

Anti-social behaviour has stopped and school attendance is improving.

APPENDIX B: Family Partnership Team – School Family Practitioner Clusters

<u>Sam Featherstone</u>
Berwick Hills Primary
Brambles Primary Academy
Caldicotes Primary Academy
Hillsview Academy
North Ormesby Primary
Ormesby Primary
Pallister Park Primary
Park End Primary
Pennyman Primary Academy
Priory Woods
St Peter's Academy
The Cleveland Unit
Thorntree Primary
Unity City Academy

<u>Michelle Povey</u>
Acklam Whinn Primary
EMAT
Green Lane Primary
Hemlington Hall Academy
Hollis Academy
Kader Primary Academy
Kings Academy
Newham Bridge Primary
Outwood Academy Acklam
Outwood Academy Ormesby
Rosewood Primary
Sunnyside Academy
Viewley Hill Academy
Whinney Banks Primary

<u>Clare Wilson</u>
Abingdon Primary
Acklam Grange School
Archibald Primary
Ayresome Primary
Beech Grove Primary
Breckon Hill Primary
Easterside Primary
Holmwood School
Linthorpe Primary
Macmillan Academy
Newport Primary
The Northern School of Art

<u>Holly Johnson</u>
Beverley School
Captain Cook Primary
Chandlers Ridge Primary
Corpus Christi RC Primary
Lingfield Primary
Marton Manor Primary
RTMAT
Sacred Heart RC Primary
St Alphonsus RC Academy
St Augustine's RC Primary
St Bernadette's RC Primary
St Clare's RC Primary
St Edward's RC Primary
St Gerard's RC Primary
St Joseph's RC Primary
St Pius RC Primary
St Thomas Moore RC Primary
The Avenue Primary
Trinity Catholic College