



Title What Works Centre – Application to become a Change Programme Partner – development of School-based Social Workers

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Prepared for Schools Forum **Date** 2nd November 2018

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. Schools Forum to support the application to the What Works Centre to become a Change Programme Partner for the development of school based social workers
- 1.2. Schools Forum to identify key representative to work with Children's Services in the development of the application and the subsequent programme if successful

2. Purpose

- 2.1. To inform Schools Forum of the What Works Centre programme and their related Change Programme and the opportunity this brings aligned to our Right for Children Transformation Programme
- 2.2. To secure support from Schools Forum to submit an application for the Change Programme and the identification of key school representatives to support the development of the application and the subsequent programme if successful.

3. Background

- 3.1. Our Walsall Right For Children vision sets out our commitment to ensure that all children have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy and learning well. To achieve this will focuses on supporting:



- 3.2. Our vision will be driven through our Right for Children Transformation programme – an ambitious whole system change programme driven by the following principles:

Get the basics right for children
 Strong leadership informed by 'what works' setting our direction
 Mirror the lives and challenges of real families – whole system transformation (as families don't fit neatly into directorates/teams)
 Implement changes that work for Walsall children and families and underpinned by evidence
 Prioritise the stability of children in all aspects of their life – design out 'handover' 'pass on'
Develop a culture of being proud of what we achieve by having a relentless focus on quality, impact and outcomes (not outputs)

- 3.3. Walsall has been chosen to be one of 21 pioneer partners in Wave 1 to work with the What Works Centre for Social Care. The Centre, funded by the DfE, will be providing a whole organisational offer to us in Children's Services; bringing additional capacity and expertise to accelerate our transformation programme. Our partnership is focussing on how we can become an evidence minded organisation

- 3.4. On the 26th September the What Works Centre announced an exciting opportunity for local authorities to consider becoming a Change Programme partner and pilot news ways of working which are focussing on moving services closer to families and communities through basing social workers in schools. Applications are open to all local authorities. In Walsall we feel it is a timely opportunity to test out this new way of working as it aligns with our part of our transformation programme principles.

3.5. As part of our transformation programme we are moving forward with deploying further resources to enhance the locality model. This will include social work resources. Piloting social workers directly in to schools would enhance our principles of connecting our practitioners better with the communities in which children and young people live and therefore we believe this is a timely opportunity for us to apply.

4. What Works Change Programme detail

4.1. The What Works Centre aims to support and evaluate transformative change projects in children's social care. The focus for the initial Change programmes launched on 26th September is on ways of working that move services closer to children and their families. One of the ways they would like local authorities to pilot is by locating social workers in schools to work with children and families.

4.2. In doing this they would like to test that by locating social work expertise closer to where children are and allowing social workers to take decision could:

- Reduce the need for higher levels of statutory social work involvement
- Reduce the need for care entry
- Deal more swiftly with concerns about children
- Ensure more cost effective services, reducing the demand for children's social care
- Make more effective use of school's existing early help services for children and families.

4.3. Each local authority can apply for £400,00- £600,000 and projects will need to be developed, tested and evaluated by 31st March 2020 with, if proven to making a difference, the LA considering a sustainable model. As part of the application the applying LA will need to demonstrate they can deliver this project to the tight timescale.

4.4. Within the application they are expecting the following to be part of the proposed model:

- Social workers to be part of a unit or team across a few schools
- Schools part of the project should be schools identified as generating high levels of referrals to social care
- Social workers will carry out the full range of work associated with children's social care and will remain part of the children's social care department
- Social workers will have devolved responsibility and creativity to make the right decisions
- Range of services they want to see delivered by social workers: strength based programmes in partnership with teachers and or parents, work with teachers to help children more effectively
- Lead professional for children who need Child and Family Assessment, CiN and CPplans for children within the school.

4.5. The successful Local Authority will work in partnership with Cardiff University and the What Works Centre to evaluate the project.

5. Timeline

5.1. What Works is aiming to commence working with successful sites as soon as practically possible (ideally from December 2018). An ability and willingness to accommodate this timetable is part of the selection criteria.

Key milestone	Date
Publication of Call for Partners	26 th September 2018
Webinars for interested applicants	15 th October 2018
Deadline for applications	Noon 31 st October 2018
Applicants to be informed of the outcome	As soon after 31 st October as possible
Provisional announcements @NCASC	14 th November 2018
End of funding period	31st March 2020

5.2 In developing our application we are

Considering data to inform the schools we would prioritise in line with the What Works Criteria Consultation and co production of application with schools through school forum.

Review national good practice