

# Report to Schools Forum

## Early Help in Walsall

### Collaborative Response to Supporting Vulnerable Pupils

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides a progress and impact update to Schools Forum on the Early Help Model within schools in Walsall relating to the Dedicated School Grant High Needs Block Reserved balance of £271,800 agreed in February 2018 for the academic year 2018/19.
- 1.2 To advise Schools Forum of the proposed next steps of the integrated approach being scoped out collaboratively between Early Help and the Integrated Behaviour Support Service (IBSS)

#### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progress in delivering the Early Help Model within Walsall schools

#### 3 Background

- 3.1 Following the initial investment of £750,000 by Schools Forum, which secured the successful development of the Early Help Offer to July 2018, Schools Forum further invested £271,800. The investment was to enhance the model for the academic year 2018/19 in order to continue the support already in existence, enhance further the Early Help Model by responding to key needs identified and to provide opportunities to work with schools to develop a financially sustainable model.
- 3.2 The key needs identified in January 2018 were:
  - **Continuation of the 6 Early Help School Support Advisors** and part time admin support beyond July 2018.
  - **Charing Locality Panels**, Commitment from partners to support the sustainability of locality panels until longer-term partnership plans for a 'Partnership (Local Authority, Police and Health) Locality Panel Coordinator is in place, in the interim however the Early Help School Support Advisors will continue to Chair all panels.

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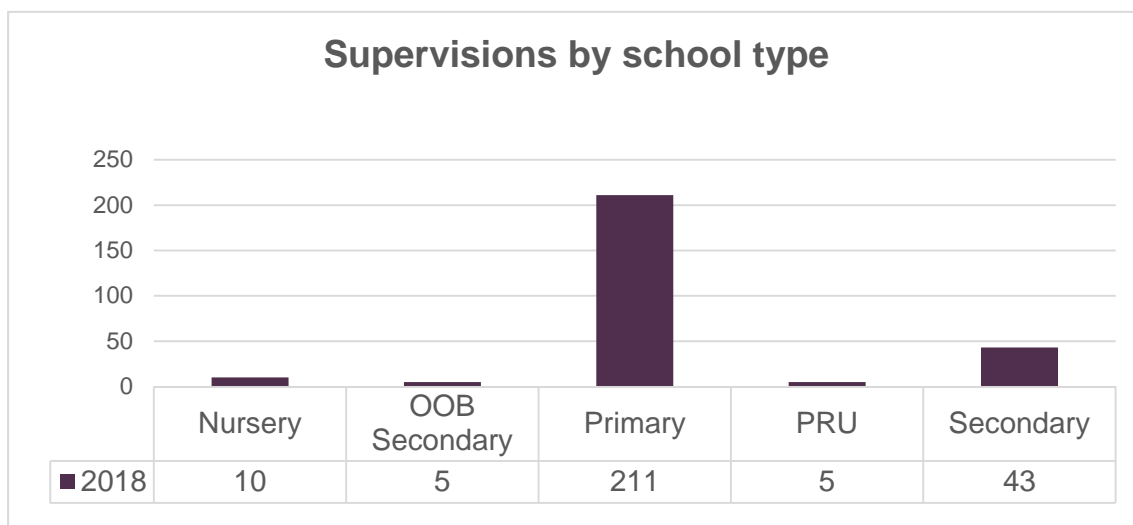
- **New Domestic Abuse information sharing project** which enables Police to share information directly with schools when there has been an incident/s at a household where a child/ren are living along with a bespoke support service for these children that schools can directly refer to.
- **New development and implementation of an evidenced based schools ‘Mentoring Violence Programme’ (MVP)** across all secondary schools and a transition programme for year 6 primary schools

**4 Progress and Impact**

**4.1 Continuation of the 6 Early Help School Support Advisors & Charing Locality Panel :**

The Early Help School Support Advisors continue to provide their dedicated support to schools offering:

- Termly supervision sessions to all schools across the borough, since previously reporting to Schools Forum in January 2018 we have undertaken a total of 274 dedicated supervision sessions as follows:



- An advice and guidance support service to schools for discussions around vulnerable pupils, collectively agree a plan of support to prevent behaviour escalating, potential exclusion and to support families where appropriate.
- Support and focus on school’s pastoral and supported workers continued professional development.
- Continued to ensure the development and provision of the locality panels.
- Chair weekly panels, whilst we continue to chair the weekly panels we have also worked in partnership with the Police and Health colleagues to secure the

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funding of a Locality Coordinator whose responsibility will be to Chair and coordinate the panels. The position for this is due to be advertised shortly.

- Continued to provide support around quality assurance of the Early Help Assessments. Since January 2018, a total of 184 Early Help assessments and reviews completed by schools have undergone quality assurance checks.

Of the 184 over 65% rated as good and above, this evidences that there has been a significant improvement in quality of assessments resulting in improved services and outcomes for vulnerable pupils and their families as well as reducing inappropriate referrals to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which has reduced significantly.



**5 School Celebration Event**

5.1 A successful Celebrating Early Help Best Practice event was held to:

- Say thank you to those members of school based staff who have made a real difference to children and young people under the 'Early Help Umbrella'.
- Provide school with vital information of what support was planned over the summer holidays.
- Discuss opportunities of moving forward from September 2018, including projects around a Domestic Abuse Partnership and Violence Mentoring programme.
- Provide some feedback of impact through the voice of children and families involved with Lead Professionals in schools via a film clip presentation.
- Awards to school staff to highlight best practice work in the Lead Professional role.

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- Highlight of the continued offer of Early Help School support advisors to all schools.
- Provide a networking opportunity for schools with other support agencies.

The event was attended by all partners, including Police, Fire Service, Black Country Women's Aid, Early Years, Beacon, and One Walsall. It was pleasing to see that 63 schools were represented with 112 school attendees across the two sessions held.

37 awards were presented to school staff highlighting best practice work in Lead Professional role.



## 6 Summer 2018

- 6.1 'Keep in Touch' Following a successful 'Keep in Touch' service being provided last year we replicated and enhanced the offer this year where dedicated officers made regular contact with young people and families open to Early Help with lead professionals being school staff.

We received 112 referrals from 31 schools across the localities and were able to support 79 of these young people (the other young people were already known and being supported by children's social care)

The team completed 102 visits and made 145 telephone calls, initial feedback from parents and young people is positive, comments received

*"Really appreciated the contact that was made via telephone call and also information relating to summer activities"*

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*“Would be interested in having more activities again next year because the boys enjoyed going to the activities. I would be interested in having more support from early help because my boys have learning difficulties”*

*“very happy, thank you for your help because it would have been difficult without it”*

Further follow up evaluation around impact is being collated and will be shared verbally at the School Forum meeting.

### 7 Continuation of the Early Help Training programme

#### 7.1 Early Help School Support continue to provide training to school staff around

- Outcome Star
- Lead Professional
- Solihull Approach

We have also extended this to meet the needs of localities including the introduction of:

- Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation (PACE) training workshops which has been held and offered to all schools in the North Locality. This 2 hour workshop has been delivered to 27 schools, from evaluation data collected parents are reporting to have significantly improved their knowledge and awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation, the signs of grooming, how and where to seek advice and support. In addition we have also trained 17 schools to deliver the workshops to ensure the awareness for parents continues.
- From the start of this academic year all localities are now offered PACE training workshops along with the offer to train pastoral school staff in order to support the facilitation of their own PACE sessions within schools.

#### 7.2 We also continue to offer evidenced based practitioner training and group facilitator training in

- Barndardos Cygnet Programme an evidence based parenting training programme to enable facilitators to run a 7 week support group for parents with children aged 5 to 18 years of age with autism.
- Understading Your Child / Understading your Child with Special Educational Needs, an evidence based parenting programme training for facilitators to run the universal 10 week ‘Understanding Your Child’ parenting group
- On line parenting support programmes
- Friends, an evidenced based wellbeing group for children and young people with emotional health and social needs, including training around Teen Friends, Fun Friends, Primary Friends and a parenting offer. All ‘friends’ resource books and literature are provided following training.
- MARF top Tips - Top tips for completing MARFs / recording around threshold

- Benefits Workshop – Universal credit changes and updates
- PANTS workshop – NSPCC campaign around talking to children about staying safe from Harm
- CAMHS training – accessing CAMHS support briefing and understanding the CAHMS service
- School Health Pathway – accessing school health and understanding services
- Outcome star Refresher training – refresher training for undertaking Outcome Star ‘Voice of the Child Assessments’
- Direct Tool Kit Training – this is a training tool that enables children and young people’s voice’s to be heard/captured and in turn enables school staff to help engage and support the children’s and young people. Following training, all staff are provided with a ‘Direct Tool Kit’ bag.

## **8 New Domestic Abuse information sharing project ‘Encompass’**

- 8.1 ‘Encompass – In Every Force, In Every School, for Every Child’, this is a national Domestic Abuse Partnership project between Police, Schools, Early Help and the local Domestic Abuse provider.

Schools raised concerns that they were not being advised when a child or young person had been involved or exposed to a domestic abuse incident unless a referral was sent into MASH with serious safeguarding concerns. Walsall has seen all of these partners come together to ensure schools are advised each morning where police have been called to any domestic abuse incident where there was a child/ren present, when a child or young person has been involved in or been exposed to a domestic incident.

The project launched at an event on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018 where over 80 schools attended.

Black Country Women’s Aid have been commissioned to provide 4 Specialist Schools Domestic Abuse workers who’s responsibility is to provide one to one support and/or group sessions for children and young people living within a domestic abuse household or exposed in any way to an incident within a school setting In addition they will also provide schools with additional training around domestic abuse.

A second launch of the project is planned for October 2018 to encourage the remaining schools to join the project.

## **9 New development and implementation of an evidenced based schools ‘Mentoring Violence Programme’ (MVP)**

- 9.1 Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) is a peer mentoring programme that gives young people the chance to explore and challenge the attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin gender-based violence, bullying and other forms of violence. It addresses a range of behaviours including name-calling, sexting, controlling behaviour and harassment, and uses a ‘by-stander’ approach where individuals are



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not looked on as potential victims or perpetrators but as empowered and active bystanders with the ability to support and challenge their peers in a safe way.

The programme endorsed through the West Midland Prevention against Violence programme, a partnership between Public Health England, West Midlands Police, Crime Commissioner and West Midlands Violence Prevention Alliance.

The programme aims to reduce anti-social behaviour and reduce exclusions, responding to school's request for "more support around difficult and dangerous behaviour by pupils putting staff and other pupils at risk and therefore leading to exclusions and support with behaviour issues in school – at times linked to criminal behaviour." (Early Help in Walsall – developing a collaborative and more effective response to supporting vulnerable pupils)

We aim to:

- Have the MVP programme in place at 3 secondary schools in Walsall by September 2019 and across all secondary schools by 2020 / 2021 with a transition programme for year 6 primary schools.
- To support school readiness and the delivery of MVP resources within secondary schools, with the recommendation that schools deliver 2 mentor led MVP sessions per half term
- Connect with community partners through community training day
- Implement effective peer support across Walsall through Police, School Panels and MVP events.

To date

- Blue Coat Secondary
- West Walsall EACT Academy
- Grace Academy
- Shire Oak Academy

have agreed to deliver MVP and have received training for MVP coordinator from the Crime Prevention Alliance, a further 5 secondary schools and 3 specialist schools have expressed an interest in training and delivery of MVP, meetings are planned to discuss school readiness.

An initial working group has been set up , with the first meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2018 where 'Terms of Reference' were drafted and the following actions agreed:

- Further MVP training for schools who have expressed an interest in MVP , planned 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018.
- Delivery of community/ partner training by MVP coordinator Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at MyPlace.
- MVP working group established

**10 Next Steps**

- 10.1 Children Services launched the Right for Children vision in September 2018. This focus of which is on:



This vision will be driven by our transformation plan and will deliver a whole system change programme, including the remodelling of the Education Support Services to further support the Locality Team approach by virtual alignment of teams and services offered.

The aim is to bring teams together to enhance the offer to schools, children, young people and their families, avoid exclusions and improve life chances. Work has commenced to pilot an approach where members of the Integrated Behaviour Support Service (IBSS) staff have been co-located within the Early Help Locality Hub to enable a single point of access/contact for schools to obtain help and advice in supporting vulnerable pupils and ultimately prevent exclusions.

The co-located team will collectively pool and share resources, trail new approaches with creativity over the coming months with a view of presenting a report to School Forum in January 2019 outlining proposals of a truly integrated approach to ensure services are available to schools, pupils are supported, exclusions prevented and families equipped for a better future.

**Report prepared by**

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Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2018