

REPORT TO: Schools Form

DATE: 21 January 2014

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director Children's Organisation and Provision

SUBJECT: Development of a School Family Support Service

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To outline a proposal for a Family Support Service within targeted Primary schools based on a key worker model. The aim is to provide an outreach family support service for families of children of school age (5-19 years). The service would support the Inspiring Families programme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Forum

- 1) note the information within the report;**
- 2) support the agreed pilot approach for a school family support service by targeting clusters of schools by levels of deprivation;**
- 3) agree to the proposed criteria for the service; and**
- 4) Support agreement to a financial commitment for the three year programme.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In 2010 the Prime Minister confirmed his intention to ensure that 120,000 troubled families are 'turned around' by 2015. The Troubled Families Unit has provided criteria for identifying 'troubled families'. On a basic level these are families that are most likely to live in households who:

- Are involved in crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB);
- Have children not in school;
- Have an adult on out of work benefits; and
- Cause high costs to the public purse.

3.2 Part of the Troubled Families programme, is to put in resources to incentivise and encourage local authorities and their partners to grasp the nettle; to develop new ways of working with families, which focus on lasting change, recognising that these approaches are likely to incur extra costs but that they will result in a shift in the way we work with these families in the future – reducing costs and improving outcomes.

3.3 Halton Borough Council has been acting as the local lead for the programme working co-operatively with all key partner agencies across the borough. The initiative is locally called Inspiring Families Halton.

3.4 There has been some initial contact with schools that highlights issues around the lack of resources to support families engaged within the CAF process.

4.0 PROPOSED OVERVIEW OF THE SERVICE

4.1 The School Family Support Service will be based on the key worker model and will be aimed at providing an outreach family support service to families with children of school age (5 – 19 years). It is a preventative service and will focus on families where there is no current social work involvement. The service will adopt the Whole-Family approach. A school family support worker may therefore work with siblings attending primary and secondary schools. The service will work on the principles of early support, building on the evidence base of the Allen review that intervening early is less costly and more effective in preventing generational transmission and breaking the cycle of deprivation.

4.2 The proposed criteria for the service include:

- Poor school attendance -a pupil who has had 15% unauthorised absences or more from school across the last 3 consecutive terms*.
- Behavioural difficulties –a pupil who has been subject to permanent exclusion or three or more fixed school exclusions across the last 3 consecutive terms; or is in a Pupil Referral Unit; or alternative provision because they have previously been excluded*.
- Crime/anti-social behaviour (proven offence in the household)
- Worklessness* (an adult on an out- of- work benefit. This includes: Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Carer's Allowance, Income Support and/or Jobseekers Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance).
- Health need as determined by a health or education professional (physical, mental and emotional) – this would utilise Educational Psychology assessments for mental/emotional health needs (and potentially support Inclusion traded services)
- Disclosed domestic abuse
- Disclosed substance misuse
- Disclosed neglect

**The Troubled Families programme criteria as detailed in the Financial Framework for the Troubled Families programme's payment-by-results scheme for local authorities*

4.3 To access the service a family would need to meet a minimum of 2 of the above criteria; this would ensure that the families who need more are prioritised as the service will have finite capacity. It would also support the borough in maximising the payment by results through Inspiring Families (national Troubled Families programme) as it includes the key outcome criteria.

4.4 This service would be a three year pilot project which will be performance managed by the Children's Commissioning Team within the Council. The Inspiring Families Strategic Group will fund the service 100% for a period of 1 year with each school signing an agreement to fund the service for a

further two years. Staff will be employed by Halton Borough Council and will receive professional supervision through Children's Services. This would include training and management support. This is a community-based service and therefore it is proposed groups of school family support workers will be located in community buildings across the borough, possibly within Children's Centres. This would support the multi-agency approach and enable the workers to develop a good knowledge of local community resources.

- 4.5 The Offer is to work with families to develop independence and resilience and improve their family outcomes by offering a 12 week medium intensive family intervention to improve parenting and family functioning.
- 4.6 The CAF assessment tool would underpin the support the family receives through the service. The assessment will provide an on-going record of needs, interventions and progress and enable a smooth transition where escalation to statutory or specialist services is deemed appropriate, or where service support is reduced (de-escalated).
- 4.7 The service would measure their performance on the following outcomes:
 - Improved school attendance
 - Improved school behaviour
 - Improved health
 - Reduced crime/ASB
 - Progress to work
 - Cost savings (reduction in level of risk, reduction in number of support workers/interventions, etc.)

Management of the Resource

- 4.8 Levels of need vary across the borough and the service will be flexible and responsive to need. Data sets from the Inspiring Families Support team will be used to anticipate where demand for the service is likely to be greatest. The staff will work with the whole family, including siblings at primary, secondary and special schools - the allocation of staff will be coordinated by an agreed management structure within the council and kept under constant review and revised accordingly. Within the three-year pilot phase feedback from the primary, secondary and special school will be an integral part of the review arrangements.

Profile of data/ need

- 4.9 Appendix 1 is a map that shows all primary schools within Halton with those that fall beneath the 10% level of deprivation. This gives is an indication of where the needs for the service are likely to be greater.
- 4.10 The proposal is to target schools below the 10% level and to work together on a cluster base of no more than three schools.

Funding

- 4.11 In terms of funding, the proposal is on the basis that the costs for the development and initial implementation of the service will be provided through the Troubled Families Financial framework for the first 12 months. These funds are time limited and therefore to enable sustainability of the service the council is looking that each school will signed an agreed service

level agreement that would outline levels of accountability, responsibility and financial contribution for a further two years.

- 4.12 Once the principle of the service is agreed the financial commitment will be clarified with the aim of implementation in April 2014. The programme will be run from April 2014 to July 2017.

Appendix 1 Map of Primary schools and top 10% most deprived areas nationally



