SCHOOLS FORUM

**Item 6**

Date: 11th November 2014

Heading: Nurture Strategy

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| **Forum asked to decide / steer / be informed** | **Decision required:** This report is to update the Forum on the new Pilot Nurture Outreach Service for all B&NES Primary Schools and to flag up and consider the likelihood that this service will require more on-going commitment from the schools forum to embed the practice being rolled out through this pilot. And/or to consider how a service such as this could be sustained beyond any more short-term funding.**Recommendations :**An extension of the funding beyond this academic year is made until March 2016, (£50,000) by which time either a review of all behaviour & attendance funding has been established in the Primary phase, or a new proposal is bought to Forum to consider how primary schools can access the support they need for the most complex children with social & emotional needs. |
| **Time Needed** | **10 minutes**  |

**Background:**

In November 2013 a report was produced for Schools Forum which cited that in the last 2 years we have seen an increase in mainstream schools struggling to meet the needs of children with complex social/emotional and behavioural needs. In particular an increase in reception aged children (this is a trend across the country). This trend has again risen in 2014/15 Reception children.

In January 2014 School Forum allocated £100,000 to run a pilot nurture service based upon consultation with primary heads and a range of professionals. It was particularly important that an equal service was offered to all children in the local authority area, without considering which area panel they came from. A specification was put out to the market as follows:

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| **Commission**  | **Provider**  |
| Delivery of an **Outreach Nurture Pilot** service, term time only and introduced to all Primary & Attendance Panels. **Primary purpose:**1. To increase the capacity of schools to meet the needs of children with complex behaviour and emotional difficulties by developing staff skills and confidence in using Nurture approaches.2 To offer those schools who are receiving reception age children (in the first instance of the commission) with behaviour and emotional difficulties to have a better understanding of the needs of these complex children so they are supported in their mainstream school wherever possible. | Brighter Futures  |

**Nurture Outreach Service**

Brighter Futures, a social enterprise run from Three Ways Special School, was awarded the competitive tender and have been working with the Commissioners and Early Years’ Service to start the contract this September, first with all the children known by early years to be most in need of support in starting school. All the children identified would have had a CAF, the majority had already accessed a therapeutic intervention through “Theraplay” (funded by Schools Forum) and have come to a multi-disciplinary panel that included the SEN Team.

The contract has capacity to support schools work with 30 children at any one time per year and where the child has settled well into school, or been diagnosed with ASD, the cases are swiftly closed and new children identified. The referral routes for these newly identified children are currently under discussion but are likely to be children where the complexity of the case has meant the Behaviour & Attendance Panels have had the cases open for a year or more and a new strategy is needed; where a school has a significant number of cases and staff need support and supervision to manage their caseload; or where a school is new to the complexities that these children bring and needs greater support to include the child, or support in submitting a request for an EHC Plan.

Type of interventions provided by the Nurture Outreach Service:

* Multi-agency partnership with school leaders, teachers, TAs, parents and agencies using Team Around the Child integrative approach to identify the needs and support requirements for the children who are referred
* Individually tailored support programmes for each case involving specialist practitioners includes observation, consultation, and modelling for staff.
* Baseline assessment using SDQ and Thrive, with follow up assessments to evidence impact and inform planning.
* Using Thrive action plans which provide practical strategies to support the child’s emotional and social development
* Supervision for staff who are working with the most complex cases
* Modelling nurture strategies for use with groups of children e.g. ‘sunshine circles’
* Providing training and ongoing CPD for school staff e.g. on Nurture, Attachment, and Thrive Approaches.

The following table is a current list of children (names hidden) that Brighter Futures are working with.



**RAG Rating –**

* Red is likely to indicate that the child’s needs are such that an EHC Plan is being proposed/supported
* Amber indicates ‘early days’ but the child is starting to respond to intervention strategies
* Green is likely to indicate that the child is settling and will not need a long-term intervention.
* Blue - there is a possibility of a diagnosis requiring support from another service e.g. ASD

**Early indicators of impact**

Initial feedback from schools indicates that the Nurture Outreach support is being well received. Staff value the advice and support that they are receiving, from Brighter Futures, to identify the needs of the children and to provide practical strategies. The Thrive Approach is already providing helpful tools to identify, understand and address gaps in children’s emotional, social and behavioural development.

Whilst it is early days in the development of this pilot, it is also evident that a number of schools new to this approach around complex children with significant attachment needs, will take time to bed in and become more familiar with the support that can be offered to these children, to enable them to access the curriculum. Equally the intensity of some of these cases means that mainstream Teaching Assistants and Teachers need on-going support to provide best practice and to meet the needs of this growing group of children.

A précis of a few cases and comments from teachers, who have access this service so far, will be available at Forum.

**Brief summary of the Thrive Approach**

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| The Thrive Approach draws on the latest research - from current neuroscience, recent attachment research, current studies of effective learning and current models of child development – in order to help adults understand children’s behaviour as communication. The Thrive Approach is systematic, dynamic and relevant, it helps adults respond to a child’s emotional situation in a way that supports their emotional and social development. If children have been emotionally thrown off track, either temporarily or over longer periods, Thrive helps us understand the needs being signalled by their behaviour and gives us targeted strategies and activities to help them re-engage.How we feel is closely linked to how we behave and emotions are key to the learning process. We can teach children to recognise and notice their sensations and then link these to their emotions and their thoughts. We build their cognitive, relational and physiological regulation systems so that they can see cause and effect and begin to make real choices, with some understanding of their consequences. This is the beginning of being responsible for one's actions. It has enormous impact on behaviour, on relationships, on being available to learn and on being productive and engaged in human society.***Pausing a moment between an impulse and an action is a life tool. Developing this strength helps a child physiologically and emotionally. But it's a strength that must be learned - we are not born with it.*** ***Dr Bruce Perry***The relationship between a child and a significant adult is an under-recognised and under-used resource, but by using Thrive™ this relationship is enhanced and will bear fruit. It can help a child get ready to learn and enhance their learning, build positive relationships between a child and their peers and it can improve attainment. It can help children thrive.<https://www.thriveapproach.co.uk>  |

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3rd November 2014