

Report on DSG Funding for Early Intervention and Prevention Service (EIP) and Early Years Support

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Schools' Forum has funded, on a pooled basis the delivery of services to all schools in the borough initially under the Extended Schools umbrella and latterly services delivered via the Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP) service.

The Early Intervention and Prevention Service (EIPS) was founded in July 2011 in response to the government agenda of promoting Early Help. The service works in partnership with other professionals, parents and carers to intervene early in a child's life to give that child the best start. The service works with families that need additional help, to enable them to access support when they need it. Schools are the main referrers to this service.

Working on a responsive area based model they provide early help in the form of direct family support, consultation and training for schools and other professionals, individual casework, counselling, parenting programmes, provision of a student social work scheme, facilitation of practitioner network meetings, tier 2 mental health support to schools, information and advice and specialist support to young children with SEN. The EIP service has strategic lead for Children Centres and also line management responsibility for Brooks Farm and Suntrap outdoor educational specialists. The service supports children and their families and the professionals and exists to bridge the interface between universal and specialist services e.g. schools and social care.

OVERVIEW OF EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION SERVICES

EIPS commissions and leads on a number of different services and initiatives in order to support schools to improve outcomes and to create effective and efficient processes to enable children, young people and their families with additional needs to be supported in the community. These are listed below: -

3 x Multi-agency teams

Area based multi-agency teams which offer support to schools and work with families with children who have additional needs. The majority of cases referred from schools to this service relate to school attendance, parenting and behavioural issues and general advice and information.

Extended Schools and holiday activities for children

Schools open for summer' which in partnership with schools provides a holistic summer programme to ensure children, young people and their families are engaged in positive activities over the summer holidays particularly targeting those children identified by schools and others as being vulnerable pupils or having additional needs.

Brooks Farm

Brooks Farm is a small community farm in south of the borough. The farm has a number of farm and other animals, classroom facilities, offers educational programmes and also supports a number of young 'volunteers' and apprentices.

Suntrap Outdoor Educational Centre

Suntrap is an education centre with overnight camping facilities, providing outdoor education and experience to children. The programme includes structured National Curriculum courses and activities from KS1 to A level; activities for Early Years/Sure Start; adventure activities; and adult interest courses. An extended activities scheme is run in the summer holidays to inspire and motivate 8-12 year olds who are referred by their schools. It has four classrooms, a library and a number of outdoor activity spaces and managed mini habitats.

Student social work scheme

The EIP service works in partnership with 5 universities to run a very active programme of placing student social workers within schools and children centres to promote early help provisions and integrated working between schools and social care. In the last year we have had over 60 social work students placed in the borough through this scheme.

Parenting support and parenting training courses

The EIP service have a number of evidenced based trained parenting practitioners and lead on the co-ordination of evidence based parenting courses in the borough. Currently we support Triple P primary and Triple P teen; we also support Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities (SFSC.) These courses are run in partnership with colleagues from schools, children centres, social inclusion, and children's social care. We also piloted in partnership with 2 primary schools the Families and Schools Together (FAST) programme in partnership with the Safe the Children Fund and Middlesex University.

The service hosts a parent involvement group/parent led user group to advise on future service delivery and we have supported schools in setting up parents' forums/user groups.

Child mental health support

Following the decommissioning of Face 2 Face counselling services the EIP Primary Mental Health Worker (PMHW) service is the only tier 2 counselling service provided by CAMHS in the borough. We have 3 PMHW's who provide area based brief therapy direct support for school aged children within schools to prevent escalation to tier 3 mental health services. They also offer training and consultations for schools.

The service also commissions a Clinical Psychologist who up until December 2012 was based within the Specialist Children Service in Wood Street Health Centre. Her focus was on the early diagnosis and support for children and their families with social and communication difficulties however in January 2013, this post will move out of Wood Street and will entirely focus on supporting professionals in their work with children with challenging behaviour affected by mental health concerns and their families. Together the clinical psychologist and the PMHW will support school based practitioners and provide swift access to CAMHS higher tier support if required.

Early Years, Schools and Colleges Safeguarding Officer

This post is based within the safeguarding service in children's social care and offers advice, consultation and support to schools with concerns regarding children's welfare. The post holder provides training, policy advice and support to safeguarding leads working closely with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The Safeguarding Officer is a key professional supporting education settings with Serious Case Reviews and audits commissioned by the WFCBSB.

Support for families affected by child poverty

Building on the learning from the Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (where we were one of 10 local authorities who were successful at achieving a £1 million worth of funding), we continue to offer advice and support to families who are in poverty or experiencing financial hardship.

We have a Revenues and Benefits adviser within the service who provides vital information and support to families regarding benefits.

Promotion, training and support to professionals working within the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

The EIP service underpins the CAF in Waltham Forest. The service offer training and support to school professionals by offering one to one support with CAF completion, telephone support from qualified social workers, facilitation of team around the child meetings and access to the multi-agency panels for cases that become 'stuck'. The EIP service audits, checks and actions CAF's completed from our many partner agencies including schools.

The EIP service bridges the interface between schools and social care to ensure cases that are 'stepped up' and 'stepped down' from social care are safely passed to and from schools and children centres.

Children's Centres

As a service we have the strategic lead over 6 Children's Centre clusters, with 17 sites across the borough. These Centres reach over 13,000 families a year, and whilst their focus is on 0-5 year olds, they are a focal point for all children so that they can learn and achieve, and improve their school readiness. The Centres provide a package of support and intervention including health, speech and language and outreach work which provides intensive support to children with additional needs.

Early support to children with special educational needs

The service leads on the early support for disabled children and manages the early inclusion support workers who are commissioned to work alongside and support early year's settings with the successful inclusion of children with SEN into their settings.

Early Years Teaching Consultants

The early year's consultants have recently moved back into the council after being commissioned through Babcock in previous years. The team is currently under review however they continue to support early year's providers with teaching and learning.

Area Practitioners Network Meetings

These forums provide support to practitioners, including group supervision on casework and regular updates on new developments.

Early Intervention Childcare Panel (EICCP)

This panel meets fortnightly to consider children, who have additional needs and who would benefit from additional resources such as early education for 2 year olds, child-minding support for families and holiday provision.

Early Intervention Multi Agency Panel (EIMAP)

The EIMAP is a multi-agency panel which meets monthly to support agencies including schools in their work with families where the needs/issues are too complex for one agency to manage. We have representation from over 20 different services, including schools at this panel and it is used by schools as a forum to get additional support for the families they have concerns about but are borderline and not yet at the safeguarding threshold for social care intervention.

Family Partnership Model

In partnership with the Centre for Parent and Child Support at the South London and Maudesley NHS Foundation Trust the EIP service supports the delivery of the evidence based Family Partnership Model training to school /children centre and other professionals.

Information and advice

The Family Information Service (FIS) is based within the EIP service. The FIS provide information, telephone, outreach advice and brokerage. The team also host specialist information events and attend parents' evenings and school events to support and offer information on services to parents.

The service is responsible for the Children's and Young People /Family Information Directory and the hosting of the Children's Disability Register.

CONCLUSIONS

The EIP service is a relatively new service however in this short time it has made a significant impact. There is strong evidence that early identification and intervention can reduce risk factors and promote positive academic, social and emotional development for children and young people. This has been backed up by recent research from Graham Allen (2010), Professor Munroe (2011) and Frank Field (2011) all of whom have informed government policy on Early Intervention. We have successfully provided a responsive area based multi-agency approach and have mobilised other agencies in order to ensure early help is put in place swiftly, thus preventing an escalation of needs into statutory services. The area based model has also enabled and promoted good working relationships with settings, including schools with a good working knowledge of the needs pertinent to the area. The multi-agency approach adopted by EIPS is informed by this research and the early data shows positive signs of improvements. This was noted during the Ofsted Inspection in 2011 as the inspectors detected promising 'shoots of progress'.

With on-going funding we plan to continue to offer and enhance this support in order meet the needs of children and young people making a real difference to their future development.

Provision

The Early Intervention Prevention Service will:-

- Provide on-going daily advice/ one to one support/consultations to schools around casework and CAF at the tier 2/ 3 level.
- Provide a screening and monitoring of all completed CAF's including risk assessment by qualified social workers
- Provide on-going support via three area based primary mental health workers enabling children young people and their families access to swift emotional and counselling support, monthly area based consultation surgeries for practitioners and training around themed issues
- Provide a rolling programme of evidence based Parenting Programmes on a monthly basis across the whole borough.
- Facilitate and co-ordinate Team around the Child/Family meetings in schools
- Provide brokerage to schools requesting a student social worker and on-going support throughout the placement.

- Provide early intervention using a multi-agency approach such as direct work via family support workers, revenue and benefits, student social workers, primary mental health workers or early disability support to children/young people or their families
- Provide half termly area based practitioner network meetings to support the delivery of early help, including group supervision and regular case discussion
- Provide a full schools open for summer programme ensuring targeted and vulnerable children and young people have access to positive activities during the summer holiday period.
- Promote an interface with social care and support a Step Up and Step down process
- Provide a rolling programme of Family Partnership Programme for schools staff in partnership with the Centre for Parent and Child Support at the South London and Maudesley NHS Foundation Trust.
- Provide and facilitate a monthly strategic multi agency panel to provide guidance and support on cases that are blocked and not progressing.
- Continue to support staff in preschool/ early years settings through regular visits to enhance quality and promote the minimum standards framework
- Offer borough wide training on relevant topics to improve staff awareness and expertise
- Continue to offer individual assessments where appropriate to ensure that children's needs are addressed and met.
- Continue effective links with Health, Social Care, Education, Housing and Adults Services to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families in need of early help.
- Continue to facilitate a fortnightly EIP childcare panel to assess and provide resources for children with additional needs identified through the CAF process

Action by Schools Forum

- That the current Local Authority primary school pooling of the *EIP* service support arrangements should continue to be funded from the *Dedicated Schools' Grant (DSG)*.
- That LA Secondary / Special Schools pooling of the *EIP* service support arrangements should continue to be funded from the *Dedicated Schools' Grant (DSG)*.