

Schools Forum 9 December 2008

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Integrated Services, Information Sharing and Assessment

Purpose of Report

1. To advise Schools Forum on the progress of the implementation of Integrated Services for Information Sharing and Assessment.

Budget Working Group Discussed

2. No.

Action for Schools Forum

3. To note the contents of the report.

Attachments to Report

4. Case studies – attached at Appendix A.

Ian McGuff
Assistant Director: Performance and Partnership
19 November 2008

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Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Schools Forum on the progress of the implementation of Integrated Services for Information Sharing and Assessment.

Background

2. At the Forum in February 2008, Members asked that further reports, providing an update in respect of the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), be submitted to the Forum during the Autumn and Spring terms of each of the financial years 2008/09 and 2009/10.
3. Dudley Children and Young People's Trust is now in place with a Children and Young People's Plan that covers the period 2008 – 2011. We are developing integrated services using the Common Assessment Framework as the basis for assessment and information sharing amongst partners, as part of that plan.
4. The work undertaken on Integrated Services to date includes the following:
 - a) Roll out of multi-agency briefings for integrated processes.

Details at 15 November 2008 were:

- 1144 colleagues have completed basic awareness briefings
- 617 colleagues have completed core practitioner briefings
- 286 colleagues have completed briefings for managers

b) **Table 1** details a breakdown of schools participating in training across the borough.

	Total Schools	Attended Training	Managers Awareness - No. of staff	Basic Awareness - No. of staff	Core Practitioner - No. of staff
Secondary	21	13	26	28	24
Primary	79	54	71	95	58
Special	7	6	7	10	3

6. The number of common assessment processes which are underway or have been completed is increasing and the rate of increase is accelerating. At the time of drafting this report (19 November) 20 common assessment processes had been activated or were complete.
7. There is solid evidence in the cases that are underway that the process is resulting in more effective team work around the child, and positive outcomes. Two case studies are included at Appendix A to illustrate this.
8. We have received positive feedback from the Training and Development Agency, (which leads on support nationally for extended schools and swift and easy referral) that we are making good progress with partners.

Areas for Development

9. There is clearly an issue for some agencies in that many of their staff are so heavily timetabled within the normal working day, that finding time to be involved in a CAF or team around the child process is difficult. Current commitments must be a factor that is taken into consideration when decisions are being made about who is best placed to become a lead professional. However, there is also evidence to indicate that with sufficient commitment by managers, and a flexible approach, all agencies are becoming involved in effective integrated working to support the individual needs of children and young people.
10. The workforce development programme to support this initiative is evolving. It is starting to focus more on specific agencies and teams that have requested their own tailored training (as opposed to general, mixed events with other services). This is usually in response to a realisation that the practitioners in question wish to become more involved in co-ordinating and leading integrated provision. We believe that this is a healthy development which we intend to progress further.
11. Managers from individual agencies, including schools, are being invited to become more closely involved in the development of our local guidance and protocols for this work.
12. The work of the Integrated Service Management team is becoming more embedded in the work of local township teams, and we will be doing more to ensure that this happens consistently across the borough.

Staffing

13. Local managers have taken up post in all five of the townships in the borough. (In Brierley Hill/West Dudley this will be with effect from 1 December 2008) Their role is to support the development of integrated services, including the CAF and Contact Point, working in collaboration with all other partner agencies.

14. Ian McGuff, Assistant Director Performance and Partnership, has taken responsibility for leading the initiative following the end of Mike Galikowski's secondment.
15. Due to the delay in appointments, there will be an under spend in respect of 2008/09 CAF budget; this will be returned to partners on a pro rata basis. The value of the under-spending will be confirmed to Schools Forum at the March 2009 meeting.

Finance

16. The funding of schools is prescribed by the DCSF through the School Finance (England) Regulations 2008.
17. Schools Forums are regulated by the School Forums Regulations 2002 as already amended by the Schools Forums (Amendment) Regulations 2004 the Schools Forums (Amendment) 2005 Regulations and the Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.
18. From 1st April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct DCSF grant: Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

Law

19. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

Equality Impact

20. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

Recommendation

21. Schools Forum to note the report in respect of the Integrated Services, Information Sharing and Assessment.



John Freeman

Director of Children's Services

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Integrated Services, Information Sharing and Assessment

Case Studies

Young person A

1. The young person is a student at a secondary school. Concerns arose about his behaviour both in and out of school. A member of Connexions staff became concerned and wanted to support the young person and work with other agencies that he had contact with in order to improve outcomes.
2. The Common Assessment Framework was explained to Nan (who has parental responsibility) and young person A. Both agreed that they thought the process would be useful but young person A did not want to be part of the initial assessment so this was undertaken with Nan.
3. All 3 aspects of the assessment were discussed and this gave a holistic view of the young person. It was recognised that Young person A had a number of issues that he would need help and support with in order to improve his behaviour. Nan was able to give information on agencies that were working with young person A that Connexions were not aware of. It was recognised that Nan was not able to complete all aspects of the form and input from other agencies was crucial.
4. It was decided with Nan that a Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting would be convened. Invitations were sent to school, the police, family centre and health. All invitees attended the meeting apart from the family centre but they were able to give written information to the meeting on the support they might be able to offer. Nan also attended.
5. In addition to the agencies identified to be involved with Young Person A, Connexions had contact from a private housing association that wanted to give input to the TAC meeting on their observations of the young person's behaviour within the community and provided a written report.
6. Connexions had also made contact with the Head teacher of the young person's previous primary school to ask how they best coped with his behaviour and recommend any strategies. He was able to give verbal feedback. Nan agreed that all information could be shared during the meeting.
7. As a result of the meeting a number of action points were drawn up, many of them involving school and the way they would engage with young person A in order to support him with attendance and behaviour in the future. The police agreed that they would accept a referral for young person A to be mentored in addition to the support he would receive in school. A referral was made to the family centre for them to provide emotional support for young person A. Activities would continue with Connexions.

8. It was decided at the meeting that Connexions were best suited to become the Lead Professional for Young person A and Nan agreed. A review meeting has been arranged for December.
9. The relevant Integrated Service Manager was able to support Connexions through the whole process and will continue to do so until they are comfortable to work through it on their own.

Young Person B

1. A Y6 pupil in a primary school. There are concerns about his behaviour in and out of school. He is becoming involved in anti social behaviour in his community. He gets additional support in school. His attendance is excellent and his mother is engaged with the school. She is a single parent, and a Dudley MBC Housing Tenant. School were the agency that identified that the child might benefit from an assessment.
2. The ISM met with the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) at the school to discuss the needs of the child, quickly followed by a meeting with Mum to explain the CAF to her. Mum gave permission for the assessment to take place which was done with the ISM, SENCo, and Mum present. The types of agencies which might be able to assist were identified and invited to attend the Team Around the Child meeting. At the assessment stage the school and Mum felt that the child was being offered the support that was missing particularly in relation to the issues the child is encountering outside school. The school recognised how his experiences in the wider community were impacting on school work and his ability to reach his full potential.
3. The agencies who were invited to the TAC meeting were a local voluntary organisation, the early intervention specialist police officer, the school and the local housing manager. Mum and the ISM were present at the TAC meeting and the child joined towards the end of the meeting so he could say what he thought he needed in terms of intervention. The action plan for the child includes police intervention to explain how his behaviour might result in the police taking further action. The police referred him to Connexions for their positive activities programme. The local voluntary organisation offered him the opportunity to engage in leisure activities and their worker also undertakes some mentoring with the child in school. It was felt that this would be very beneficial as one thing identified via the assessment was that he had no positive male role model. It will also provide a link between school and the local youth club.
4. One of the benefits for Mum and the wider family is that he is now getting additional support from the Housing Manager. Until the TAC meeting the manager had limited understanding of the family and their needs. She has received a number of complaints from residents about the child's behaviour and had visited the home on one occasion. Now she is aware of the support that is being given to the family and is able to manage the case on a more informed basis and is in a better position to respond to complaints when they arise.