

Meeting: Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Date: 19 October 2005

Subject: Update on the actions and response to the recommendations of the Sub-Committee's review of Phase 3 delegated funding for pupils with SEN in mainstream schools

Responsible Officer: Paul Clark, Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Roger Rickman, Group Manager Enhanced Services

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Bill Stephenson, Education and Lifelong Learning

Key Decision: No

Status: Public

Section 1: Summary

The report provides the Sub-Committee with an update of the actions and response to the recommendations of the review of Phase 3 delegated funding for pupils with SEN in mainstream schools completed in January 2005.

Decision required

To note and comment on the updated information on the Sub-Committee's review recommendations.

Reason for report

A group appointed by the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee completed a review of Phase 3 delegated funding for pupils with SEN in mainstream schools in January 2005 and an action plan was formulated, addressing the recommendations of the review, that was reported to the Sub-Committee in April 2005. This report provides the Sub-Committee with an update to the action plan.

Benefits

The recommendations of the review are assisting the introduction and implementation of the changes to SEN funding and provide necessary safeguards for pupils with special educational needs.

Cost of proposals

The costs can be met within existing budgets.

Risks

The recommendations of the review all serve to support the introduction of the funding changes and is helping to minimise any risks involved.

Implications if recommendations rejected

The Sub-Committee's review recommendations were accepted in full.

Section 2: Report

Brief history

A group appointed by the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee completed a review of the statementing process for children with SEN in July 2004. Phase 3 delegation was highlighted as part of this review and was subsequently included in the Sub-Committee's work programme and a review completed in January 2005.

Options considered

Not applicable

Consultation

Not applicable

Financial implications

Not applicable

Legal implications

A full legal report on Phase 3 delegation was included as part of the report to the Sub-Committee in April 2005.

Equalities impact

The review group sought to consider what would be in the best interests of children with special educational needs in Harrow.

Section 3: Supporting Information/ Background Documents

Project scope: Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee, 13 October 2004.

Report: Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee, Report of the Scrutiny Review Group, Phase 3 delegated funding for pupils with SEN in mainstream schools, January 2005.

Recommendations of the Sub-Committee's review of Phase 3 delegated funding for pupils with SEN in mainstream schools, Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee, 19 April 2005.

Appendix

Appendix 1 Action plan update

Appendix 1: Action plan update

Handling transition to the new model			
	Recommendation	Action/response (April 2005)	Update
1	All SENCOs undergo a course of training by July 2005 to support them in their role under the new arrangements and that additional written material also be supplied.	<p>Three full day sessions are planned for headteachers, special educational needs co-ordinators and special educational needs governors, covering the new arrangements and in particular the monitoring arrangements that will apply, including provision mapping, that will contribute to helping schools respond to the wide range of pupil needs in Harrow's mainstream schools.</p> <p>Work is already in hand to produce guidance and communications in an appropriate format giving a detailed explanation of how the new arrangements will operate that will be issued to schools, in particular headteachers, special educational needs co-ordinators and special educational needs governors, and parents.</p>	<p>66 out of 69 schools attended the training in June and July. The three schools that were unable to attend have been contacted and will be visited by the advisory teacher for SEN this term.</p> <p>Briefings have also been given to central services and teams.</p> <p>The Educational Psychology Service is going to contribute to supporting schools in drawing up their provision maps this term.</p> <p>Additional written information was provided for schools on the operation of the new funding arrangements.</p>
2	Early years area SENCOs work more closely with schools to encourage and support earlier intervention and adjustment to the new arrangements.	<p>The Area SENCOs currently support children with any kind of additional need to be included in pre-school and the Foundation Stage in schools. They work to support the smooth transition of children between pre-school and nursery or reception in school.</p> <p>Work is underway to develop a system which provides schools with a more formal notification that a child who has additional needs is due to transfer to them. The notification will be sent by the pre-school that the child has been attended and will suggest that the receiving school convene a transition meeting involving the child's parents and all relevant professionals to ensure the child is successfully included in school.</p>	<p>The area SENCOs continue to support children with any kind of additional need to be included in pre-school.</p> <p>By the end of the last Summer Term the area SENCOs supported the transition of 45 children into school. All children will be followed up by October half term to assess if the child is being successfully included and accessing the curriculum.</p> <p>The communication between pre-schools and schools about children transferring is significantly improved and over the coming year the area SENCOs will be working to improve the timing of the transfer of information to schools to enable schools to better plan for the inclusion of children.</p>

Impact on parents/carers			
	Recommendation	Action/response (April 2005)	Update
3	In accordance with the communications management strategy, future publications on this subject are referred to the Communications Unit for advice on use of the Council's corporate style, use of language and accessibility. The relevant Portfolio Holder should also see publications.	This recommendation will be followed with regard to any further publications.	This recommendation is being followed in connection with any publications on this subject, for example, the information leaflet for parents, and relevant portfolio holders shown draft and final versions.
4	The Parent Partnership Service give consideration to how all parents with children at School Action and above can be made aware of the service and its role and to continue to examine how the service can respond more proactively to the needs of parents.	<p>The Parent Partnership Service will write to all schools offering to attend meetings where there would be an opportunity to address parents, with the special educational needs co-ordinator, with regard to supporting parents of children with special educational needs, including cluster meetings as appropriate.</p> <p>The Parent Partnership Service will liaise with Carole Tobin, General Education Adviser, with regard to opportunities to work with special educational needs co-ordinators and parents, offering advice and support on a 1:1 basis, or in groups, concerning supporting parents of children with special educational needs.</p> <p>Staff in the Parent Partnership Service attend the regular special educational needs co-ordinator termly meetings and contribute to the termly inclusion newsletter.</p>	<p>An offer was made to all schools by the Parent Partnership Service to attend meetings, briefings, open evenings etc. To date there has been no formal take-up, however, informally a lot of opportunities arise through the regular work of the service with parents and schools.</p> <p>Members of the Parent Partnership Service attend the regular termly special educational needs co-ordinator meetings and contribute to the termly inclusion newsletter where appropriate. A helpful item on the service is included in the autumn governors bulletin, with a photograph of the team.</p> <p>The service attended the primary training days referred to under recommendation 1.</p>

	Recommendation	Action/response (April 2005)	Update
5	The Parent Partnership Service monitors the use of the service and effects on its resources after Phase 3 delegation during the first year.	<p>The Parent Partnership Service will undertake monitoring as part of the management of the service. From April 2005 a termly report can be provided, showing the take-up in service with comparisons on previous year's take-up. Take-up of the service is currently increasing which is due, in part, to the appointment of a full-time co-ordinator who has greater capacity to support service needs. The Parent Partnership Service has also actively been raising awareness of the service and networking more widely to raise its profile that has also had an impact on take-up of the service.</p> <p>Depending on available funding in 2005/06, consideration is being given to developing a database that will aid monitoring and reviewing the take-up of service and tracking casework.</p>	<p>Information has been taken from manual records and shows a 37% increase in telephone calls logged, from new and previously known parents/carers in summer 2005 compared to summer 2004. Two calls were logged specifically about phase 3 delegation. Parents/carers have asked individual team members about phase 3 delegation as an additional question to other work over which they have requested support.</p> <p>There is a specific parent partnership database used by a number of local authorities that the service has considered and is planning to use next year. This will improve regular activity reporting and monitoring.</p>
6	The Parent Partnership Service produces a leaflet on the change to Phase 3 delegation.	<p>The leaflet recommended is being produced with a draft provided to the Parent Partnership Service and the Communications Unit in early May.</p> <p>The Parent Partnership Service will arrange for wide distribution of the leaflet to schools, libraries, all reception points, voluntary and statutory groups, community groups, Northwick Park Hospital, GP surgeries etc.</p>	A specific leaflet for parents was produced and widely distributed in July 2005 and translated into five community languages. The leaflet is available on the Harrow website together with other information on the Parent Partnership Service.
7	The Parent Partnership Service produce a leaflet detailing the channels available to parents/carers should they be unhappy with the level of SEN support that their child is receiving (as set out in Appendix E of the Sub-Committee's review report).	Flow-chart proposed by the Scrutiny Committee will be incorporated into the above leaflet, adding some wording which refers to the school's complaints procedure for addressing specific concerns and complaints. To be incorporated in the final report to Cabinet recommending Phase 3 Delegation.	The specific leaflet for parents referred to under recommendation 6 included the flow chart proposed by the sub-committee in its review report.

Monitoring and accountability			
	Recommendation	Action/response (April 2005)	Update
8	<p>That the Director of Children's Services develop provision mapping, including a system of monitoring, (a) before Phase 3 delegation is introduced, and (b), in order to clearly spell out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the school and the role of the LEA at each level (i.e. School Action, School Action plus, those with statements); • The associated monitoring of these arrangements along with steps to be taken should any problems occur (the role of the school and the LEA may differ for individual schools); • A programme of 'self review' to enable schools to monitor their own performance alongside the current school self-evaluation activities. 	<p>The LEA will introduce a framework for monitoring and review of inclusive learning. This will require schools and the LEA to work together to implement a rigorous monitoring programme to ensure the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs, are met.</p> <p>The framework will consist of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contextual data relating to SEN and inclusion that will be reviewed by the lead officer to help identify needs in the school population. Analysis of data and other indicators (OFSTED reports, PANDAS, PLASC) will support the analysis of the progress of vulnerable learners, groups of learners or the impact of interventions. 2. Annually schools will be given a clear statement of their resource allocations for SEN and inclusion in a separate letter. The statement will usually show the amounts allocated from each funding source and how they are calculated. Typically information will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ AEN by formula ○ SEN by formula ○ SEN by individual allocation/statement ○ Other relevant grants ○ 3. Guidance will be drawn up for schools to conduct their own self-review re SEN based on the OFSTED revised SEF form. 4. All Schools will be required to produce a costed provision map. This is a useful technique that headteachers and special educational needs co-ordinators can use to identify both individuals and groups of pupils that face barriers to their learning and to clarify the interventions that will be used to support them. Resources can then be allocated by the school to support the required/ /provision. 	<p>From September 2005 schools are required to conduct detailed supported school self-evaluation and populate their online Ofsted self evaluation form in preparation for inspection. As part of the ongoing support to schools the new Head of Achievement and Inclusion has produced a detailed framework for schools that has reference to SEN. This is in line with the Every Child Matters agenda and will inform most of schools' planning over the coming years.</p> <p>Continuous monitoring of the work of schools in order to raise standards and continue to improve the quality of education is the key work of the team of the Achievement and Inclusion Division.</p> <p>All schools were issued with a spreadsheet detailing all inclusion funding available to them in July 2005. From April 2006 this will be available in the Section 52 statement.</p> <p>Alongside the detailed supported school self evaluation procedure sent to all schools by the Achievement and Inclusion Division, an SEN format was circulated at the training days.</p> <p>The first group of schools will be asked to submit their provision map in the Spring Term 2006. All schools will be supported through their regular educational psychologist visits and two additional training sessions for SENCOs in the Autumn Term 2005.</p> <p>As part of the cycle of visits by the Achievement and Inclusion Division, the first group of schools will be visited in the Spring Term 2006, led by the Principal Adviser (Inclusion).</p> <p>Schools that are judged inadequate in any area through the annual dialogue with schools carried out by the Achievement and Inclusion Division will be supported to make the improvements needed.</p>

	<p>The response that the LEA will make should an individual school fail to deliver and the nature of that/ /intervention.</p>	<p>5. A focused discussion with schools on a rolling programme will take place in the Spring Term of the academic year. Data will be used to identify schools requiring more support. Evidence-based information can be gathered from across the department, including special educational needs and inclusion-related services and those that co-ordinate admissions. The new Achievement and Inclusion Division will lead visits. It will be helpful to have educational psychology colleagues involved in joint discussions with schools when inclusion and special educational needs are the focus.</p> <p>6. Schools deemed vulnerable will have a detailed follow up interview and offered a menu of support and intervention with timescales to help the school address any concerns. An annual report to schools will note good practice in Harrow.</p>	
9	<p>School governors are provided with additional training/guidance in relation to the monitoring of SEN budgets within schools.</p>	<p>School governors have been invited to the school training sessions in June and July and an evening training session has been planned.</p> <p>Additional guidance is being prepared. Please refer to recommendation 1.</p>	<p>Seven governors attended the training in June, a few attended with schools. Several additional sessions have been planned for the Autumn Term 2005, including a Saturday briefing session in a range of subjects.</p>
10	<p>That schools be encouraged to continue to hold bi-annual reviews of pupils with IEPs at School Action and School Action Plus. Further that parents continue to be kept fully informed and fully engaged in this process.</p>	<p>Schools will be expected to adhere to the requirements of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2001 that specifies that Individual Education Plans (IEPs) should be reviewed at least twice a year. Ideally they should be reviewed termly, or more frequently for some children. Parents' views on their child's progress should be sought and parents should be consulted as part of the review process. Wherever possible, the child should also take part in the review process and be involved in setting targets.</p>	<p>As part of the training in June and July schools were advised to maintain the current practice with regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2001. The new Ofsted self evaluation form underlines to schools the voice of pupils and parents in all aspects of supported school self evaluation.</p>

Children's Services, People First			
	Recommendation	Action/response (April 2005)	Update
11	The new structure is used to strengthen support given to parents and families of children with SEN to enable them to best support their child's learning and development.	The new structures of People First are designed to do just what Scrutiny wish to support. Specifically within Children's Services the linking of the SEN Assessment and Review Service, Educational Psychology Service, including the Portage Home Visiting team, the Sensory and Communication Team and Children with Disabilities Service social care team is designed to link up the various skills and offer a more streamlined support service to any pupil with particular additional needs, their family and the school. This new arrangement is already paying dividends with the linking of workers to special schools, the new complex needs panel and the integrated approach to support from this group under one group manager.	The creation of a social care team within children's services specifically to support disabled children and their families, the establishment of a family link scheme and working together with a local voluntary organisation were recognised in the June report of the inspection of children's services as improving access for this group. The next steps in this area will involve exploring the integration and joint location of social care staff with colleagues in the health service.
	Formula funding		
	Recommendation	Action/response (April 2005)	Update
12	Free school meals should not be used as a proxy indicator within the proposed formula funding model. The LEA is encouraged to further investigate the use of postcode-based data for establishing need.	Alternative measures are going to be considered by the Phase 3 delegation working group. The aim is to move away from proxy indicators to actual indicators of SEN need such as the numbers of pupils with statements and on school action /school action plus or recognised educational indicators.	The Schools Forum in July 2005 received and agreed a report on the development of the formula for SEN funding, moving away from proxy indicators over time, that will form part of the consultation with school governing bodies in the autumn 2005 on school funding formula changes in future years.

