

Meeting: Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Date: 4 April 2006

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 a further 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 a further update to the action plan for which reports were submitted previously in April 2005 and October 2005.

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 have served to support the introduction of the funding changes and 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.

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 October 2005.

Appendix

Appendix 1 Action plan update

Appendix 1: Action plan update

Handling transition to the new model			
	Recommendation	Action/response (October 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>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>	<p>The Autumn Term briefings for SENCOs have focussed on provision mapping.</p> <p>A range of schools across the local authority have requested further professional development and training that has been delivered by the SEN advisory teacher.</p> <p>The Educational Psychology Service has contributed to the work in schools.</p> <p>Further information and support is planned for the summer term with drop -n sessions for SENCOs after school</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 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>	<p>The area SENCOs continue to support children with any kind of additional need to be included in pre-school.</p> <p>The 45 children who had supported transitions were followed-up. All continue to be included and access the curriculum.</p> <p>A consistent transition proforma to be completed for children moving from pre-school to school has been trialled, evaluated, and, in Spring 2006, finally agreed.</p> <p>An early years conference will be held on 24 April that will focus on all aspects of transition. All SENCOs in settings are now trained to support the transition process to ensure earlier interventions are made.</p>

Impact on parents/carers			
	Recommendation	Action/response (October 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 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.	This recommendation continues to be followed most recently in connection with a related leaflet for parents and professionals describing special provision in the authority.
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>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>	<p>Parent Partnership continues to use opportunities informally through regular work with parents and schools to raise awareness of the service and how it can support parents. As part of ongoing outreach activities, displays and/or staffed stands are arranged at a number of council community based events eg Glebe community advice day, Parents First launch (Stag Lane) and Under One Sky event.</p> <p>Parent Partnership staff continue to attend termly SENCO meetings and contribute to the newsletter as appropriate. Parent Partnership is well placed to continue to support parents and this is supported by feedback from a parent/carer survey undertaken as part of ongoing service development. The survey results showed that parents were happy with the service and would contact Parent Partnership again for help/advice, with 98% of respondents saying that they were happy to tell other parents about the service if they needed help. This survey will be repeated in Summer 2006.</p>

	Recommendation	Action/response (October 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>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>	<p>There is no further evidence of telephone calls specifically regarding Phase 3 delegation. Questions regarding Phase 3 funding sometimes occur with regard to the level of support a child is receiving in school.</p> <p>Parent Partnership supports parents and schools to work through the changes in the funding arrangements and to highlight the early intervention and available support that is accessible to pupils with special educational needs.</p> <p>The introduction of the database has been delayed by the relocation of the team to Little Stanmore School in December/January and some ongoing technical difficulties with telephone capacity. However, the database remains a high priority for 2006/7.</p>
6	The Parent Partnership Service produces a leaflet on the change to Phase 3 delegation.	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.	Leaflets continue to be used as appropriate. No individual requests for translated copies have been received to date.
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).	The specific leaflet for parents referred to under recommendation 6 included the flow chart proposed by the sub-committee in its review report.	Parent Partnership staff have commented that they often refer parents/carers to the flowchart as part of the support provided and many find this visual diagram helpful.

Monitoring and accountability			
	Recommendation	Action/response (October 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>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>Provision mapping has been introduced into all schools from September 2005 based upon the work with the 8 pilot schools over a 2-year period. Pilot schools consist of 1 special, 2 First, 2 First and Middle and 2 High schools. 2 more High schools joined the pilot last year. The pilot schools are developing provision mapping in a variety of ways to fit their context, some starting from a strategic level and some beginning with learning and teaching. This flexibility of approach has ensured that the models developed have met the needs of individual schools. Schools in the pilot group have all established provision maps that identify pupils with special needs, the interventions available, staff skills and gaps in provision. The maps are used to proactively plan provision for different groups of children. These schools are now able to allocate costs to provision and monitoring visits by the local authority will take place at the end of this term and into next term to ensure provision matches need and is within budget.</p> <p>Since the launch of provision mapping across the local authority in September 2005, all schools are now actively engaged in the process and those that were unable to attend training have been visited and supported. The pilot schools are paving the way for all other schools developing their provision mapping. Support and training is available through termly SENCO meetings and visits from local authority staff. Schools are very positive about these developments in monitoring SEN provision as it enables them to ensure pupils' needs are met.</p> <p>The pilot school visits are planned for this term and the beginning of the summer term when their provision maps will be analysed and circulated to other schools to assist their planning.</p>

	The response that the LEA will make should an individual school fail to deliver and the nature of that/ /intervention.		There have been no schools identified by OFSTED this year as being inadequate in respect of SEN. The review of all schools will be held in the summer term by the Achievement and Inclusion Group.
9	School governors are provided with additional training/guidance in relation to the monitoring of SEN budgets within schools.	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.	The Saturday briefing session was cancelled owing to lack of numbers.
10	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.	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.	Schools continue to hold reviews. Provision mapping should enable schools to plan in a more strategic way and enable, for example, group education plans to inform planning.

Children's Services, People First			
	Recommendation	Action/response (October 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 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.	The integration and joint location of social care staff with colleagues in the health service is expected to develop further in the summer.
	Formula funding		
	Recommendation	Action/response (October 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.	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.	The formula for SEN funding will be altered for the 2007-08 financial year as part of the move towards using only educational attainment and school action plus data.

