

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE
YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

29 JUNE 2007

MONITORING, CHALLENGING AND SUPPORTING INCLUSION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 To outline how the Local Authority (LA) through the Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) monitor, challenge and support schools and settings in the use of their delegated resource to meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) including those with Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD).

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The LA delegates significant resources to schools for the education of children and young people with SEN and BESD. The delegated resource for pupils with high incidence/low need statements in 2007/08 is £7 million. A further £6 million is delegated to schools on an earmarked basis for pupils with low incidence/high need statements. The children and young people who should benefit from this resource are those assessed by the school and by the LA, following the Code of Practice, as having needs that are significantly different from their peers. It is crucial that this delegated resource is rigorously monitored to ensure there is good value, good practice and provision and ultimately good achievement by those children and young people who require greatest support and intervention.
- 2.2 Particular issues around the use of delegated SEN funding were a constant theme raised by parents and carers during consultation related to the the review of SEN and Behaviour provision in 2006.
- 2.3 Schools have a statutory responsibility annually to report (through their annual financial statement – Section 52, part 6) how they intend to spend their delegated funding. Many schools have consistently done this and this has been rigorously recorded by the LA but this is not universally the case. A significant proportion of schools do not return the appropriate information and until the past year this has been only sporadically challenged.
- 2.4 Ultimately, it is also not enough to return a financial statement as this is simply an audit of planned expenditure – it does not explain why decisions have been made and most crucially does not explain whether or not delegated funding is making a difference.
- 2.5 This has led to fundamental revisions in the system for monitoring, challenging and supporting schools in their use of SEN delegated resources which is explained, below.

3.0 MONITORING

3.1 The CYPS monitor the use of delegated funds and the achievement of our most vulnerable learners in four key ways:

- Inclusion Profile
- Inclusion Quality Mark
- Communications Database
- Analysis of OFSTED inspection, LA reviews and Records of Visit

3.2 Inclusion Profile

The major foundation stone of how delegated resources are being used has been the development of the 'School's Inclusion Profile'. This profile is sent to schools each term and outlines the schools delegated budget and compares their expenditure with schools in their locality and with schools of a similar type (with a similar cohort). The profile also identifies whether or not the pupils with SEN in the school are on track with their achievement – hence the real strength of the profile – in the bringing together of the use of resource and pupil performance. The profile is shared with all School Improvement Partners (SIPs) and provides the basis for informed discussion with individual schools.

3.3 Inclusion Quality Mark

The IQM is an annual award for which schools can submit. It covers all areas of inclusion – for pupils, staff, parents/carers, governors and community. The IQM is both a celebration of inclusive practice and annual opportunity for the school to audit, plan and develop inclusive practice. The award can be achieved at five levels with Level 5 being a leading school for inclusion. By achieving the IQM, even at the most basic level (Level 1), a school can ensure it is compliant with all its statutory equality duties and its SEN delegation responsibilities. The IQM also includes guidance and a template on how to complete the part 6, section 52 statement.

3.4 Communications database

A school has many interactions and relationships with the many communities it serves and works with. On the vast majority of occasions schools are very successful in these relationships but there can be times, particularly in the sensitive area of inclusion, when concerns are raised about a school's practice, values and attitude.

3.5 A record is maintained by the LA of these concerns whether they are expressed by parents/carers, community members or LA officers who work with the school. These concerns will be systematically and transparently shared with the school. Some concerns will not be credible, others may warrant further investigation and challenge.

3.6 Report Analysis

Reports, records, reviews and inspections are systematically trawled by the Quality & Improvement Service to monitor for evidence of good or poor inclusive practice and provision.

3.7 Forum

All information that is collected through the monitoring tools described is discussed at a half-termly forum attended by key personnel from the Quality and Improvement Service and the Access and Inclusion Service. At this meeting appropriate and proportionate challenge and support is planned for schools which are a cause of concern.

4.0 CHALLENGE

If, after systematic monitoring, a school appears to have an issue relating to its use of delegated resources, the achievement of vulnerable learners or generally around inclusive practice, further investigation and challenge, initially from the SIP and then specialist advisers from the LA, will take place in one of the following ways:

- Immediate communication
- SIP Visit
- Paired visit
- Focussed review
- Themed review

4.1 Immediate communication

Given the sometimes sensitive nature of concerns that are raised around inclusion, particularly of vulnerable children, immediate and direct communication may need to be made with the school by the Q & I service. This initially will be a telephone call with the possibility of a follow-up visit from either the SIP or appropriate adviser/officer from Q & I and Access and Inclusion services.

4.2 School Improvement Partner visit

In the normal cycle visits to a school it is expected that the SIP will ensure inclusion is a high priority. Additionally, on an annual basis, the LA will request the SIP drills deeper into certain areas of inclusive practice or provision.

4.3 Paired Visit

The specific nature of some areas of inclusion, for example the education of pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties, may require the SIP to be supported by a specialist adviser. Paired visits will take place when either:

- The SIP reports additional challenge would benefit a school;
- On monitoring information the Principal Adviser (Inclusion) considers further challenge/guidance is required by a school;
- When the school, in agreement with their SIP, acknowledges further investigation in to a particular inclusion area is needed.

4.4 Focussed review

If serious or chronic concerns/issues are identified a short-notice focussed review will take place. The review will most likely take place over one day and be conducted either by a single adviser or small team depending on the issues and size of the school. Standard LA review procedures are followed.

4.5 Themed review

Regular reviews take place across a number of schools/settings throughout the county or in an area/locality concentrating on particular issues/themes. This kind of review involves visiting a number of schools/settings in a concentrated period of time. The writing of the review will be generic but it will note particular areas of good or inadequate provision and practice.

5.0 SUPPORT

5.1 Schools and settings can access a range of support on inclusion from the Q & I service and the A & I service. Broadly, support on inclusive practice is in line with the National Strategies wave model.

- **Wave 1** describes quality inclusive teaching which takes into account the learning needs of all the children in the classroom.

- **Wave 2** describes specific, additional and time-limited interventions provided for some children who need help to accelerate their progress to enable them to work at or above age-related expectations.
- **Wave 3** describes targeted provision for a minority of children where it is necessary to provide highly tailored intervention to accelerate progress or enable children to achieve their potential. This may include one to one or specialist interventions.

5.2 Support from Quality and Improvement Service

All support from specialist advisers in the Q & I service must be brokered through the SIP. Support from Q & I is based on improving whole-school, cohort or class practice (Waves 1 and 2)). It is not geared to working with individual children and young people. All support is time-led and on most occasions will have to be paid for by the school. If a Q&I specialist adviser considers the support required is best served from the Access and Inclusion Service this will be recommended and brokered on the school's behalf.

5.3 Support form Access and Inclusion Service

All schools have an entitlement to support from A & I teaching and support services. This support is designed to guide and support schools working with the most challenging pupils, generally those at school action plus (wave 3).

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Local Authority has now developed a robust and rigorous accountability process which champions the needs of our most vulnerable children and young people and fully meets our statutory responsibilities. This process has been acknowledged by the DfES as outstanding practice and NorthYorkshire has been asked to be one of four national SEN hubs – with the remit share our practice to other LAs.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That developments in the system for monitoring, challenging and supporting schools in making provision for children and young people with SEN and BESD be noted.
- 7.2 That a further monitoring report be brought to the Committee early in 2008 outlining the impact which the enhanced monitoring, challenge and support process is making.

Cynthia Welbourn
Corporate Director: Children and Young People's Service

Author: John Bell
Contact Details: Tel 01609 533076
E-mail; john.bell@northyorks.gov.uk
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