

MEETING:	SCHOOLS FORUM
DATE:	7TH DECEMBER 2009
TITLE OF REPORT:	IN-YEAR FAIR ACCESS SUPPORT
MANAGER OF SOCIAL INCLUSION	DENNIS LONGMORE

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide – All Secondary Schools

Purpose

To request one-off funding allocation for the support of children and young people who are placed in secondary schools in emergency situations within the In-Year Fair Access Protocol, for example, permanently excluded students or those subject to a managed move to avoid a permanent exclusion or as a result of an out of county Looked After foster placement. Such funding would enable the running of a pilot to assess the effectiveness of support for students in these circumstances.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendation(s)

THAT School's Forum approve:

the funding request of £20,000 from DSG underspend to enable targeted support be made available to schools to better meet the needs of vulnerable students when transferring to new high schools as part of the In-Year Fair Access Protocol.

Key Points Summary

In greater detail, the funding would:

- Enable Herefordshire Children's Services to further support high schools in the management of students who require a fresh start via a managed move or an exceptional placement within the In-Year Fair Access Protocol. Students that may benefit from a managed move are likely to be vulnerable youngsters with behavioural, emotional and social needs and may be facing possible permanent exclusion. Other students that may require an exceptional placement may include Looked After Children suddenly placed in Herefordshire in response to their social situation.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Dennis Longmore, Manager of Social Inclusion on 01432 260816

- Provide targeted support to vulnerable students.
- Help to reduce exclusions.
- Encourage schools to engage in the managed moves process.

Alternative Options

1. This is a one-off request to be set against DSG underspend in order to assess the effectiveness of a one year pilot to support students placed in schools in emergency situations.
2. If funding is not made available then it would put at greater risk the good practice of placing vulnerable students in new schools, in moments of crisis and there would be a greater likelihood of these school placements breaking down. For students to benefit from such placements, most of them would need some level of additional support.
3. If the pilot is assessed as being effective then Improvement and Inclusion will look to sustain such improvements from 2011 onwards, for example by considering prioritising monies from other budget areas like the Vulnerable Children budget. Other sources of funding would have to be considered.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. Vulnerable children and young people continue to be the highest priority for the Government and the DCSF and feature in all inspections of schools and local authorities. As a local authority we have a duty to meet the needs of such students, including publishing an agreed In-Year Fair Access Protocol.

Introduction and Background

5. The DCSF support the use of managed moves in order to avoid permanent exclusion by providing a fresh start for troubled students. More details are available in 'Improving behaviour and attendance: guidance on exclusion from schools and Pupil Referral Units', DCSF updated annually.
6. In Herefordshire we have a system within the primary phase where there is an expectation that permanent exclusion will be avoided by use of managed transfers. Managed transfers are essentially managed moves within a local protocol. Such placements are now supported by the allocation of banded funding level 3. This has been a very successful strategy resulting in zero permanent exclusions from primary schools in 2008/9 and only one in 2007/8 (the year the approach was implemented).

	2007/8	2008/9
Permanent exclusions from primary schools	1	0
Managed transfers from primary schools	8	9

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7. With this strategy and funding request, we now have an opportunity to extend this good practice into the secondary phase.
8. A protocol will be developed to outline the detail of the use of this strategy. This will relate to the In-Year Fair Access Protocol.
9. For students that have received a permanent exclusion from school, to make the most of a fresh start in a new school, it is very likely that additional support will be required to ensure the best possible outcome.
10. The effectiveness of the In-Year Access support budget will be reviewed prior to the end of the financial year. The review will be conducted by the Manager of Social Inclusion with a written submission to the Assistant Director, Improvement and Inclusion.

Key Considerations

11. Vulnerable children and young people that may require additional support within the In-Year Fair Access process would include:
 - Permanently excluded students;
 - Students at risk of permanent exclusion and subject to a managed move;
 - Students placed in foster care away from their home area;
 - Students subjected to serious bullying;
 - Students in other exceptional circumstances.

Community Impact

12. None other than assisting with the stability of the school community.

Financial Implications

13. *Set-up and management of a budget to deploy support funding to schools:*

Management of the budget

- Managed by Manager of Social Inclusion;
- Monitored by Team Leader of Behaviour Team.

Costings:

14. Total £20,000.
 - Amount attached to each student/school – sliding scale between £1000 - £2000 depending on level of need.
 - The level of need, and therefore the amount of money allocated, usually to be discussed within Pastoral Support Plan meetings with recommendations being considered by the Team Leader of the Behaviour Team (TLBT) in discussion with relevant colleagues, for

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example the Social Inclusion Officer and other members of the Behaviour Team. The TLBT will determine amount offered to new school. In some exceptional cases, the Manager of Social Inclusion will determine the level of funding deployed.

- In those cases where a CAF/TAC is in place for a student, this may be the forum for discussing these issues as well as monitoring progress.
- Amount agreed by the TLBT will be transferred to school budget.
- Deployment of support and spend monitored within the school's PSP meetings. A written submission outlining spend to the TLBT.
- TLBT to receive monthly financial (Cedar) report

What can the money but spent on?

15. This would be dependent on the needs of the student and the internal support systems within the school. Below are some possible uses:
- Deployment of a Teaching Assistant
 - Assist with applied learning placements;
 - Transport to applied learning placement;
 - Resources;
 - Training.
16. The above list is only indicative. The allocation could theoretically be spent on anything agreed within the PSP group as being effective, useful support.

al Implications

17. The local authority has a duty to assess and meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people.
18. In addition, schools must, by law have regard to the DCSF guidance, Improving Behaviour and Attendance (2008) which suggests managed moves as an alternative to permanent exclusion of students.

Risk Management

19. There are no risks identified with this proposal.

Consultees

20. In compiling this report the Manager of Social Inclusion consulted with other colleagues with the Children and Young People Directorate.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

In-Year Fair access Protocol

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