

## **North Yorkshire Children's Trust**

### **Monitoring Report November 2009**

#### **Parent Support Advisers –Schools and Settings**

##### **1.0 Purpose of the Report**

1.1 To inform the North Yorkshire Children's Trust of further developments in parent support services provided in education settings.

##### **2.0 Context**

2.1 Parent Support Advisers (PSA) were first introduced in March 2007 following North Yorkshire's successful bid to be one of 20 local authorities involved in a national pilot. Funding was provided by the DCSF for 30 FTE workers, employed for 18 months, who were based in schools and education settings, with the intention of providing support to families by working with parents at the first signs of social, emotional, health or behavioural issues being observed in their children.

2.2 The pilot was initially extended for 6 months to allow for a comprehensive assessment of the work involved and was, subsequently, continued on a substantive basis from April 2009.

2.3 Lessons from the pilot have informed further development, with PSA posts deployed in children's centres using the recruitment, training and support practices which had been used to support the initial work. Since that time, local and national PSA evaluation has clearly indicated the increasing scope and success of the PSA role, its increased involvement in multi-agency working and its continuing and significant contribution to Common Assessment Framework processes (CAF) and parenting programmes.

##### **3.0 Background**

3.1 Ongoing development of PSA work, since the last report to the Children's Strategic Partnership Board in January 2009, has continued to develop the PSA role to ensure that the work undertaken forms a well coordinated response to Integrated Services in North Yorkshire and is, appropriately, targeted at the families identified as being at greatest risk of requiring more acute services if intervention is not provided.

## 4.0 Deployment

4.1 The recent OfSTED Inspection in North Yorkshire noted that:

*“The roll out of integrated services is helping to deliver services which are more closely aligned to meet the needs of the diverse communities across the county”.*

The report also noted that steps had been taken to achieve county wide coverage and equity of service, with PSAs and children’s centres as two of its priorities for the current year.

4.2 A small increase in the number of posts, from the original pilot funding, has allowed us to provide a primary phase PSA in all 22 localities within the County. These posts are based in host schools, or small clusters of schools, where most of their work is undertaken. The schools were, initially, chosen on the basis of achieving the ‘best fit’ on the basis of geography and need, with further consideration given to the planned location of their children’s centre PSA colleagues.

4.3 The management and support from the host schools has been an important element in the successful delivery of the work, with schools where there is a high incidence of identified parenting difficulties getting the most support. However, collaborative working between schools can allow those with a lower incidence of parenting difficulty to request support as necessary.

4.4 The further development of the PSA role has included training designed to provide skills which can be applied in an area based role as required. These include: the delivery of parenting programmes; support for transition and, thirdly, family support using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). These core elements of the PSA role can improve the reach of parenting support and help overcome the problems of targeted delivery in the rural environment.

4.5 Access to support for parents of secondary phase pupils has been delivered through a PSA attached to the Pupil Referral Units and REOTAS Panels serving local groups of secondary schools. This has delivered a service to children and young people who have been clearly identified as having emotional and behavioural difficulties. These children have often been permanently excluded from school, giving rise to some concern that some opportunities for appropriate early intervention were being missed.

4.6 Changes to both the delivery of Targeted Youth Support (TYS) and the arrangements for the Pupil Referral Services (PRS) have provided an opportunity to align the PSA with both the local PRS and TYS Hubs, thus extending the range of children and young people who have access to the service.

4.7 Some co-location of workers with the early intervention workers in the TYS hubs has created good opportunities for joint training and delivery of evidence based parenting programmes. Funding from the 'Think Family' DCSF initiative is being used to support the delivery of the 'Strengthening Families 10 -14 Programme' across the County.

4.8 The PSA working model, (including the training, recording, supervision and management elements) will also support the introduction of new arrangements for Traveller Education and Minority Ethnic Services and Enhanced Mainstream Schools for primary aged pupils with social, educational and learning difficulties, due to be introduced in Spring 2010.

4.9 Areas of greatest need within the County continue to receive support from Home School Support Workers, both in primary schools originally identified through Children's Fund mapping and secondary 'Challenge Schools' identified through DCSF figures for persistent absence. The deployment of support for these schools continues to be on the basis of this need but it is now intended to align future recruitment and training with PSA arrangements.

## **5.0 Parenting Programmes**

5.1 PSA's are ideally placed to support the roll out of parenting courses and in order to ensure that the PSA staff have the appropriate skills to work with parents. With that in mind, the second phase of their training has included the delivery of a range of parenting programmes, which have been influenced by local needs and preferences. These include:

- Positive Parenting
- Strengthening Families
- Family Links
- Mellow Parenting
- Solihull Approach

5.2 Support and supervision for PSA's involved in programme delivery is provided by the coordinators for the Parenting Expert and Parenting Early Intervention Programmes, funded until March 2011 through the national 'Think Family' initiatives.

5.3 Parenting programme delivery often involves staff from different disciplines and agencies, strengthening local multi-agency practice, influencing awareness and opening appropriate referral routes. An example of this would be the 'Strengthening Families 10 -14 Programmes' where partnerships have been forged with the NSPCC Family Support Centres in Scarborough and Catterick; the Integrated Youth Service (with Hubs in each of the 6 Integrated Service Areas); Youth Justice Service; the Independent Domestic Abuse Service; the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service; the U-Turn Project and the Youth Work Service.

Discussions are now underway regarding potential collaboration with Broadacres Housing Association's Tenancy Relations Co-ordinator and the

Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators as there is scope for referral to SF 10-14 to be written into Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs).

## **6.0 Supervision and Training**

6.1 PSA's continue to receive management support from head teachers or designated staff in their host setting, with professional supervision provided by the Education Social Work Service (ESWS). This balance ensures that their initial focus is on early intervention which helps to prevent issues from escalating into crises, reducing the number of referral occurring at a later stage, but recognising when family circumstances have become more serious and require a more urgent and complex response. Recent adjustments to the deployment of the ESW Service have been made to allow for the delivery of regular supervision by a Senior Education Social Worker, with additional support available from suitably qualified ESWs as required.

6.2 All PSAs have received a basic level of training which includes:

- An induction to working in North Yorkshire, familiarising them with both CYPS and their school/settings policies and procedures.
- Role specific training commissioned by the Training and Development Agency (TDA).
- CWDC generic modules for children's workforce practitioners.
- Additional modules on safeguarding practice

6.3 The original cohort of staff have completed the Support Work in Schools (SWiS) Parent Support level 3 qualification. A further qualification Working With Parents (WWP) level 3, which is broader and relates to working with parents in a less school and education specific way, is now also available.

## **7.0 Data Collection**

7.1 In order to establish what data was required to effectively evidence PSA impact and outcomes, a review of the main PSA role objectives was undertaken by the PSA Working Group and the Performance and Outcomes Team. Following on from this work, ten main objectives were identified within the PSA role:

- Build trusted relationships with parents, with particular focus on reaching the most vulnerable
- Give parents the confidence to gain the skills necessary to parent positively and provide access to information and support (i.e. signposting etc)
- Delivery of evidence-based parenting support through PSA involvement and services (i.e. parenting skills courses provision etc)
- Provision of targeted support for vulnerable and hard to reach groups, including preventative and early intervention working
- Increase the number of parents involved in their child's education, both at school and at home

- Work with parents to improve children's behaviour and attendance
- Identify and work with parents/school to enable children to overcome barriers to learning
- Improving levels of pastoral support in schools
- Promote multi-agency working through school and complex case-working
- Promote the emotional well-being of vulnerable children

7.2 To measure progress against these objectives and establish a clear PSA data set, these areas of work were matched against the National Indicator Set and the local priorities within the Children and Young People's Plan 2008-11. Details of existing monitoring arrangements (NYCC and PSA) were then matched to these, to identify potential gaps in data collection and confirm the final data requirements and points for data collection.

7.3 Following on from this work, a finalised PSA data set has been produced and a number of key performance indicators have been identified, which will allow future progress to be mapped and PSA impact to be evidenced effectively.

This will also allow the capture of Vulnerability Checklist codings and ensure that PSA involvement in the Common Assessment process is appropriately recorded.

7.4 By recording information contained within the new data set and, by capturing it in a standardised format, the proposed performance framework will allow PSA impact to be evidenced by area and/or county. This reporting will include:

- Number of cases open / closed / referred
- Number of PSA / Parent Agreement targets met
- Number of Parenting Programmes delivered / attended
- Maintenance of / change to Vulnerability Checklist case coding
- Type and level of need addressed by PSA involvement
- Levels of multi-agency / CAF / LP involvement by PSA
- Frequency / type of PSA activity and signposting work
- Levels of PSA training and workforce development
- Satisfaction levels of parent / child / professional

## **8.0 Summary**

8.1 Recommendations from the report of January 2009 have been progressed with improvements to:

1. Equity of access to the service across the County with all localities now included.

2. Training and development which now incorporates parenting programmes and adjustments in the core training to include Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) requirements.
3. Further targeted work being developed for Traveller and Minority Ethnic families and Enhanced Mainstream Primary Support Schools.
4. Greater consistency of processes and data collection within integrated services which will provide improved measurement of impact.