

Education Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 29 October 2019

Electoral Division affected: (All Divisions);
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Supporting Pupils at Special School with Medical Conditions: Task Group Update

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

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Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the progress made by the multi-agency Special Schools Nursing Task and Finish Group against the recommendations made by the Children's Scrutiny Committee in respect of special school nursing provision in Lancashire.

Recommendation

The Education Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the progress made to date against the recommendations and the proposed ongoing activity against the project plan;
2. Discuss and agree any feedback on the draft policy.

Background and Advice

In September 2017, the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee received a report on special school nursing which identified inconsistent provision across Lancashire. A task and finish group was established to review existing provision and findings were shared with the [Children's Services Scrutiny Committee in December 2018](#).

The main focus of the report was on:

1. The requirements of the Department for Education's statutory guidance "Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions" (2015, updated 2017) and the roles and responsibilities of education and health staff in supporting pupils to have their medical needs met;

2. The school nursing provision available in special schools, commissioned by Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and the universal Public Health-commissioned school nursing service through the 0-19 Healthy Child Programme.

The findings of the report were considered by the Committee and a series of recommendations for the county council, CCGs and the Integrated Care System (ICS) were made. The responses from the Cabinet Members for Children, Young People and Schools and Health and Wellbeing, along with the relevant NHS bodies, were considered by the Committee in February 2019.

A multi-agency Special Schools Nursing Task and Finish Group led by a Health Commissioner from Fylde Coast CCG was established with the remit of addressing the recommendations of the report. Governance is through the SEND Thematic Group 3: Access to Services.

This report provides an update on progress against all recommendations, with a particular focus on the two key areas identified above and outlines plans and timescales for ongoing activity.

Key themes

The task and finish group meets bi-monthly and works to a project plan which addresses all recommendations. The review identified 12 recommendations for the county council, 9 for CCGs and 2 for the ICS. Below, a detailed update is provided on the main recommendations:

Department for Education's statutory guidance and development of local policy and guidance

The main focus has been to develop:

- a) A draft county-wide policy for special schools to consistently implement the Department for Education's statutory guidance, collaborating with special schools both through the task and finish group and through the Lancashire Special School Headteachers' Association (LSSHTA);
- b) A draft multi-agency protocol to clarify the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of education and health professionals and parents/carers in supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, through defining what is deemed to be a basic care intervention and a medical/clinical intervention.

Following a review of the statutory guidance and best practice policies from other authorities, a working draft policy and guidance has been produced, including sample process flowcharts and a proposed suite of templates to support implementation of the policy. A key element of the work is agreeing the levels of interventions to be delivered by education and health staff, informed by national guidance such as from the Royal College of Nursing (RCN).

The draft policy and guidance (as at Appendix 'A') have been shared with all Lancashire special school heads and county council, and Health Commissioners

facilitated a workshop with representatives from LSSHTA and current providers on 9 October to address initial feedback on the draft policy and guidance, which will further inform its ongoing development. (Please note: the working draft of the policy and guidance is still being reviewed and drafted through stakeholder engagement; sign-off of this draft is therefore not requested at this stage).

A key output was the agreement in principle to define medical tasks/interventions in three tiers/levels in the policy:

1. Routine and easily acquired skills;
2. Tasks requiring training from health professionals which can be delegated to non-clinical staff;
3. More complex clinical procedures (to only be carried out by trained health professionals, as these carry a higher degree of risk).

A second collaborative provider and headteacher workshop and subsequent stakeholder workshops with school staff and with parents/carers will take place in the autumn, with the aim of having an agreed draft policy by early 2020. The policy will then require legal sign off.

Commissioned School Nursing Provision

A significant data gathering exercise was undertaken by the task and finish group via a questionnaire that went to all 39 special schools within the ICS; 33 of the schools responded.

The aim of the questionnaire was to baseline the following to identify commissioning requirements:

- Number of pupils within the school in need of medical support;
- Current provision/arrangements and frequency, e.g. school nurse, specialist clinics;
- Training level needs analysis;
- On-site facilities for delivering medical support.

This intelligence was then further enhanced through questionnaires to health providers and commissioners followed by a workshop in May 2019 to sense check the information collated, address gaps in data and identify key areas for future development.

Findings have highlighted that service specifications require updating, levels of commissioned provision (in terms of both frequency and availability) are based on historic data and not reflective of current demographics (i.e. pupil numbers per school) or the level of need within settings. Funding levels have broadly remained static and within the Lancashire geography, an unwarranted variation was identified in terms of funding and provision for one specific area; this has now been addressed, with investment secured.

Subsequent workshops with health providers, a representative group of head teachers, health commissioners and the local authority, have enabled a good shared understanding of current issues, a shared vision of what needs to be addressed and a commitment to working jointly across the system to develop provision with the aim being to achieve more equitable support to schools which is underpinned by need.

Review activity is now informing the ongoing development of a consistent service specification across the ICS footprint; the service specification and the policy are interdependent and the agreed policy will inform the requirements of the service specification. The specification will be co-produced with stakeholders and is expected that the first draft will be completed by January 2020; this will then be required to go through due process.

The review has also identified the need for consistent training programmes for health staff and education staff delivering support to pupils, which will support the successful delivery of the policy. This will be incorporated within the specification. Public Health are currently working with their provider of the 0-19 Healthy Child Programme contract to look at how universal nursing services can provide a needs based public health offer within special schools. Equally, the review of special school nursing provision is looking to include support from specialist provision to mainstream schools, where children with medical needs requiring specialist support are in attendance.

Progress update against all recommendations

The Special School Nursing Task and Finish project plan (as at Appendix 'B') outlines progress/outputs to date against all recommendations, the lead organisation, next steps, anticipated timescales and a RAG rating.

Consultations

There has not been a requirement for any formal consultation in the work undertaken to date, however, there has been stakeholder engagement.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Financial

No revenue or capital implications for the county council.

Legal

The Supporting Pupils in School with Medical Conditions policy and guidance will require legal sign off from the county council and will then be implemented in county council maintained special schools. Any impact on the county council's insurances will need to be considered as the policy is developed.

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

NA