

Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement

Meeting to be held on 17 January 2013

Electoral Division affected: All

Lancashire Early Intervention Strategy – Best Start Lancashire

(Appendix 'A' refers)

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Executive Summary

This report provides an update on progress of the Best Start Lancashire Project.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement is asked to note the report and comment as appropriate.

Background and Advice

Best Start Lancashire (BSL) is an initiative delivered through children's centres to provide additional early support for children and their families between the ages of 4 and 7 (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2). The resources (£2 million) to enable this innovative programme to be implemented in 2011/12 were created through stringent efficiencies. The County Council made a commitment allowing the programme to be continued in 2012/13 at the cost of a further £2 million with £1 million planned for 2013/14. It is anticipated that the DfE funded Pupil Premium for schools, targeted at pupils eligible for Free School Meals, will increase substantially over the next two years allowing schools to maintain the family support programmes from their own budgets in 2014/15.

The early support is targeted at children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). There were 6869 "eligible" pupils in the target year groups in Lancashire primary schools in 2011/12, in 2012/13 there are 7,363 FSM pupils; an increase of 494. Children's centres have been allocated £250 per FSM pupil as an additional resource to provide an increased early support offer for schools in their area.

Best Start Lancashire, is a key element of the directorate Early Support Strategy and recognises the importance of parental engagement in children's learning, alongside successful early support in schools. BSL uses evidence based strategies/interventions which improve educational achievement and deliver the key intended outcomes shown below.

Key intended outcomes for pupils eligible for free School Meals

- Improved attainment in speaking and listening and reading skills at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage in 2012 (41% good level of attainment) and Key Stage 1 (70% L2+ in reading).
- The above results to be in line with or above the national average in 2013
- Improved levels of attendance at school in Y1 and Y2 so that persistent absence is below 9.7% for Year 1 and below 9% for Year 2
- A reduction in referrals to children's social care that do not require the further involvement of social care services (no further action - NFA)

Progress towards actions identified in the review of the programme in April 2012

- **A continued focus on implementation improvement in particular where Red proformas are returned**
The Best Start team have followed up all Red RAG ratings and offered support to schools and children's centres as appropriate 24 Red RAGs were reduced to 7 through this intervention.
- **Collection and analysis of impact information – Summer Term 2012**
Self Evaluation proformas have been completed by schools and children's centres supported by school advisers and nominated officers. These focus on the impact on the identified outcomes
- **Deliver good practice workshops in districts – Summer Term 2012**
8 good practice workshops were held across the authority in September 2012, children's centres and schools presented at each event providing models of good practice.
- **Database of good practice available on the web site - Autumn term 2012**
In addition to the good practice events case studies of good practice have been collected and these have been uploaded to the best start web site www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/childcare
- **Develop year 2 delivery plans based on "what's worked" in year 1**
This was a main focus of the good practice events, and remains a key priority for the best start team in their contact with schools and children's centres

Impact Data 2012

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2012 - children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) 2012

The percentage of children that achieved a good level of development in Communication Language and Literacy Development and Personal Social and Emotional Development was 46.5% (2012 target 41%) which represents an increase of 6.5% on 2011.

The percentage of children that achieved a good level of development in reading was 63.1% which represents an increase of 6.5% on 2011.

The percentage of children that achieved a good level of development in 'language for communication and thinking' was 76.4% which represents an increase of 5.7% on 2011.

Year 1 Phonics screening check 2012 - children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)

47% of children eligible for free school meals were working at the required standard as measured by the new Year 1 phonics screening check – we have no yearly trend comparators for this data as this is a new measure from 2012 but this is above the national average of 44% for this group of pupils.

Key Stage 1 2012 – children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)

71% of pupils eligible for free school meals attained level 2C or above in reading (target 70%) an increase of 2% on 2011.

56% of pupils eligible for free schools meals attained level 2B or above in reading and increase of 1% on 2011.

Attendance

The attendance data will be available in the Spring term 2013.

Reduction in the proportion of referrals requiring no further action

The data for the full year for 2012 is not yet available but data from April to September 2012 indicates that the proportion of referrals leading to no further action during this period has reduced from around 30% in 2011 to 18%.

Performance monitoring

Self Evaluation proformas have been completed by schools and children's centres supported by school advisers and nominated officers. These focus on the impact on the identified outcomes. The initial returns indicate that around 44% of schools are judged green compared with 25% in March 2012, 54% are judged amber compared with 64% in March and around 2% compared with 11% are judged red.

To date, 152 school adviser proformas have been received (around 39% of schools) and 69 children's centre proformas have been received (87% of children's centres).

RAG Descriptor	RED Limited impact – support required	AMBER Some positive impact	GREEN Evidence of positive impact
School number (percentage)	4 (2%)	82 (54%)	66 (44%)
Children's centre number (percentage)	0	25	44

Red returns are followed up by a member of the Best Start Lancashire Team to facilitate progress, supported by the school adviser and children's centre nominated officers.

Amber returns will be monitored during the Spring term 2013 to check on progress.

Green returns will be monitored in the Spring term 2013 to check that progress is sustained.

Where schools have no FSM pupils therefore no funding children's centres are encouraged to meet with school to ensure links are made to increase school knowledge of where to access early support for families should the need arise.

Key Learning from Year 1 of Best Start Lancashire

Good practice events detailed that Best Start Lancashire has been successful, especially where...

- the children's centre and school work well together, developing a trusting relationship
- the focus of delivery remains on the needs of children and their families, it is aimed at empowering families and building their resilience
- there is clear leadership of key people in school and the children's centre that drive the work forward
- there is a jointly owned and regularly reviewed action plan
- the activity adds value to what is provided separately by school and children's centre

Examples of good practice are available in **(Appendix A refers)**

Next Steps Autumn 2012/Spring 2013

- Follow up all red self evaluation impact proformas to ensure that Best Start Lancashire is fully in place and having a positive impact on the target group
- Support action planning and evaluation with individual schools and children's centres
- Share the positive outcomes from year 1 through;
 - publications by The National College for School Leadership;
 - district children's trusts;
 - examples of good practice on the web site
 - a master class for school leaders hosted by a school and children's centre
 - corporate communications.
- Best Start practitioner training offer
 - Schools (speaking & listening, reading, mathematics repeats)
 - Children's Centres (helping parents to help their child in speaking & listening, reading, mathematics)
 - Joint (Solihull Approach)
- Consolidate learning from good practice in order to detail a Best Start Lancashire Core Offer moving through Year 2 and Year 3
- Evaluate the impact of Best Start on building resilience in a sample of families through a research project with UCLAN

District Children and Young People's Trusts

District Children and Young People's Trusts have been informed about Best Start Lancashire and reports on impact will be made to the Trusts in the Spring Term 2013. This information will be monitored by the District Trusts.

Consultations

This project has been agreed through discussion with headteachers and children's centre managers. Ongoing consultation exists through the District Children's Trusts, where members are asked to monitor its progress through a regular Best Start Lancashire agenda item.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

The Early Intervention/Support strategy underpins significant aspects of the transforming social care budget option (£3million out of a £6 million total). Failure to deliver on this strategy would impact on the achievement of the budget option.

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

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
Report to the Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement – 'Lancashire Early Intervention Strategy – Best Start Lancashire' http://council.lancashire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=176&MId=543&Ver=4	3 April 2012	Dave Gorman, Office of the Chief Executive, (01772) 534261
Report to the Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement – 'Lancashire Early Intervention Strategy – Best Start Lancashire' http://council.lancashire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=176&MId=540&Ver=4	24 November 2011	Dave Gorman, Office of the Chief Executive, (01772) 534261

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A