

**29 June 2017****Agenda Item: 3****Children's Trust Executive Sponsor: Dr Kate Allen****'A STOP SMOKING IN SCHOOLS' (ASSIST) SMOKING PREVENTION  
PROGRAMME****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update and share the progress and first year activity of the ASSIST programme commissioned by Public Health Nottinghamshire via the Nottinghamshire Children's Integrated Commissioning Hub (ICH), the Tobacco Control Team and provided by Nottinghamshire County Council Youth Service.

**Information and Advice**

2.
  - ASSIST is a three year programme that commenced January 2016.
  - The programme is currently in its second year
  - The total contract value is £450,000

**Background**

3. Around 10 million adults smoke in the UK, treating smoking related illnesses costs the National Health Service around £2.7 billion every year and causes nearly 20% of deaths in England. Children who start smoking before the age of 16 are twice as likely to continue as adults compared to those who take up the habit later.
4. In Nottinghamshire around 17.5% of adults smoke (an estimated 111,496 people). This figure masks local variation where in some parts of the county this can range from 10.2% to 22.6%. In Nottinghamshire an estimated 2,500 children take up smoking each year and approximately 5.3% of children age 15 are regular smokers, this is in line with the regional figure (5.3%) and slightly less than the England figure (5.5%).
5. The ASSIST Programme has been evaluated by a randomised controlled trial funded by the Medical Research Council. The trial found the programme to be effective in reducing smoking prevalence over a two year period of follow-up, with the trial results published in The Lancet. If implemented throughout the UK, it is estimated that it would prevent 20,000 young people taking up smoking each year.

## **The Programme**

### **Aim**

6. To reduce adolescent smoking prevalence in Nottinghamshire by encouraging new norms of smoking behaviour by training influential Year 8 students in mainstream secondary schools to work as 'Peer Supporters' and to contribute to tackling inequalities in health through promoting and supporting the benefits of being smoke free.

### **Delivery**

7. ASSIST is a targeted smoking prevention programme delivered to secondary schools in Nottinghamshire and aims to reduce adolescent smoking prevalence. The programme is led by a co-ordinator and a team of trainers who deliver the training to schools that participate.
8. Internationally and in the UK no other schools-based smoking prevention programme has been found to be as effective in such a rigorously conducted large scale randomised trial. The costs and benefits of the intervention fall within the range of previously reported school-based interventions to prevent the uptake of smoking.
9. DECIPHer IMPACT (the organisation with overall responsibility for the programme) provides the necessary ASSIST training, support, advice, resources and quality assurance to set up and deliver effectively. It also provides ongoing events and updates to the programme.
10. All Year 8 peer supporters are asked to fill in a questionnaire at the beginning of the programme, and by analysing the results of the questionnaire the training team will identify which Year 8s are the most influential in the year group and 18% of them become peer supporters. Peer supporters go on to have conversations with other Year 8s about the risks of smoking and the benefits of being smoke-free. The young people are required to fill out a diary of what conversations they have had.

### **Programme Update**

11. To date 12 trainers have been recruited and the DECIPHer IMPACT ASSIST training has been delivered to all. Recruitment and training is something that is always being monitored and reviewed depending on need.
12. The coordinator and trainers have further accessed additional training around e-cigarettes/vaping and shisha use to address the increasing prevalence of these methods of tobacco use.
13. The target to work in four schools in Year 1 has been exceeded and the programme has been delivered to a total of six schools. Although a target list has been allocated the order of the schools that have been approached has varied due to the challenges faced in engaging schools to participate. Currently for Year 2 the programme has been delivered to six schools with

further schools engaged with the aim of working with them before the end of the academic year. The summer period is then used as an 'engagement/promotion' time to schedule schools for the new academic year.

14. The coordinator has a close relationship with DECIPHer IMPACT for guidance and support and is working collaboratively with partners and associates including local Councillors and Public Health colleagues. The coordinator has also built up a strong network with colleagues delivering the ASSIST programme in other areas such as Luton and has attended the annual DECIPHer conference to share best practice and help make improvements to the delivery of the programme. In addition to this an 'ASSIST coaches meeting' was organised by the coordinator with the aim of sharing best practice, quality assurance (QA) feedback and ideas about training development. It also gave the opportunity for coaches to share concerns, forward plan and ask questions. As a result constructive feedback was collated to further improve the delivery of the programme and to also feedback to DECIPHer.
15. DECIPHer Impact carried out a QA observation visit as is protocol for the first twelve months of the programme. The visit took place on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and the team received an 'Excellent' rating for their first year. The team were complimented on some of the 'best behaviour management tactics and strategies' being used.
16. The co-ordinator has further developed several resources and tools outside the given DECIPHer protocol. A sticker incentive reward system was introduced to encourage the completion and return of 'conversation' diaries by the peer supporters. Also a trainer evaluation form has been developed to capture feedback on quality and address any gaps that may be highlighted.
17. Once schools are committed to the programme there have been no issues taking students out of school for the two days of training and ASSIST trainers, teaching staff and students work well together. This may be because it is a 'win-win' situation all round with a democratic selection process of students which boosts confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy. There is little additional input required from teaching staff and it is looked on favourably by OFSTED.
18. **Table 1:** details of the schools the programme has been delivered in to date and the number of pupils trained.

<b>Year 1 (2016)</b>		
<b>School</b>	<b>Number of pupils trained</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Sutton Academy	20	February 2016
Brunts Academy	42	May 2016
Holgate Academy	27	May 2016
Kirkby College	16	May 2016
Holgate Academy	27	September 2016
Ashfield School	68	November 2016
<b>Year 2 (Completed to date)</b>		

School	Number of pupils trained	Completed
Kirkby College	16	January 2017
Quarrydale Academy	33	February 2017
Meden School	22	February 2017
Manor Academy	28	March 2017
Sutton Academy	20	May 2017
Serlby Park Academy	14	May 2017

19. Below are a selection of comments from pupils' experiences of the programme:

'I have become more confident'

'Something I learned about myself from working on this course is that I am never going to smoke'

'Something I learned about myself from working on this course is that I am influential'

'I learnt to be more aware of people around me and to be supportive of everyone's ideas and opinions'

'It is fun and you learn things at the same time'

'My main achievement during the training course was learning all the facts and talking to people I wouldn't normally talk to at school'

'It may seem difficult at the start but I enjoyed it in the end. The best part was the training days so make sure you enjoy it!'

20. Below are a selection of comments from teachers' experiences of the programme:

'It's great to spend time with students that I wouldn't normally have much interaction with'

'I've seen a different side to some pupils and some have surprised me'

'The students were very engaged and really enjoyed the training. The day was well structured and the students enjoyed each activity. It was good to have experienced trainers who could spot if students were disengaging and could adjust and adapt the activity to suit the groups. The staff really enjoyed the day too and were very positive about all the session!'

'Thank you all for this course, I have passed on your positive feedback for us to our head, next year's Head of Year 8 and the other staff who have helped with the course. It has been something that has been really worth committing to and hopefully we will see a positive impact.'

## RECOMMENDATION

1) The Children's Trust Executive notes the first year development and progress of the ASSIST programme and agrees to continue to promote and support it.

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Tina Bhundia  
Children's Integrated Commissioning Hub and Public Health Nottinghamshire  
Nottinghamshire County Council  
County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP  
0115 9772373  
tina.bhundia@nottsc.gov.uk

**Background Papers**

1. Report to the Public Health Committee 12 May 2015, Report of the Director of Public Health: Developing a Schools Health Hub
2. Report to the Children's Trust Executive 15 July 2016, An Update Report: 'A Stop Smoking in Schools' (ASSIST) Smoking Prevention Programme
3. DECIPHer IMPACT ASSIST (<http://www.decipher-impact.com/about-us/>)

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.