

Tackling Emerging Threats to Children

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the proposed use of the three-year temporary funding of £1.2m from the Schools Budget Reserve. This funding was provisionally allocated in order to support schools to identify and tackle a wide range of underlying vulnerabilities and threats to children.
- 1.2 The report will provide further detail around the proposals for universal, targeted, specialist and recovery support for schools, children and their families.

2. Context

- 2.1 In June 2015, a report was brought to the Schools Forum to request funding from the Schools Budget Reserve, in order to support schools to safeguard children against a broad range of emerging threats. These threats include the risks children face from Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), grooming and radicalisation, as well as associated internet safety concerns.
- 2.2 Evidence shows that abuse and exploitation of children and young people is increasing, particularly through the use of the internet and social media. In particular, concerns around Child Sexual Exploitation and radicalisation have become increasingly prevalent in the media, following several high profile cases and local inquiries which have emphasised the scale of the problem.
- 2.3 It is therefore crucial that the County Council and schools ensure that they are responding effectively to these threats in order to reassure the public and promote the safety and well-being of children and young people in Nottinghamshire.
- 2.4 In addition, the County Council and schools must respond effectively to their statutory obligations in relation to child protection issues. For schools, the revised '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' guidance from the Department of Education outlines the safeguarding duties that all schools and colleges must comply with. Read alongside Ofsted's new documentation around safeguarding and the recent imposition of the Prevent duty on schools and childcare providers, it is essential that schools have the appropriate capabilities and knowledge to recognise, and take action against, these threats to children.
- 2.5 In order to support schools, the County Council has developed proposals for tiers of support to tackle such threats. These proposals have been produced in light of ongoing activity within the Authority, as well as commissioning opportunities available, in order to provide a coordinated and integrated approach to support.

3. Partnership Approach

- 3.1 The County Council is mindful that there are many other activities underway within schools and the Local Authority that must be aligned with the proposals set out herein, in order to develop a coordinated approach to safeguarding. Therefore, links with these ongoing activities and their respective funding streams will be made where appropriate.
- 3.2 For example, the Home Office has released funding in recent weeks to Local Authorities for the delivery of their obligations under the Prevent Duty. This funding equates to a grant of £10,000 for each of the seven Nottinghamshire districts, the City Council and the County Council. While still in the approvals process, there is a current proposal in place for these grants to be pooled to appoint a Prevent co-ordinator/s to work across the City and County to manage activity.
- 3.3 In addition, there are many initiatives already underway in Nottinghamshire which link to the support offers within this report, including;
- Take Five Programme – the new national pilot which helps children and young people feel calmer, more focused and more in control
 - Extension of NCCL Galleries of Justice's '*I Pledge to Keep on Track*' youth crime prevention programme to tackle cyber-bullying and online grooming
 - Participation of some Nottinghamshire schools in Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month
- 3.4 There is also an opportunity for alignment with the Schools Health Hub, which is to be commissioned by the Children's Integrated Commissioning Hub (ICH) by means of Public Health funding (£200k). The aim of the new Schools Health Hub is to improve health and educational outcomes through advice, guidance and information for schools in relation to health promotion based services.

4. Universal Support Offer

- 4.1 There is increasing consensus from schools and other education providers that a single, unified package of universal support, in relation to a broad range of threats, would be the most beneficial option to ensure robust support for children. Such universal support can be provided in relation to threats including:
- Child Sexual Exploitation
 - Radicalisation and extremism
 - Grooming, sexualised chat and indecent images
 - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage
 - Cyber-bullying
 - Internet safety in relation to the issues above, as well as associated forums and chat-rooms that encourage harmful behaviours
- 4.2 It is therefore proposed that £375k of the £1.2m funding from the Schools Budget Reserve is allocated over the next three years to provide a single package of Universal Support to schools in relation to these threats.
- 4.3 As part of this package, a resource will be provided to schools to offer support and training to teaching staff. This includes support to develop the curriculum for all Key

Stages, raising awareness among staff of the issues being addressed and offering consistent advice and guidance, to ensure that schools are effectively equipped to identify these threats early on. At present, options are being explored as to whether this resource will be commissioned or directly delivered by the County Council.

- 4.4 To supplement this, an accessible, online learning platform for universal services will be offered to schools, to provide up-to-date guidance materials, evaluated resources and 'best practice' in relation to the threats outlined above. Through this central platform, schools can be assured that the correct resources and reference materials are available to meet the safeguarding demands of the new Ofsted framework.
- 4.5 The Digital Team at the County Council are currently replacing the existing *Wired* platform for schools with a new *Nottinghamshire Schools Portal* from September 2015. There is an opportunity for us to work alongside colleagues to utilise this platform to ensure that a single, accessible hub of resources and information can be used by schools.
- 4.6 In 2014/15, 7,300 pupils and 619 professionals, parents and carers attended 'LUVU2' performances by the Pintsize Theatre Company, which aim to engage and educate young people and their families about Child Sexual Exploitation. In light of its success, it is proposed that these theatre tours are re-commissioned over the next three years as part of the Universal Support package.
- 4.7 It is also proposed that a nationally knowledgeable 'critical friend' is commissioned to join the established Universal Support Working Group to map, analyse and align existing activity, evaluate the effectiveness of such practice and highlight gaps in provision. The aim of this exercise is to build on ongoing activity, rather than replace it, whilst providing appropriate challenge, scrutiny and strategic direction.
- 4.8 The Universal Support Working Group will commission 'consultation workshops' with a range of identified stakeholder groups, including PVI settings, colleges, pupil groups and parent groups over the three years, facilitated by the 'Critical Friend'. This will give the relevant stakeholder groups the opportunity to draw attention to developing threats and identify necessary support requirements.
- 4.9 As work progresses, it will become clearer where there are areas which require the commissioning of training and resources to supplement existing good practice. It is widely agreed that the Universal Support package needs to be sustainable and resilient to ensure that the content is maintained for years to come, whilst also being flexible for future emerging threats.
- 4.10 The breakdown of funding from the Schools Budget Reserve for Universal Support can be found in **Appendix A**.

5. Targeted and Early Help Support Offer

- 5.1 Schools and other universal settings regularly inform the County Council that support regarding a range of early help concerns is valued and allows staff to better support their pupils.

- 5.2 In response to this, it is proposed that £375k of funding from the Schools Budget Reserve is used over the next three years to appoint three Tier Two Development Workers, who will support schools when concerns about a child first emerge.
- 5.3 These three new Development Workers will sit alongside three *existing* Tier Two Development Worker posts, which are currently being appointed into the new Family Service. The six workers will then be spread evenly over Nottinghamshire's three localities:
- Bassetlaw and Newark & Sherwood
 - Mansfield and Ashfield
 - Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe
- 5.4 These six Development Workers will dedicate their time to:
- Helping schools to access the right support and referral routes, particularly where children and young people do not meet sufficient thresholds
 - Supporting schools to implement their own intervention strategies
 - Acting as a conduit between schools and other professional networks
 - Promoting an understanding of risks and vulnerabilities that children may face
 - Helping to move “stuck” cases forward and advising when a “Complex Case Resolution Meeting” might be appropriate
- 5.5 These Development Workers will also help to promote intelligence-sharing in relation to child sexual exploitation, through Nottinghamshire Police's “Operation Striver” forms. By partaking in the existing multi-agency CSE Concerns Network meetings and hotspot meetings, these workers will have a significant role to play in information-sharing, data assessment and resource allocation.
- 5.6 As recruitment activity is already underway in preparation for the commencement of the Family Service on 1st November 2015, it is likely that these newly funded posts can commence activity within the coming months.
- 5.7 The breakdown of funding from the Schools Budget Reserve for Targeted Support can be found in **Appendix A**.

6. Specialist Support Offer

- 6.1 In 2014/15 alone, 269 individual children in Nottinghamshire were identified as being either at risk of CSE, or were victims of sexual exploitation. It is therefore crucial to ensure that such exploitative activity towards children can be effectively investigated and disrupted, and offenders are effectively prosecuted.
- 6.2 Currently, the NSPCC and Barnardos provide preventative and therapeutic support for children affected by CSE through one full-time Barnardos professional, but this service is due to expire in June 2016.
- 6.3 It is therefore proposed that £450k of the Schools Budget Reserve funding is utilised to commission an enhanced service for child sexual exploitation over the next 3 years, in the form of three Specialist Support Workers. These workers will focus their activity on children who have been subjected to, or are at risk of, sexual exploitation.

- 6.4 These Specialist Support Workers will be commissioned to respond to demand across the County. They will dedicate their time to:
- Offering one-to-one therapeutic support to children and their families affected by child sexual exploitation
 - Minimally contributing to the training and support of social care staff, education and health professionals
 - Contributing to the existing Multi-Agency CSE Concerns Network
 - Offering a critical friend (support and challenge) role
 - Supporting children to make disclosures to Nottinghamshire Police
 - Working closely with Nottinghamshire Police to guide children and young people through the criminal proceedings process
 - Linking with existing services and aligning with the Universal, Targeted and Recovery workstreams
- 6.5 It is recognised amongst professionals that children subjected to, or at risk of, CSE are likely to have poor educational outcomes, poor attainment, detachment issues and behavioural difficulties. Through this Specialist Support Offer, schools can feel assured that mechanisms are in place to:
- Help to identify risks to children and young people earlier, before such academic, attainment and behavioural issues develop
 - Provide earlier and better support to schools who have specific concerns regarding CSE
 - Offer opportunities to discuss concerns and themes across agencies
- 6.6 The breakdown of funding from the Schools Budget Reserve for Specialist Support can be found in **Appendix A**.

7. Recovery Support Offer

- 7.1 The purpose of Recovery Support is to ensure that appropriate health and therapeutic support is offered to children who are victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse activities. This includes the child's mental, emotional and sexual health.
- 7.2 Given the nature of such support to children and young people, it is felt that the funding for this workstream is the responsibility of the NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). Therefore, the proposals within this area of activity will not utilise funding from the Schools Budget Reserve, but are detailed in this report to alert schools to the wider scope of safeguarding and support available to children and young people.
- 7.3 Through collaboration with CCGs, the County Council will plan and commission the appropriate therapeutic support for victims of child sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse. Inquiries into a list of evidence-based interventions will be made as part of the therapeutic support offer, to ensure the support given to victims is the most appropriate and beneficial for their needs and long-term recovery.
- 7.4 Part of this work will also involve scoping the appropriate response to historical sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as for children and young people who are at high risk of, but have not yet been, victims of sexual exploitation.

7.5 Access to such recovery support will be through a graduated response through the appropriate pathways, whilst maintaining the appropriate interfaces with the universal, targeted and specialist workstreams. By ensuring synergy between all four tiers of support, schools can be confident that there is coordinated activity at all stages of a child's journey, from identification to protection to treatment.

8. Summary

8.1 This report details the proposals for Universal, Targeted and Specialist Support to be funded by the £1.2m from the Schools Budget Reserve, over the next three years, in relation to:

- The provision of a single, unified Universal Support package, including
 - Training and support to teaching staff;
 - Development of an online platform for resources and guidance materials;
 - Re-commissioning of the Pintsize Theatre productions in relation to CSE;
 - Commissioning of a critical friend to map existing practice, consult with key stakeholders and highlight gaps in provision
- The appointment of three additional Tier Two Development Workers within the County Council, to deliver targeted support to schools, children and families where concerns about a child first arise
- The commissioning of three Specialist Support Workers to help to protect children from child sexual exploitation and support the investigation and disruption of activity

8.2 The breakdown of costs per year for the Universal, Targeted and Specialist Workstreams can be found in **Appendix A**.

8.3 Whilst the Recovery Support Offer will not be funded by the Schools Budget Reserve, further proposals have been developed to offer therapeutic support to current and historic victims of Child Sexual Exploitation and sexual abuse. This workstream will work in synergy with the other three workstreams in order to provide a comprehensive system of support for children and young people.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1. The Schools Forum approve the use of the three-year temporary funding of £1.2m from the Schools Budget Reserve, in relation to the Universal, Targeted and Specialist support offers detailed in this report
2. The Schools Forum identify the regularity by which detail and progress from the four workstreams is to be reported

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