

Wiltshire Council

Children's Services Select Committee 29 November 2012

The Future Development of the Young People's Support Service (YPSS)

Purpose of Report

1. This is an update report as requested by the Children's Services Select Committee in March 2012. This report contains the latest information on Wiltshire's development of the Department for Education's (DfE) Power to Innovate (PTI) and the development of the provision for those young people who were permanently excluded from their mainstream secondary school prior to the start of the PTI trial in May 2012. The closure of the Young People's Support Service (YPSS) in August 2012 followed the Cabinet decision in November 2011.

Background

2. YPSS was placed in Special Measures in May 2011 by an Ofsted inspection and a decision to seek closure from the Secretary of State was submitted in January 2012. Agreement was reached in March 2012 and the YPSS service was closed from August 2012. A number of young people (28) remain the responsibility of the local authority as their permanent exclusions took place before the PTI came into force. Their provision is currently being organised by the Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) team through the two previous YPSS facilities, namely the Trinity Centre in Trowbridge and the John Ivie Centre in Salisbury.
3. The EOTAS provision for the retained young people is a closed service. There are no new referrals from secondary schools as the PTI has enabled schools to take full responsibility for the provision for those young people who would previously have been excluded and become the responsibility of the local authority.
4. Three former teachers from the YPSS service have been employed with six support workers and an outdoor specialist support worker. These staff have had their redundancies deferred for a year until August 2013. The service will then close completely in August 2013.
5. If the Government do not legislate for schools to continue to take responsibility for those they would previously have excluded, and schools themselves do not wish to retain their responsibilities then the local authority will revert to its

responsibility for excluded young people. At this point arrangements will be made to commission and procure, the range of personalised learning provision that currently exists.

6. The retained EOTAS service is due to receive a monitoring visit by OfSTED. The previous three visits have noted the progress that was being made by the service and satisfactory judgements were made. However the new OfSTED framework places greater emphasis on teaching and learning and the progress made by young people as well as the personalised learning packages that are in place.
7. The EOTAS service has made good efforts to maintain the progress set from the three previous visits. Attendance of young people at both Centres has improved. Teaching is more focused and learning more tailored to individual needs. Resources have been consolidated and used more effectively in learning particularly the use of technologies such as interactive white boards.
8. In relation to the provision made by schools to personalised learning (alternative provision, that has become their responsibility, the LA has established an accredited framework of alternative providers following an application and detailed scrutiny process. There are 34 private providers accredited on the current framework and the LA is currently in the process of a second round of applications that will be completed in the new year with additional providers expressing interest and being added. Schools in the North and West (federations) of the local authority decided at an early stage to utilise the money delegated to them individually. They use their finances to enhance preventative work through approaches such as, additional learning mentors or have on-site and/or off-site facilities which are specifically adapted to meet their young people's needs. Schools in the south of the local authority (Wessex federation) decided to pool their finances and purchase places through an organisation known as CfBT. CfBT have facilities in other local authorities such as Bristol and Bath and North East Somerset and educated young people with their own staff. They currently share half of the John Ivie Centre premises in Salisbury for young people on personalised learning packages. Our own EOTAS service utilises the other half for those young people we have retained.
9. Service Level Agreements for the use of the devolved finances have been signed by schools and focus on finances being used exclusively for those they identify as being in need of a personalised learning package. Two schools in particular are using the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) questionnaire to identify young people at a very early stage and put into place a range of approaches to ensure preventative work is in place. The NFER questionnaire has been designed alongside the DfE PTI to help evaluate the effects on young people, their parents/carers and schools and to report back to ministers on the trial.

10. A third meeting for those organisations providing personalised learning packages or Alternative Provision (AP) who are in our published catalogue of providers was held in October 2012 with presentations from schools. We have around 34 organisations who have signed up to our accreditation register. A further meeting is planned for February/March 2013

11. Although schools themselves have the responsibility for assuring the quality of any in-house provision and any external providers that they commission, the EOTAS team also monitor provision and make visits to sample the quality of provision being delivered by Alternative Providers.

Recommendations

To note the update report.

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Appendices

Appendix A Provision for young people retained in the EOTAS Service.