

Torbay Schools Forum
Challenging Behaviour Project Update
February 2017

Introduction

The Torbay Schools Forum (TSF) agreed to allocate £400,000 a year for three years to invest in a project to improve outcomes for vulnerable children with the expectation that this would also lead to cost savings with fewer children needing to use expensive out of county provision. Initial research led to a focus on two specific areas:

- Challenging behaviour
- Autism

Two task and finish groups of headteachers and others were established and their plans agreed by TSF in June 2015 with the projects commencing September 2015. An overall steering group and two implementation groups were established with £150,000 per annum allocated to each implementation group.

Actions

The steering group (chaired by Roger Hughes who chairs Torbay Schools' Forum and TAPS) provides the link between the implementation groups and the TSF and monitors and provides oversight for the overall project. Work includes:

- supporting a pilot for 'Stitch (in time)' which is an early intervention multi-therapeutic and intensive approach to working with very young children and their families where there are significant concerns about behaviour. It is intended that the pilot will take place after Easter in 2017.
- analysis of case studies, out of county placements and other information in order to inform future actions;
- developing ways in which the effectiveness of investment in these matters can be assessed;
- supporting the introduction of a head of service for vulnerable learners. The main purpose of the role will be to find ways of supporting children and young people who do not have SEND so that they are not excluded from school or placed in out of county provision. Part of this is the development of alternative provision in Torbay;
- establishing greater accountability for managing the exclusion process.

The Challenging Behaviour Implementation Group (chaired by Adam Morris of Watcombe Primary) has agreed an action plan the main points of which are:

- exploring how potential problems are identified in very young children, what steps are taken and how information is passed on. This is a multi-agency approach linked to early help and improved communications between health and education services;
- Implementing and monitoring effects of intense outreach provision from Chestnut; two staff have been appointed and are providing full time intervention with the child, family and school where there are extreme concerns about behaviour of primary aged children who are highly likely to be excluded from school;
- investing in a network (training, supervision and good practice) of FSWs to improve provision and impact;
- the network of behaviour leads from secondary schools are sharing good practice; investigating joint training with the intention of introducing good behaviour champions in each school; developing a joint commissioning approach to develop and quality assure providers of alternative provision to make sure that there is good value; training support assistants in emotional literacy to support the most volatile students; and informing the development of the assessment service.

If you would like further information or would like to get involved please contact the relevant chair.