

Torbay Education Safeguarding Service (TESS)  
Progress Report to Schools Forum – February 2016

1. Purpose of report.

The purpose of the report is to provide an overview and summary of progress and developments to the Schools Forum since the last report produced in February 2016.

2. Development of service –staffing.

Unfortunately, Hayley Mason left her position as TESS social worker in July 2016 in order to return to statutory social work. A recruitment exercise in the summer holidays proved disappointing with only one of two applicants being eligible for interview and then proving unsuitable for the post. There are plans to re-advertise through Devon Jobs and also to be included in a national advertising campaign about to be undertaken by Torbay County Council.

3. Review of TESS.

The TESS review proved to be very successful. Although there were a few points to be listened to, such as the fact staff are unavailable due to the amount of meetings they are required to attend, and the request to consider occasionally using other sites as a base, overall schools confirmed that they found the service to be extremely useful. Having worked so hard to develop the service it was extremely rewarding to find that all of the schools in Torbay along with Children's Services acknowledged the success so far and were willing to commit funds to expand and extend the service.

4. MASH/Children's Services.

It is likely that there will be a move away from physical MASH meetings for *some* referrals, to virtual MASH meetings for *all* referrals. This will place increasing demands on schools to supply quality information at short notice, however, the value of this information cannot be overstated and hopefully schools will be able to respond to these requests. As a direct result of the quality of information provided by schools for MASH meetings TESS are now asked to contact schools for information for initial strategy discussions. These occur when a referral is received that indicates a child may have experienced, or may be at risk from, significant harm. Again, the quality of the information and the knowledge of the child and family can significantly influence the outcome of the meeting.

5. Conversion rates.

A detailed analysis of all referrals from schools between September and November 2015 has previously been submitted indicating that most referrals from schools are appropriate. Unfortunately such detailed analysis of a further period of referrals has not been possible as the data team at Children's Services are busy providing data for the post Ofsted Improvement Plan. As soon as new data becomes available a further detailed analysis will follow.

6. Contacts from schools.

From September 2015 – July 2016 TESS had a total of 2108 contacts with schools. This was an increase of 275 from the previous year with an average of 191 contacts per month, peaking in June with 280 contacts. Based on 2014/15 figures we made significant inroads with 13 schools and for reasons yet to be established significantly reduced the number of contacts with 2 schools. Only 8 schools have made less than 20 contacts with TESS and these are the same schools as in 2014/15. This analysis does not take into account school population or socio economic indicators, however, we would still like to increase the level of contacts with those schools. During 2015/16 a total number of 234 visits were made to schools, with only one school not having been visited. This school will be on the top of the list of schools to visit during 2016/17

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