

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW ON SUPPORT TO YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

29 JANUARY 2009

Councillors * Alexander (Chair), and *Allison. *Ms Baker and Ms Amin

* Members present

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none received.

2. URGENT BUSINESS

There was none

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

5. SCOPE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF REVIEW

It was reported that to date it had not been possible to secure a non voting co-opted Head teacher onto the Panel.

There was some discussion around the risks to young people who may be affected by parents who took drugs or were alcoholics. The Panel agreed that this was a serious issue which could lead to neglect and therefore was a child protection issue. Consequently it would not be specifically considered as part of this review.

RESOLVED

That the Scrutiny Support Officer write formerly to the Secondary Heads Association and to the Head of the Pupil Support Centre inviting them to attend the next meeting.

6. EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DRUGS AND ALCOHOL PROBLEMS

Consideration was given to what is currently done by the Council and its Partners to identify young people at risk and to the assessment procedures. Key issues which came out of the meeting were:

- Acceptance that the services were not good at identifying young people at risk and that as a consequence they were not being signposted for treatment early.
- There was a low referral rate from GP's with only 2 referrals to 'Involve' in the last year. Noted that the PCT were currently

engaged in raising GP's awareness of the various services available.

- There was a need to obtain information on the prevalence of substance abuse by young people nationally so that the expected number of such young people in Haringey could be calculated and benchmarked against other Authorities to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- It was suggested that the assessment tools use were standard tools used across Authorities.
- Accepted that services needed to be provided across the Borough and accessible to all young people. There was a need for greater publicity of 'Involve'
- Smoking at an early age should be seen as an early indication of possible risk.
- Suggested that schools with a high rate of truancy should be targeted for early intervention and that pupils in Year 6 and 7 were more vulnerable to peer pressure.
- Officers did not consider that there was duplication of services but there were gaps in training a wider range of staff.
- Whilst CAF was one of the routes used by schools they could also refer direct to specialist agencies.
- CAF was used by all universal settings i.e. schools, health visitors and family support workers. It was important that they had all received the appropriate training.
- Officers did not think that there were any delays in providing treatment.

RESOLVED:

1. That the next meeting receive reports on:-
 - Details of how effective the current treatment programmes are
 - Information on the early identification available in schools and any problems that they perceive, including the individual roles of the staff in schools who undertake assessments of children and young people who may be at risk of substance misuse and identify any training needs that they may have.
 - Size of problem and capacity to respond.
 - More details on Pathways to be provided.
2. That officers examine the CAFs that were referred to the substance misuse worker alongside a small selection of those referred by the CAF Panel to On Track; Behaviour Support; Children & Families Services or Family Support and a random sample of SASSI forms completed in the academic year September 2007 to August 2008.
3. That with regard to training:-
 - (a) future CAF training sessions include the early identification of substance misuse by children and young people, and the Youth

Justice Board guidance on the use of appropriate ASSET and SASSI information when completing the CAF be considered for inclusion in the CAF training process.

- (b) That each agency ensure that the main assessment tools are inclusive of substance misuse and that all relevant staff are trained in the assessment tool and have local knowledge of available resources, and a rolling programme of borough-wide training in assessment of vulnerable young people and substance misuse be coordinated by the Head of Workforce Development in the Children and Young People's Service linking with the TPCT training staff.
- (c) That relevant social workers and other professionals working with children and young people are (re) trained in substance misuse matters, e.g. How to identify substance misuse, dangers of substance misuse, brief interventions, referral routes to specialist services and the role of the Core Assessment in these processes.
- (d) That DUST should be promoted for use by social workers in all relevant Children & Young People's teams, including those working with parents misusing alcohol and drugs and the relationship between the Initial and Care Assessments and the DUST should be included in the basic substance misuse awareness training for social workers.