



**Agenda Item
8**

Report Status

For information/note X
For consultation & views
For decision X

Report to Haringey Schools Forum – Thursday 14th January 2016

Report Title: Early Help Service DSG funding proposal

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- 1. Purpose: To report on progress and impact on the Early Help Locality Model**
- 2. To present a proposal to members for continued DSG funding as a contribution to the Early Help Service provision.**

Recommendations:

- 1. We recommend that the Forum endorse the proposed DSG funding request for 20-16/17.**
- 2. We recommend that members note the impact and progress made since the establishment of the Early help Locality Model**

1. Report

1.1 Introduction and background

1.1 This paper provides Schools Forum with an update on the implementation and delivery model for the council's Early Help service. It also gives early details of evidence of impact and anticipated future benefits of the Locality Model to embed a more collaborative and broader-based early help approach in Haringey. The Locality model for Early Help was introduced on 5th October 2015. It has been noted at previous School Forum meetings that the scale and complexity of the vision for Early Help and that the impact of its introduction will need to be measured over time.

“Evidence from Ofsted’s single inspections of local authorities and from this thematic inspection shows clearly that the offer of help to families when concerns first arise is increasingly prioritised by local authorities and their partners. As a result, more children are benefiting from better focused and coordinated support earlier. Early help workers increasingly feel part of professional networks and therefore are less isolated and more supported”. (Ofsted. ‘Early Help - Whose Responsibility?’ 2015)

1.2 In Haringey, family support services have over recent years been aligned with social care supporting the CYPS focus on those children and families where statutory social care intervention was appropriate using the LSCB Threshold of Needs Guidance, this reflects at Tiers 3 and 4. As a result, the direct impact seen by schools of the DSG funding allocated annually for family support was often indistinguishable from the support provided by Children’s Social Care casework and CP plans. This approach appears not to have enabled adequate resource and the intensity of family support required by schools to meet their needs and those of the children and families they work with who do not met statutory thresholds, on an ongoing basis.

1.3 Recognising that existing structures and historic deployment of resource were not meeting the needs of schools and universal providers, Early Help provision is now directly focussed on earlier intervention, responding to children and families assessed as in need of ‘pre-statutory’ or Tier 2 support. As part of a collaborative range of early help provision the introduction of locality teams, this approach aims to improve outcomes for children, young people and families by intervening earlier and crucially, in a far more joined up way. We have a clear commitment to preventing escalation through earlier intervention to enable families, children and young people to become more resilient and self-reliant, reducing both the immediate and long-term demand for specialist services and negative long-term outcomes.

2. Proposal for Schools Forum

2.1 In the context of Haringey’s Early Help strategy which sets out the vision and aims of effective early help partnership working, it is requested that Schools Forum continues to agree to the combined allocation of £1.35m from the Schools and High Needs Blocks, to support the Early Help Service. These funds will continue to be used solely for front-line, case working staff within the Early Help service, which equates to 30-32 staff.

2.2 Our approach and structure now enables access to a consistent and responsive, whole family support service via the CYPs Single Point of Access (SPA). Schools are at the heart of the early help model as a universal service accessible to all children and families in the borough. This consistent, borough wide additional early help provision part-funded by DSG, provides three locality teams focussed on supportive and collaborative working. It offers greater efficiencies and consistency as a single service, but which has the imagination, will and capacity to maximise our collective resource and deliver improved outcomes to families who would otherwise frequently escalate into long-term statutory intervention.

3 Funding, structure and development.

3.1 The wider Early Help Service is funded from three main sources:

- DSG £1.35m
- Troubled Families Grant £1.052m (including Payment by Results income).
- Council General Funds £975,200

3.2 The allocation of DSG funding in 2015-16 was made to support the Integrated Family Support Teams in the knowledge of a proposal to change the delivery model and alter the service profile to enable for the first time, the emergence of a consistent service delivering support at a markedly earlier time in the emergence or development of issues and which has a direct impact on those already being supported by universal settings. The breakdown of funding sources and spend was provided to Schools Forum in September 2015. At that time we committed to use DSG funds for Early Help to support front line staff. That commitment remains with DSG funding used purely for front-line, hands-on, family support staff with a range of skills and experience.

3.3 The Early Help Strategy which was adopted by Cabinet in May 2015 enables us to be clearer about the contribution family support will make for children and families and across the wider early help partnership, shifting focus and our collective resource towards prevention and early intervention as well as avoiding the escalation of need. The positive impact seen from Haringey Families First (Troubled Families response) and elements of IFSS practice means we are well placed to build on these methodologies and successes to develop whole family assessment and embed a collaborative, outcome focussed approach alongside clearer and more accessible pathways to support.

3.4 Evidencing outcomes is critical to prove the case for long-term sustainability of Early Help. Acknowledging the need to demonstrate impact, the Early Help service has commissioned the Outcome Star evaluation tool. This interactive 'distance travelled' on-line tool, captures individual and family progress to provide a visual and data measure of progress, which will add additional evidence to the statistical measures we will also be capturing to evidence impact to local partners, corporately at Priority 1 Board and also to support outcome claims as part of the government's Troubled Families programme.

3.5 We have brought all of the existing family support teams together into an integrated service with a clear point of access via the SPA. All contacts received will be triaged by Early Help senior practitioners (qualified social workers) as part of the SPA team before being allocated to the relevant locality team or handed on/signposted to the most appropriate universal provider where need is assessed as being Tier 1 or 2.

3.6 The early help service, as a core element of the continuum of provision across Haringey has a number of benefits, namely:

- Children families and young people are getting a service response based on assessed need using the LSCB Threshold guidance to achieve the desired outcomes.
- The process from contact via allocation to work beginning with a family is quick with targets embedded within the service operational guidance
- A named Early Help Senior or Family Support Worker is linked with each children's centre and school to provide a regular presence, a commitment to local forums, sound advice, guidance and support in relation to existing or potential family support matters, and when appropriate, to agencies working directly with children and families to ensure better access to co-ordinated support for those children and families who need it.
- Respond to requests for additional resource to support or take the lead on complex and challenging Tier 2 cases while encouraging and enabling partners to retain lead professional roles but still access additional support as required.
- To provide support and guidance on the completion of Early Help Assessments and requests for service through clear, quick and simple links.
- To be available for and committed to attendance at setting-based multi-agency discussion forums for complex cases which need un-blocking and development or refinement of stalled action plans, to effect improvement in outcomes for children and families.
- Improved data capture and consistent recording will enable locality and service wide analysis of need.
- Through the locality service manager, creation of capacity to work with and explore local communities and agencies in order to develop comprehensive local networks of early help provision which can further increase delivery capacity and build community strength and resilience
- CYPS will be able to develop an overview of all children and families supported across the early help workforce to understand the impact of its work.
- The service aims to equip children and families with the confidence and skills to build their capacity to deal with situations as they arise in the future.

3.7 It is vital that schools feel able to influence and contribute to the development of the Early Help service and with Children and Young People's Services and equally important that they are mandated to feedback criticism and know that these concerns are being dealt with. The emerging relationships between school leaders and locality Service Managers will enable and encourage this ongoing and two-way dialogue at a local and direct way.

3.8 Should the DSG allocation be approved, it will, together with the General Fund contributions and funding from the Department of Communities and Local Government DCLG Troubled Families grants, ensure the provision of a service that has been designed in consultation, and is supported by the introduction of the SPA and a dedicated early help 'workflow' all implemented on schedule, in October 2015.

3.9 The newly implemented locality structure has been implemented to deliver improved outcomes for vulnerable children and families that are timely and evidenced and the impact of the support provided will be visible and demonstrable. Significantly, schools and universal settings will benefit from our clear commitment to intervene earlier and focus on supporting Tier 2 needs (LSCB Threshold), rather than Children's Social Care caseloads at Tiers 3 and 4 in order to provide a greater impact for schools and their students than has previously been seen. Education – Wellbeing – Employment – are the thematic areas which benefit most from this new approach.

Impact of the removal of funding

4.1 Equally clear is the negative impact on vulnerable families and schools, if Schools Forum to remove their financial support for Early Help and Prevention. The Ofsted document '**Whose Responsibility**' outlines the system and emphasises the partnership responsibilities for delivering Early Help and without DSG funding, our partnership approach and supporting systems will be unable to develop across the borough, potentially leaving education settings as the primary family support provider. It was clear through the Troubled Families programme (phase 1) that educational outcomes can be enhanced through effective, collaborative and targeted family support, with 634 out of Haringey's 850 successful outcomes (75%) including an improved education outcome.

4.2 The Early Help Locality model has genuine potential to deliver similar or even greater school-based outcomes amongst a range of other positive indicators, which will strengthen families and help create greater family and community resilience. Without DSG funding however, the resource currently available to support over **550 families** with multiple and complex issues, would be reduced by around 40%. This would increase demand on universal providers and Children's Social Care where the capacity to provide hands-on practical support in the family home and for 52 weeks a year, simply does not exist.

4.3 Other funding models may enable individual schools or clusters of settings to employ additional Family Support Workers direct, but working collaboratively with the council enables the extended workforce to:

- work consistently towards the evidence-based family outcomes which have been agreed at the EH partnership Board and with the DCLG
- access joint training to embed whole family working and the use of early help assessments to effectively understand need
- record activity consistently to ensure OFSTED can track a child's journey
- record all contacts via the SPA to ensure no child or family is hidden or gets lost in terms of responding to emerging and better understood needs.
- EH model and jointly funded approach addresses many of the risks identified by Ofsted.

“The quality and effectiveness of early help services however remains too variable both between areas and within the same services. Children’s need for additional support is often not identified or acted on at the right time, with earlier opportunities to provide support often missed. The assessment and planning of services for individual children are too often insufficiently focused on improving outcomes for the child. Plans are not consistently or effectively reviewed and management oversight is not rigorous enough”. (Ofsted. ‘Early Help - Whose Responsibility?’ 2015)

4.4 Should Schools Forum withdraw financial support for Early help funding will revert for distribution across all schools general fund. This equates to approximately £40 per child on roll or, for a 300 pupil primary school, approximately £12000. These funds would not in isolation, enable schools to secure comparable early help or family support provision through direct employment or commissioning services of a similar scope and impact.

4.5 Currently, the council’s Early Help service is supporting around 600 children and young people attending 46 schools across the borough and others in schools outside Haringey. This work includes completing assessments, supporting and coordinating plans and contributing to TAF’s to enable those students and their families to achieve improved outcomes. Current cases involve students at all secondary schools and 58% of primary and junior schools, or 66% of the Boroughs schools overall.

5. Current position

5.1 There have been a number of adjustments made over time by the council in an effort to address the challenges presented by Schools Forum and others in relation to the emphasis and outcomes of family support services. In October a significant change has been delivered in order to demonstrate the council’s understanding of the issues and frustrations amongst universal providers. The new locality approach focuses resources including those funded through the DSG allocation directly towards vulnerable children and families. It provides a timely, responsive and flexible resource in order to add value to the support already provided through universal settings. Where appropriate, the Early Help service will take the lead as part of a collaborative, team around the family approach to support and enable children and families to achieve improved, sustainable outcomes before their needs reach the level of requiring statutory interventions.

5.2 This re-organisation of resources and change in approach has led to the cessation of the Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) which included, Family Support, Edge of Care, Early Help, Family Intervention project and Haringey Families First and introduced a single, consistent and experienced resource 'The Early Help and Prevention Service', which also incorporates the councils response to youth provision. Critically it forms a collective resource which will provide capacity and expertise to deliver direct support to children, families and young people when the response to their needs exceeds the available time and human resource which is delivering essential early help provision through all universal settings and community providers.

5.3 Through the introduction of a single, consistent service, with a clear remit, we are adding capacity at the point we will have most impact to achieve positive outcomes and where we can operate effectively, alongside and complementary to, existing universal early help provision through actively joining with existing networks and being sufficiently locally aware to create and develop new and effective relationships.

5.4 The implementation of the locality approach is the key for the development and enrichment of local networks and local, personalised contact between settings and early help service practitioners. Implementation has been just one step on the journey; however it is fundamental to creating a sustainable and effective continuum of early help support from pre-birth, through early years and educational settings to employment and self resilience. Education – Wellbeing – Employment are the achievements we are aiming for with every child, family and young person we support, our ambition recognise the scale of the task ahead and we have established the new delivery model as planned, on time and within budget, but equally we recognise there remains much to do.

6. Performance and Impact

6.1 An Early Help Performance Framework incorporating the mandatory Troubled Families Outcome Plan has been developed and is being refined to track the progress of cases and capture the impact and performance, both of the wider early help model and of its individual elements.

6.2 Haringey is a well regarded council in terms of its Troubled Families successes. In Phase 1 of the initiative, Haringey effectively supported over 1000 families and delivered 850 sustained, outcomes for those families impacting positively on employment, educational attendance and a reduction in anti-social behaviour amongst young people.

6.3 In Phase 2 (2015-2020) we have an ambitious target of ensuring 3240 families in Haringey are supported to achieving similar outcomes and so far 684 eligible families have been engaged and supported through whole family assessments and family action plans.

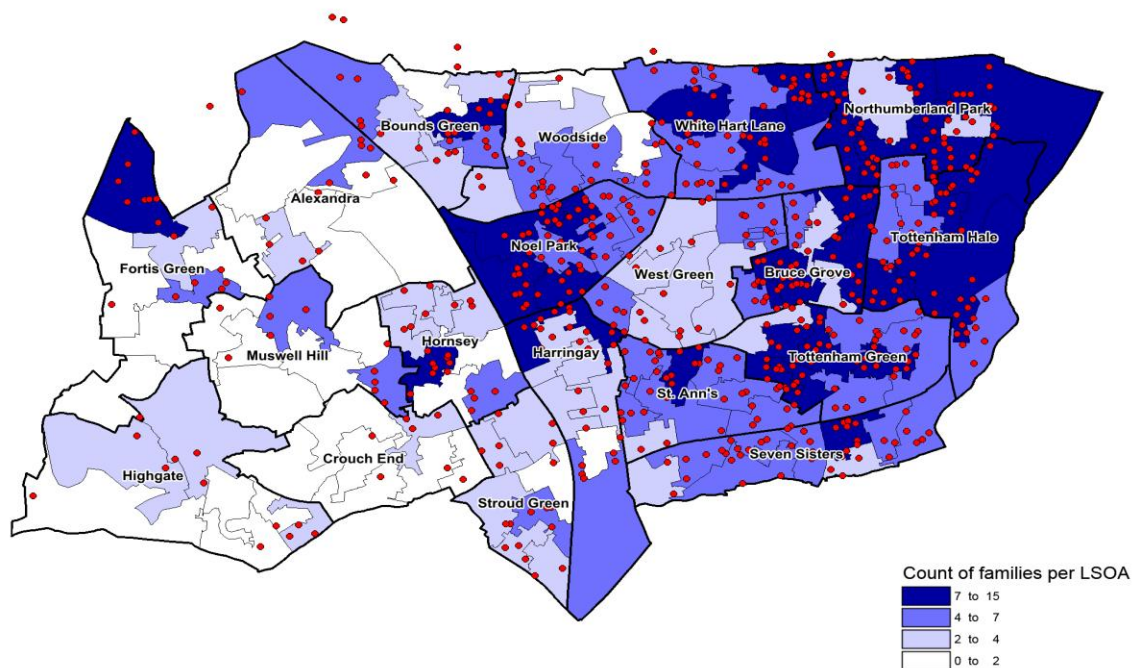
6.4

- Since October 5th Locality Teams have Initiated 103 new family cases with 326 children and young people, of which 220 are school age.
- There are currently 392 families including over 1000 children and young people on the active caseload of the Early Help service (average 2.55 children per family).
- Full caseload age breakdown; 28% pre-school age, 21% primary age, 51% secondary age.
- 59 TAF meetings took place in a school or children's centre in October and November.
- 100% of secondary and 58% of primary/junior schools currently have students being supported by the service
- Potential to grow capacity to 550 families

Note: To up-skill and build confidence in the workforce to secure longer-term effectiveness, staff retention and data capture, delivering training has inevitably impacted on initial capacity within the service.

- No step-ups from Early Help to Social Care since 5th October
- A dedicated family support worker for Alternate Provision settings.
- Embedded Youth Engagement Coordinators and Practitioners in each locality team to build capacity, increase awareness and access to pathways to further education and employment
- Aligned with the Targeted Response Team to access specialist workers with Domestic Abuse, substance misuse and mental health specialism's
- Named workers allocated to every Children's Centre and school
- Attended multi-agency Vulnerable Children's meetings in every Children's Centre
- Contact made with all schools and staff have visited many settings to agree and commit to the most effective local forum for the identification and support of appropriate families
- All staff have completed recently adopted Signs of Safety training following adoption of this as the CYPs model of practice.
- EH staff trained on the single IT recording system (MOSAIC) - already in use across children's Social providing consistent transparent recording
- Provided joint training opportunities (Early Help & Outcome Star)

Location of families engaged by the Early Help Service since September 2014



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7. Conclusion

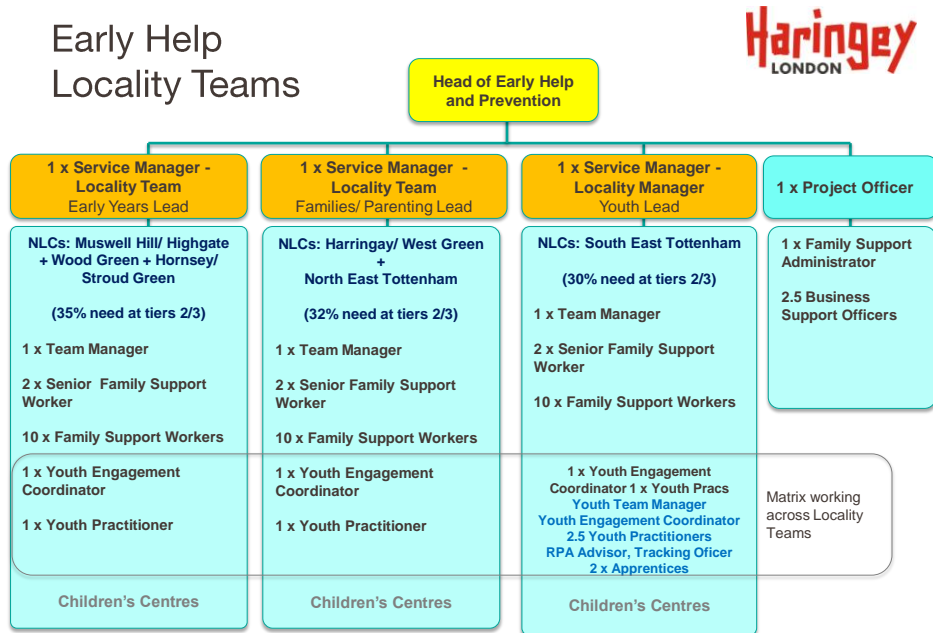
7.1 This report has provided a summary of the historical context of service development but critically, continues to report the significant shift in the council's attitude and approach to their role in providing additional early help services. Recognising the enormous amount of early help provision already being delivered on a daily basis we have put in place a model that provides a visible, tangible and accessible resource, which builds on and enhances that body of work.

7.2 Schools Forum has received details of how the DSG allocation has been used in 2015/16 and this report also provides early evidence of impact seen to date.

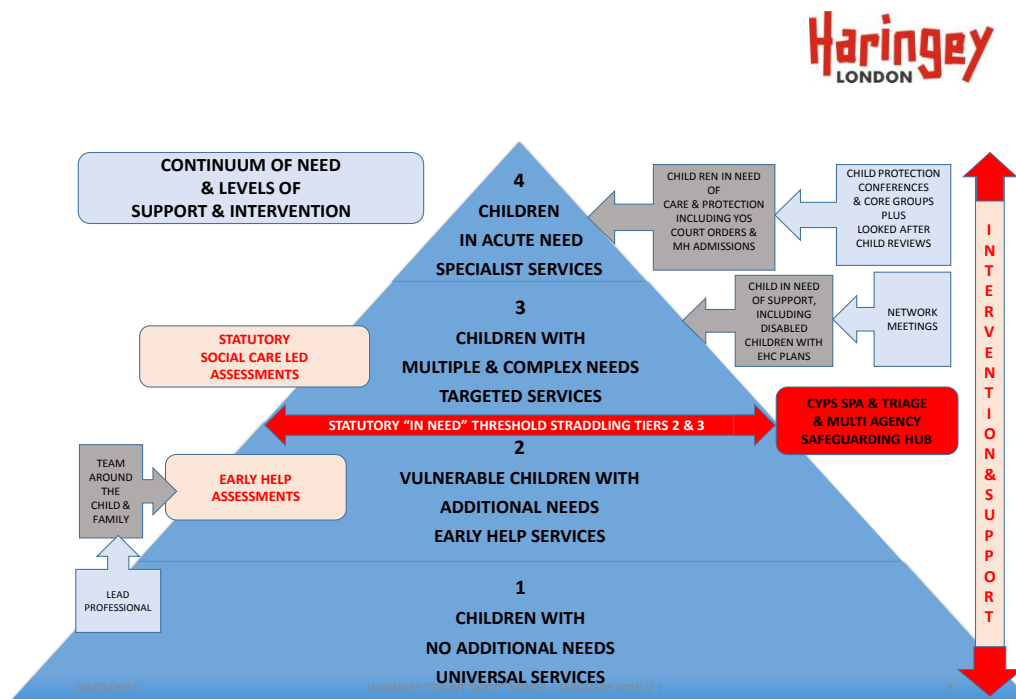
7.3 The true impact of effective early help provision however will only be seen over time, as we support children and families in Haringey move forward from the challenges they face. This will lead to less reliance on or recourse to statutory services and longer term assistance, through their ability to engage with education, achieve wellbeing and secure employment.

7.4 To build upon and extend the capacity and impact of the early help partnership, Schools Forum are invited to continue to support the Early Help Service through continued allocation of £1.35m DSG funding which, together with General Fund and DCLG monies, will ensure this new approach delivers meaningful impact and positive outcomes which are evidence-based and can be seen as well as felt in settings across the borough.

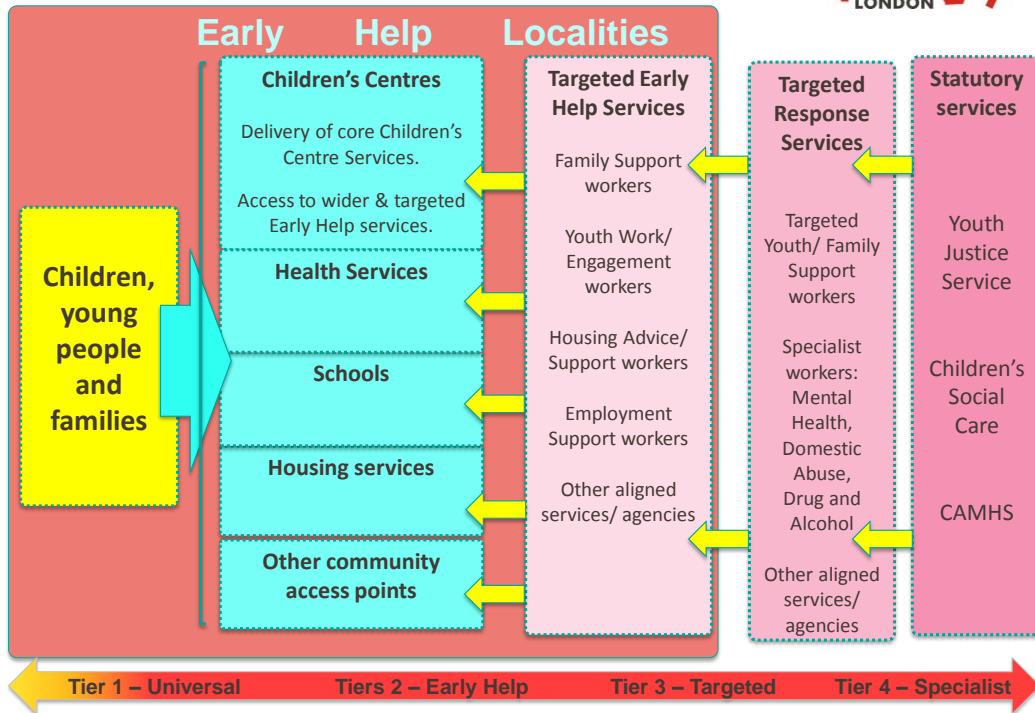
Appendix 1 Early Help and Targeted Response Service Structure



Appendix 2. LSCB Thresholds of Need guidance



Appendix 3 Continuum of CYPS support services
 Continuum of Core Early Help Services



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