

REPORT TO SECONDARY HEAD TEACHERS & PRINCIPLES GROUP / EDUCATION MATTERS

FUNDING FOR DESIGNATED EDUCATION OFFICER

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to –

- Update schools on the Designated Education Officer (DEO) role within The Children's Hub
- Outline funding options and agree your support to continue the role during 2018/19.
- Recommend to the Schools Forum to approve the continuation of the role and funding option 2 as detailed in the report.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Children's Hub is a partnership between Hartlepool Borough Council, Stockton on Tees Borough Council, Cleveland Police, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust. It began operation on June 1st 2016 and responds to concerns from professionals and the public regarding the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in both local authority areas. The Children's Hub is funded by the two Local Authorities with contributions from partners as appropriate.
- 2.2 During the months leading up to the establishment of The Children's Hub consultation with Head Teachers and safeguarding representatives from schools made clear their desire for an 'education professional' within the Hub that could support schools in their safeguarding duties and ensure that children receive the right support at the right time.
- 2.3 The role is not a statutory Local Authority duty, rather it adds value to the safeguarding process with the DEO in a position to –
- Develop excellent relationships with schools offering advice and guidance across the continuum from early help through to statutory assessments
 - Contribute to safeguarding and child protection training programmes for staff within schools
 - Provide challenge to schools to ensure children are supported appropriately
 - Collect vital information from schools which enables the Hub to make timely and effective decisions in a multi-agency manner
 - Attend Strategy meetings on behalf of/ with school representatives where required.

2.4 During the period 2016/2017 Hartlepool Borough Council funded the post. During 2017/18 Stockton on Tees schools, following agreement at Schools Forum, funded 66% of the post with Hartlepool funding the balance.

3. Costs

3.1 The estimated cost for the role to continue in 2018/19 is as follows: Band 13 role - £52,000 including on costs. Based on the 66% / 34% split this would equate to £34,320 for Stockton Schools.

4. Activity

4.1 The following is a summary of Stockton on Tees schools activity in relation to the DEO role:

- The Children's Hub receives approximately 800 concerns a month from referrers relating to Stockton on Tees children and young people and the DEO contacts all education settings to understand more about the child to support decision making in what's best for the child.
- The DEO has had regular contact with 90.2% of schools and colleges in Stockton on Tees including those of maintained, academy and free school status.
- Over 50% of contacts with schools and colleges have been initiated by the DEO seeking crucial information on children and young people at risk of harm.
- The DEO has responded directly to 60 concerns specifically raised by schools in which they sought DEO advice and guidance.
- 15% of the DEOs engagement with Stockton on Tees education providers were RAG rated 'red' – Child in Need of Protection
- 43% of the DEOs engagement with Stockton on Tees education providers were RAG rated 'amber' – potentially a Child in Need or a Child in Need of Protection
- Wherever possible education providers are encouraged to attend Child Protection 'Strategy' meetings. On occasion the DEO attends on their behalf and to date the DEO has attended 31% of all strategy meetings held within the Children's Hub.
- The DEO is actively involved in the Stockton on Tees Safeguarding Forum and has attended all forums since the DEO post was put in place in order to promote the relationship between DEO and schools.
- The DEO is involved in the design and delivery of Designated Safeguarding Lead training.
- The DEO undertakes regular audits of referrals that come from education providers in order to improve appropriateness and quality of referrals.

5.0 Options

5.1 There are a number of options for the DEO role including -

	Option	Pros	Cons
1.	<p>Allow the post to come to an end. No longer fund the role.</p>	<p>Schools will not be expected to fund the role.</p> <p>The recent JTAI and Peer Review have highlighted the role as excellent practice.</p> <p>National research consistently shows that a dedicated education specialist is vital to the effectiveness of a MASH (CHub).</p> <p>Ofsted has noted that the DEO role is extremely useful and showing good results.</p> <p>The current DEO is a qualified teacher and has a clear understanding of the education system.</p>	<p>To cease funding an education presence in the CHub would not be in line with positive verbal feedback received from head teachers and Designated Safeguarding Leads to date since The CHub became operational.</p> <p>The CHub will no longer have a dedicated education specialist in the team. Schools will no longer have a 'go to' contact for general safeguarding advice.</p> <p>Schools will need to participate fully in strategies and supply the CHub with all information relevant to a safeguarding enquiry.</p> <p>The DEO would no longer be able to contribute to training for Designated Safeguarding Leads. DEO's combined knowledge and understanding of both education and social care systems currently allows for strong development of referral process for schools and is useful within this training.</p>
2.	<p>Stockton schools to fund 66% of the role and Hartlepool to fund 34% of the role. This would be reviewed and adjusted annually.</p>	<p>If all schools agreed this would equate to - Stockton schools £34,320. For 2017/18 it was agreed that the cost would be shared on a per pupil basis. <i>Please see the attached appendix for indicative figures for individual schools.</i></p> <p>Ongoing partnership between individual education settings and DEO allows schools to provide evidence of Good if not Outstanding practice in relation to</p>	<p>Not all schools would necessarily use the role fully if they had no safeguarding concerns in that year.</p>

		safeguarding within certain areas of School Evaluation Form required by OFSTED.	
3.	Schools choose to 'buy back' into the DEO role.	Schools can buy the service if they feel it adds value to their safeguarding duties.	Difficult for the CHub to administer. The DEO is either an 'all or nothing' role. Cannot offer additional safeguarding support to some children but not others.

5. **Recommendations**

- 5.1 To recommend to the Schools Forum to approve the continuation of the role for 2018/19 and to continue to allocate costs as in 2017/18 based on funding option 2.