

Children, Young People & Education

Agenda: AP Funding Model Working Group
Date: Friday 5th April 2019
Location: Room 2.40, Sessions House
Time: 15:30 – 17.00

Attendees

Stuart Collins (SC)	Director Integrated Children's Services
Celia Buxton (CB)	Principal School Improvement Adviser
Ming Zhang (MZ)	Head of Service for PRUs, Inclusion & Attendance,
Hilary Alford (HA)	County Access to Education Manager
Simon Pleace (SP)	Revenue and Tax Strategy Manager
Sue Beauchamp (SB)	Head of Two Bridges School
John Tutt (JT)	Executive Head Teacher, St James' CE Infant and Junior Schools
Philip Wicker (PW)	Canterbury Executive Committee Chair
Rachel Meehan (RM)	Head of Birchwood PRU
Sonette Schwartz (SS)	Chair of Birchwood PRU
Jane Partridge (JP)	Headteacher, Northfleet Technology College
Marie Woolston (MW)	Head of Service, North West Kent Alternative Provision Service
Craig Hallam (CH)	Deputy Headteacher Pupil Engagement
Richard Billings (RB)	Ashford Inclusion Collaboration
Michaela Clay (MC)	Executive Head of ELA
Beth Hall (BH)	Administration Officer to Stuart Collins (Minutes)

Apologies

Daniel Hatley (DH)	Executive Principal, The Hayesbrook School
Liz Mitchell (LM)	Headteacher, Seal CofE Primary School
Rosemary Joyce (RJ)	Chair of Two Bridges

1	Introductions and Updates	SC
	SC opened the meeting and members of the group introduced themselves. It was discussed and agreed that at the previous meeting in February broad agreement for the proposals in the consultation meeting were reached in all but 4 of the key questions and the role of this meeting was to resolve the detail in the remaining 4 areas.	
2	The Role of the Clerk	All
	<p>The consultation paper suggested that the LA would serve as chair in each of the IYFAP. This proposal was rejected, and consideration was given to the LA providing a consistent 'Clerk' (in line with a Magistrates Clerk model) and administration support to each of the IYFAP. The proposition moved from chair to clerk to advise the panel on points of procedure, governance, and legal basis with administrative support to help with data collection on managed moves and how different areas operate. The clerk would provide the opportunity to capture all information in the same way countywide. SC suggested developing a job description based on the role of a legal clerk.</p> <p>Concerns from the group were expressed in regard to how a consistent clerk would be funded. SC stated this will be a dedicated role but was confident that this would not need to come from the AP budget.</p>	

	<p>There was a lot of debate as to why this may be helpful in some areas not all areas needed this level of support and having a collaborative model was the key. SC advised that during the consultation he received feedback that IYFA panels are not consistent or well attended and some areas were actively asking for support. A consistent Clerk would provide consistent minutes, tallies between schools, advising panels, and monitoring consistency across county. By the end of the discussion there was unanimous agreement within the room that a consistent well-informed Clerk would be able to help advise and support both the chair and the IYFAP process to support an inclusive and collaborative approach.</p>	
3	PAN/Roll	SP
	<p>SP attended the meeting to discuss the funding options, i.e. using PAN or census figures. SP provided three options, and the group were split between continuing with census numbers or using PAN. There was healthy debate based on local preference and circumstance. As for some districts/schools there could be fairly big variances at school levels. As PAN is essentially stationary over a number of years and census fluctuates it was felt that PAN offered more certainty. There was some debate that census could encourage some schools to go over PAN with as many children as possible.</p> <p>There was healthy discussion over the unintended consequences for some smaller, rural, or less full schools. This led to discussion about a rolling introduction to ensure that no school or district faced a cliff edge or larger unequal drop in any funding. SP proposed to split the difference between census and PAN at 50/50 to soften some of the highlighted differences and give the time that's needed to transition. It was agreed this is partly the role of the IYFA panel and present officers are to ensure this doesn't happen. PW suggested a solution to transition to even get to a 50/50 mark.</p> <p>SP agreed to work up figures for 50/50 between pan and roll and transition period. SP stated the importance to find way to get there gradually as this is key to plan and know the end destination.</p> <p>ACTION: SC to discuss transition period with individuals to look at status quo in districts to look at flexibility on 50/50 split of PAN/census.</p> <p>ACTION: SC to attend Management Committees/IYFAP to meet with Head & Chairs</p>	<p>SC</p> <p>SC</p>
4	Fining Process, Tolerances, and Use of Funding Discussion	All
	<p>SC opened the discussion around contract details and the starting place of having one or not. It was agreed that while inevitably there needs to be a contract in place to receive the money and hold partners to account this should not be the first step on the path and good collaborative working would bring the best results. It was agreed that this could be helped by having strong protocols and agreements in place ahead of fining. It was suggested that permanent exclusions, elected home education, fixed term exclusions, should all be dealt with through this progression of issues rather than a purely financial penalty.</p>	

	<p>One of the intentions of imposing financial penalties was to ensure that schools worked in partnership to develop and improve inclusive practice. Around 50 secondary school pupils are being encouraged to EHE in years 10 and 11 and coming out of school at this crucial time.</p> <p>It was agreed that whichever mechanism is used for how schools are held to account should be owned by those schools. There was a healthy debate as to whether a contract could affect the collaboration arrangement and what works well with Headteachers and schools working together. MW queried if there is a need for a fine or is it about a QA process. MW agreed a fine is appropriate but stated we must show that good practice is in place and ensure there were no safeguarding issues.</p> <p>There were views that schools would want to hold onto money if they have to exclude. In areas where this affects PRUs and schools are working together, this will erode good impact this is having in these areas. Concerns were raised that this may encourage home education and other means to get children off roll rather than fines.</p> <p>If the school feels there is no alternative to permanently excluding, there is a rolling list of schools to take permanently excluded children. It was shared that Hayesbrook are working hard and seeing less exclusions. The process should be based on QA and protocols. Areas where schools over exclude should have a set of protocols and to have a contract for that area.</p> <p>MC queried what incentive there is for grammar schools to take part as headteachers do not receive additional money, even though they are not likely to send pupils to PRUs, SC advised that grammar allocation is taken at source and distributed meaning very little impact for selective schools.</p> <p>It was agreed the contract arrangement would help to pick up any examples of non-inclusive or extreme end of behaviour.</p> <p>PW pointed out that good collaboration works well when everyone is invested in the process and outcomes but a single change of Head with a different view could impact the collaborative approach and a contract helped guard against such eventualities.</p> <p>Exclusion rates are very good and low but there should be definition and criteria and if schools have tried everything then what criteria is measurable. If exclusions were looked at and showed there is evidence there was nothing else that could be done, there is no alternative in majority of instances and schools are working hard to ensure this doesn't happen.</p> <p>There were concerns raised around the £18,000 fine being a large sum of money for exclusions. A number of members couldn't see justification for the amount. It was stated this is the national average and per pupil funding varies across Kent.</p> <p>The importance of having protocols without necessarily fining was highlighted but go to this when protocols need to come into force. In the end pose fine but not to use a system where this is headlined. Possible to combine all options in system.</p> <p>PW queried if a school is penalised by fine, is this public to the area. It was</p>	
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	<p>agreed that if working collaboratively then there is a need to be transparent and the area needs to know this information as people want to see the system working fairly.</p> <p>There was consensus agreement that having a contract in place was essential but that a process of protocols and working together should be the norm before any financial penalty was imposed</p>	
5	Implementation in Delegated/Devolved Systems	All
	<p>The discussion surrounded the issues which arise from having a part delegated part devolved budget where a physical AP is in place. There are 5 areas with a physical PRU where a part delegated part devolved arrangement would need to be agreed and developed</p> <p>The first principle of this approach is that it should be the intention for this type of split to provide money for vulnerable young people by helping incentivise schools to take more responsibility and manage these young people themselves.</p> <p>It was stated there is a risk of having higher dependency on PRU if trying to help everywhere. It was agreed this is about how schools manage young people and bring all schools on board. It was proposed that where strong collaboration exists then schools will work together and find resource.</p> <p>It was suggested to adopt a more strengths-based approach to incentivise rather than punish schools who did not engage discussing inclusive practice rather than financial penalties.</p> <p>It was reported that not all schools are prepared to work collaboratively and where this partnership is not as fully developed financial penalties are likely to be necessary.</p> <p>CH stated Swale doesn't have a PRU and voted to devolve money which makes work very hard and provides different measurements. This has encouraged becoming very inclusive and money is very important.</p> <p>Same model in the North was introduced in Maidstone and didn't work the same as it all depends on the area. This is a small PRU so different work with specialist staff but struggled to do so.</p> <p>It was shared that different models work well in different areas but change in management can upset a collaborative dynamic very quickly. Half delegated/devolved is working well but might work less well in other areas. How do we now get to recognise there are such fine margins to working or not. General consensus was that to have a contract was the only way forward but agreed a number of different steps has merit before reaching financial penalty.</p> <p>SC stated the area picture is coming through quickly and a clerk will be instrumental in understanding each area. Having consistent oversight and observance of collaboration is important. A clerk will manage the contract and increasing to KR13 post could provide the opportunity to do this. It was agreed that the group want to view a final job description and want the role to have a QA focus.</p>	

Next Meeting: TBC