

EDUCATION & SKILLS DIRECTORATE

Scrutiny Committee

Report of: Assistant Director Inclusion, SEND and Wellbeing

Date: 3rd September 2020

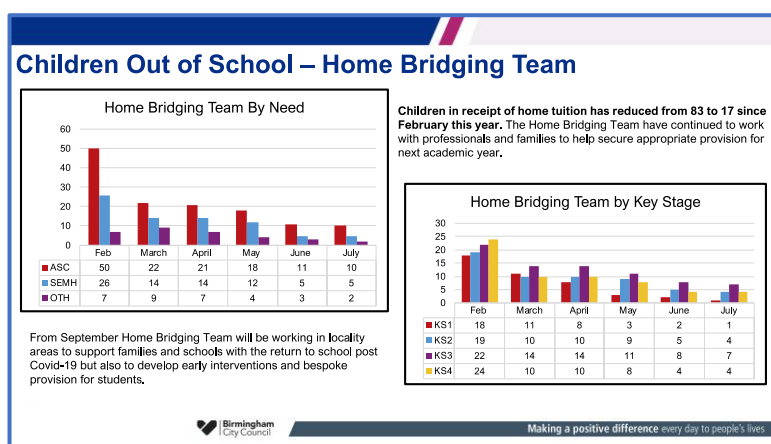
Home Bridging Team Planned Programme 2020-21

Background:

Historically where children were out of school the SEN administration team have allocated home tuition as an interim provision while a new placement was secured. There was limited hand over from the previous education setting, no monitoring of the impact of tuition or a focus towards reintegration back into full time education.

In September 2019, the Home Bridging Team were formed and have been key in establishing links with CYP and families where they do not have a named educational setting. The Home Bridging Team is made up of teachers, higher level teaching assistants and a teaching assistant. The team have experience of working across all age ranges and special needs and understand the education system. They have regular contact with the children and young people, provide mentoring support, liaise with tutoring agencies, building relationships with families and professionals with the ultimate goal to support young people back into an educational setting.

Throughout lockdown the team have maintained contact with CYP and families, delivered online learning and liaised with schools and professionals to secure placements and plans for transition. Since February of this year, there were 83 children who were home tutored, compared to 17 by July 2020.



The successes over this academic year has been due to:

- relationships formed with families and the CYP, with a clear focus on return to the right education setting
- the children and young people at the centre of what the Home Bridging Team do, with their voice central in ensuring the appropriate provision is secured
- for children with more complex SEND needs, supporting the EHCP Annual Review
- liaising with schools and professionals about school placements and the support needed to transition and settle in a new setting

Moving Forward – September 2020:

Following the success of the Home Bridging Team the local authority is developing the team to work across six localities of the city. This will enable local areas to have oversight of their children and young people and develop preventative strategies within their schools, share best practice across settings and use the Home Bridging Team's expertise as well as the wider specialised service link professional to provide bespoke support for those children and young people in greatest need.

To do this the Service Lead will work closely with the six regions of the city to have oversight for developing a locality offer that supports the early identification of children and young people who may be at risk, as well as those children and young people with more prolonged absences. The lead officer will work closely with local teams to support those hard to reach children and young people currently accessing bespoke plans, including those on home tuition and/or alternative provision.

Each locality will have a member of the Home Bridging Team allocated who will work with the children and young people, families, schools and professionals to support with engagement and removal of barriers to education to ensure young people are able to make academic progress and build skills which will enable them to thrive as they move into adulthood.

The service lead will be working with the wider team of professionals supporting children's wellbeing as well as alongside the headteacher/school lead to identify those children and young people most at risk. In doing so, the team will ensure the most appropriate link professional is in place where an agreed outcome and timeframe for support is put in place.

In addition to working closely with schools and professionals to identify children and young people at risk of becoming school refusers, the service lead will also work closely with the specialised services for wellbeing, to identify those CYP who are struggling to return to school post Covid. Support will be offered as part of the wider

well-being strategy and building early intervention within schools, including the development of a pathway for ensuring support and provision for children whose needs are more complex.

Working closely with each of the six local areas, an additional support officer is being introduced specifically to support those children and young people who are struggling to return to school.

Where a CYP is not on a school roll, the local Home Bridging officer will be a point of contact for families, building strong relationships and helping to ensure that all professionals are involved with a plan of action for re-integration back into an education setting.

The Home Bridging Team are also working alongside the Birmingham Virtual School in a pilot project with the AV1 no isolation robot (<https://www.noisolation.com/uk/av1/>). Where a CYP is unable to attend school, the robot enables the CYP to connect live into the lesson and maintain contact with learning but also social aspects of school life. Schools across localities will be selected to test the device and in conjunction with Home Bridging contact and lead from school establish a plan for engagement in education.

The service lead will also be working closely alongside the local authority placements team, where a child or young person is not on a school roll, to identify their needs and barriers to accessing the learning environment. The service lead and Home Bridging Team member for that locality will work closely with schools and specialist services to support in the identification of training needs for schools and a transition package put in place to support.

The introduction of guidance and revised Pastoral Support Plans, will form the basis of a monitoring system for those at risk of placement and where there is a potential for a placement breakdown. The newly formed tracking by Key Stage and Special Educational Need will be used to target support and training within the locality where it is needed most.

Citywide ***weekly/monthly reporting will enable the specialised services to*** understand best practice in areas and feedback from schools. Information will also be shared with Headteachers at Primary and Secondary Forum and with SEND Locality and Consortia leads so that schools can share best practice, raise questions and help to foster network connections and a consistent approach to inclusive working.

Nichola Jones
Assistant Director Inclusion, SEND and Wellbeing