

Birmingham City Council

Schools Forum

Date 26th October 2023



Subject: Delivering Better Value Update

Report of: Helen Ellis

Report author: Helen Ellis

Decision to be made by: Report for information only

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This report is intended to provide School Forum with an update on the progress of the Delivering Better Value Programme.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 There are no specific recommendations for this report.

3 Background

- 3.1 Birmingham County Council is participating in the Delivering Better Value Programme – Tranche 3. Delivering Better Value (DBV) is a programme working to identify and implement local and national opportunities to improve the outcomes for children and young people with SEND and place the system on a more sustainable financial footing, commissioned by the DfE. The evidence base developed for Birmingham will contribute to a grant application to the DfE for up to £1million for the local area to use to embed the identified opportunities.
- 3.2 There are 3 stages to Phase 1 of the programme:
- 3.2.1 Module 1 which aims to: Clarify current position, forecast future position and identify high impact areas
 - 3.2.2 Module 2 which aims to: Understand evidence for change in prioritised areas and have a quantified future view of potential impact
 - 3.2.3 Module 3 which aims to: Have clarity on solutions and plans to implement and gather feedback and engage with system partners
- 3.3 So far, insights have shown that spend on Maintained Specialist Provision accounts for over 62% of all spending from the High Needs Block. We have seen

historical growth in both unit cost and caseload over the last 5 years in this provision type. There are two main age groups where we see starts occur in this provision: age 5 and ages 11&12 – these are key transition ages. The most prevalent primary need of starts occurring between 2020 and 2022 is Autism Spectrum Condition, accounting for 43% of all new starts. A secondary area of focus is understanding some of the historic drivers of growth of the number of EHCPs in mainstream and the unit cost growth for EHCPs in mainstream. Whilst the average annual growth rates in caseload and unit cost for mainstream have been significant, benchmarking analysis suggests the figures in Birmingham for caseload are still lower than expected when comparing with statistical and regional neighbours. With growth rates expected to continue in forecasting scenarios this remains an area of focus to ensure effective and inclusive support for all children supported in mainstream with SEN. Finally, the ASC pathway in Birmingham is another area of focus given the prevalence in the area.

- 3.4 Remaining activity will continue to investigate these key areas. We have completed case reviews of 36 individual cases with participants from education, health, social care and parent/carer representatives to discuss the child or young person's journey and understand where there is opportunity to better support them to achieve their ideal outcomes. We are scheduling visits with our special and mainstream schools to speak with students and staff about their experiences and understand what the day to day experience is. Surveys are live and due to close 30th October. We are collecting responses from parents and carers, education professionals and children and young people. Listening Forums with Head Teachers, SENCOs and Parent Carers offers the opportunity to add qualitative evidence and examples to quantitative evidence. They will explore in depth the key focus areas to gather broad perspectives on the challenges and solutions. Workshops are underway to map out the step-by-step process of how we identify and support children with ASC and speech, language and communication needs and whether there is any opportunity to improve interventions put in place. Additional analysis of variation within Birmingham and comparing with neighbours will be conducted to identify outliers and explore drivers of best practice or understand groups facing specific challenges.

4 Any Finance Implications

- 4.1 There is potential for grant funding of £1million to support transformation work to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Birmingham. As part of the work, financial quantification of opportunities will be completed.

5 Any Legal Implications

N/A

6 Any Equalities Implications

6.1 N/A

7 Appendices

7.1 DBV Schools Forum Report 261023. ppt