

Quality Care - for you, with you

Southern Area Outcomes Group

Minute of meeting held on Tuesday, 2 February 2016 at 10am,
in
TESS Unit, Tullygally Primary School, 21 Meadowbrook Road,
Craigavon

Present:

Paul Morgan, Chair
Anne Hardy, CYPSP
Margaret Gibney, Administrator
Michael Heaney
Diane Clarke
Kirsten May
Jacinta Linden
Michele Janes
Rachel Long
Shirley Gillespie
Mairead Abraham
Martina McCooey on behalf of Gerard Rocks
Mark McBride on behalf of Gerry Blakney

Apologies:

Kieran Shields
Geraldine Maguire
Michael McCrory
Michael Hoy
Catriona Regan
Gerard Houlahan
Helen Dunn
Gerard Rocks
Gerry Blakney
Mia Murray

Paul welcomed everyone to meeting thanking Kieran for agreeing to host today's meeting. A round of introductions was carried out and apologies noted as above.

Early Years Inclusion Service – presentation by Mary Shalley, Special Needs

Advisor:

Mary referenced presentation provided for today's meeting; giving a brief update on the background of Early Years Inclusion Service (EYIS). Mary noted that the service provides a base line for Primary School teachers in terms of the level of support children require. As funding is secured year to year it is unclear/unknown how many will/can avail of this service. Mary commented that the pilot has indicated that when the service invested in the recruitment and training of teachers and assistants they have found that the staff move on to other permanent posts as funding is not secure.

Mary stated that children are the centre of everything; the aim of the service is to improve outcomes for children and how the outcomes can then be measured. It was agreed that the service would focus on two key issues; improved language, behaviour and wellbeing for children. Mary noted that Service Level Agreements have been very effective.

Mary then described the tools used to evaluate the service noting that figures indicate significant improvements in the Southern Area. However Mary pointed out that Regional figures have not yet been published therefore statistics are not accurate.

In terms of the stages of Code of Practice Mary advised that the stage at which a child is set, should be dependent on their need, the stages 1.-5 are a guide to what level of support is needed, they do not mean that children have to work through each stage.

Mary further noted that EYIS has helped to build the confidence of not only teaching staff but also play group leaders as the service is available to any setting working with children. Marked improvements have been noted and feedback included in presentation is extremely positive.

Mary then referenced key recommendations as detailed in presentation; agreeing to forward copies of presentation to all members.

Mary opened the floor to any questions: Michele Janes commented that the figures in relation to Speech & Language and Communication showed significant improvements in terms of health and education for those children. Mary concurred with this adding that a number of the children who benefited from the service would not have been identified as needing a service without the pilot. Mary reiterated that the gain for these children was significant over a very short period of time i.e. 18mth gain in some cases following a 10week intervention programme.

Mairead Abraham pointed out that the waiting list for Speech & Language Therapy can be up to 9months which can have a significant impact on a child. Mairead then referenced the programmes available through Surestart such as the Welcoming Tool

and 2yr programme; both of which have helped the transition of children into nursery or playgroup ensuring that information is passed onto and shared with school.

Shirley Gillespie asked if the children who benefited from the pilot will be 'tracked' as they progress through their education. Mary advised that the onus is on parents to share information with schools as their children progress. However Mary pointed out that the Education Authority will keep a record of any intervention and should any of these children become known again the information regarding their early intervention will be there.

Paul and the group thanked Mary for her presentation today.

Action:
Margaret to forward copy of presentation to members

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Agreed as accurate.

Matters Arising:

Anne agreed to follow up with Peter Hutchinson the names of Trust Champions. All other matters have been actioned.

Update from Michael Heaney re Scoping Study – Children in the Justice System:

Michael circulated a hand-out to members providing them with a brief background to scoping study. Michael commented that the aim of the review is to simplify the justice system; adding that agencies will try to push the changes in practice even if there is no change to current legislation.

Michael commented that the majority of children are not aware that some offences will always have to be disclosed when applying for certain jobs; meaning that some children could have a criminal record from a young age which they must disclose, in later life. Shirley Gillespie asked if children are being educated in school. Michael commented that they are to a certain extent; Michael then gave an example wherein a group of teenagers in school were asked if they thought sending an image of themselves to a peer was an offence; none of the teenagers present thought that this was an offence. Michael stated that PCSP are carrying out work to help raise awareness of this and to help children understand the potential dangers of becoming involved in the Youth Justice System. The issue of funding and budget cuts was discussed; Michael commented that half the budget is currently spent on custody which evidence suggest is not best for most children. Michael added that there has been a significant reduction in budget over the last 10yrs. Paul commented that it is hoped that some funding will be allocated via EITP, to help direct young people from criminal activity and youth justice. Michael agreed to keep members updated on progress

Action:

Michael to keep members updated

Feedback from Action Planning:

Anne reported that the Task Group continue to work at a local level on outcomes 1-3. Anne advised that the Task & Finish Group are due to meet again to bring the work together into an action plan ensuring there is no duplication. Anne added that this could take up to one month.

Julie emphasised the importance of working with parents and referencing what has worked well in other areas. Anne concurred with this, highlighting that work on one specific outcome will impact on other outcomes in the action plan.

Anne then referenced contribution from Kieran Shields to the Task & Finish Group commenting that he has completed a tremendous amount of work.

Martina McCooey advised that she intends to attend all Locality Planning Group's over the next two months to get an appreciation of key programmes available ensuring that these programmes are responding to need and that there is no duplication.

BME Task Group:

Paul advised that the Survey Monkey returns are still being analysed agreed that the group would filter out those who responded and did not work directly with BME families. It was also agreed that Anne would make contact with some respondents to clarify responses and strengthen feedback. Group are due to meet again at end of February and draft report will be shared. Paul reiterated that the purpose of the Task Group is to look at what BME services are currently available and what works well. It is also hoped that any gaps in services will be identified; the intention is that once finalised the report will be shared with CYPSP and the Regional BME Group.

Agency Updates:

Michele Janes referenced current refugee situation and Barnardos involvement in the resettling of refugees. A scoping exercise will be carried out re housing, health and education needs of refugees. Michele commented that there is no control over who comes however priority is being given to family groups. Michele agreed to share information with group as it becomes available.

Action:

Michele to share information re refugee situation as it becomes available.

Mairead Abraham provided a brief update on the Regional Childcare Strategy; consultation currently with OFM/DFM. Transition to Dept. of Education expected in May 2016. Mairead noted that feedback was positive with a lot of interest. Mairead then referenced recent applications to Bright Start which closed on Friday – 11 applications from Southern Area were received with 5 of these being from local primary schools.

Feedback from CYPSP/Chairs

Anne reported that the partnership will meet again in March to look at Children's Strategy & Bill. Chairs are due to meet at the end of February.

Some discussion ensued re the inclusion of someone from Community Planning at further Outcomes Meetings, it was agreed that Anne would make contact with local Council representatives and arrange meeting.

Action:

Anne to liaise with local council reps and arrange meeting to include Paul, Julie and reps from Community Planning

Update Locality Planning Groups:

Julie advised that she returned from maternity leave 4weeks ago and to date has attended 3 out of 6 Locality Planning Meetings. Some consideration is being given to amalgamating certain groups; Julie will keep Outcomes Group updated.

Update Family Support Hub:

Rachel noted that Hubs continue to be busy; an increase in self-referrals has been noted which is very encouraging. However Rachel advised that this in itself is bringing its own challenges and these will be discussed at steering group.

Paul commented that associated activity should and needs to be recorded given that funding is only secured until September 2016. Paul noted that the message needs to be portrayed at regional level that the Hubs are extremely effective and the need remains for the service. Paul suggested that he and Anne would meet with Maurice.

Any Other Business:

Paul referenced report provided by Michael Hoy re Outcomes for Children Programme.

Action:

Michael to provide update on progress across Southern Area

Martina McCooley advised that she would forward Infant Mental Health Report to be shared with members;

Action

Margaret to circulate report to members

Date of Next Meeting:

Tuesday 12 April at 10am in TESS Unit, Tullygally Primary School, 21 Meadowbrook Road Craigavon