

## **Schools Block Transfer to HNB 2022-23**

### **Project 1: Temporary additional staffing in Early Development and Inclusion Team (EDIT)**

#### **Background**

The Early Development and Inclusion Team (EDIT), previously known as the Pre School Teacher Counsellor Service, consists of 1.7FTE teachers who are specialists in SEN and early years and who support children under five who have significant special educational needs. Children are usually referred by Health, either by paediatricians or health visitors, although in some cases they can be referred by early years settings. EDIT teachers will assess children and deliver a programme of support, modelling strategies which can be used by parents to support their child's development and reviewing on a regular basis. They also support children in early years settings, offer training to staff, support with transition in to settings or school, run groups for children on the caseload and their parents and make or assist with EHC applications where they are needed. In addition, the EDIT team manage a budget for children who need one to one support in order to access early years settings.

#### **Rationale**

A reduction in the size of the EDIT team by half some years ago, as part of a savings strategy, has resulted in the team having to restrict its activities and children waiting longer for support. The team has had to prioritise older children who need support to transition in to a setting or school, which gives less time for earlier intervention with younger children. This has been exacerbated by late referrals from Health, apparently as a result of the pandemic, meaning that some children with quite profound needs are going in to school with inadequate support.

Currently, of the 126 children known or referred to the EDIT Team, only 107 are allocated to an EDIT teacher (85%), with 19 children (15%) on a waiting list and unable to be allocated due to staffing restrictions. Children who are referred in the year before starting school are prioritised by the team, but waiting times are still 3 months on average. Some of these children may have only one term or less of intervention before transition to school. Younger children have to be given lower priority; waiting times for them vary from 3 to 6 months.

Current waiting times limit opportunities to support children early at a critical stage of their development, meaning they are likely to experience more difficulties in early years settings and primary schools, particularly if there has not been adequate opportunity to support and train staff and if EHC applications have been delayed. A poor transition experience may even mean in some cases that children who might have been supported successfully in mainstream schools may need to attend special schools, or may need to attend earlier than might otherwise have been the case.

#### **Proposal**

Recruit an additional 0.4 EDIT teacher in order to reduce waiting times and give more support to children with SEND transitioning in to school as well as earlier support to younger children. Additional capacity could be absorbed by existing staff on a temporary basis for 12 months.

**Aims**

To provide expert intervention as early as possible for children referred to the EDIT service, in order to maximise their development

To ensure children under five with SEND have support prior to transition and a well planned and successful transition to primary school

**Success criteria**

- Waiting times for new children referred in the year before starting school to reduce from 1 to 3 months to 1 month maximum.
- Waiting times for younger children to be reduced from 3 to 6 months to 3 months maximum.
- All children referred in the year before transition to have at least 2 terms of intervention prior to transition.
- Children supported by EDIT experience a successful transition in to school, as reported by parents and schools

**Cost**

A 0.4 EDIT teacher would cost £26,387 per annum including on costs.

**Savings**

Avoidance of one local maintained special school placement due to improved transition to mainstream school would save approximately **£26,000** including place funding.