

All Party Parliamentary Group for the Teaching Profession



Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 25 March 2019 at 4.00-6.00pm in “The Ideas Space”, 8-10 Great George Street, London, SW1P 3AE

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr Chris Waterman welcomed attendees to the meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group for the Teaching Profession.

It was reported that apologies had been received from MPs due to parliamentary matters.

Thanks were expressed to the Policy exchange for lending “The Ideas Space” for a meeting space to allow the APPG to continue.

2. Mental Health in Schools: the current situation.

A discussion led by Jenny George (National Audit Office) with input from attendees of their local experience

RECEIVED: A Presentation from Jenny George, National Audit Office

REPORTED:

That the report had looked at Child Mental Health Services.

That Mental Health had historically been a poor relation to physical health, although the government were now looking to rectify this.

That the government had allocated £1.4 Billion of funding over 5years via “Future in mind” programme.

That the report was commissioned to identify if the government were on track to meet its ambitions.

That it is estimated that one quarter of children with a mental health problem could access specialist mental services.

That in October 2018 the number able to access services was up to 30% of those needing services, with the majority not seen by mental health specialists.

That the report had covered Mental Health in the education sector and had shown that schools were already doing a lot and had identified mental health as a key issue, although there was variation across the sector.

That there was no good data available to determine the amount spent as it was not a directly identifiable funding stream.

That a survey carried out by the DfE had shown that most schools deliver some form of support and the majority were offering several forms of support.

That there were concerns regarding the universal and early intervention services, with an increasing demand for NHS services,

That the lack of NHS services was placing pressure on LAs and schools.

That schools had seen a 16% reduction in the numbers of school nurses employed from 2015-2018.

That the "Future in Mind" programme was a call to arms, which included 49 proposals but had not been set up to be 1 deliverable program,

That the programme proposed to increase the number of children who could access NHS services, and was expected to increase access rates by up to 31% by 2021.

That the "Stepping forward" proposal identified increasing staffing and implementing local transformational plans.

That in 2017 the government had published a joint green paper with the NHS and education which had identified the need for early intervention services.

That whilst the green paper was a good "call to arms", the individual strands were not and that there was no cross-government accountability in place.

That the green paper had stated that all schools should identify a lead for Mental Health and that there would be a fund for Mental Health support teams which should be supervised by NHS staff providing a link between schools and the NHS.

That the paper was seen as positive but was in the early days in terms of implementation.

That the paper raised a number of question and things to watch, including the target of 20-25% of country which had been identified as needing to be covered by 2023, only minority children will have access to support services.

That it was estimated that approx. 1000 schools would be covered.

That there was a risk of substitution, with money being repurposed to provide the funding required for services.

That is was unclear whether or not sufficient resources were in place, as the programme would require 8,000 new staff and there was a slow process in expanding NHS which presented a risk for the programme.

That the most recent estimates were from 2004, when 10% had been identified as requiring Mental Health support.

That a prevalence report had indicated a slight increase since 2004. However there were skews to the data and emotional disorders had risen significantly with 74% late teen girls identified as having a related condition.

(by Chris Waterman)

That the paper had shown incredibly low ambition level as it was only aiming to get people into 25% of schools

(by Jenny George_

That the government were proposing to increase the number of children seen to 25-35% and that pilots could realistically reach 25% and then look to increase.

(by Lord Listowel)

That the NHS were currently cutting specialists and therefore, there was concern there would not be sufficient supervision of the workforce. Evidence to show shortage of experience for supervision?

(by Jenny George)

That the number of child psychologists has declined in the last few years

(by Max Fishel)

That actual causes of the epidemic of Mental Health issue were identified as poverty and the pressures of social media. That the report was addressing the symptoms and not the cause of mental health issues in children.

(by Jenny George)

That Sam Stephens mentions the effects of Social Media, and the difficulty of identifying drivers.

That the earlier children received support and treatment the cheaper it is and more effective it is.

(by Max Fishel)

That there needed to be a cross-departmental approach to address this issue.

(by Chris James)

That there was concern regarding the growth and prevalence of issues and that whilst some were predictable, there were many complexities

That it was unclear what the Teaching Profession and schools should be responsible for that is wise and manageable.

(by Jenny George)

That the Government suggests that Mental Health was a cross departmental-issue and therefore everyone should play their part.

(by Chris Waterman)

That there appears to be an education system moving one way. in terms of a narrow focus on content, whilst teachers are also expected to pick up pastoral issues when these are becoming more complex and difficult to manage.

(by Julie Greer)

That there was a spectrum of need and provision and that all children should get access to environment and opportunities,

That all children have Mental Health and that poor mental health has been destigmatised, providing a greater ability to talk about Mental Health issues now.

That there was a need for access to specialists for those with needs, and that schools were well placed to identify this but that it must be Health care professionals that deliver this.

(by Lord Listowel)

That reliable consistent relationships with children is crucial to support them with Mental Health issues.

(by Tim Oates)

That the emphasis shouldn't be seen as a responsibility of schools however, it was important for schools to acknowledge the impact of curriculum and its subsequent impact or remedy of issues.

That curriculum was focused on individual performance with pupils defined by predictive grades, and pastoral support often had a discourse of character rather than about how schools can support children.

That it was vital for schools to look at the individual identity and academic identity separately.

That for some a change of culture within school may be required and then schools can begin tackle problems before emergent mental health problems escalate.

(by Sam Butters)

That the mental health of teachers and parents was also important.

That the culture of school and system of education could exacerbate these issues and the environment needs to be more positive.

(by Nick Brook)

That teachers had a duty to promote good Mental Health in schools.

That teachers should be able to identify but shouldn't emulate or replace health roles.

(by Deb Outhwaite)

That the local experience of losing two students to suicide had resulted in traumatised staff who were still facing the stresses of Ofsted.

That within an opportunity area there was no additional funding for mental health and that an under-funded strategy is not working.

(by Chris Waterman)

That it was unclear what the modelling of local integrated team would cost for a group of schools. That this would be helpful to show how much adequate Mental Health provision would cost and that an analyse of who is needed to deliver

3. “Trends shaping Education: 2019”: a response to the OECD Report

REPORTED:

That the report raises big, key issues for education and that attendees were invited to contribute to a response to the OECD report.

That the secretary was not aware of any other response to the OECD report and therefore, this offered a good first response from the APPG.

RECEIVED:

A draft response to the OECD Report

An oral report providing a summary of each of the chapters from the 5 contributors.

REPORTED:

That it was intended the APPG would produce a publication and that members will be invited to provide comments prior to publication.

That an invite will be sent to the Education Minister to attend the APPG to listen to discussions held.

Thanks were expressed to the co-authors for their contribution to the response to the OECD report.

4. Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy: a response to the DfE paper

REPORTED:

(by Chris Waterman)

That the paper presented low ambition, and, for example, one of the challenges had been identified as making it easier for people to apply to become a teacher.

(by Nick Brook)

That the Early career framework investment was considered useful,

That for new head-teachers, parallel arrangements were needed

That the analysis which identified workload as being too high was correct.

That an analysis of the problem with Teacher Recruitment and Retention was sound, however the paper failed to adequately determine how these issues will be addressed.

(by Jackie Moses)

That the strategy only goes so far and that it was critical that schools have the financial resources to allow an adequate response.

(by Julie Greer)

That teacher's personal investment also needs to be considered as well, teachers need to take a more academic approach to their own career.

(by Michelle Palmer)

That the strategy was a good starting point and tool to think about how it can be implemented.

That the implementation would need to be monitored and that there was a requirement to hold government to account.

That the Royal Society of Chemistry had responded to the strategy and would be working regionally with schools.

(by Tim Oates)

That implementation was not solely for the government to conduct.

(by Jean-Louis Dutaut)

That policy makers need to take some accountability

(by Max Fishel)

That the Secretary of state needs to hear the experience of experts in their field to ensure that policy is fully informed.

(by Deb Outhwaite)

That the teacher workload reduction roadshows provided an opportunity to provide feedback.

(by Chris Waterman)

That at the next meeting of the APPG a response to the paper would be collated.

That the Secretary would invite the Chair to sign a letter inviting the Secretary of State to attend APPG to hear discussions.

5. Teacher numbers: an update

A paper outlining the current situation regarding teacher numbers would be circulated.

6. National Audit Office: an update

REPORTED:

(by Mark Parrett).

That the Public Accounts Committee had written to Amanda Spielman flagging their concerns and issues

That there was a public accounts committee enquiry into apprenticeships;

That the National Audit Office were carrying out a value for money study on SEND which was expected to be published Summer 2019 and would cover financial sustainability, mental health and workforce.

7. Any other business

(a) Ethical Leadership (Chartered College of Teaching)

REPORTED (by Nick Brook)

That the Leadership development group were advising on the development and accreditation of leadership.

That the group were considering three parts; embedding the framework and taking forward the pathfinder programme, embedding the framework in teacher and leader training and establishing ethics forum.

That a full presentation would be provided at the next APPG meeting.

(b) Summer Meeting

TO REPORT:

That this will take place on 10 June 2019 at 4.00-6.00pm in Committee Room 10, at the Palace of Westminster