

## **Allocation of additional Grant Funding for LEAPS Funding for 2 year olds** **(From March 2015 to be known as Local Early Intervention and Prevention Support)**

### **Introduction**

In January 2015 Beacon Hill received a **Grant of £25,237** to provide additional support for 2 year olds with SEND accessing nursery provision.

- It was agreed that the additional funding would initially cover 2 terms (8 months).
- Criteria and a process for the allocation of funding via the LEAPS panel were agreed at a meeting at Beacon Hill on February 12<sup>th</sup> 2015.
- Information and guidelines regarding the new funding and the LEAPS process were circulated to all North Tyneside Early Years Providers in March 2015.

### **Purpose of the Funding - Agreed outcomes from meeting held on 12th February 2015** **(Mark Taylor, John Thompson, Helen Jones and Lynn Scorer)**

- LEAPS funding will be made available to all 2 year olds, not just those accessing nursery provision via the 2 year offer.
- Applications will be considered on an individual basis and funding allocated accordingly. It is acknowledged that children who require oxygen or have other highly complex needs may require up to 100% 1:1 support.
- Allocation of funding will be based on settings clearly demonstrating the needs of the child and what training, resources, support and strategies will be needed in order to successfully include those children with SEND. This will be over and above those resources allocated from within the setting.
- Almost ALL of the specialist nursery provisions in North Tyneside are now full and have waiting lists. The additional funding for 2 year olds will be used to facilitate inclusion within mainstream provisions wherever possible. Staff in settings will be trained and supported – additional personnel will be recruited to facilitate this.
- Those children with significant needs may make the transition to a specialist provision at 3 years of age – (when LEAPS would reduce to a maximum 50% in a mainstream setting.)
- Mark Taylor would expect that approximately half of the additional funding will be allocated in the summer term and the remainder carried over to the Autumn term. (this did not happen due to the late allocation of the funding into Beacon Hill)
- The impact of the additional support for 2 year olds will be monitored and evaluated,

The basis of the funding was to support those 2 year olds who would have been likely to require an Assessment Nursery placement but, due to over subscription, would need to access a mainstream placement with a high level of support. There are currently 2 children receiving funded support (14 hours per week)

It was also agreed that mainstream settings including those children would also have access to support, via the Portage team for target setting, sign posting to appropriate training, help with LEAPS paperwork, Team around the Child/Family meetings etc. This has formed the

basis for the majority of our work to date (the equivalent of 1 and ½ days per week currently)

**ATTACHED IS A BREAKDOWN OF THE SPEND TO SEPTEMBER 2015 AND A PROJECTED SPEND UP TO MARCH 16** (which would utilise the entire grant allocation if allowed to continue beyond December 15).

- Within the grant there was specific provision to offer specialised support to settings who were including children whose needs indicated that they may require Specialist Nursery Provision.
- This support would be made available from within the Portage team.
- Support allocated was initially 2 half days per week but has increased to 3 half days from September 2015.

#### **Progress to date – January-October 2015**

- At the end of the financial year 2014-15 to March **£2577** had been allocated.
- **£22,660** was available from April 2015 to fund support in the Summer and Autumn terms – to December.
- The grant has primarily funded support, via the Portage team, to 22 children in settings. (Of these 6 had previously applied for Assessment Nursery placements at 2 and ½ years of age and been unsuccessful.)
- With the support provided into settings (**2 x ½ days per week**) **all** children have made successful transitions into 2 year nursery placements and made progress towards agreed targets.
- 3 children are now accessing a mainstream 3 year old provision, with ongoing LEAPS support and 4<sup>th</sup> has a place at Beacon Hill.
- 2 children have moved from Children's centre provision into school based nursery classes with no LEAPS funding.
- This gives some indication of the impact that this level of support can have when it is both timely and well received by both settings and parents.
- With an additional half-day TA time being funded from September members of the Portage team are currently supporting 14 two year olds with Additional needs. Only 1 is receiving additional funded support in his setting via LEAPS (2 hours per week)
- Of the 22 children supported at least 10 would have been applying for Specialist Nursery provisions at 2 and ½ if it had not been for the additional support available via this grant.

#### **Training and Support**

Bespoke Support has also been provided to a range of provisions across North Tyneside, to co-ordinate support for 11 children. (**Equivalent to ½ day per week**)

This additional support has taken the form of:

- Supporting staff with AEN/LEAPS paperwork
- Signposting to appropriate staff training opportunities (eg. Makaton, PECS etc)
- Observations of children and advice on target setting
- Attending Team Around Child or Family meetings
- Direct liaison with parents and other professionals, including the LEAPS panel

Of these children 3 settings were supported with an Application and transition into an Assessment Nursery placement, 5 were supported with LEAPS applications, Team around the Child meetings and implementing strategies within their setting. There was also direct liaison with parents and other professionals involved with supporting 7 of the children to arrange visits to nurseries and accompany families on visits and with submitting the correct paperwork.

### **Portage Basic Workshop Training**

A 3 day training course, leading to a certificate in Portage Practice, was offered to all Early Years Providers in North Tyneside in April 2015 and October 2015. The training is targeted at Early Years practitioners and focusses on Observation, recording, target setting, small steps and measuring progress of children with SEND.

Staff from 3 Children's Centres, 1 childminder, 1 practitioner from a Private nursery and 5 nursery teachers attended, along with Portage parents from North Tyneside and practitioners from Newcastle, Sunderland and Gateshead. The evaluations were incredibly positive. They felt the training was relevant to their work and would help them when working with children with SEND in their settings.

In the past there has been funding available from the National Portage Association to offer free places to those in Early Years settings but this ceased 2 years ago.

The funding for 2 year olds could be used to increase attendance at this training which is so highly valued across North Tyneside and the North East Region.

### **Bespoke Training Day**

Planned in conjunction with 2 Teachers from Beacon Hill and Speech and Language Therapy. This training would be offered to those settings who are including those children with significant difficulties, with very limited play and interaction skills and who aren't able to engage in nursery routines. The training day will be offered in the Autumn term.

### **LEAPS funding for 2 Year olds**

To date the LEAPS panel has received just 7 applications for support for 2 year olds. 5 of these were declined as it was not felt that the needs of the children were over and above what could be offered within a 1:4 ratio.

Information regarding the funding available for 2 year olds was sent out in June and again September 15. It has been circulated through all settings and Childminders.

- The September LEAPS panel allocated 12 hours support to a 2 year old with Visual Impairment attending a private day nursery. Based on term time attendance to the end of December this will cost £1486.80.
- The panel has been made aware that there is another 2 year old with the same condition and her setting are applying for additional funding to support her. It can be assumed that this will be awarded at the same rate £1486.80 per term.
- LEAPS funding was also been allocated to a 2 year old in a playgroup at 2 hours per week at the October panel. This will total approximately £115.64 to the end of term in December.

It is anticipated that the demand on the funding will increase significantly over the next term and we would hope to be able to continue to allocate funding up to the end of the financial year in March. (SEE PROJECTION ON EXCEL SPREADSHEET ATTACHED)

- The Portage database identifies 9 children aged under 2 who may begin to attend a setting, following their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday, in the Spring term.
- Of these children 6 would have been likely to apply for Assessment Nursery places at 2 and ½ years last year due to their level of need.
- For these children it can be assumed that they will have significant needs, requiring at least 50% support. This would make the average allocation **£810 per child per term**.
- This funding will be needed to ensure that these children can continue to access a mainstream provision until they are eligible for nursery entry following their 3rd birthdays.
- Parents and settings will be supported in order to ensure smooth transitions from home into a setting or from a 2 year placement into a 3 year placement.
- The support will be monitored and evaluated at the end of the Autumn term, in line with LEAPS funding for 3 year olds and payments issued to settings in December 2015.

#### **Funding Request 2016-17**

I would anticipate that in order to extend the work we are currently doing we would need an additional £10,000 (ie a grant of £35,000)

- There have only been a few applications directly to LEAPS panel but with some additional dissemination of information this will increase. One of the children who is receiving funded support has 12 hours a week – this is a cost of £1486 for the Autumn term alone. We need to ensure that we have sufficient funding to meet the complex needs of these children.
- Some settings need support in making their applications to panel if they are new to the process and this direct support could be made available from my team.
- Settings who then receive support via LEAPS could be offered guidance in how best to utilise it for the benefit of the child and evaluate the impact – again this would be offered from within my team.
- We are currently offering the equivalent of 1 and ½ days support in this way but would need to increase this in line with increased numbers of settings receiving funded support. The funding would allow me to either offer paid ‘backfill’ in order that members of my team could be released by their managers or have a designated ‘2 year old’ person who facilitates this - maybe for 2 and ½ days each week..
- One of the areas we haven’t been able to progress this year is Bespoke training and we are aware that there is a need for this. The training has been written and prepared. Continued funding would enable us to roll this out in the new financial year.
- I would like as many settings as possible to send staff on the 3 day Portage training as this really does increase their skills in observation, target setting and recording

small steps of progress of the children. Funding could be used to offer the incentive of a limited number of free places on this training (which usually costs £150)

- I also want to further develop work with childminders who work with 2 year olds.
- Finally there is an award available to settings (and childminders) who can demonstrate that they work to Portage principles. It's the National Portage Association Stamp of Approval. This involves supporting settings and completing an application form and evaluation. I have approached 4 settings and 1 childminder to be the first to apply and would need time to work with them over the next few months to complete this process. I would like to award the first North Tyneside settings in the Spring.

Lynn Scorer – Head of Portage/LEAPS October 2015