

Schools Forum – 10th November 2022
Minority Ethnic Achievement Service (MEAS)
2021 – 2022 Financial Year

Executive Summary:

- To inform the Schools Forum on the delivery of the current MEAS offer to maintained schools
- To update schools on the recommendations made in the Autumn term 2021 School Forum report and progress made in delivering them
- To provide further recommendations to support the continued development of MEAS

Recommendation

That Schools Forum:

1. Agrees to the continued de-delegated funding from maintained primary school's delegated budget for 2023-2024 financial year
2. Notes the continued improvements and development of the service over the last year and proposals for next year

**Report of Assistant Director for Education Strategy and Improvement
Families and Communities**

Background

1. The Minority Ethnic Achievement Service was a centrally retained service until 2012/2013, when it became a de-delegated service under Exception 1 of the Funding Reform requirements. The Schools Forum have since voted annually to agree that the service should be provided centrally. The service is managed by Entrust Education Services, Staffordshire County Council's joint venture partner.
2. The Minority Ethnic Achievement Service is available to primary and secondary academies at a cost and can be purchased on a pupil-by-pupil basis or as a combined package of Inclusion Support and other services.

Context

3. Maintained schools are divided into two categories to determine the support they receive from MEAS.
 - EMAG (Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant) schools are identified annually based on a formula which considers the number of EAL pupils and also their country of origin. EMAG schools receive funding directly and are not entitled to support for new arrivals from MEAS. We have produced a good practice guide to support schools; [Minority Ethnic Achievement Service \(MEAS\) | Staffordshire Connects](#)
 - Non EMAG schools can refer new arrivals to MEAS and also receive a nominal funding allowance for each pupil, this is used to fund additional resources such as dictionaries, dual language books or apps.
4. All maintained schools who do not receive the EMAG funding are able to request support for pupils causing concern, i.e., those who are not making the expected progress in learning English.
5. All referrals for the Minority Ethnic Achievement Service are sent to a central inbox MEAS@entrust-ed.co.uk. Referrals are systematically reviewed daily and allocated to a caseworker based on the language spoken by the pupil.
6. Once pupils are allocated a consultant, the consultant will arrange a visit to the school. During this visit, the pupil will be observed in class and an assessment will usually be conducted. The nature of this assessment depends on the age of the pupil and the language spoken. Where the consultant worker speaks the pupil's language a home language assessment will be conducted. During the visit there will be a conversation with an appropriate person from the staff to identify any particular issues for the pupil and where possible with the parent/carer. Following the visit, a comprehensive report is sent to the school which includes strategies and resources which can be used to support the pupil.
7. In addition to the initial visit MEAS will also attend meetings with parents, this is particularly useful where the team member speaks the home language but can also be useful in other situations. For example, many parents do not understand the benefits of the child talking their own language at home or how the English education system works. The team's experience of working with EAL pupils can help to overcome these issues.
8. The number of referrals to MEAS have increased dramatically this academic year due to world-wide travel starting again after the COVID19 pandemic but also due to the political situation in Afghanistan, Hong Kong and Ukraine.

9. Figure 1 – Referrals from Maintained Schools

Academic Year	New Arrivals Primary	New Arrivals Secondary	Pupils causing concern Primary	Pupils causing concern Secondary
2015 - 2016	161	21	28	0
2016 - 2017	80	17	36	4
2017 - 2018	47	6	29	3
2018 - 2019	26	13	20	2
2019 - 2020	32	5	16	3
2020 - 2021	15	0	24	2
2021 - 2022	54	7	17	1

Figure 2 – Comparison of Academy and Maintained Schools

Primary Schools				
Academic Year	Academies		Maintained	
	Schools	%	Schools	%
2015 - 2016	73	24.4%	226	75.6%
2016 - 2017	97	32.4%	202	67.6%
2017 - 2018	122	40.8%	177	59.2%
2018 - 2019	148	49.7%	150	50.4%
2019 - 2020	177	56.2%	135	43.8%
2020 - 2021	183	58.6%	129	41.4%
2021 - 2022	195	63.3%	113	36.7%
Secondary Schools				
2015 - 2016	36	51.4%	34	48.6%
2016 - 2017	42	60.0%	28	40.0%
2017 - 2018	47	67.1%	23	32.9%
2018 - 2019	53	74.6%	18	25.4%
2019 - 2020	55	78.5%	15	21.5%
2020 - 2021	58	82.8%	12	17.2%
2021 - 2022	58	82.8%	12	17.2%

Countries of origin

Country	Number
Afghanistan	41 (13 maintained + 29 Academies)
Anglo-Dutch	1
Bulgaria	1
China	5
Hong Kong	8
India	3
Mexico	1
Poland	3
Slovakia	1

Syria	3
Thailand	1
Ukraine	48 (32 maintained + 16 Academies)
Vietnam	1
Total for maintained schools	79

10. Beyond the individual consultant support, schools are also supported to develop their provision for EAL learners through a range of approaches including learning walks, modelling good practice for staff and resources such as guidance for welcoming refugees.

Update from last report to School Forum

11. **Working with families from Afghanistan** – a number of Afghan families arrived in the Newcastle district in September 2021 and the MEAS team supported schools as they welcomed these new arrivals. In all 11 schools were provided with support and the team worked with 41 individual pupils.

Some of the common challenges faced by Afghan evacuee pupils and schools were:

- a. New environment – different school systems and curriculum
- b. Learning EAL in a fully English-speaking environment – as opposed to language classes
- c. Different teaching styles - UK schools vs Afghan schools
- d. Culture – dress, food, behaviour norms
- e. Social expectations
- f. Preparing mid-term to receive the pupils
- g. Sorting logistics such as access arrangements/uniforms/resources/contacts
- h. Non-attendance after enrolment
- i. Potentially non-permanence of the pupils' enrolment in the school
- j. Staff being unfamiliar in supporting new arrivals

Support provided by MEAS for receiving schools;

- a. Regular contact with the schools, continuing to offer support dependent on the schools needs. For example, to provide resource and lesson plan guidance and curriculum progression
- b. Delivered staff sessions in how to welcome and work with newly arrived pupils, how school and pupils can support the EAL pupils. For example, support staff to reflect on the school's Difference and Diversity curriculum.
- c. Signposted both via email and during staff sessions to useful resources and websites
- d. Visited the schools to observe, assess and advise staff on how best to support the children
- e. Reports were written and sent in with recommendations of strategies which included, placing the newly arrived pupils with middle to high

ability pupils, to include children in all activities, use visuals where possible when teaching the children as well as pre-teach vocabulary on new topics, to use visuals to communicate their social needs, use of buddy systems etc.

- f. Delivered Diversity sessions around Migration and Islam and Christianity.

12. Working with families from Ukraine

During the Spring term, due to the political situation in Ukraine and the response of the British Government, a number of families arrived in Staffordshire. The response from MEAS mirrored that offered to the families from Afghanistan.

To date (5/9/2022) 122 primary aged pupils are attending Staffordshire schools. We have received 48 referrals for individual pupil support (32 maintained + 16 Academies) which is just over 39% of the total number of pupils.

Impact of the MEAS service

13. Based on the service's experience of working with schools, feedback received, and the five recommendations made in the 2021 Schools Forum report, (detailed below) we have implemented some additional delivery from September 2021. These additional functions have provided schools with further support and advice on implementing the graduated response.

14. Recommendation 1: Training for schools

Produce a webinar on Supporting pupils with Emotional Health and Wellbeing.

Progress to date up until the end of the academic year 2022 – this will be ready for the autumn term and the link sent out in the Autumn term Newsletter.

In response to the arrival of families and children from Ukraine, MEAS ran a webinar in June "Meeting the needs of newly arrived EAL students". This was attended by 9 schools. MEAS will repeat the webinar during the Autumn term.

15. Recommendation 2: Follow up on EMAG action plans

Provide training for staff around how to support EAL children and families effectively.

Progress to date up until the end of the academic year 2022 – To date 18 schools have returned their action plans from a possible 28 schools which is a return rate of 64%. Reminders have been sent to the 10 schools outstanding. The team have put together a Good Practice guide and action plan template which was sent to the schools to showcase excellent practice and provide further ideas for schools. [Minority Ethnic Achievement Service \(MEAS\) | Staffordshire Connects](#)

One school requested a staff meeting focussing on strategies to support learning for EAL pupils.

16. Recommendation 3: Expand the Difference and Diversity workshop offer

Provide a new workshop for schools around racism.

Progress to date up until the end of the academic year 2022 – this will be ready for the autumn term and the link sent out in the Autumn term Newsletter.

Since September 2021, the team have delivered 126 sessions over 29 schools. Sessions include; Journeys, focussing on refugees arriving to this country, Lady in Black, Focus on Islam, Chinese calligraphy, and an Introduction to Urdu.

Feedback from schools who have received the Difference and Diversity sessions;

We included this as part of a multi-faith day, and it definitely addressed misconceptions about why some people cover their hair/face and move to another country.

Primary school in Tamworth

Thank you for a brilliant morning. The children gained so much knowledge and have a great time taking part in your practical approaches which were fun and engaging.

Primary School in Cannock

Excellent activity that was thought provoking.

Primary school in Staffordshire Moorlands

17. Recommendation 4: Provide a MEAS support helpline

Provide a MEAS telephone helpline for 1 session per week, to help improve accessibility to the service for all schools.

Progress to date up until the end of the academic year 2022 – the phone line commenced in May 2022 and schools were notified via the summer newsletter, information sent to the SEND and Inclusion hubs and by team members.

The helpline is available every Friday morning during term time on 0333 300 1900 option 6 ask for MEAS. This phone line is open to all schools, both maintained and academies. Enquiries range from support for pupils who are new to school, requests for training, advice on transition, where to find appropriate resources and working with parents and carers.

To date the average number of calls received per session is 6 - 10. The majority of calls currently are concerning support for families from Afghanistan and Ukraine.

18. Recommendation 5: Provide MEAS support to Afghan resettlement programme

Provide information, advice, and guidance to schools around supporting Afghan refugees as part of the services core offer and as required and directed by Staffordshire County Council.

Progress to date up until the end of the academic year 2022 – 41 referrals were made into the service. 13 referrals came from maintained schools, the rest from academies.

19. Additional delivery

Contact was made with the 28 EMAG schools requesting data on newly arrived pupils learning through English as an additional language in Staffordshire.

The letter explains that as an EMAG school there is no longer the need to complete a Notification of New Arrival form (NONA) and a funding form for each new arrival. EMAG schools will receive a lump sum for the year, comprising a minimum allocation of £1500. This is a “one off” payment to meet the specific needs on entry to school.

At the end of the year each school will be asked to submit information on the number of new arrivals they have received.

EMAG schools are still eligible to apply for additional funding to meet the needs of asylum seeking/refugee children and the school can access support from MEAS if they have an EAL pupil who is causing concern. This may be a new arrival or a pupil who has been in school for some time.

EMAG schools were requested to submit their action plans for analysis detailing how they were utilising their EMAG funding. To date 18 schools have returned their action plans from a possible 28 schools which is a 64% return rate. Reminders have been sent to the 10 schools outstanding. The team have put together a Good Practice guide and action plan template which was sent to the schools to showcase excellent practice and provide further ideas for schools.

The team continue to support schools with advice and strategies in dealing with concerns over racist incidents. Two schools contacted us and were offered Difference and Diversity sessions. The following feedback was received:

Thank you so much for your visit we thoroughly enjoyed it. The structure for the day was brilliant. From being in the hall and answering the questionnaire, to being able to go back to class and unpick each question. The children were able to challenge stereotypes and reflect on their own misconceptions and stigmas. The Q and A aspect of the session worked really well, as the children at this point felt comfortable asking questions and exploring their own curiosity. The children also commented on how much they loved the interactive aspects, trying on the traditional wear and playing who wants to be a millionaire, to consolidate their learning. Thank you so much for your visit. I am sure the children will remember this experience for a long time.

20. The team produced 10 top tips for Transition for schools which was included in the summer edition of the termly newsletter for schools. [Minority Ethnic Achievement Service \(MEAS\) | Staffordshire Connects](#)
21. Production of a termly newsletter for schools which includes advice, guidance and resources and relevant articles and thought pieces. [Minority Ethnic Achievement Service \(MEAS\) | Staffordshire Connects](#)
22. Attendance at the SEND hubs – this has enabled the team to bring MEAS to the attention of schools and other multi-agencies, e.g. Inclusion officers, schools who have not accessed MEAS historically and has led to more enquiries.

Recommendations for the financial year 2022/23 in additional to core delivery;

23. **Recommendation 1: To continue to promote and provide a MEAS telephone helpline** for 1 session per week, to help improve accessibility to the service for all schools. This will be monitored, and sessions added should there be sufficient demand.
24. **Recommendation 2: To produce training for schools** around ways to promote oracy and opportunities to talk for EAL learners. This will consist of whole school, classroom, and homework strategies.
25. **Recommendation 3: Continue to provide MEAS support to pupils from Ukraine** Provide information, advice, and guidance to schools around supporting pupils from Ukraine as part of the services core offer and as required and directed by Staffordshire County Council, including providing a termly training webinar for schools.

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List of background papers: