Kraftsamling - Inter-services cooperation to identify children at risk

Kraftsamling – Långt ifrån lagom

Municipality of Botkyrka / Sweden

Here

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The local context in Botkyrka
- Botkyrka is a municipality outside of Stockholm with a population of 85,000 inhabitants.
- 53 percent of the population have a migration background and 100 different languages are spoken in that area.

The educational context - schools in Botkyrka
- 46 municipal pre-schools and 12 private preschools
- five open pre-schools
- 21 municipal comprehensive schools and six independent schools
- three upper secondary schools and three independent secondary schools

Kraftsamling/Mobilisation – The starting point of social services
- Social services in the Municipality of Botkyrka work together with those children that schools are worried about. They seek to provide joint support as early as possible and support children in the best possible way with the child’s needs in focus.
- Schools are an important resource in the work of social services with children at risk, as children spend a considerable amount of time in the school environment. Schools and social services are partners with as much openness and transparency as possible in their cooperation.

Cooperation between social services and schools
• Social services and education committees are directed to improve the collaboration and take measures to better identify children at risk and in need of support. A pre-study carried out between 2007-2008 mapped existing collaboration and identified development areas.
• Both committees made formal decisions to jointly collaborate. In this context, the project ‘Kraftsamling’ was carried out between 2009-2010.
• Both committees incorporated the project into their everyday work as from 1 January 2011 onwards.

Project implementation
• A steering group jointly chaired by the Director of Social Services and the Director of Education headed the project implementation. Local collaboration groups jointly chaired by team leaders and head teachers were likewise involved in the project implementation. Every school has a contact social worker from social services.
• Staff within social services and schools use a joint policy document with collaborative working routines centred around individual children.
• A joint development programme for schools and social services was implemented. Structured cooperation and collaboration on all levels was in place – from the individual social worker/school representative to management and political decision makers.

Prevention and early intervention
• At the level of local groups: Field workers visit school welfare teams once per term. Information to parents is given at the start of each term.
• At the level of individual children and families: Offers of a meeting to discuss support needs.

 Approaches for high risk children or children on register
• Group level: Social services contact workers give advice to school personnel on group/class problems.
• Individual level:
  ▪ Contact to social workers available at low threshold
  ▪ Early signaling system to ensure timely responses
  ▪ Feedback possibility to school personnel
|   | Close cooperation during child care investigations  
|   | Coordination of support in schools and in homes  
|   | Dialogue during placement outside the home and with return to the home  
| **Moving cross-sectoral collaboration forward** |  
|   | Police started to be represented in steering group and local collaboration groups from 2012 onwards.  
|   | Community intervention groups were set up to respond to young people at risk of developing a criminal identity.  
| **Issues:** | Conflicts of interest and barriers to cross-sectoral cooperation may come up. This can for example result in the emergence of leadership issues in who drives the cooperation.  
|   | Identifying effective methods with positive outcomes remains a challenge.  
| **Resources:** | Staff from social services, schools, the police, and local authorities.  
| **Objectives:** | Establishing better cooperation between social services and schools  
|   | Delivering person-centred services to children, including vulnerable children with complex needs  
| **Outcomes:** | Enhanced services for children  
|   | Improved inter-sectoral cooperation between services  
| **Evaluation:** | n. a.  