

SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy & Partnership Board

6 February, 10.00 – 12.00

Committee Room 2, County Hall, Chichester

Brian Pope, Independent Chair

WSSC

Lucy Butler, Director of Children's Services
Jenny Boyd, AD Children's Social Care and Early Help
Steve Nyakatawa, AD Education & Skills
Claire Prince, Head of SEND & Inclusion
Claire Hayes, Head of Early Help
Vince Clarke, Children First Transformation Director
Kathryn Kellagher, SEND Development Officer
Karen Furse, Head of Standards & Effectiveness
Vicky Richardson, Head of Practice Improvement and Inspection
Fiona Mackison, Public Health Strategic Commissioning Lead
Marie Foley, Head of Data, Projects and Systems
Steve Trippier

Education and schools

Mark Wignall, Head, Downlands Secondary
Phillip Potter, Head Oak Grove College
Claire Kenyon, Busy Lizzies, Early Years
Doug Thomas, Head APC
Simon Brown, Head of SEND, Chichester College
Gillian Santi, Governors Association

Parent Carers

Health

Sally Kean, Children's Commissioning Manager

Councillor Representative

Jacque Russell, Cabinet member

Apologies

WSSC

Louise Warren, Senior Improvement Lead
Loretta Rogers, AD Adult Operations
Louise Fox, Head of Service Assessment and Family Safeguarding
Wanda Parker, Service Manager (rep for Louise Fox)
Grace Fairbourn, Early Years SEND Lead
Sarah Clark, Head of Virtual School

Education and schools

Representative of primary schools

Health and Commissioning

Jacqui Parfitt, Service Manager and Development Lead, Joint Commissioning Unit
Caroline Tozzi, Integrated Care System Health Lead
Kate Courtney, Designated Clinical Officer, maternity cover

Parent Carers

Rowan Westwood, West Sussex Parent Carers Forum

1. Delivering Better Value (DBV) and Change Partnership Programme, see attached presentation and papers

Issues raised in discussion:

Delivering Better Value (DBV)

- DBV £1m grant: it has been fed back to the DfE that it seems unfair for all Local Authorities receive £1m regardless of their size.
- DBV projects are around the highest impact changes we can make to systems that support CYP with SEND, primarily within mainstream education. Our action plan includes projects focusing on Early Years Support and Achieving Appropriate Step Down from EHCP.

Change Partnership Programme (CPP)

- The DfE would like Local Authorities to use a standardised template that will cover the whole SEND and Alternative Provision agenda. The Local Area Inclusion Plan (LAIP) is a huge collaborative piece of work which will involve parent carers, schools and other stakeholders. It will combine the SEF, the Implementation Plan and the data dashboard.
- The CPP pilots will be independently evaluated, providing a rich source of feedback for the DfE.
- Development of national standards – this is about thresholds and aims to create consistency between Local Authorities, allowing for national benchmarking.
- CPP Proposals around Alternative Provision are positive and align with our Improvement Plan focus on early intervention.

ACTIONS:

1.1 VC to circulate guidance and early draft of the LAIP

2. Terms of Reference

These have been updated to be in line with DfE guidance.

Membership: see attached for latest amendments.

The TOR were approved by the Board and will be reviewed again in December 2024.

Voluntary sector to be included in Partner Working Groups (PWGs) – WSPCF, Reaching Families, Aspens.

ACTIONS:

2.1 LB, BP and CT to meet to discuss representation from health providers.

3. Improvement Plan Partner Working Groups (PWGs)

The schedule for reporting into the SEND-AP Board was approved.

It was noted that the Improvement Plan will be reviewed once we have the published Ofsted Report, which is due on 21 February.

The leads for the PWGs report into the Education Transformation Board. The summary reports will feed into the SEND-AP Board, which will include significant achievements and challenges.

ACTION:

3.1 VC, ST, CP and KK to liaise over inviting PWG leads to SEND-AP Board.

4. EHCP Response Plan

See attached powerpoint – EHCP Response Plan

Thanks to CP, MF and Mathew Ansell who have worked with Karen Spencer and Andrea Morgan to produce the reviewed data.

Performance: Education Psychology assessments monthly:

- The figures for January are up to 21 January, so do not represent a complete month. For example, the number of completed EP assessments for January is 173, not 120. This will be rectified after March when the SEND-AP board starts to meet at the end of the month.
- The EPS new approach for assessments – Person-Centred Needs Assessment (PCNA) – has both increased efficiency and enabled better engagement with families.
- The autumn term overall figures for completed assessments were affected by industrial action and long-term sickness absence.
- We're actively reviewing our recruitment marketing strategy to attract more EPs to the service.

Performance: Education Psychology Assessments Autumn Term by priority:

- Priority 1 are mostly Early Years, where there are significant levels of need and evidence that they'll need a specialist and highly adapted environment to access education.
- EHCNA requests from Early Years have come through earlier in the school year, which gives us more time to find a suitable placement. Historically they have come through in late spring or summer term.
- We also prioritise children open to social care, and ask schools to advise SENAT if there is a change in a child's circumstances.

Performance: Education Psychology Assessments Yearly:

- The annual figures for completed assessments are considerably higher for 23/24, due to changing work practices in the EPS (using Person-Centred Needs Assessments – PCNAs), commissioning of Skylakes, and employing Associate EPs.

Performance: Education Psychology Assessments Timeliness:

- This slide is about the EP assessment only
- For next month, break this data down into numbers as well as percentages with narrative around those over 45 weeks so we can be confident in the data.

Performance: average weeks completed

- We are working on refining the SENAT data to ensure accurate reporting.
- There is an overall shift down in time taken to complete an EHCNA.
- For next month, include monthly figures of "in and out" - how many new requests come in, and how many EHCPs are issued.
- For next month, how many requests come in, how many are agreed, and how many result in an EHCP. It was noted that we tend to decline more requests for EHCNAs than other LAs, but the majority of our EHCNAs result in an EHCP.

Performance: SENAT

- Performance in SENAT has been affected by the need to focus on Age Phase Transfers, which should be completed by 15 February. There is a bottleneck of EHCPs waiting to be quality assured by the Team Managers.
- SENAT is not yet up to capacity though there is a recruitment plan in place.
- There are 5 vacancies, 3 have been filled and we are going out to advert again for the other two.
- Staff have been offered overtime; colleagues who previously worked for SENAT have been asked back on short-term contracts.

- We recruit from ex-teachers, SENCOs, TAs, those with administrative experience. Some are young and at the start of their working lives, others are returning to work after a break. Most are full time.
- We are looking to change how SENAT works by having separate teams for Assessments and Reviews.
- We are looking at how other Local Authorities have managed the increase in demand. The advice is that we're doing the right things, but it will take time and it's important to bring the staff with you.
- We are also conscious of the wellbeing of SENAT staff and recognise that they are put under a lot of pressure.
- SENAT is working with Organisation Development team over workflow and communications with families while they are waiting for their EHCPs.
- Alongside this, we are carrying out quality assurance audits of EHCPs, looking at the quality of the plans and of the assessments/reports that feed into the plans. Colleagues from health, social care and the WSPCF are involved in the audits.
- QA activities to be brought to the board at a future meeting.
- In recognition of the fact that some children are waiting a long time for their assessment to be completed, we are issuing additional funding to schools where a child has waited for more than 20 weeks. The funding amount is £3,644 per year, the equivalent of the Individually Assigned Resource. We are able to do this as we are confident that the vast majority of EHCNAs will result in an EHCP.

ACTIONS:

- 4.1 Break down EP assessments timeliness data into numbers as well as percentages.
- 4.2 Provide narrative around the assessments above 45 weeks so we can be confident in the data.
- 4.3 Include monthly figures of "in and out" – how many new requests for assessment come in, and how many EHCPs are issued.
- 4.4 Include how many EHCPs were issued within 20 weeks per month.
- 4.5 Include numbers of draft EHCPs which are delayed because of challenges in securing a suitable placement.
- 4.6 Break this down to include SEMH draft EHCPs which are delayed because of challenges in securing a suitable placement.
- 4.7 Include numbers of draft EHCPs which are delayed due to parental disagreement.
- 4.8 Look at the turnaround of healthcare providers