

## SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy & Partnership Board

**25 February 2025, 10.00 – 12.00**

**Chichester College, Chichester**

<p><b>Chair</b> Brian Pope, Independent Chair</p> <p><b>WSSC</b> Claire Hayes, AD Education &amp; Skills Claire Prince, Head of SEND &amp; Inclusion Nadia McGarry, SEND Improvement Lead Vicky Richardson, Head of Practice, Improvement &amp; Inspection Jade Fellows, Practice Development and Improvement Lead Karen Furse, Head of Standards &amp; Effectiveness Charlene Hornsey, Head of Early Help Rebecca Turner, SEND Strategic Commissioning Lead Kathryn Kellagher, SEND Development Officer Derry Richardson, Head of Service, Commercial and Contracting Karen Spencer, Principal Service Lead, SENAT Paul Morrison, SEN Post-16 Officer Mike Smith, Supported Internships Officer Cara Lambert and Jane Blackwell, Disability Register and Library Service</p> <p><b>Education and schools</b> Simon Brown, Head of SEND, Chichester College Mark Wignall, Head, Downlands Secondary Lisa Harris, Head Rumboldswyke Ruth Campbell, Head Chichester Nursery Nicky Smith, Governors Association</p> <p><b>NHS Sussex ICB</b> Rachael Prim, Designated Clinical Officer, for SEND</p> <p><b>Department for Education</b> Liz Flaherty</p> <p><b>Parent Carers</b> Rowan Westwood, West Sussex Parent Carers Forum Hannah Torr, West Sussex Parent Carers Forum</p>	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p><b>WSSC</b> Vince Clarke, Director of Children’s Services Marie Foley, Head of Data, Projects and Systems Kieron Lyons, AD Children’s Social Care and Early Help Loretta Rogers, AD Adult Operations Heidi Farr, Head of Assessment &amp; Family Safeguarding Central Fiona Mackison, Public Health Strategic Commissioning Lead Daniel Ruaux, AD Corporate Parenting Andy Thorne, Delegate for LA Finance Director Toby Wilson, Young Voices Stephen Humphrey, Head of Commissioning Sarah Clark, Head of Virtual School Grace Hall, Early Years SEND Lead</p> <p><b>Education and schools</b> Phillip Potter, Head Oak Grove College Doug Thomas, Head APC</p> <p><b>Parent Carers</b> John Clifton, West Sussex Parent Carers Forum</p> <p><b>NHS Sussex ICB</b> Caroline Tozzi, Joint Director for Children and Young People and Strategic Lead for SEND Toby Silverman, SEND Improvement Manager</p> <p><b>Councillor Representative</b> Jacquie Russell, Cabinet member</p> <p><b>NHS England SE SEND Advisor</b> Adeline Gibbs</p>
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## 1. Action Log

See Action Log

## 2. Disability Register

- West Sussex library service is the only one in the country to have the Disability Register sit within it.
- The Disability registration form collects a wide variety of information which provides a rich source of data. Data reports are available on request.
- The library service has a range of specialist, low-tech resources to lend out free of charge, eg multi-sensory packs, Understand Me communications library, and a booklist to help support a range of situations across age groups. There is a programme of free activities in all libraries, eg Story time, as well as SEND specific free holiday activities such as Dungeons and Dragons workshops for older young people.
- It was noted that the library welcomes children and young people and there shouldn't be concerns about noise – this should be emphasised as some parents cite this as a reason not to visit libraries.
- Rebecca to consider linking up Disability Register with annual health checks for post 14 year olds.
- The Disability Register has a steering group but would like to come to the SEND-AP Board for governance and for guidance in extending the register and increasing membership.

### ACTIONS:

2.1 It was agreed that the SEND-AP Board would provide governance for the Disability Register and it would attend on an annual basis, to coincide with the production of its annual report. KK to add to Forward Plan.

2.2 Cara/Jane to link with Karen Furse and attend a Head Teacher engagement session to promote the Disability Register and the Library Service.

2.3 Charlene H will share the presentation with Designated Schools Team.

2.4 Rebecca T to link with Disability Register over annual health checks for post 14 year olds.

## 3. SEF update

- The SEF content was presented in a new format which is based on three questions:
  - What are the highlights and key activity
  - What is the impact of our activity
  - What are our plans to improve practice over the next six months
- It shows there is a wealth of activity and initiatives; as we move into Q3 and Q4 we will need a greater focus again on the impact of this.
- As a board, we need to start asking the "So What" questions. EG on slide 42 it says the Post 16 team has supported 79 young people who are NEET and identified as having SEND. We need to evidence what happened to those children as a result of this support.
- The new format was praised for being more accessible and user friendly. The aim is for it to be something not just produced for senior leaders but as something useful that can be used in team meetings.
- Vicky and Rowan are working on how the WSPCF can inform the SEF; if WSPCF data aligns with our data and if it doesn't, what can we do about it. Vicky to

attend the Together for Change panel to see how that operates and how we can use it as evidence of coproduction.

- Board members are welcome to contribute to the SEF: please contact Vicky.
- Improving inclusive practice in schools was referenced as an area for improvement in the East Sussex Ofsted report:
  - WSCC School Ofsted reports should feed into the SEF – this information is captured by the Standards & Effectiveness service.
  - It would be helpful to include the perspective of those working in schools and other education settings.
  - The March SEND-AP board meeting will be at Downlands Community School and this will be a good opportunity to hear a SENCO's lived experience.
  - The next term Head Teacher engagement sessions will focus on highlighting good inclusive practice.
  - Growing West Sussex feeds into this conversation.
- There are a couple of sections where the focus is on children and young people with EHCPs rather than all children with SEN.
- On the section on quality assurance of EHCPs, it needs to be made clear that this is a multi-agency process, ie it includes health partners.

## **ACTIONS:**

**3.1** Karen Furse to liaise with Vicky over school Ofsted information.

**3.2** Amend section on quality assurance of EHCPs to make it clear that this is multi-agency.

## **4. Focus on Preparation for Adulthood, Area for Improvement 5**

This is an area where we have struggled to identify a lead, as it cuts across so many services. Derry Richardson has agreed to take this on and today we have brought together a number of people to talk about different aspects of the area of work.

### **Changing the Perspective: the Post-16 Landscape in West Sussex**

See presentation by Simon Brown/Paul Morrison

- Most learners with EHCPs sit with the Chichester College Group (1400), with 85 at Colliers and 183 at West Sussex special schools.
- There are 420 learners out of county, including 95 at specialist colleges which are predominantly for 19-25 year olds. These are spread across England, such as the Royal National College for the Blind in Hereford, where we currently have three students.
- EOTAS and AP are growing cohorts and it would be interesting to look deeper into this demographic. Those people out of school pre 16 can also find transition to college a challenge at post 16.
- Last year Chichester College Group (CCG) retained 70% of learners with a small percentage going to paid employment.
- It was noted that CCG offers a good range of education including 110 bespoke programmes to help those students who don't have the necessary qualifications to automatically move up a level. These learners would otherwise be NEET.
  - Funding of bespoke programmes is via claiming for additional guided learning hours or, where that is not possible, by applying to the local authority for high needs funding. Most local authorities don't allow FE colleges to apply for high needs funding without an EHCP but West Sussex does.

- The guidance around English and Maths is becoming more arbitrary: there was a caveat where a percentage of learners could be exempt from having to achieve level 4 but this was reduced to 2.5% this year and will be 0% next year. There is more flexibility in apprenticeships, where it has been amended to functional skills.
  - It's hard for those learners who feel a sense of failure when they have to resit exams in English and maths; this is one of the reasons they drop out of college.
- Simon attended a discussion led by NASEN where they examined the findings of the Ofsted thematic review of [local area arrangements for preparation for adulthood](#). They will be putting forward a recommendation that preparation for adulthood needs to start earlier and should be included in Annual Review paperwork.
- We need to promote a more positive perception around transition to college and have established a [hub](#) at St Anthony's in Chichester and St John's in Brighton. The hub at St Anthony's is managed by school staff and serves to bridge the gap between school and college. CCG would like to see hubs established in other areas as well.
- The SENAT Post-16 team has five full-time Special Needs Officers, who have years of experience teaching in special schools or colleges. They conduct all the Annual Reviews for the 1700 young people at FE Colleges. This model of working has proved successful in both embedding flexible partnership working and in providing value for money:
  - Legal time frames for annual reviews have been adhered to for the past three academic years
  - Any problems can be dealt with as they arise, thereby keeping young people in education who otherwise might have left. For those students who have to resit exams and who are at risk of leaving education, they can take collaborative decisions with CCG, parents and the young person themselves around bespoke programmes.
  - Parents have given very positive feedback and appreciate having a local authority officer chairing the annual review meetings.
  - While there is little input from health in the annual reviews, it was noted that there is excellent training available for eg epilepsy.
- Post 16 hasn't benefited from the Delivering Better Value programme where projects were chosen based on data analysis of where they could have the greatest impact. However, the Post 16 Team can evidence the value of having Special Needs Officers and East Sussex is now trialling the model.

### **NEET for SEND Cohort – Karen Furse**

- NEET data is collected over a three-month period.
- We have worked on better and more efficient tracking which has reduced the number of unknowns rates. We can now evidence that our combined numbers for Unknown and NEET are better than the national average.
- The focus is now to improve the tracking of those on SEN Support. This is more challenging than tracking those with EHCPs and will involve an ongoing dialogue with schools, starting with the September Guarantee.
  - Unknowns aren't equal across the county and there are some schools where we have to push to get the data.

### **Supported Internships – Mike Smith**

- In West Sussex, we have 16 young people on supported internships 2024/25, and this is projected to increase to 45 places next year.

- The funding for the Internships Work programme ends on 31 March 2025 and we are waiting for clarification about what will happen next – hopefully this will be given at the National Legacy Webinar on 4 March.
- The latest SEND Employment Forum included input from some young people which can be shared at a future meeting.
- The concern is that once Mike has left, the work will come back to SENAT, a service that is already under a huge amount of pressure.
  - Derry will consider this as part of the Preparation for Adulthood Action Plan.

### **Implementing the Action Plan – Derry Richardson**

- It's clear from the presentations today that there is a lot of good work taking place across services. Derry will work on pulling together all the strands of work to give us a joined-up picture of where we are. We can then review which have the greatest impact and where we should focus our efforts. From this we can identify any gaps and create an overarching Action Plan.
  - Derry to return to the board with the Action Plan for review.
  - From the parent perspective, there seem to be a lot of gaps and parents still talk about the cliff edge. There are concerns around volunteering, when young people with SEND are expected to work for free while their peers are not.

### **ACTIONS**

4.1 Derry to return to Board with Action Plan. To include consideration of who will lead on Support internships work.

Brian thanked everyone for their input. It was an illuminating discussion and good to see that we're in a better position than we'd thought.