

SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy & Partnership Board

22 November, 10.00 – 12.00

8933564744 Cathedral Room, Chichester College, Chichester

Brian Pope, Independent Chair

WSCC

Vince Clarke, Director of Children's Services

Claire Hayes, AD Education & Skills

Vicky Richardson, Head of Practice, Improvement & Inspection

Nadia McGarry, SEND Improvement Lead

Grace Hall, Early Years SEND Lead

Kathryn Kellagher, SEND Development Officer

Karen Furse, Head of Standards & Effectiveness

Louise Fox, Head of Service Assessment and Family Safeguarding

Rebecca Turner, SEND Strategic Commissioning Lead

Education and schools

Doug Thomas, Head APC

Mark Wignall, Head, Downlands Secondary

Nicky Smith, Governors Association

Parent Carers

Rowan Westwood, West Sussex Parent Carers Forum

Department for Education

Liz Flaherty

Councillor Representative

Jacquie Russell, Cabinet member

Apologies

WSCC

Claire Prince, Head of SEND & Inclusion

Sarah Clark, Head of Virtual School

Marie Foley, Head of Data, Projects and Systems

Kieron Lyons, AD Children's Social Care and Early Help

Loretta Rogers, AD Adult Operations

Fiona Mackison, Public Health Strategic Commissioning Lead

Daniel Ruaux, AD Corporate Parenting

Andy Thorne, Delegate for LA Finance Director

Toby Wilson, Young Voices

Charlene Hornsey, Head of Early Help

Stephen Humphrey, Head of Commissioning

Graham Olway, Head of Organisation and Planning

Education and schools

Claire Kenyon, Busy Lizzies, Early Years

Phillip Potter, Head Oak Grove College

Simon Brown, Head of SEND, Chichester College

Parent Carers

John Clifton, West Sussex Parent Carers Forum

Health and Commissioning

Caroline Tozzi, Integrated Care System Health Lead

Toby Silverman, Health Commissioner, SEND

Rachael Prim, Designated Clinical Officer

NHS England SE SEND Advisor

Adeline Gibbs

1. Action Log

- Item 9.1 from 23 Sept around SEND sufficiency data. We're working with the special HTs looking at future capacity and a five-year forecast. CH will bring to the January board meeting.
- Item 9.1 from 21 October around Meeting the Parents. It was agreed that CH should attend the WSPCF coffee mornings and RW will share dates for next year.
- Item 9.2 from 21 October around WSPCF parent carer survey. Agreed to adapt the Impower questions as we have a baseline from 2023. RW has reached out to health and social care colleagues too.
- Item 9.3 from 21 October around planning meeting for parent carer survey. Suggestion that RW has a slot at an Inclusion Leads meeting.

2. 6-month review with DfE

See attached presentation.

Discussion points:

- It felt like a positive and constructive meeting. We're where we should be at this point; we have an action plan based on data analysis and our focus should now be on impact and the experience of parents.
- We need to include balanced feedback and firsthand examples from parents about why things are better – "you said, we did". This focus on impact will be reflected in the next update of the SEF.
- We need to communicate more with parent carers around the improvements.
- The PCF annual survey will be focused on impact and will be an important tool to measure how things are for families.
- The Autism in Schools and PINS projects both focus on the relationship with parents and would provide a large data pool.
- DfE written feedback will be circulated once it's issued.

ACTION:

2.1 Parental experience to be included in programme for head teachers. KF to progress with RW.

3. Partner Working Groups - Proposal

The PWGs were originally created as part of our preparation for the Ofsted Inspection and were based on the Ofsted framework. The case for change is that we're still working towards pre-inspection priorities and the Ofsted response plan isn't quite aligning with our strategic plan.

- Some of the PWG remit is business as usual, such as the work in SENAT, and we don't necessarily need to bring this under PWG 2.
- PWG 3 is around leadership and many of the actions have been achieved, so it could be descoped with some of the work from this group placed in transformation.

It is proposed that the remaining four partner working groups be brought under Vicky Richardson's remit. They will have a great focus on the Ofsted areas for improvement and gathering evidence of impact, and the PWG leads will work with strategic leads to identify KPIs. Each PWG will report into the monthly Area SEND Partnership meeting and we will share the impact with the SEND-AP Board.

Discussion points:

- Need to clarify how the PWGs will report into the SEND-AP Board – it will be every three months rather than twice a year.

- With regards to the Area for Improvement 2 around video fluoroscopy equipment, there are ongoing issues with recruitment and training which still need to be monitored.
- There are also other areas for improvement outside the Ofsted areas, and we mustn't lose oversight of these.
 - The plan isn't to "drop" anything, just move the work to a place where we feel it will be more effective.
 - Within each PWG, there are subgroups which support the wider remit, eg SEN Support is part of PWG 1.
 - We need to be clear how the WSPCF feeds into the four PWGs.
 - Co-production is moving into the transformation workstream.
- The proposal was discussed at the October Area SEND Partnership meeting before being brought to the SEND-AP Board.
- More detail around the PWGs is required before the SEND-AP Board approves the proposal.

ACTIONS:

3.1 NM to provide details of PWGs, their subgroups, priorities and how they are evidencing impact to the December meeting.

3.2 CH to talk to board about Growing West Sussex in January/February 2025.

4. Update from West Sussex Parent Carer Forum

Questions from October SEND-AP Board: email responses to these were received from RT and Graham Olway and circulated with the agenda:

What is happening with the keyworker service and the IPT after March 2025?

- Keyworker service. The specification is completed, and we are now in discussion with health regarding funding. We want to have a three-year contract so we can retain staff and manage caseloads effectively.
- IPT: we're committed to this team but again it is joint funded, and we need assurance from health.
- RT to email CT on behalf of the SEND-AP Board and copy in BP.

What is happening with the Not in Receipt of Full-time Education (NIRFE) working group?

- CH's team are preparing a scrutiny paper around this area and will bring it to a future SEND-AP board meeting. Previous scrutiny reports are available for public viewing:
 - [Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee - Wednesday 20 November 2024, 10:30am - West Sussex webcasts](#)
 - [SEND School Places Sufficiency report](#)

What is happening to the Disability Access to Resource Panel?

- This is being discussed with ICB which should pick up the health parts of Joint Commissioning. Adrian Dyka and Steve Humphries to feed back next month.

The WSPCF Annual Report is attached to the notes and RW was thanked for her role in representing parents at the board.

ACTIONS:

4.1 LF to share the annual report with other groups as an example of good practice.

4.2 RT to write on behalf of the board to CT, cc BP, to ask about funding for the keyworker service.

5. SEND & Inclusion Strategy, Priorities - Update

During October, we held four well-attended SEND Strategy review stakeholder workshops. Informing these sessions was the data and information we'd already collated for the SEF and the LAIP. We provided context around the local area and then shared draft priorities with participants.

We have themed the feedback from the workshops and will share it with participants to check we captured everything.

The constructive feedback has prompted us to rethink the strategy priorities and timeline. The strategy needs to be co-produced and to this end we have established a small Co-production Group. Membership includes RW, and our Designated Clinical Officer and Designated Social Care Officer. We would welcome school involvement. We've had one meeting so far and have got agreement for a project officer to support the group.

We are still working on the SEND Outcomes Framework and we need to dovetail this with the SEND Strategy.

Next steps:

- There are several West Sussex strategies up for renewal and we want to take this opportunity to be clear about what is going on and how we align to them all. Ideally, we would want the SEND Strategy to feed into the Council Plan, the Children and Young People's Plan and the Education & Skills strategy.
- Following the feedback from the stakeholder workshops, we need to further consult with parents, children and young people in the spring.
- We are in a pre-election period from mid-March to May and it's likely we will need to take the strategy to scrutiny. Potentially the strategy could be ready by July but it might be better for schools to launch in September at the start of the new academic year.
- We want to have a strategy that key partners are genuinely engaged with and that will see us through the next five years.

It was agreed to launch the strategy in September 2025.

ACTION:

5.1 Post 16 transition – Brian to arrange a meeting with the Director of Lifelong Learning in Hounslow with CH to discuss employability hubs for Post 16 young people.

6. EHCP Response Plan

See attached presentation.

Discussion points:

- AM working with RT to reduce numbers of assessments with external partners as they need to align with capacity in SENAT.
- Prioritisation: currently this is around 20% of our most vulnerable children and young people. Most are from Early Years, and we know they will need a high amount of support.
- 85% of assessments are completed with 6 weeks of allocation.
- Within SENAT, the impact of the reconfiguration is beginning to show.
 - The data on slide 10 shows 20-week timeliness to be 13%. The new dedicated EHCNA team is showing 21.5%.
 - The data on slide 11 shows the average number of weeks to be 41.22. The new dedicated EHCNA team is averaging 34.89.
 - For next time, pull out the data for the EHCNA team in a new slide to evidence the impact of the reconfiguration.
- Slide 13 shows that the backlog has almost gone – the number is now at 28.
 - There is a new backlog built up from April 2024. This doesn't include our most vulnerable children who were prioritised.

- It was agreed that we should stop calling this a backlog and instead label it as Over 20 Weeks.
- The 833 for October 24 is in fact closer to 630. The parameters of the report are taken from Mosaic when there are still open steps, not from the date the final EHCP was issued.
- We will always have some cases over 20 weeks but we aim to get to 50%.
- For families, the main complaint is not the waiting time but the communication during the process.
 - The letter to families at week 16 to explain about delays is an additional step to try and address this.
- There will be a three month review of the reconfiguration in December but generally the team is feeling positive about the new teams.

The board was pleased to see the impact of the reconfiguration and asked KS and AM to pass on their thanks to SENAT and the EPS for their hard work.

Quality Assurance: EHCP audits – see attached presentation

Discussion points:

- For next time, it would be interesting to focus on what is making the plans require improvement.
- Natalie McNeill (Designated Social Care Officer) has worked hard on compliance around social care involvement.
- While the current audits are of new plans, we should also consider an audit of existing plans and their annual reviews.
- The WSPCF is a member of the QA Activities Group and is keen to support this work.

EPS – person centred needs assessments – see attached presentation

A personal reflection from RW: as one of the first families to go through this, it was fantastic. A powerful session, from her and her child's perspective.

ACTIONS:

- 6.1** Separate out the data for the new EHCNA team to evidence the positive impact of the SENAT reconfiguration.
- 6.2** Rename the backlog from April 24 as Over 20 Weeks.
- 6.3** Provide analysis around what is making plans require improvement for next in-depth EHCP Response focus (February 2025).