

SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy & Partnership Board

25 January 2025, 10.00 – 12.00

Old Court Room, North Street, Chichester

Chair

Brian Pope, Independent Chair

WSCC

Vince Clarke, Director of Children's Services

Claire Hayes, AD Education & Skills

Claire Prince, Head of SEND & Inclusion

Sarah Clark, Head of Virtual School

Grace Hall, Early Years SEND Lead

Karen Furse, Head of Standards & Effectiveness

Charlene Hornsey, Head of Early Help

Rebecca Turner, SEND Strategic Commissioning Lead

Kathryn Kellagher, SEND Development Officer

Graham Olway, Head of Organisation and Planning

Matthew Ansell, Finance Manager

Laura Tomlin, Schools Planning Officer SEND

Sharyn Wall, SEND Sufficiency Project Manager

Loisa Hayward, Project Manager

Education and schools

Simon Brown, Head of SEND, Chichester College

Mark Wignall, Head, Downlands Secondary

Phillip Potter, Head Oak Grove College

Zoe Gordon, Head North Mundham

Ruth Campbell, Head Horsham Nursery

Nicky Smith, Governors Association

NHS Sussex ICB

Caroline Tozzi, Joint Director for Children and Young People and Strategic Lead for SEND

Toby Silverman, SEND Improvement Manager

Department for Education

Liz Flaherty

Councillor Representative

Jacquie Russell, Cabinet member

Apologies

WSCC

Nadia McGarry, SEND Improvement Lead

Vicky Richardson, Head of Practice, Improvement & Inspection

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 & 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

Education and schools

Claire Kenyon, Busy Lizzies, Early Years

Doug Thomas, Head APC

Parent Carers

John Clifton, West Sussex Parent Carers Forum

Rowan Westwood, West Sussex Parent Carers Forum

NHS Sussex ICB

Rachael Prim, Designated Clinical Officer, for SEND

NHS England SE SEND Advisor

Adeline Gibbs

1. Action Log

See Action Log

2. Growing West Sussex

See attached presentation.

This is a Learning and Wellbeing Alliance, working collaboratively and creatively with key partners across the education sector in West Sussex to establish a new approach to education in the county. It is not a WSCC-led group but has its own identity and an independent chair.

- Governance within WSCC: Growing West Sussex will report into the Children First Board.
- There are plans to create a Belonging Strategy which would align with the vision of our SEND & Inclusion Strategy and help with culture change.
- The challenge of system coherence was acknowledged; this is echoed in the Pan Sussex health landscape.
- WSPCF is represented in the alliance.
- Rather than having children and young people in the meeting, it has been decided to take issues to groups to allow for better engagement.
- It will be introduced to West Sussex Schools at the next round of Head Teachers' briefings.

3. SEND Sufficiency Quarterly Update

See attached presentation.

Discussion points:

- Graham is now supported by Laura Tomlin who has joined as the Schools Planning Officer for SEND, and Sharyn and Loisa for project management.
- 63% of state special schools are at or over capacity. It's clear that demand outstrips supply and the challenge is to fill the gap.
- SEND Sufficiency is not just about building more special schools. With the drop in primary school numbers, there is an opportunity to repurpose buildings but this will still come at a cost.
- While we can make changes to process and take part in pilots, as a Local Authority we are under huge financial pressure and need support and direction from the DfE. West Sussex Cabinet members understand that we need to invest to save money longer-term but don't have the latitude.
- We have plans to increase SEND Sufficiency but we have no flexibility in terms of finance.
- The previous government supported Free Schools which was a route for local authorities to get capital investment. We are waiting for direction from the new government and in the meantime, are progressing with the building of two new Free Schools, which are 2-3 years from opening.
- While it is a national issue, we need to analyse where we differ from the national picture: the latest figures for numbers of children with EHCPs in mainstream schools are 40% national, 32% West Sussex.
- We recognise that once a child has started in a special school, it is difficult to return them to mainstream. Our focus needs to be on supporting schools to keep them in mainstream in the first place.
- The data on Slide 5 "Type of settings our children and young people with EHCPs attend 2024" presents four main areas – mainstream, SSC, Mss, INMSS.
- We're aware that some schools support more children with EHCPs than others and we need to foster joint responsibility.

- The learning from SSCs needs to be taken to mainstream schools. EG having a place for students to go to if they need to talk about something benefits all students, not just those with EHCPs.
- Slide 6: DBV analysis of case studies around placements and outcomes
 - It was noted that while a small sample of cases were looked at in West Sussex, the findings were replicated across the other local authorities in the DBV programme, which makes it statistically viable.
 - While children may not have been placed in an ideal provision, it may have been the best provision available at the time.
 - It's more evidence that we need to offer more support to mainstream schools.
 - We need to get the message out to parents that their child may well have better outcomes at a mainstream school.
 - We need to review the SENAT-led consultation process.
- The data for post-16 has not been analysed to the same level. Many young people who attend INMSS transfer to mainstream FE colleges and it would be useful to analyse their journey and outcomes.
 - Graham to work on Post-16 data for the next update.
- Slide 8: shows the gaps in provision by locality.
 - We have a shortfall of specialist placement of between 650 and 750.
- It would be interesting to have DBV data analysis looking at children and young people placed more recently, to see if we are getting better at supporting needs.
- For the next SEND Sufficiency update, Graham will include a slide on the progress of projects.

ACTIONS:

3.1 For the next SEND Sufficiency update, Graham to provide:

- Post-16 data: analyse the destination data of CYP at INMSS who then attend a mainstream FE College.
- Progress of current projects.

4. Health quarterly update

ICB structure chart (attached)

Caroline is the strategic lead for SEND across West Sussex. Any queries should be directed initially to her, Rachael Prim (DCO) or Toby Silverman (SEND Improvement Manager).

The structure chart highlights the interface between different roles, clinical and commissioning and the link up to SEND and CYP ICB Executive leads. It doesn't include links to the nursing function (Children in Care, All-Age Continuing Care, the LDA programme (within the Chief Nursing Office), primary care and planned care).

Improvement Area 1: Local area health leaders should act swiftly to identify and address 'waiting well' arrangements, and gaps in service provision to meet the full range of needs of children and young people with SEND. This includes speech and language provision, neurodevelopmental pathways and CAMHS.

Waiting times for CAMHS were picked up in the Ofsted/CQC report and it was acknowledged that these are a national challenge. CAMHS work is led through the Pan Sussex Mental Health LDA Board, CYP Mental Health Delivery Group, and the local CYP Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Partnership - chaired by Dan Ruaux and Lizzie Izzard.

Discussion:

- While there has been a lot of useful work done around Support Whilst Waiting, this is only one part of the Improvement Area and it's not clear what the strategy is to improve provision of CAMHS and SALT.
- Health is a complicated landscape and this is being driven by different areas. Caroline will provide evidence of this through recent ND and CAMHS updates in East Sussex. Caroline to share when available.

Improvement Area 2 – Health leaders should act immediately to ensure that children identified as at high risk of aspiration are fully assessed, including access to video-fluoroscopy as necessary.

Discussion:

- A Contract Performance Notice has now been issued to the provider, which will mean that Caroline will receive fortnightly updates on progress.
- For the Ofsted/CQC review meeting in March, Caroline will aim to provide information on how many children are affected and the data around them: are they on a waiting list, have they been assessed, etc.

Improvement Area 3 – Leaders across the partnership should work at pace to further develop their strategy to improve the timeliness of EHC plans to ensure that processes are rigorous, sustainable and lead to plans of consistent quality.

Discussion:

- Rachael Prim, DCO, will focus on the quality and timeliness of health advice for EHCPs and health input into annual reviews
- Caroline to liaise with WSCC data team to check health data in EHCP Response plan.
- Health data expected in February and it will focus on EHCNA health input, waiting times and support whilst waiting, and transition pathways. The data is released quarterly and it makes sense to have the SEND-AP board health quarterly focus the month after data is available, ie the next one will be May. To support health engagement in this meeting, we'll also commit to having the health quarterly meetings in Horsham. KK to amend Forward Plan.

ACTIONS

4.1 Caroline to provide evidence and impact of work picked up elsewhere in health so that we have a record.

4.2 Caroline will aim to provide information for the Ofsted/CQC review meeting in March around numbers of children identified at high risk of aspiration, if they are on a waiting list, have they been assessed etc.

4.3 Kathryn to amend the Forward Plan so that health quarterly updates fall in May, September and December and are based in Horsham.