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**Directorate of Education and Skills**

**SEND and Inclusion Strategy Project Board**

APC, Burgess Hill

10 October 2022, 10.00am -12.00pm

**Notes of meeting**

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| **Item** |  | **Action** |
|  | **Present**Paul Wagstaff, Director of Education & SkillsHelen Johns, Assistant Director, Inclusion and SENDKathryn Kellagher, SEND and Inclusion Development OfficerJacqui Parfitt, SEND Service and Market Development ManagerMark Wignall, Head Teacher, Downlands Doug Thomas, APC Gillian Santi, Chair WSGAGrace Fairbourn, Early YearsJenny BoydNatalie McNeil, Designated Social Care OfficerRowan Westwood, WSPCF**Apologies:** Emma Bruton, Early Help Louise Isa-Grada, Littlegreen AcademyYasmin Malayiya, Assistant Director Andrew Strong, Head Teacher, PortfieldEileen Darby, Chichester CollegeClaire Kenyon, Busy LizziesFenella Potterton, GBMetNigel Jupp, Council MemberNicola Hoyle, Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust |  |
|  | **Notes of previous meeting - matters arising and actions:**These were agreed. Papers to be shared with the board:* Scrutiny Report and the minutes of the meeting
* Green paper submission
* Delivering Better Value
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|  | **Project progress and data update**See attached powerpoint presentation. **Discussion points from the project update:****Governance**The changes in governance were outlined in the previous meeting and were also discussed at the recent Scrutiny Committee.The SEND & Inclusion Strategy Board reports up to the Children First Board, where HJ has a regular slot, and ultimately to the Health and Wellbeing Board.HJ to look at cabinet representation on this board.**ACTION:** JP reported that we now have a new Children’s Board within health and she will make connections with it.* **SEND Partnership Board**
	+ This is the governance layer which gives us much more detailed feedback about the impact of the strategy on the wider SEND arena. It was identified that we had a gap in representation from Adults Services, and we have invited Mike Smith and Lisa Loveman to join the board.
	+ We are in the process of setting up a SEND Youth Board, which will link into the SEND Partnership Board. We are working with the SEND Participation Officer and have set up an initial SEND Youth Board meeting on 18 October. Some representation from the youth board will attend the SEND Partnership Board and young people will be able to input the agenda.
	+ We ask people attending to complete Report Cards, to try and illicit some thinking beforehand of concerns or activities that might impact on our world.

**ACTION:** PW requested that messages from the SEND Partnership Board should be fed back to this meeting as an agenda item.**Communication*** We are planning a communication with parents around waiting times for EHCNAs. We are also setting up a monthly on-line information meeting for new assessments.
* We are getting feedback that not all schools are accessing the support and advice that is available to them. We currently communicate with schools via the weekly school bulletin, the SEND & Inclusion Newsletter, Tools for Schools. We can see that these are accessed but not by everyone.
* This is also an issue with social care and health, in particular GP surgeries, with regards to understanding what is ordinarily available at schools with SEN Support. The bulk of children identified with SEN are on SEN Support and do not have an EHCP.
* Autism in Schools project: much of the value in this project is about schools and families working together. Jane Crawford will share the learning at a future SEND Partnership Board meeting and we will report back to here.

**ACTION:** RW requested that we establish a working group to look at comms.**SENCOs and the need to have sufficient protected time to carry out their role.** * SENCOs are often part-time - small schools can’t afford a full-time SENCO. This can make it difficult for parents to arrange time to meet with them.
* It can also mean that they spend all their time doing the statutory paperwork side of their role, rather than reviewing practice at an operational level, eg checking the classroom, reviewing how the curriculum is adapted etc.
* Ideally the voice of the SENCO should be included at a senior leadership level and be evident in school teaching and learning policy.

**ACTION:** PW will pick up with HR and see if we can find out how many schools have part-time SENCOs.**EHCNA data and actions we are taking to mitigate** This continues to be an area of significant challenge and is largely because of lack of capacity with the Educational Psychology Service and the increase in numbers of requests. * There is a national shortage of EPs and we are considering recruiting from abroad. Local Authorities where EPs have continued preventative work and know children and young people before they are put forward for EHCNA, have maintained a high percentage completion rate for EHCPs within the twenty week timeframe.
* COVID has impacted on this area in several ways.
	+ The NHS didn’t see children to make a diagnosis
	+ The EPs couldn’t see children to assess them
	+ Lockdown caused developmental delays in children and this has caused an increase in requests for assessment, as parents/schools are concerned at lack of progress
	+ There has been an increase in mental health issues.
* We need to shift the assumption within health and social care that a child will need an EHCP in order to get the support at school. We are getting a lot of anecdotal feedback that GPs and other health professionals are telling parents that their child needs an EHCP, especially in Early Years, which creates anxiety. We need to emphasise to colleagues in health and social care that a child will be supported at school with or without an EHCP.
	+ JP reported that Rachael Lee is doing a series of meetings with paediatricians to explain this.

**Mitigating actions** * Working to upskill Early Years settings and have appointed 4 Special Advisory Teachers, Early Years SEND Transitions. They are focussing on working with reception classes this term to help schools meet the needs of those children who are developmentally delayed because of COVID.
* Grace reported that they are doing a deep dive into data to identify children with SEND who aren’t taking up the full hours. They also have 10 places on an Early Years Inclusion Course which they will spread across the county.
* The Schools Forum funding for early years support is not long term and we need to consider sustainability.

**Achievement data** * Our KS4 SEND gap between SEND and non-SEND is higher than the national figure.
* In terms of KS4 data, it would be useful to see if attainment is higher in SEN Support or EHCP. Some children with SEN Support have relatively high starting progress points but the progress doesn’t continue.
* It would be interesting to consider destinations data up to age 25.

**ACTIONS:** Fuller data set for the next board meeting, to cover:* up to age 25
* destinations data
* NEETs
* exclusions data, to be broken down between primary and secondary.

**Agenda item for next meeting:**Take a detailed look at data from schools in Autism in Schools project and schools that have undertaken the Therapeutic Thinking training. | HJJPHJHJHJHJ / RWPWHJHJ |
|  | **SEND Sufficiency Planning** See attached powerpoint for details.Discussion points:* Generally each unit will have around 12-15 children
* We have put in a bid for two free special schools for SEMH/ASD and are hopeful that we will get one.
* We are looking for satellite sites for filled special schools. Plans in place for 235 additional special school places to be phased in over a couple of years, using annexes, mobile classrooms or satellite sites.
* Rachel Conway is the Project Manager around Self Sufficiency and she will link with health/Jacqui to discuss therapies in schools.

**Delivering Better Value programme.**See attached powerpoint presentation.* We are also working with Impower to try and streamline our processes and ensure consistency with panel decisions. We are looking at having a single advice line to enable us to signpost more efficiently.
* SEND is an important aspect in the Children and Young People’s Plan

**ACTIONS:**Include the Delivering Better Value slide deck with the notes of this meeting.Involve WSPCF in Delivering Better Value project.Review our Implementation Plan in light of the current national picture, which is very different from 2019. | HJHJ (next meeting) |
|  | **West Sussex Parent Carer Forum**The WSPCF has held 9 events so far this term, at which they proactively talk to parents about their issues. They also talk to Reaching Families and other groupsKey concerns:* The key concern is basically down to survival – our families are generally some of the most vulnerable, reliant on benefits as often one parent is caring for child so they are down to one income. They have spoken to one parent who is concerned about how to pay for the electricity to keep on their child’s respiratory machine.
* Complex needs families: they are trying as a charity to get funding to increase the work they can do for these families.
* Another key concern is waiting lists. Not just for EHCNAs but across health, social care and education – their families have to use lots of different services and are constantly coming up against waiting lists.
* There is concern about attendance and anxiety around a vulnerable young person attending provision – there is a desire to keep them safe at home.
* Families are also concerned about what happens in the post-16 world, particularly with regards to social services, where they describe the transition from children’s services as like looking over a cliff edge.

Families understand the national pressures with regards to delays with EHCNAs, but anxieties could be calmed by a simple communication explaining why. In the absence of information, families will assign blame. The Local Offer is key. Most families don’t use it and it needs a rethink – it could be a much more powerful tool. **ACTION**PW noted that this links to criticisms of the WSCC website being “clunky” and that perhaps Impower could pick this up.  | PW/HJ |
|  | **Inspection Framework**See attached powerpoint presentationWe don’t know exactly when we were be inspected but are anticipating it will happen in 2023. * We have struggled to get data from health and are now using a consultant who is a CQC inspector to help us identify how we can better work together and where our gaps of knowledge are. She will link up with Marie Foley and the work she is doing in this area.
* We will replicate internally the deep dive methodology to identify key concerns.

**ACTION**Agenda item for the next meeting: review our SEF and Implementation plan at the next meeting and see how they align with our strategy aims.  | HJ |
|  | **Agenda items for the next meeting:** Review our SEF and Implementation plan and see how they align with our strategy aims. Take a detailed look at data from schools in Autism in Schools project and schools that have undertaken the Therapeutic Thinking training. |  |
|  | **Dates of meetings for the academic year 2021/2022:**30 January 2023, 10.00 – 12.00 venue to be confirmed16 May 2023, 10.00 – 12.00 venue to be confirmed |