

## READING HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

### REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND EARLY HELP SERVICES

DATE:	19 <sup>th</sup> January 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	9
TITLE:	Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy		
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#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report and its appendices set out the SEND Strategy for Reading Borough which was approved by ACE Committee in July 2017 (Appendix 1) and the progress made to date on its delivery.
- 1.2 The SEND Strategy provides a framework for SEND improvement, and the delivery of the provision and support required across key agencies to deliver the SEND Code of Practice (2015) in a coordinated way, ensuring that children and young people's needs are met at the right time, making best use of the resources available.
- 1.3 It sets out the framework for addressing the key areas for improvement and development that will support universal and specialist provision across a range of agencies in meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND and their families now and into the future.
- 1.4 The SEND Strategy consists of 4 strands.
  - Analysis of data and information to inform future provision and joint commissioning.
  - Early Identification of needs and early intervention.
  - Using specialist services and identified best practice to increase local capacity.
  - Transition to adulthood
- 1.5 The strategy provides a framework for a coordinated approach that will support all stakeholders and partners to:
  - understand the profile of children and young people's needs with special educational needs and / or disabilities (SEND) 0-25 within Reading borough and how that compares to other local authorities;
  - have clarity regarding their responsibilities and their role in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND;
  - ensure that there is a continuum of provision to meet the range of needs of children and young people with SEND and their families which is flexible to the changing profile in Reading;

- understand the pathways to accessing more specialist support when required;
- have confidence that high needs spending and resources are targeted effectively and support improved outcomes for children and young people;
- understand what needs to be commissioned, recommissioned and decommissioned to meet the changing profile of needs across Reading borough both now and into the future.

1.6 Appendix 1: SEND Strategy 2017 - 2022

Appendix 2: Terms of Reference of SEND Strategy Board

Appendix 3: Schools Forum High Needs Block report October 2017

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 *To note the SEND Strategy and required contribution of key agencies for its delivery.*
- 2.2 *For all partners to sign up to support the delivery of the SEND Strategy.*
- 2.3 *To comment on the progress made and additional actions to be considered for its successful delivery.*

3. CONTEXT

- 3.1 The profile of needs on children and young people with SEND in Reading has changed over the last few years, along with the national changes which support provision being made to young people with the most complex needs up to the age of 25.
- 3.2 The current pattern of provision and services across Reading does not meet the needs of as many young people as we would like, which has resulted in a significant number of children and young people accessing provision outside of Reading Borough.
- 3.3 The Children and Families Act (2014) requires local authorities to keep the provision for children and young people with SEND under review (including its sufficiency), working with parents, young people and providers.
- 3.4 The Act is clear that when considering any reorganisation of provision, decision makers must be clear that they are satisfied that the proposed alternative arrangements will lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for children with SEND.

4. PROGRESS TO DATE

- 4.1 A SEND Strategy Board has been set up with representatives from all key partners, including Reading Families Forum (Reading's Parent Carer Forum). It is monitoring the implementation of the strategy, and will ensure progress is made. Terms of Reference are attached as Appendix 2.
- 4.2 The involvement of parents/carers from the start in developing and then implementing plans and strategies that may impact on children and young people with additional needs is essential and at the heart of the Children and Families Act.

Reading Borough Council has been working closely with Reading Families Forum and the impact has been very positive to date. They bring a valuable perspective and constructive challenge to the future planning of services.

- 4.3 The Forum have expressed concerns regarding progress in the past and is keen to see actions being taken so that families experience a positive difference.
- 4.4 The involvement of young people in the development and implementation of the strategy is key to its success. This engagement is currently less developed than that with parents / carers, but there is now a Young People's Forum who have named themselves 'Special United'.
- 4.5 Multi agency strand groups which all include members of Reading Families Forum have been established with Terms of Reference for each, and meetings have been held for 3 of the 4 strands.
- 4.6 A comprehensive draft SEND data report has been developed to support strategic planning and commissioning decisions, including any changes in provision that may be required.
- 4.7 In line with national trends, there has been an increase the numbers of children with additional needs, and in a change in the profile of needs, in particular those diagnosed with an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) and those identified with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH). A needs gap analysis is being undertaken to identify the support required by schools in relation to children with ASC and SEMH. This analysis will be used to develop proposals to improve outcomes for children building upon existing good practice.
- 4.8 A detailed graduated response guide is being co-produced to support early years professionals and settings, schools and colleges and partner agencies in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people as early as possible, as well as mapping of provision and services available to support early intervention. There will be 4 Graduated Response documents (Pre-school, 5-11 years, secondary and post 16), with the 5-11y due to be piloted.
- 4.9 The range of services and provision, including support for universal services to identify and meet the needs of children at the earliest stage, are being reviewed to ensure that the majority of current and future children can have their needs met within the local area. This includes targeting outreach support from settings/schools with best practice.
- 4.10 Audits are underway of the following:
  - (i) the Exceptional Needs Funding Panels for pre-school children to identify types of need that pre-school settings are requesting additional support for, outcomes, and numbers that go onto have an EHCP;
  - (ii) Portage Home Visiting Service to identify the types of need, outcomes, and numbers that have an EHCP as a pre-schooler and those that go onto have an EHCP at primary school;
  - (iii) the Sensory Integration Massage Service to identify the needs of the children that access this service and their outcomes.
- 4.11 An Early Years audit and training programme for pre-school settings will be evaluated.

4.12 There is currently a significant overspend in the High Needs Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). A detailed report on High Needs Block spend has been presented to and discussed at Schools Forum and next steps agreed to ensure that allocation is appropriate and based on evidenced need, is targeted where it needs to be, and is supporting improving outcomes for children and young people. The Schools Forum High Needs Block report is attached (Appendix 3).

4.13 Progress has been made with converting the previous statements of SEND to Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and additional capacity has been put in place to meet the March 2018 deadline for the conversion of all statements to EHCPs.

## 5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The proposals contained in this report meet support the following Corporate Plan priorities:

1. Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable;
2. Providing the best start in life through education, early help and healthy living;
6. Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities.

5.2 The decision contributes to the following Council strategic aims:

- To establish Reading as a learning city and a stimulating and rewarding place to live and visit
- To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all

5.3 The SEND Strategy supports Reading's 2017-20 Health and Wellbeing Strategy by:

- Focussing on children and young people with special educational needs and disability and identifying actions which will lead to improved provision and outcomes for them and their families.
- Working alongside parents/carers and young people to develop and implement the strategy, listening to their views and feedback and using this to inform next steps.
- Ensuring that the Local Offer is of high quality and information is coordinated and clear and supports knowledge and understanding of the services available to support families.

5.4 The SEND Strategy involves a range of partners including health partners, and its delivery will support improving health outcomes for children and young people.

5.5 Once the element of work on deeper interrogation and analysis of the range of data and information on the range and profile of needs and forecast future needs is complete, a plan will be developed that ensures sustainability of provision.

## 6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 Section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places a duty on local authorities to involve local representatives when carrying out "any of its functions" by providing information, consulting or "involving in another way".

6.2 Co-production with parents / carers and young people is at the heart of the Children and Families Act (2014) and SEND Code of Practice (2015).

6.3 Co-production is not the same as consultation, although consultation can form a part of an overall co-production process. Co-production happens when service providers and service users recognise the benefits of working in true partnership with each other. This process is adopted 'from the start', when planning, developing, implementing or reviewing a service. It means that all the right people are around the table right from the beginning of an idea, and that they are involved equally to:

- shape, design, develop, implement, and review services
- make recommendations, plans, actions, and develop materials
- work together right from the start of the process, through to the end.

6.4 As set out in paragraph 3.4, any reorganisation of provision will require an impact assessment that satisfies decision makers that the proposed alternative arrangements will lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for children with SEND. Statutory processes are required for any significant change in designated specialist provision in schools which include a full process of formal consultation with all interested parties.

## 7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 All elements of the work involved in delivery of the strategy will support improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families.

7.2.1 Involving children, young people and their families in the development of services and support is key to the delivery of our equalities duty.

## 8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The following Acts are central to the delivery of the SEND Strategy.

### 8.2 The Children and Families Act, 2014

8.2.1 The Children and Families Act placed a duty on local authorities to ensure integration between education, training and health and social care provision.

8.2.2 Local authorities and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) must make joint commissioning arrangements for education, health and care provision for children and young people with SEND, both with and without education, health and care plans.

8.2.3 In carrying out the functions in the Children and Families Act, all agencies must have regard to:

- the views, wishes and feelings of children, their parents and young people;
- the importance of the child or young person and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions; and
- the need to support the child or young person, and the child's parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child and young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational, health and broader outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.

### **8.3 The Care Act, 2014**

- 8.3.1 The Care Act requires local authorities to ensure co-operation between children and adult services to plan for meeting the future needs of young people as they move into adulthood and become more independent, along with achieving continuity of support between services to enable young people to access timely and appropriate support.

### **8.4 The Equalities Act, 2010**

- 8.4.1 This defines the equality duties and includes SEN and disability. These duties are the statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 This proposal will ensure that there is clear information on spend and forecast spend and that high needs budgets are targeted appropriately. It will also seek alternative forms of income where possible. Once detailed analysis of need has been completed, any statutory consultation required to change provision or any requirement to consider capital development would be subject to a further committee report.
- 9.2 The Council has received grant from the Department for Education (DfE) in 2017 to support review of SEND and an additional grant to support a small amount of capital development. The grants can support implementation of the strategy. Once firm proposals of options for change are established that require capital investment these will be fully costed to inform decision making.

## **10 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1 None