

READING HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

DATE OF MEETING:	13 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	5
REPORT TITLE:	Progress report on the delivery of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy		
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ORGANISATION:	Reading Borough Council		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The SEND Strategy was discussed at the Health and Wellbeing Board on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and the Board agreed to support its delivery. The Board requested an update on progress within 6 months, and also requested that the report includes an update on progress on the issues around transition from children's to adults' services. This report provides a summary of progress made in delivering the SEND Strategy and the steps that have been taken to improve the transition between children's and adults' services.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 To note and comment on the progress made and propose additional actions to be considered for its successful delivery.
- 2.2 To note and comment on the progress being made in improving the transition between children's and adult's social care.
- 2.3 That the learning from the work in Strand 4 to seek the views of young people and their families on the transition process, information, the annual review process, and where the gaps and barriers exist to achieving independence is brought to a future meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Reading Borough Council's SEND Strategy was approved by ACE Committee in July 2017. It provides a framework for SEND improvement, and the delivery of the provision and support required across key agencies to deliver the Children and Families Act (2014) and 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.
- 3.2 It sets out 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.
- 3.3 The SEND Strategy currently 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

3.4 The strategy supports 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 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 both now and into the future.

#### 4. PROGRESS TO DATE

##### 4.1 Strand 1 - Analysis of data and information to inform future provision and joint commissioning.

4.1.1 Strand 1 has continued to analyse the data report and use that to inform actions for this strand group as well as other strand groups. For example, Strand 2 was asked to track the journey of children who have accessed specialist support in the early years, carry out an audit of pre-schools, look at the mental health pathway in the early years, and develop guidance for school readiness, and Strand 3 was asked to look at operational models for outreach and school to school support. Strand leads report back to Strand 1 on progress against these actions.

4.1.2 Feedback on school cluster funding identified inconsistencies across clusters on how they were using this funding. It has therefore been agreed to hold this budget and the managed moves budget at the centre so best use of it to support inclusion in mainstream schools can be identified. Effective examples from other Local Authorities are being drawn on to inform this. A protocol is being co-developed during the summer term for implementation in September 2018 to support this and will include a requirement to evidence impact.

4.1.3 Work has continued to ensure that spend from the High Needs Block is transparent and is used effectively to impact on outcomes for children and young people. High Needs Block budget information is reported regularly to Schools Forum, as is progress on delivering the SEND Strategy.

4.1.4 A survey has been carried out with schools regarding their commissioning of therapy and other services. The survey was carried out in order to establish what services schools are commissioning and funding themselves, and to see whether there was a more effective way of jointly commissioning some services in larger contracts, e.g. for speech and language therapy. In addition, Strand 3 of the SEND Strategy Board wanted to survey schools on the support they felt they needed to meet the needs and improve the outcomes for children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) and children and young people with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH). These questions were included in the same survey.

- 4.1.5 The survey was initiated in January, and was extended until the end of March in order to encourage more schools to respond.
- 4.1.6 27 schools responded to the survey: 1 nursery school; 18 primary schools; 6 secondary schools; and 2 special schools.
- 4.1.7 The amount spent on additional therapies by those schools that responded went up in 2016/2017 to £285,088, and reduced to £268,345 in 2017/2018. Schools cited pressure on budgets as the main reason for stopping buying in therapies. There has been an increase in the number of schools buying in Play Therapy, with over £100k being spent on play therapy in each of the last 2 years.
- 4.1.8 The full report will be shared with members of the SEND Strategy Board in order to establish next steps.
- 4.1.9 The Educational & Child Psychology Service, which provides a range of therapeutic and educational assessments and support, continues to have increased buy back from schools, with an increased income predicted for the next academic year to over £200,000, with 90% schools buying the services offered.
- 4.1.10 The Primary Mental Health Workers continue to work closely with schools offering mental health assessments and therapeutic interventions. Demand for their service continues to increase. There is no cost to schools.
- 4.1.11 Work has continued with the schools with specialist provisions, including meeting with parents and students to get feedback, and reviewing starting points of children who go on to access specialist provision in order to determine when their needs were first identified and destinations post accessing the provision. This has helped inform the work of Strand 3 who have looked at what is required in the development of provision in Reading.
- 4.1.12 Investigation has been carried out into effective models of building capacity in supporting schools in managing behaviour that is challenging and reducing exclusions. This work is being taken forward with the Teaching School (Churchend Primary School), Cranbury College and Local Authority Services. A parent guide to exclusions has been co-produced with parent / carers and shared with schools. This includes a section on internal exclusions.
- 4.1.13 As a consequence of feedback, primary and secondary SENCO groups have been re-established.
- 4.1.14 Reading Borough Council has been successful in meeting the requirements of the SEND grant from the Department of Education (DfE) to support SEND capital developments, which the SEND Strategy Board has agreed needs to be focused on supporting delivery of the SEND Strategy and in particular the improvements needed to enable Phoenix School to take girls. Currently girls with these needs are accessing school placements out of area in order to have their needs met.
- 4.1.15 It is anticipated that Strand 1 will be closed in September 2018 as a comprehensive data report has been produced which will be updated annually, once national and statistical neighbour comparisons are published. These are usually published towards the end of June, so the report will be updated over the summer and used by the SEND Strategy Board and the strand leads to inform actions for the next academic year.

## **4.2 Strand 2 - Early Identification of needs and early intervention.**

- 4.2.1 In order to understand whether children and young people's needs are being correctly identified and provided with appropriate early intervention, an analysis of Early Years Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Needs Assessments was undertaken. The vast

majority of Early Years (EY) statutory assessment requests were from the Portage Service, or from the Nursery Schools. The children who accessed this specialist support in the early years have been tracked and results indicated the Portage Home Visiting Service are correctly identifying the children they work with who need a statutory assessment and/ or specialist educational provision.

- 4.2.2 Further work is being done with partner agencies to ensure pre-school children are correctly identified by all partners for referrals into the Portage Service. Portage will provide SEN Team a termly identification report of children they have identified as meeting the guidance for an Education, Health and Care assessment and / or access to specialist educational provision in order to help with place planning.
- 4.2.3 In order to understand why there are so few requests for EHCP needs assessments from other EY providers, an audit of pre-school educational providers understanding of how to identify and provide appropriate support or signposting for EY children with SEN was undertaken and a training programme has subsequently been put in place from the findings of the audit, facilitated by the Nursery Schools and the EY Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).
- 4.2.4 An audit of the funding allocated at the Early Years Intervention Panel (EYIP), which provides funding to support early years settings meet the emerging SEN needs, was undertaken and found inequity of which EY settings applied for funding. The EY SENCO and Nursery Head Teachers are supporting settings in how and when to apply for funding. The EYIP will now meet monthly to ensure easier access for all EY settings. In addition, a system has been agreed to enable EY settings to access Educational Psychologist support and advice via the Panel.
- 4.2.5 Guidance on school readiness has been produced and is being circulated. Guidance on transition from pre-school to school has been completed. This will be extended to transition guidance for primary to secondary school and then linked to the Strand 4 transition to adulthood work. Guidance on deferring, offsetting and summer born children has been written and is being circulated.
- 4.2.6 An audit of the work of the Autism Advisor and the Sensory Integration and Massage Service has been undertaken and reported on, including numbers of cases and primary needs at referral. Annual reports will be produced to monitor needs addressed and outcomes.
- 4.2.7 Strand 2 is supporting an Early Help Project in the Whitely Cluster on supporting schools with early identification and early help with families.
- 4.2.8 The group is now focusing on developing clear pathways that set out expectations of what should be provided by universal services and at what point more specialist services might be required to provide further assessment, advice and support, and/or more specialist provision. Pathways for EY Emotional and Mental Health are being developed.
- 4.2.9 Dingley Specialist Nursery is working closely with Strand 2 to track the children who have attended Dingley, look at how many have received an EHCP and how many are in specialist/ mainstream settings. This data will be reported on in July.
- 4.2.10 Reading Families Forum has provided a report on parents/ carer views on early identification. The summary of the views given suggest that families' experience of early identification and support before any diagnosis is mixed with excellent support being put in place for some. However, this is not consistent. This feedback is being used to support further actions.
- 4.2.11 Strand 2 is working closely with Strand 3 and the broader group with the Teaching School and School Improvement services on meeting the needs of children and young people with SEMH and reducing exclusions in Reading.

- 4.2.12 Screening tools are being developed with the Speech and Language Therapy Service, the Educational Psychologist Service and Cranbury College to screen children and young people who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion to help understand the profile and target support.
- 4.2.13 The Schools Link Mental Health Project has received funding from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to continue to help improve outcomes for children and young people with emotional and mental health issues. The project focuses on early recognition of mental health issues and providing improved support and access for children and young people with emotional and mental health issues. The project is closely linked with other partners and agencies and with the Strand 3 work. Quarterly reports will be shared.
- 4.2.14 Strand 2 has written and finalised Graduated Response Guidance for Early Years, Primary and Secondary schools. Post 16 guidance will be produced over the summer. The Guidance gives clear information of what can be provided to meet the needs of children and young people.
- 4.3 Strand 3 - Using specialist services and identified best practice to increase local capacity.**
- 4.3.1 Strand 3 has focussed on the two areas of greatest need identified through the data report and from feedback from parent/ carers and schools: children with autistic spectrum condition (ASC) and children with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties.
- 4.3.2 In relation to children with ASC a proposal has been developed to meet local need. This is due to be considered by the SEND Strategy Group at its meeting in July and has already been considered by members of Strand 1 and Schools Forum, with both groups being supportive of the proposals. If approved, the proposal would be progressed through Committee with a recommendation to initiate the process for commissioning these, which would include the statutory consultation process.
- 4.3.3 Currently there is 1 x 21 place primary specialist provision at Christ the King Primary School in the south of Reading and 1 secondary specialist provision at Blessed Hugh Faringdon secondary school. Parents that we spoke to fed back the challenges of their child going to a primary school that was not in their community, particularly with regard to it inhibiting the development of friendships close to home. It was felt that this could lead to their child becoming increasingly isolated at weekends and in school holidays. It was also felt that having 1 large primary school provision placed significant pressure on 1 school.
- 4.3.4 The proposal identifies the need for a further 2 smaller primary specialist provision bases across Reading to enable children's needs to be met more locally. It is proposed that all 3 primary specialist provisions would provide capacity for at least 10 places and will provide specialist outreach to schools within their area, as well as being a hub for families to seek guidance and support. It is anticipated that if the proposal goes ahead, numbers at Christ the King would reduce over time, as current children moved on to secondary or other provision.
- 4.3.5 It is proposed that the secondary specialist provision at Blessed Hugh Faringdon, which is due to be expanded, would similarly be commissioned to provide outreach support to schools across Reading.
- 4.3.6 All specialist provision will have a service level agreement (SLA) in place which will be monitored. These will be reported on to Schools Forum annually.
- 4.3.7 A working group consisting of Churchend Teaching School, Cranbury College and Local Authority officers are taking forward the work to reduce exclusions, which will inform

proposals to support children and young people with SEMH needs. This will be progressed through Strand 3, and reported on to the SEND Strategy Board.

#### 4.4 Strand 4 - Transition to adulthood

4.4.1 Since the Strand 4 action plan was developed in April, Strand 4 has focused on actions to deliver Outcome 1, which not only provides a basis for the other 4 outcomes but also underpins the operational work to transfer cases from the Children and Young people with Disabilities Team (CYPDT) to Adult Social Care (ASC).

4.4.2 Integral to the delivery of the Strand 4 action plan is joint working with partner agencies, the voluntary sector and families. The views of young people and their families are being sought on a range of their experiences including: the transition process, information, the annual review process, and where the gaps and barriers exist to achieving independence. It is proposed that this learning can be shared at a future meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

4.4.3 **Outcome 1: We will work with families to develop a Transition to Adulthood Plan (14-25) that outlines how young people with SEND will be supported into adulthood, recognising the extra help that they may need to build their independence and clarifying pathways for accessing more specialist support and funding.**

- Current processes for supporting young people with SEND into adulthood are being reviewed in order to identify good practice and areas for development. Essential to this is an understanding of the experiences of young people and their families who have gone through the transition process, and this learning is being coordinated by Reading Voluntary Action, Mencap and Reading Families Forum.
- An *Approaching Adulthood Policy* has been developed and is being consulted on. A final version is anticipated to be completed by mid-June and will provide a framework for improving practice. The aim of this policy is to enable services to work together to identify early those children and young people and their families who may need support to prepare for adulthood, in line with agreed timescales and a holistic care pathway to access specialist support.
- The Strand 4 group identified the need for improved and earlier joint working between Children's and Adults' Services and work is underway to align the Council's information, data, finance and commissioning systems to facilitate a smooth transition process.

4.4.4 **Outcome 2: Everyone who is involved in supporting young people as they approach adulthood will work together to have positive aspirations for them and support them in a way that helps young people to be as independent as possible and achieve their goals.**

- Reading Voluntary Action is taking the lead on work to identify and promote areas of best practice (locally and nationally) where young people with SEND are supported to achieve their goals and be as independent as possible.
- The views of young people and their families about what barriers exist to achieving independence and what needs to improve are being sought.
- It is anticipated that by August the Annual Review process will be updated to ensure that it is informed by the experiences of young people and their families and that the voice of the young person is heard in transition planning.

4.4.5 **Outcome 3: Clear and accessible information is available for young people and their parents/carers so that they know what to expect in the future.**

- The Strand 4 group is currently seeking the views of young people and their families to help improve information about transitions to adulthood, so that it is relevant, easy to read and widely promoted. Integral to this is the *Local Offer* which is being updated to reflect findings of a peer review.
- Information requirements will be embedded into the new transitions pathway so that practitioners know what information young people and their families require and when.
- An information booklet to support transitions has been developed and is being consulted on and this will also be available as an online resource.

4.4.6 **Outcome 4: Young people from the age of 14 have a person centred approach which supports them to consider options for education, training, volunteering or opportunities for paid employment. Young people are encouraged to aim for the maximum achievable independence including, where possible, meaningful engagement in the world of work.**

- The actions for this outcome will be informed by the actions currently being undertaken.

4.4.7 **Outcome 5: Local businesses and charities provide meaningful opportunities for paid work, education, training and volunteering.**

- This work is being aligned with the Social Impact Bond (SIB) developments, to ensure that there is a joined up approach across services to support vulnerable young people into adulthood.

4.4.8 Services from across the Council and partner agencies will work together to deliver actions to support Outcomes 4 and 5, primarily to:

- Understand the local demand, effectiveness and sufficiency of current post 16 provision, and current gaps in provision for young people with SEND, and
- Develop the market to meet needs of individuals locally.

4.5 **Transfer of cases from Children and Young People's Disability Team (CYPDT) to Adult Social Care (ASC) Locality Teams.**

4.5.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board requested that this report included a section on progress on the issues around transition from children's to adults' services.

4.5.2 An *Approaching Adulthood Policy* has been developed and is being consulted on as set out in paragraph 4.4.3.

4.5.3 Since 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018, all new referrals for adults over the age of 18 years have been directed to the Adult Social Care Locality Teams. There are approximately 90 young people aged 18 - 25 years whose cases are to be transferred from CYPDT to Adult Social Care (ASC) by September 2018.

4.5.4 Resources have been identified and put in place to support the transfer of cases from CYPDT to ASC.

4.5.5 A sample of cases has been reviewed to determine the quality of cases and subsequent actions and timescales, and a checklist drawn up to highlight to CYPDT what is required for the cases to be transferred.

4.5.6 CYPDT social workers are preparing the cases for transfer by reviewing, quality assuring and completing any outstanding tasks.

- 4.5.7 Select cases have been identified for a phased transfer so that they can receive immediate support from adult social care.
- 4.5.8 Work is underway to ensure the data management system (MOSAIC) supports the transition process, including ensuring finance, data and reporting requirements are clarified and aligned.
- 4.5.9 An experienced Adults' social worker is providing advice and guidance to Children's workers on complex cases, and the Eligibility Risk and Review Panel has been extended to provide an opportunity for cases to be reviewed.
- 4.5.10 A communication to families will be developed and sent out to families by the end of July to ensure that the changes are explained and that there is clear information to families regarding next steps.
- 4.5.11 A staff training programme will be co-developed to ensure all staff fully understand the support needs for young people 18 - 25 with SEND

## 5. CONTRIBUTION TO READING'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The SEND Strategy supports priorities Reading's 2017-20 Health and Wellbeing Strategy Priority 3 *Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in children and young people*.
- 5.2 The SEND Strategy action plan supports Reading's 2017-20 Health and Wellbeing Strategy's three foundations - safeguarding vulnerable adults and children, recognising and supporting all carers, and high quality co-ordinated information to support wellbeing.
- 5.3 The SEND Strategy specifically addresses these in the following ways:
- 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 The annual SEND data report supports the interrogation and analysis of the range of data and information on the range and profile of needs and forecast future needs, to inform commissioning decisions. This will be used to support the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).

## 6. COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 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). Parent /carer representatives from Reading Families Forum are represented on each strand group and have been instrumental in the development of actions and implementation of the SEND Strategy. They have also been involved in service improvement and review work.



- 6.3 In addition 'feedback' sessions have been held with parent/ carers and / or young people in some schools with specialist provisions, and the council officers have attended a feedback coffee evening arranged by Reading Families Forum on school exclusions. A parent guide to exclusions has been co-produced for parents and has also been shared with schools. Another coffee evening is taking place in June on short breaks.
- 6.4 In the last 12 months, our new SEND youth forum have held 4 events. They have chosen their name, Special United, and their logo. Each meeting is free for anyone aged 11 - 25 with SEND or their siblings to attend. 13 young people attended the last event with 8 having attended before.
- 6.5 Special United have contributed to some changes to the Local Offer and provided feedback for the regional Local Peer review on another Local Authority's offer, IASS, short breaks, school exclusions and a leaflet on preparations for adulthood.
- 6.6 There is always much lively discussion and the next event is planned for 12<sup>th</sup> July to discuss the role of Children with Disability Social Workers and plans to move young adults to the adult social care team.

## **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 There is now clear information reported regularly to Schools Forum on spend and forecast spend of budgets to support SEND.

9.2 The Council has received grant from the Department for Education (DfE) in 2018 to support strategic development of SEND, the allocation of which is approved through the SEND Strategy Board.

9.3 A SEND Capital grant (over 3 years) has been allocated to Reading by the DfE to support a small amount of capital development. In order to draw this down information on its use and how it fits in with a SEND Strategy is required to be published on the Local Offer and updated annually. The SEND Strategy Board agreed for it to be targeted to support implementation of the strategy, and in particular ensuring Phoenix school can meet the needs of a broader range of pupils, including girls, and the delivery of the specialist provision development. The DfE have confirmed that Reading has met the requirements and will be allocated the first tranche.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10.1 Reading SEND Strategy

[https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/reading/enterprise/files/approved\\_send\\_strategy\\_august\\_2017.pdf](https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/reading/enterprise/files/approved_send_strategy_august_2017.pdf)