

READING HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

DATE OF MEETING:	18 th January 2019	AGENDA ITEM:	5
REPORT TITLE:	Progress report on the delivery of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy		
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The SEND Strategy was discussed at the Health and Wellbeing Board on 19th January 2018 and the Board agreed to support its delivery. A further report was provided for the meeting on 13th July 2018 to update on progress. An update on progress on the issues around transition from children's to adults' services was requested but it was agreed that July was too early. The Board approved the recommendation 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. This report provides a summary of progress made in delivering the SEND Strategy since July 2018, and the steps that have been taken to improve the transition between children's and adults' services.
- 1.2 Representatives from Special United, our young people's forum, have been invited to the meeting to share their experiences and views.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 To note and comment on the progress made to deliver Reading's SEND Strategy.
- 2.2 To note and comment on the progress being made in improving the transition between children's and adult's social care.

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 delivery strands have been reviewed in the light of progress to date and new priorities arising from the analysis of 2018 data. The new strands are set out below:

- 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 The SEND Data Appendix was updated and a workshop held with representatives from all SEND Strategy Groups to support setting priorities for 2018/2019. The feedback suggests a need for this sub group to continue for a little longer to develop the sections of the report identified as gaps at the workshop, e.g. Early Years section, overlaying of health data and agreeing a system for capturing the notifications (duty to inform data) in one place (e.g. from health colleagues, from Sensory Consortium etc).
- 4.1.2 The special school place planning data has been updated and this is being reviewed in the light of admissions between January and September. The initial forecasts were accurate in most year groups at the Avenue School, but there was a much higher number of pupils admitted into year 7 than previously experienced by the school. Numbers have been further reviewed to inform place planning for 2019/2020. The school has been allocated additional building space at the Avenue Centre to support this growth.
- 4.1.3 The DfE announced a Special Free School bidding round at the end of July with a closing date of October. In order to provide the additional capacity required to support children locally, and negate the need for high cost out of area placements, Reading has submitted a bid with support from Wokingham and West Berkshire who have committed to commissioning places. The DfE criteria welcomed joint bids across Local Authority boundaries. We will receive the outcome of this in January.
- 4.1.4 It was proposed at the data workshop that the Short Breaks Review work will become a strand of the SEND Strategy for this academic year.
- 4.1.5 The following strands were recommended for this year
- Strand 1 - Data and information (short term)
 - Strand 2 - Early intervention and prevention / development of specialist provision and services (including outreach)
 - Strand 3 - Improving behaviour
 - Strand 4 - Preparing for Adulthood

Strand 5 - Review of Short Breaks

- 4.1.6 The October census data has been checked to enable implementation of the funding to support schools with high levels of EHCPs. A system has been agreed for this to happen on a termly basis and schools who are eligible will receive the money at the end of each term for the previous term.
- 4.1.7 The process for inclusion support funding applications for pupils with exceptional needs as discussed at the previous meeting has been agreed and the panel set up.

4.2 **Strand 2 - Early Identification of needs and early intervention / development of specialist provision and services (including outreach) - merger of previous Strand 2 and 3)**

- 4.2.1 Strand 2 and 3 have been merged and are working closely with developments in the Early Intervention strategic developments.
- 4.2.2 The work is linking closely with the Mental Health initiatives including being awarded the Government Trailblazer for mental health, early years mental health, the trauma informed community and schools partnership and the Therapeutic Thinking schools work.
- 4.2.3 Deb Hunter, Principle Educational Psychologist, is joint chairing these strands with Parent Partnership representatives to ensure the voice of families.
- 4.2.4 Services are also working with children and young people in the development of mental health support.
- 4.2.5 A new strand looking at Early Years data is also being convened from January 2019 to support consistent early identification and support at the earliest stage.
- 4.2.6 The first stage of delivering the commissioning of 2 additional specialist provisions linked to mainstream schools to support children in the primary years with social and communication difficulties has been initiated.
- 4.2.7 Expressions of interest have been invited to be submitted in December that can demonstrate an ability to meet the specification. Discussions have been held with interested schools, and one firm expression of interest has been received. Further conversations are being had to progress this.
- 4.2.8 Interested schools have been to visit similar provision in Camden to help inform the model and their decision on whether to submit an expression of interest.
- 4.2.9 Further meetings will be held with schools that formally express an interest.

4.3 **Strand 3 - Improving Behaviour**

- 4.3.1 The local authority has introduced a therapeutic approach to managing behaviour based on the principles of ACEs (adverse childhood experiences). The launch of this major change in strategy takes place in December 2018 with two workshop days for schools and external partners. Over 100 participants are booked on to the workshops. This is to be followed up with intensive 3 day training for headteachers in January 2019 to form a key implementation group to establish the strategy in schools.
- 4.3.2 The LA have introduced a new 'inclusion panel' structure to hear the case for additional funded support for pupils with SEND at risk of permanent exclusion. This has been introduced and panel meetings will take place monthly with schools and services working together to ensure all strategies are joined up, and that plans are built around the needs of each child.

4.4 **Strand 4 - Transition to adulthood**

- 4.4.1 An Approaching Adulthood Policy has been developed. 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. This Policy identifies the statutory responsibilities the Local Authority is responsible for implementing, to ensure that young people and their families have the appropriate support as they move into adulthood.
- 4.4.2 The group have proposed a multi-agency Approaching Adulthood Panel be established to support the transition of young people from Children to Adult Services. The Panel will be responsible for coordinating the identification and monitoring of those children and young people who will or may require continuing services when they enter adulthood. The proposal is that it is held termly and joint managed by Children and Adult Services.
- 4.4.3 Until the Panel is established, interim arrangements are in place for the CYPDT Team Manager and Adult Transitions Lead to consider the needs of young people approaching adulthood, initially those aged 17.
- 4.4.4 Work is underway to align the information, data, finance and commissioning systems to facilitate a smooth transition process and help forecast numbers of young people who may be eligible for Adult Social Care services and their needs.
- 4.4.5 In order to provide the young people and their parents and carers with good information throughout, both about the stages in the transitions process and the range of options for the future, easy read versions of the Approaching Adulthood Policy and Pathway will be developed and promoted. Information requirements will be embedded into the new transitions pathway so that practitioners know what information young people and their families require and when.
- 4.4.6 We are working on an information booklet for young people and their families to support transitions.
- 4.4.7 Strand 4 Group members attended a workshop to discuss the best use of the Preparation for Employment Grant and developed a proposal which was subsequently approved by the SEND Strategy Group in July. The Adult Commissioning Team will take the lead on this piece of work and conversations with Children's Services are underway to progress this, which has been well supported by parents / carers and representatives from schools and colleges on the Strand 4 Group.
- 4.4.8 An Adult Senior Social Worker / Transitions Lead has supported the process to transfer 18-25 years cases from the Children and Young People's Disability Team (CYPDT) to Adult Social Care Locality Teams and all cases were transferred by September 2018.
- 4.4.9 Case files of young people aged 18-25 have been audited and a report on the findings has been produced and shared with senior management teams in Adult Social Care. A summary document is being produced to share with Bright Futures for Children and the Strand 4 Group.

4.4.10 Next steps / work in progress:

- Understand what opportunities and services already exist in Reading and where the gaps are; a market position statement and strategy is under development.
- Support the commissioning process for the SEND Preparation for Employment Grant; establish a forum to share good practice and monitor developments in terms of supported employment.
- Understand from young people and their families what barriers exist to achieving independence and what changes will support their independence. This will be followed up by an agreement of actions to improve practice locally.

- Updated Annual Review process informed by the views of young people, their families and partners; ensure processes are in place so that the voice of the young person is heard in transition planning.
- Information about transitions will be updated and widely promoted; information requirements will be embedded into the new transitions pathway so that practitioners know what information young people and their families require and when.

4.5 Strand 5 - Review of Short Breaks

4.5.1 A group consisting of Children's Services representatives, Reading Families Forum and Leisure and Culture representatives have been meeting to review short breaks with the aim of improving a universal offer that families are confident in.

4.5.2 It has been agreed that this will now form a sub group of the SEND Strategy Board and an action plan has been drafted.

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

5.1 The SEND Strategy supports the priorities in 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 officers continue to attend 'feedback' sessions through Reading Families Forum on request. This has included a coffee evening on short breaks.
- 6.4 Special United, our Young People's Forum, have continued to meet and contribute to the work.

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. This was topped up by the DfE in May 2018.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Reading SEND Strategy

https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/reading/enterprise/files/approved_send_strategy_august_2017.pdf