

## READING HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

DATE OF MEETING:	17 January 2020		
REPORT TITLE:	Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategy - annual update		
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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The Health and Well Being Board on 18 January 2019 considered the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy. The Board requested an update on progress after a year. This report represents that update. Since that time, work on SEND has continued and the following specific key achievements have been secured:

- Continued close working with Reading Families Forum to ensure co-production of materials and service delivery
- Views of children and young people in Special United and in schools have informed coproduction of services and materials, such as the mental health work and development of the Education Health and Care Plans.
- A SEND free school with places for Reading children and young people with SEMH and ASC is in process.
- Two new primary resources for children with Social Communication Difficulties have been agreed and scoping exercises underway re location.
- Preparing for Adulthood: an information guide for parents and carers - a joint co-produced publication for young people moving into adulthood
- Therapeutic Thinking Schools approach is well embedded in schools
- Mental Health Support Team trailblazer is established and going live in January 2020
- The Graduated Response Guidance is being more consistently used by schools with the number of pupils at SEN Support increasing.

Appendix 1: SEND strategy on a page.

Appendix 2: SEND strategy refresh October 2019.

Appendix 3: Co-production and how we work together.

Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment

1.2 A communication plan is also being developed which will support greater engagement with the strategy.

### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 *Members to note the progress that has been made in this area. Members continue to support the work of the SEND team and particularly the work with stakeholders to embed co-production in all services and all service delivery*

### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Special educational needs and disabilities remain a high profile issue both locally and nationally. Most local authorities are over-spending the 'high needs' block (the funding allocated to cover SEND) and the media regularly refer to a 'crisis' in special needs. The number and proportion of children with Education and Health Care Plans has risen over the last three years with 1.7% of pupils in Reading maintained schools having statements or education and health care plans in 2019 (a rise from 1.4% in 2016).

The rate of appeals has also increased with more parents/carers seeking a legal recourse. In Reading, 6.79 per 10,000 of school population registered an appeal compared with 5.45 in England and 8.16 in South East (2016/17 - last year where data available)

In October 2019, 1366 Reading pupils had an Education and Health Care Plan. The majority of these (some 828 children and young people) were in mainstream or resourced provision.

Some groups of children and young people are over-represented in the SEND figures. As at 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019, 1385 pupils had an Education and Health Care Plan, of those, nearly three quarters (74%) were boys/young men. Of all children and young people with plans, 54% were white British. Boys from an Indian, White and Black Caribbean and Black African background represent a higher percentage of those with EHCPs compared with their proportion of the school population. (2.17, 4.49 and 4.49 compared with 0.96, 1.2 and 2.14 percent respectively). For girls, the figures as at November 2019 show no over-representation for any ethnic group compared with their proportion of the school population. (Figures attached as part of Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment)

- 3.2 The SEND code of practice 2015 sets out a series of principles for delivering support for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

- The participation of children, their parents and young people in decision making;
  - The early identification of children and young people's needs and joined up early intervention across education, health (universal and specialist) early help and social care services as appropriate to need to support them;
  - Greater choice and control for young people and parents over support;
  - Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support, including development of jointly commissioned services;
  - High quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN;
  - A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning; and
  - Successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment.
- (SEND Code of Practice, 2015, sections 1.1 and 1.2)

Reading Borough Council approved a SEND strategy in July 2017. The strategy was refreshed in October 2019 in a workshop including all key stakeholders. The refreshed strategy has been co-produced with Reading Families Forum and other key partners. Progress on the strategy and associated activity was reported to Health and Well Being Board in January 2018. The Board requested a further update in January 2020. This document represents that update. The refreshed strategy is attached as Appendix 2.

## **4. THE PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 Members to note the progress that has been made in this area.  
Members continue to support the work of the SEND team and particularly the work with stakeholders to embed co-production in all services and service delivery

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

- 5.1 The refreshed SEND strategy is a key component for the delivery of Reading's health and wellbeing strategic aims. It was coproduced with partners including Health, social care and parent/carers, as a Reading-wide commitment to meeting the needs of children and

young people (0-25y) with SEND. By identifying needs early and ensuring the right support is in place at the right time, and that local provision meets local needs, outcomes for children and young people with SEND will be improved. This will positively impact on their ability to make healthy lifestyle choices, their mental health and wellbeing and reduce social isolation.

- 5.2 The proposal recognises that plans in support of Reading's 2017-20 Health and Wellbeing Strategy should be built on three foundations - safeguarding vulnerable adults and children, recognising and supporting all carers, and high quality co-ordinated information to support wellbeing.

The refreshed SEND strategy has at its core a commitment to:

- Making SEND everyone's business
- Right support at the right time
- Local provision that meets local needs
- Making best practice common practice
- Co-production at the heart of what we do
- Ensuring parents/carers are confident in local provision

## **6. COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

- 6.1 The refreshed strategy was developed following a workshop in October 2019 which included the following key stakeholders:  
Reading Families Forum  
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust  
Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group  
Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust  
Social Care including Adults, Transitions Team, Access and Assessment, Children Looked After, Children and Young People with Disabilities Team.  
Schools, alternative providers and post 16 provision.  
Trauma Informed Practitioner,  
Autism Advisor

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 Although there is no substantial decision to be made, we have included an Equality Impact Assessment for members to consider. Clearly given the focus on special educational needs and disabilities, we would expect a positive differential impact on children, young people and young adults with disabilities. The EIA is attached as Appendix 4.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Although there is no substantial decision to be made, the refreshed SEND strategy has been developed bearing in mind the requirements of the 2014 Childrens and Families Act and the 2015 SEND code of practice.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Not applicable

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 2014 Childrens and Families Act
- 2015 SEND code of practice.
- Draft Refreshed Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategy, November 2019
- Reading Local Area Self-evaluation of Special Educational Needs and Disability.
- Summary of Reading Local Area Self-evaluation of Special Educational Needs and Disability.