

13 February 2020

SEND Joint Commissioning

Ward(s): All

Portfolios: Councillor Chris Towe - Education and Skills

1. Aim

To commission (make or buy) services for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) that are of best value, quality and meet the outcomes identified in an Education, Health and Care Plan.

To align and integrate, partnership commissioning activity to provide effective, responsive and joined up services where resources go further to support the needs of our children in the Borough.

2. Recommendations

Consider the commissioning arrangements for children with special educational needs and disabilities and future areas for developments.

3. Know

3.1 What is Joint Commissioning?

Joint Commissioning, is a strategic approach to understanding, planning, delivering and reviewing services in a joined-up way to meet need. In the context of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), it is the means by which Education, Health and Social Care work together to deliver better-informed, efficient, effective and sustainable services that improves outcomes.

The Council must decide what kinds of services should be provided to children and young people with SEND, who should provide them and how they should be funded from early childhood to adult life and between Children's and Adult Social Care services and between paediatric and adult health services. Commissioning activity defines what the need is, how those needs are best met before consideration is given to what services are to be developed or purchased.

The number of children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND has increased steadily over 5 years. This cohort is proportionately higher than the England average. Currently, **2,181** SEN children have an education, health and care plan (EHCP). Most of these children and young people are being jointly supported, and in receipt of a services such as in / out of Borough schooling, short breaks, school transport and specialist health support at home or in school and personal budgets. Some may also be in care of the local authority.

3.2 The commissioning framework

The Children and Families Act 2014 provides statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures for local commissioners who are required to work together in the interests of children and young people with SEND.

The SEN Code of Practice 2014 sets out the statutory duties that the local authority, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), and Education must carry out regarding the planning and commissioning of services for SEND children. This should ensure close co-operation between education, health and social care agencies.

The Walsall Joint Needs Strategic Assessment 2018 (JSNA), is how we analyse and interpret the future health, care and well-being needs of our children and young people with SEND.

A Memorandum of Understanding between Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group clarifies roles, responsibilities, and the joint services that are provided by organisations.

3.3 Who are our key partners?

In Walsall, our partnership is with the CCG, Adult Services, Children Social Care, Access and Achievement and the NHS Trust to support disabled children with SEN and to make timely interventions.

We also work closely with the Dudley & Walsall Mental Health Trust support young people with mental health needs.

3.4 What do we currently commission through this process?

Examples include:

- A SEND Mediation Service to assist with Social Care or Health disputes.
- Personal Budgets that fund various aspects of Education, Health, Care and Transport
- A Complex Needs Panel with funding authority to distribute support to SEND children eligible for Social Care & Continuing Health Care.
- Care Treatment Reviews with funding authority to avoid hospitalisation.
- A Transition Panel with funding authority to manage moves into Adult Social Care and Adult Health Services.
- Fostering, Looked-After Supportive Hub Service providing therapeutic support to LAC children to improve placement stability.
- A health funding agreement to clarify CCG finance for SEND / LAC children.
- Residential Pathway Service provides dedicated therapeutic support to LA residential home staff to better their skills to care for our LAC children.

3.5 What are our future areas for consideration?

These include:

- An All-Age Disability Service.
- Speech and Language, Occupational and Physiotherapy that is specifically noted as part of Education, Health and Care Plans.
- A single Occupational Therapy equipment service. (Children's Services fund OT equipment in home while Health fund similar in schools). There may be efficiencies to consider in this area.
- Address the increasing demand of young people with Attention Deficit Hyperactivities Disorder (ADHD) and Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC).

4 Financial Information

Financial challenges facing all organisations mean it is increasingly important to work closely together to eliminate duplication and improve value for money whilst striving to improve quality and improve outcomes for Walsall children and young people with SEND and their families.

5. Reducing Inequalities

Effective joint commissioning activity across Education, Health and Children's Social Care aimed at improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs supports the recommendations of the Marmot Review (2010).

6. Decide

N/A.

7. Respond

Members to decide on the frequency of future reporting.

8. Review

Commissioning arrangements are subject to regular review by partner agencies.

Background papers

1. Memorandum of Understanding
2. SEND Children's Joint Commissioning Arrangements

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