

## Schools Forum 27<sup>th</sup> June 2017

### **Title: SEND Updates**

#### **1. Purpose**

To update the School Forum on the progress of the Implementation of the SEND Reforms and the preparation for inspection of the local area's effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

#### **2. Recommendations**

The report is noted

#### **3. Report detail**

The Self Evaluation document is written and a wide variety of partners have contributed to it. This document has been used to identify twelve key priorities with lead personnel identified to move the priorities forward. The priorities are as follows:

- Children and Young People's participation at both strategic and operational level
- Co-Production and parental/ carer engagement at both strategic and operational level
- The 16-25 agenda
- Transitions from 14-19 and into adulthood
- The EHCP (Education, Health and Care planning) process including timeliness and better alignment with Early Help
- Developing the Capita 1 management system to support the EHCP Process
- Data and intelligence
- Use of school based data around SEN Support to narrow the attainment gap
- Development of the Local Offer
- Joint commissioning and joint arrangements
- Commissioning of Specialist School places
- Self Evaluation/ review and Audit – including the use of both local authority and health authority audit tools.

The Ofsted preparation group was set up in November and monthly meetings are being held this group is multi agency and partners from across the Local Area (i.e.

Walsall) are involved. These meetings have been well attended and clear tasks have been identified and are being followed through.

There are now task and finish groups set up around Better alignment with Early Help; the Local Offer; Transitions and the 16-25 Agenda; Data; and the development of Capita 1. Each of these groups has a broad membership and all are moving the SEND agenda forward at a pace.

Meetings continue to be held with Health colleagues to draw together plans across agencies and to align the CCG Audit Tool and the Local Authority Audit Tool.

There have been meetings with individual commissioners and providers and they are contributing to the self evaluation.

### **Areas under development**

The key document is the self evaluation document. If an area's self evaluation lacks both 'accuracy and rigour', it is likely to fail the inspection. Consequently, much of the preparatory work is focussed on the development of the self evaluation through critical review and evaluation.

In alignment with this is the Council for Disabled Children Audit Tool which has been completed by the LA and CCG and shows a similar picture of challenges.

Development work follows from the issues identified in these tools. Some examples are as follows:

- Assessment (of Education Health & Care Plans)

The EHCP format has been reviewed and there is ongoing consultation with parents/carers and school SENCOs. It is hoped to move forward with a more 'stream lined' Plan that is more person centred.

66% of EHCPs were completed within the 20 weeks' timescale in May 2017. This was 11% in early 2016 and the upward trajectory is continuing. We are now above the national average of 58% .

We are now reporting on a monthly basis to the DFE about the number of Statements we have left to transfer to EHCPs . The reported figure from June was 630. This means we have transferred 53% of our Statements to Education, Health and Care plans, with 42% remaining to transfer. This is around the national average.

- Parent partnership

Walsall FACE, Walsall's Parent/ Carer Forum, ceased to exist from the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2016. Contact a Family is working with parents who attend Walsall's Parent Participation Group to move the participation agenda forward. A new Parent / Carer

Forum is constituted. They have re-launched themselves as FACE Walsall. An umbrella group, Kidz, is supporting the forum with administrative and financial functions. Attached is their leaflet'

### Specialist school places

A report on specialist school places went to the meeting of the Council's Cabinet on 26<sup>th</sup> April. Cabinet agreed to increase the number of specialist school places in Walsall over the next 5 years, as part of the School Place planning strategy. The report indicates the number and types of places we will need to add to our existing special schools, where this is possible, over the next 5 years to keep pace with demand. As a local authority, we are no longer able to open new schools ourselves. But, we are keen to work with others to develop new free special schools that meet particular special needs. We also want to expand our resourced provisions in Walsall – there are 9 ARPs attached to mainstream schools, each of which provides for up to 80% inclusion in the mainstream school.

### Pupil Voice

Throughout March, April and May schools within Walsall LA; mainstream (EYFS, primary and secondary) and special schools contributed to a borough wide pupil voice capture, 'My Walsall, My Voice'. This work is displayed within the foyer within the EDC, highlighting children's aspirations, views about the present and future along with things that are going well and areas for improvement. This has been the start of gaining a wider picture of pupil voice with Walsall LA. This work will continue throughout the year and will be incorporated within the Local Offer, especially success stories.

### Local Offer

Following an initial meeting the LO site is now more easily accessible from the Council's website. The home page had been updated and the weighty text has been removed. The Category pages had been updated too – e.g. Early Years – with new downloads added. Much work had been carried out to re-fresh and update the Health information that was included on the LO site. The method of working involved identifying those people responsible for different areas of the Health sections of the LO – and the CCG's own pages. The Schools' Local offer – the weakest area – each of the entries and links for 126 schools and other providers needs to be reviewed; the information needs to be updated, be more dynamic and interactive, with video links and ways of identifying good practice.

The mandatory requirement for co-production – and the need to involve parents in a meaningful way; , not just getting parents to attend a meeting needs addressing. It was agreed to produce a plan, properly resourced, to show what needed to be done to further review, re-assess and improve Walsall's local offer. It has now been agreed we need to look at the Platform the Local Offer sits on and move this to the Walsall corporate site.

### Data

A key issue within Walsall is SEND pupil working at School Based Support and the high levels of pupils who are coded on census as MLD. Work over the coming term will be focused on working with schools on raising standards (progress levels) for pupils at School Based Support and with the more consistent identification of SEND across the LA. At a recent Head Teacher briefing categorisation of CYP at SEN Support was discussed.

- SENCO Forum/ Cluster

It has been agreed that these will now be free events which allow the LA to share Key messages and share good practice the June Cluster attracted 70 plus SENCO's and was a positive event. The key topic for the September cluster will be census categorisation.

Claire Goss. Head of SENDI 26/6/17