



Walsall Council

Walsall Children's Services



Walsall Children are Safe, Happy and Learning Well with Self-Belief, Aspiration & Support to be Their Best

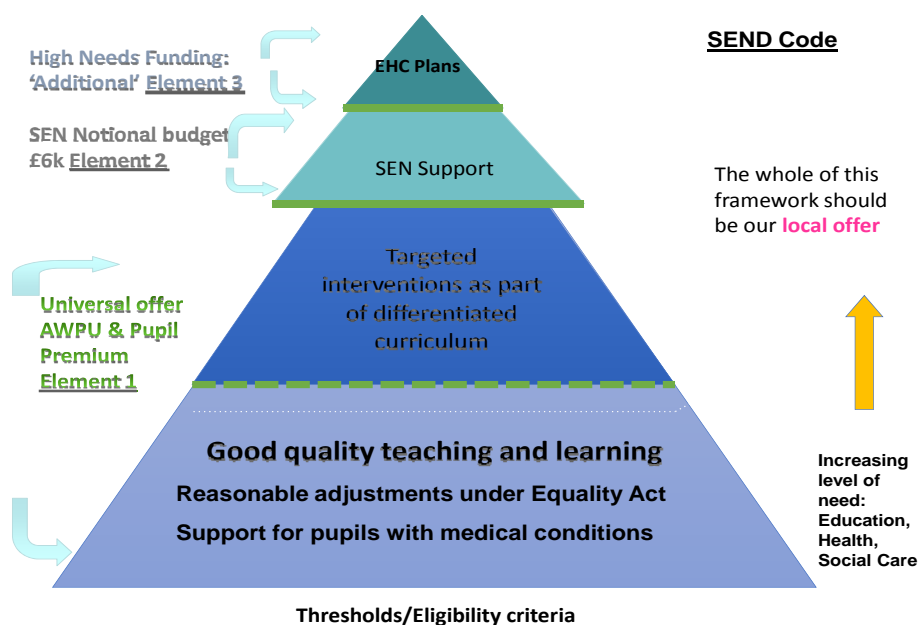
SEND and Inclusion Newsletter -2nd Edition – December 2017

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to our December Newsletter

Local Offer Update *(Jackie Ross, support for SENDi Service)*

It has been a privilege to be able to join up with a small number of stakeholders in the short time I have been here. I have appreciated meeting school governors, head teachers, SENCOs and agency professionals - as well as children, young people and their families. The feedback to me about the Local Offer has been consistent - the need for a straightforward approach to the setting out of provision as well as criteria for identification at universal, targeted and specialist levels across education, health and care - all in relation to the SEND Code of Practice. In this way we would have more than a list of services, and instead a strategic cross-borough approach, taking account of our data on the needs of our children and young people with SEND and a focus on how our provision matches up (or not) to meeting their needs and supporting them to achieve positive outcomes.





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The Local Offer in this way becomes strategic, dynamic and real for us all. Individual settings as well as the local area (the local authority and health) have to take into account the same approach to provision mapping, whether at individual setting level or local area level - what are the needs of our population, what do we provide and what is its impact? and, of course, working with our community of children, young people with SEND and their families to understand this.

Please note: we will be providing on the Local Offer one link to all schools, colleges and other settings to signpost parents and young people to your SEN Information report. Please check that SEN Information reports/school offers are on the front page of your school's website so it can be found by your local community and by inspectors.

SEN Support: (*Jackie Ross & Margaret Wiredu*)

We know we need to review our approach to those children and young people identified at SEN Support - their progress and attainment is lower than their peers in our statistical neighbours.

There are positive assets here in Walsall. Some of our school-led partnerships have been proactive at developing good practice which could be spread more widely across the borough. There is expertise and experience within central services. I see that there has been considerable work here in relation to seminal works - in the not too distant past - the Bercow Review (of services for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs) - which got a mention on the news this week! - and the Rose Report (on dyslexia and reading difficulties) as well as other more recent initiatives. The principles and recommendations of these reports have not changed and remain valid and the knowledge, skills and experience are here too. The issue is how to utilise our existing expertise across the local authority and school partnership to help move forward with our SEND children and young people.

Some questions for us to think about:

- Are SENCOs given enough time to do their job and take up their strategic role as set out in the SEND Code?
- Does your school/setting have a provision map that is being assessed and changed according to the impact that provision has on enabling children and young people to have positive outcomes? – Our Local Offer needs to be reflecting this practice at the cross-borough level.

UPDATES (*Jackie Ross*)

National Update: The government has this week published a green paper on children's mental health '*Transforming children and young people's mental health provision*'. The proposal is that each school will have a designated mental health lead by 2025.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-provision-a-green-paper>

The actual consultation on this paper is:

<https://engage.dh.gov.uk/youngmentalhealth/>



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Local Updates:

We are looking to **increase capacity** in the Educational Psychology team and the statutory assessment teams. We will update you as soon as there is any news here.

SENDi is working to **join up more closely between education and social care**. We are currently working with Julie Hatton who oversees the Children with Disabilities Team and will be looking to develop closer working with other social care teams for our SEND children and young people.

Specialist Provision Consultation (Philip Wells). The consultation for extensions to six schools to increase specialist provision is now complete.

Outreach, Support and Empowerment for Parents, Carers and Young People (Jackie Ross)

1. Walsall Information Advice and Support Service (SEND): offers free, impartial, confidential information, advice, support and guidance (as well as a sympathetic listening ear!) for parents / carers of children with SEND 0-25 and independently for young people aged 16-25. Parents/young people can contact this service by phone: 01922 650330 or email: iasssend@walsall.gov.uk. Information and advice includes, for example, Education, Health and Care Planning and the law in relation to this, rights, responsibilities and choices for parents and young people, opportunities to participate in decision-making and signposting to other relevant services.

This is Walsall's statutory service as set out in the SEND Code of Practice: *Local Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure this service is provided: 'Local authorities **must** arrange for children with SEN or disabilities, and their parents, and young people with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to their SEN or disabilities, including health and social care. Information, advice and support should be provided through a dedicated and easily identifiable service. (SEND Code section 2.1).*

2. FACE - Walsall Parent Carer Forum is a voluntary group of parents and family carers of children & young people aged 0-25 with various disabilities working in partnership with Education, Health and Social Care to help shape future services in Walsall. The forum represents the views of parents and carers in the local area but it does not advocate for individual families. If parents or carers want to join, contact: facewalsall@gmail.com. We are keen for parents & carers of children with any additional need or disability to join and be empowered and involved strategically. Please let them know about FACE.

The role of parent carer forums is also set out in the SEND Code of Practice: *'Parent Carer Forums are representative local groups of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities who work alongside local authorities, education, health and other service providers to ensure the services they plan, commission, deliver and monitor meet the needs of children and families. Parent Carer Forums have been established in most local areas and local authorities are actively encouraged to work with them'. (SEND Code section 1.13)*



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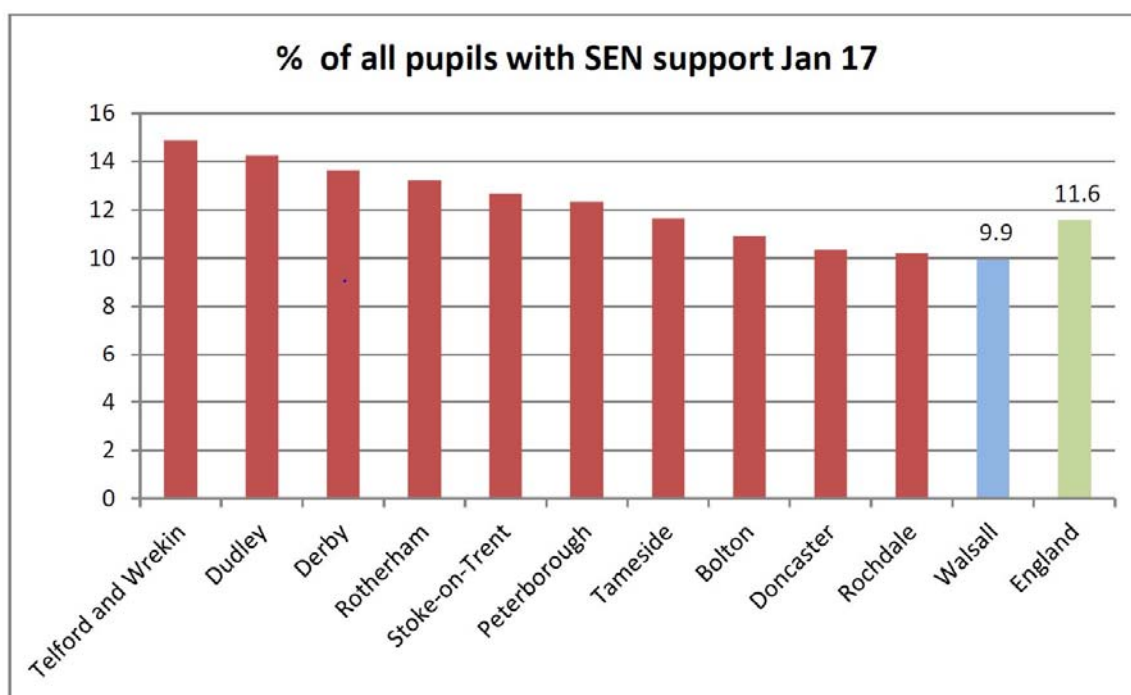
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We are currently working closely together on the Local Offer.

If you would like representatives from either organization to come to speak about their work to your school cluster or partnership, please contact them as above. You could also think of inviting them to your parents' evenings or events where there are young people. If they do not have capacity to attend they would be pleased to send leaflets.

Analysing Our Data (*Susan Shannon, School Improvement Partner*)

% of Pupils with SEN Support comparison with statistical neighbours:



Questions to ask (and to bring answers to relevant forums e.g. the SENCo forums)

1. Is it good to be below the England average?
2. Does this mean we are identifying all of our children/young people who need SEN Support?
3. How many of our SEN Support children/young people are awaiting Education, Health and Care Plans?
4. Is it good to be below the England average?
5. Does this mean we are identifying all of our children/young people who should be on SEN Support?
6. How many of our children/young people on SEN Support are awaiting EHC Plans?



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Family Hubs: A Reminder (*Susan Shannon*)

This is a new initiative to develop 'SEN Family hubs' across Walsall for all parents of SEN pupils from mainstream and special schools. These hubs will be supported by learning mentors and SENCOs and will give parents, carers and young people a voice and support. The first of these meetings will be held at Old Hall Special School where there is already a thriving and supportive 'Family hub' for advice and support.

A number of SENCOs have expressed an interest in being part of the working party in the development of these HUBs. If you are a SENCO or Learning mentor and would like to get involved please contact susan.shannon@walsall.gov.uk. We hope that the first meeting will take place early in the spring term and parents will be informed and invited to this as soon as the date is finalised.

Education Health & Care Plans (*Denise Lowther-Pope, EHCP Strategic Manager*)

We are currently finding it difficult to meet all of our statutory deadlines and therefore will need to make some organisational changes to ensure that our decisions remain consistent and in line with statutory timeframes and criteria as set out in the SEND Code of Practice.

So we are proposing that:

- 1. EHCP Assessment Panels:** The current EHCP Assessment panels cease from the beginning of December 2017 and that in-house panels, comprising the Interim EHC Strategic Manager, Caseworkers, Educational Psychologist and Advisory Support Team representatives are trialled for the period 4th December 2017 – 31st March 2018. Towards the end of this process we will review procedures and then we will share the findings with you.
- 2. Advice Providers' Meetings:** We have decided that advice providers' meetings will not take place at present and instead parents and young people will be reminded of their statutory right to request a meeting with a Casework Officer upon receipt of the draft plan. Please do not hesitate to advise parents to contact us if they have any concerns about this change.

We are grateful for the support and commitment from schools and outside agency professionals and would wish to express our sincere thanks to colleagues who have contributed to this process. We will always welcome school/setting and outside agency attendance at future panels during the trial period to observe. Please contact us directly if you wish to arrange this.

We have made some changes to the advice template and other documents which contribute towards the statutory assessment process for children/young people who are being considered for EHC Plans. We will be using the new ones from January 2018 and will update you at the start of the spring term.



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The Educational Psychologist Team- (Dr Emma Thornbery, *Lead Educational Psychologist*)

While most of your contact with the team will be through your link EP, through attending training, undertaking project work and EHC assessments you may work with other members of the team as well.

Introducing you to our Educational Psychologists as follows:

Dr Emma Thornbery - Lead Educational Psychologist - Emma has worked for the authority for 9 years as a trainee, main grade EP, senior EP and now lead psychologist.

Dr Victoria Norman - Victoria has worked for the authority for 8 years as a trainee and main grade EP. This year she has taken on a specialism relating to mental health and youth offenders.

Dr Jane Linton - Jane has worked for the authority for 14 years as a main grade EP. This year she has taken on a specialism relating to family and community psychology.

Michaela Power - Michaela has worked for the authority for 18 years as a trainee and then main grade EP. This year she has taken on a specialism relating to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Dr Ruth Hewett - Ruth has worked for the authority for 6 years as a trainee and main grade EP. This year she has taken on a specialism around involving young people and parents in our work and how we communicate our role.

Dr Suzanne Horgan - Suzanne is new to the authority this year. This year she has taken on a specialism around our work with 16 to 25 year olds.

Elizabeth Samuel - Elizabeth has worked for the local authority for many years as a main grade EP. This year she has taken on a specialism relating to Children Missing Education.

Locum Psychologists:

Karen Roberts - Karen has started working with the authority as a locum psychologist this year.

We also have locum psychologists working with us this year to support the completion of EHC assessments for some young people.

Dr Ann Evans - Ann is working with the authority as a locum psychologist

Trainee Educational Psychologists:

Amy Humphries - Amy is in her final year of her professional training at the University of Birmingham. This year she has taken on a Specialism relating to child sexual exploitation, which is also the focus of her thesis.

Finola Holyoak - Finola is in her second year of her professional training at the University of Exeter. This year she has taken on a specialism around mental health and well-being.



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SENCOs - A Reminder (Margaret Wiredu, *Advisory Support Team Manager*):

All SENCOs (as well as special school representatives) are invited to attend the termly SENCO forums. We are really keen to continue to work with as many SENCOs as possible here. These are free of charge and will focus on school improvement issues relating to SEND, as well as national and local initiatives. Each term the Forum will be offered on a different day of the week to enable as many SENCO's as possible to attend.

Spring Term	Wednesday, 28 th February 2018	1.30-3.30pm
Summer Term	Friday, 8 th June 2018	1.30-3.30pm

We wish you a peaceful Christmas and New Year break.

Best wishes

Lynda Poole
Assistant Director, Access & Achievement

Claire Goss
Head of SEND & Inclusion

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Margaret Wiredu, *Advisory Support Team Manager*: margaret.wiredu@walsall.gov.uk

Emma Thornbery, *Lead Educational Psychologist*: emma.thornbery@walsall.gov.uk

Denise Lowther-Pope, *EHCP Strategic Manager*: denise.lowther-Pope@walsall.gov.uk

Susan Shannon, *School Improvement Partner*: susan.shannon@walsall.gov.uk

Philip Wells, *SENDi Interim Assignments*: philip.wells@walsall.gov.uk

Jackie Ross, *SENDi Service*: jackie.ross@walsall.gov.uk



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SEND and Inclusion Newsletter -3rd Edition March 2018

Dear Colleagues

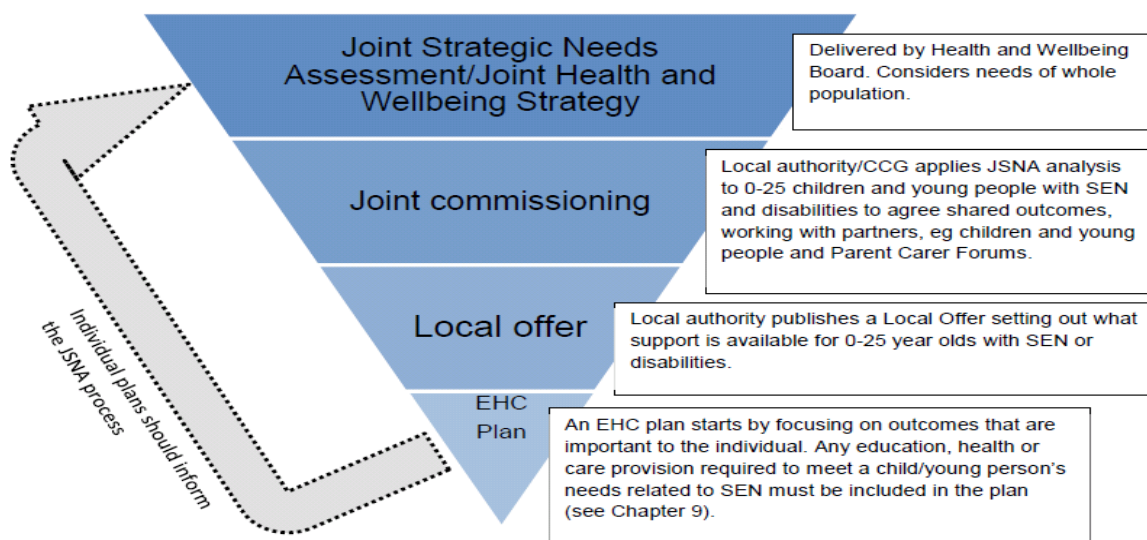
Welcome to our March Newsletter

From Jackie Ross, (SENDi Service)

The focus of this newsletter is our partnership with health colleagues. We are working together on our self-evaluation and action plan so that we develop a robust strategy going forward. The SEND Code is very clear about the strategic relationship between local authorities and health partners, and in particular, the Health and Well-being Strategy, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), joint commissioning and the Local Offer:

Joint understanding: Joint Strategic Needs Assessments

3.20 There is a clear relationship between population needs, what is procured for children and young people with SEN and disabilities, and individual EHC plans.



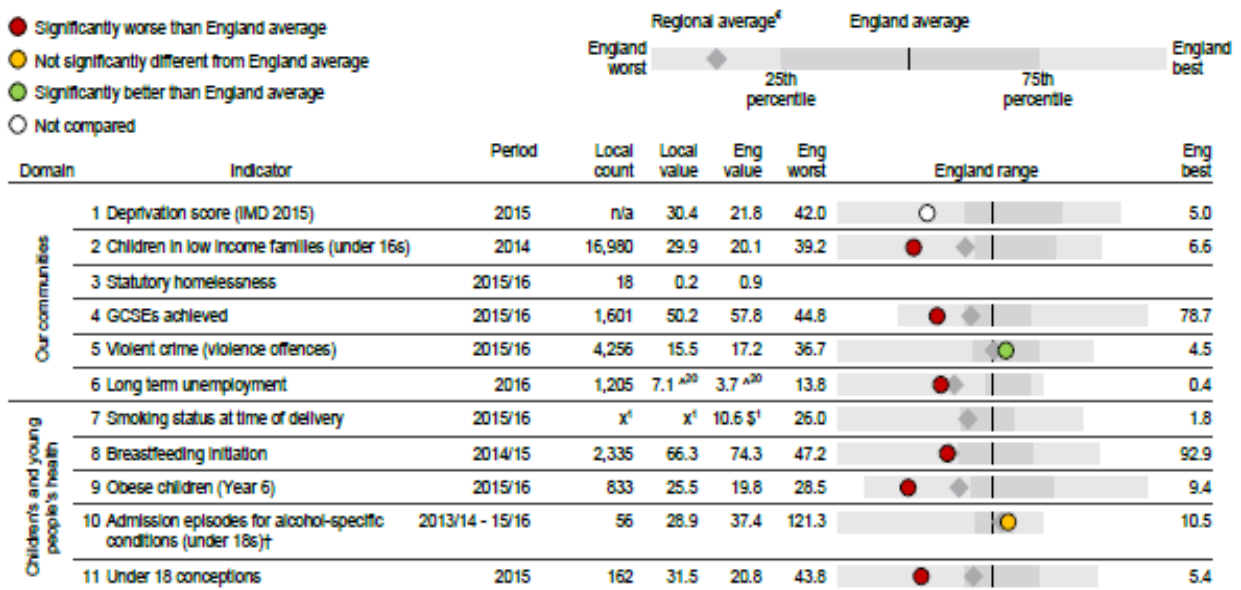
Certainly when I was a SENCO (prior to the new SEND Code), I had never come across a 'Health and Well-Being Strategy' nor a 'JSNA' as they had no impact on my professional life, until I started working for a local authority then I was asked to be the SEND author of a JSNA -- this was very interesting -- once I had looked up the abbreviation and what it meant!. Working with health partners broadened my horizon. Importantly for us, how will current work impact on the lives of local children, young people and families and what we do as professionals?

I now look at the local health profile, the 'School Readiness Report' (both from Public Health England) and the JSNA as they offer a broad understanding of where things are for local children, young people and their families.

Walsall's health profile tells us that: "In Year 6, 25.5% (833) of children are classified as obese, worse than the average for England. The rate of alcohol-specific hospital stays among those under 18 is 29*. This represents 19 stays per year. Levels of teenage pregnancy, GCSE attainment and breastfeeding initiation are worse than the England average". Click [here](#) for the link to the Walsall Health Profile.

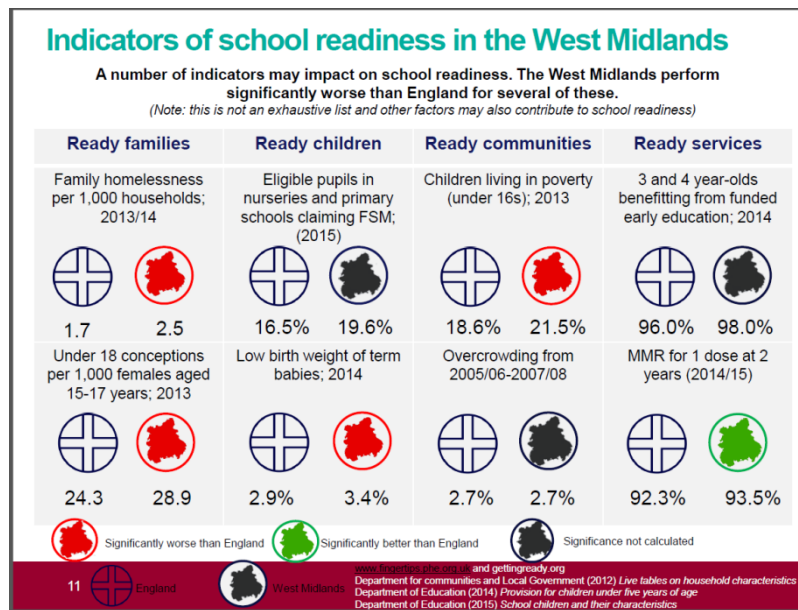
Health summary for Walsall

The chart below shows how the health of people in this area compares with the rest of England. This area's result for each indicator is shown as a circle. The average rate for England is shown by the black line, which is always at the centre of the chart. The range of results for all local areas in England is shown as a grey bar. A red circle means that this area is significantly worse than England for that indicator; however, a green circle may still indicate an important public health problem.



The regional 'school readiness' report also provides important information: "School readiness is a measure of how prepared a child is to succeed in school cognitively, socially and emotionally. The good level of development (GLD) is used to assess school readiness. Children are defined as having reached a GLD at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage if they have achieved at least the expected level in the early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development, physical development and communication and language) and in specific areas of mathematics and literacy"

Click [here](#) to access Improving School Readiness - Creating a better start in the West Midlands



We are already proactively working together as partners 'on the ground' to develop a joint self-evaluation, using:

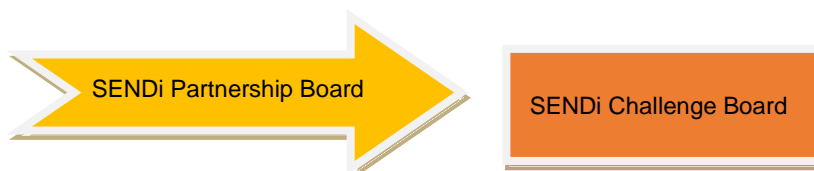
- health measures,
- expanding our SENDi score to include vulnerable children and young people (the 'i' in SENDi and the remit of the wider Access and Achievement Service)
- and significantly, developing a joint approach to understanding outcomes.

Our self-evaluation will feed into the JSNA, joint commissioning and the Local Offer.

We not only have a duty but want to work together as set out in the SEND Code:

- where this promotes children and young people's wellbeing or improves the quality of special educational provision.
- to assess local needs.
- to plan and commission education, health and social care services jointly for children and young people with SEN or disabilities. In particular:
- in local Health and Wellbeing Boards to assess the health needs of local people, including those with SEN or who are disabled.

There is a **SENDi Challenge Board** which functions to challenge and support: 'all key partners with joint responsibility for contributing to the local area's effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND and children in other vulnerable groups'. This is attended by education, health and social care and really 'brainstorms' issues. There is an independent chair who can help raise the profile of the SEND work if need be. **The SENDi Partnership Board** (Chaired by Lynda, our AD for Access and Achievement) feeds into this work by taking forward 'on the ground' the integration between educational, training, health and social care provision.

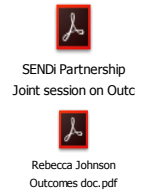


The focus of the recent SENDi Partnership Board work was on shared outcomes and was led by Rebecca Johnson, the Senior Health Commissioner for the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) which is our health partner

Please see

Our shared PowerPoint on outcomes.

Paper on Outcomes from Rebecca Johnson, Senior CCG Commissioner:
The focus is on those children/young people on EHC Plans but this applies to those on SEN Support Plans too.



From Rebecca Johnson, Senior Commissioner, Clinical Commissioning Group

What is an outcome?

The National Health Service (NHS) definition of outcomes is: *Patient Centred Outcome Measures (PCOMs) have patients at the heart of the development of measures – creating measures that are most important to patients with the condition/symptoms (NHS England 2015).*

Health Outcomes framework

NHS England has set out an Outcomes Framework with Domains and Indicators to be achieved when delivering health care and/or medical needs.

Domain 1	Preventing peoples from dying prematurely
Domain 2	Enhancing quality of life for people with long-term conditions
Domain 3	Helping people to recover from episodes of ill-health or following injury
Domain 4	Ensuring people have a positive experience of care
Domain 5	Treating and caring for people in safe environment and protecting them from harm

Locally defined outcomes for services are set by commissioners in partnership with stakeholders and service users. These are included in a 'Service Specification' which sets out how health professionals shall provide and deliver health services. The following are examples of outcomes to be achieved:

- 1 To improve clinical outcomes for children/young people by providing physiotherapy to them which improves their ability to balance which means that they do not fall over any more.
- 2 To ensure children/young people are supported to remain at home independently by providing them with a wheelchair, for indoor/outdoor use to help them get about better.
- 3 To reduce admissions and avoid a stay in hospital by providing the appropriate care at home from community nurses.
- 4 To improve the quality of life for children/young people by providing them with speech and language therapy to help them communicate better with others and improve their ability to make themselves better understood.

What do we need to do?

- 1 Professionals to jointly identify with children, young people including their families/carers what outcomes they want to achieve.
- 2 To define the outcomes to be achieved ensuring that they are **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely** that is **SMART**.
- 3 Record the outcomes set in the Education, Health and Care Plan.
- 4 Check at annual review if outcomes have been achieved, if not identify the reason(s) why and what additional needs to be done to support achievement.

From Esther Higdon, Senior Program Development and Commissioning Manager, Public Health

Emotional Health and Wellbeing and Behaviour Support Toolkit:

A group has been meeting since April 2017 to identify what is on offer in Walsall to support parents and schools to promote resilience but also identify what services are available that can be offered in school or at home when emotional health and wellbeing or behaviour issues are emerging in children and young people as well as identifying what services are available when onward referral becomes necessary.

Support available has been categorised into

- services for women during pregnancy to support early bonding
- support for children 0-5
- support for children 5-11
- support for children 11-19
- with a new category being developed for young people at transition 19 -25

This toolkit will be formally launched to coincide with the new academic year but will be available for sharing from April 2018.

For more information, please contact Esther Higdon Esther.Higdon@walsall.gov.uk

Refreshed Teenage Pregnancy Reduction Strategy:

Teenage Pregnancy is a particular issue in Walsall and although rates are reducing more needs to be done on a multiagency basis to support a continued reduction from support to increase a young person's self esteem and aspirations to provision of effective relationship and sexual education that is appropriate to all audiences. This strategy is to be launched 25th April at EDC. For more information, contact Carol Williams Carol.Williams@walsallhealthcare.nhs.uk

Healthy Eating Support in Special Schools and in Targeted Primary Schools and Nurseries:

In order to support schools to develop a whole school approach to healthy and sustainable eating, the Public Health team have commissioned the Soil Association to work in education settings. It is anticipated that this will lead to an increased uptake of school meals, an increase in healthy eating behaviours, increased cooking and growing skills in children and families and more knowledge about nutrition, food safety, shopping, growing food and where food comes from. For more information, contact Esther Higdon Esther.Higdon@walsall.gov.uk.

From Dr. Zoya Alhaswani, Walsall Designated Medical Officer

The role of Designated Medical Officer (DMO) is a Community Paediatrician who has a dedicated role in providing a link and supporting joined up working between Walsall Council and Health services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

The DMO:

- has a key role in supporting Walsall CCG to meet its statutory responsibilities for children and young people with SEND and agreeing the relevant health services within an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan.
- offers advice and support to clinicians writing reports for EHC plans
- acts as a point of contact for professionals involved in the care of children and young people with additional needs in relation to health and education; for example, schools, colleges and voluntary services.
- has strategic oversight, identifying priorities for development and facilitating improvement where needed.

Contact: Consultant Community Paediatrician Dr. Zoya Alhaswani, Walsall Manor Hospital, Moat Road, Walsall WS2 9PS Tel: 01922656659

From Jackie Ross, SENDi Service:

Please could you help?

I would like to hear your voice on the following topics:

- The Self-evaluation
- The Action Plan and strategy for the SEND Agenda going forward
- Health provision
- How you could involve the children, young people and families you work with in engaging in the Local Offer and SEND Strategy?

I would like to be invited to parents' evenings/events to meet and chat about what works and does not work for them if they have a child with SEND. This will give me an ideal opportunity to meet with parents who might not come to other specially organised events and to chat to parents/carers and their children. Kay Munday from SENDIASS or a representative from FACE Parents' Forum would like to come and have a small stall if possible at such events. Please invite us in any combination! Please send invites to me at jackie.ross@walsall.gov.uk.

From Margaret Wiredu, Advisory Support Team Manager

SENCOs - A Reminder

All SENCOs (as well as special school representatives) are invited to attend the termly SENCO forums. We are really keen to continue to work with as many SENCOs as possible here. These are free of charge and will focus on school improvement issues relating to SEND, as well as national and local initiatives. Each term the Forum will be offered on a different day of the week to enable as many SENCO's as possible to attend.

Summer Term Friday, 8th June 2018 1.30 pm - 3.30pm

Best wishes

Lynda Poole
Assistant Director, Access & Achievement

Claire Goss
Head of SEND & Inclusion

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