

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – Wednesday, 25th September 2019

BRIEF UPDATE FROM THE HEAD OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEND) AND INCLUSION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) provides drop-in sessions for SENCO's in localities on a monthly basis in order to be more accessible and visible. The drop-in sessions are due to be reviewed. The EPS provide specialist support to both children and young people undergoing statutory assessment and those being supported in educational settings. The EPS have rolled out a cost-free ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) training programme.
- 1.2 The Home Education Service is a local authority service which provides temporary, continuing education for children who cannot attend their mainstream school. There is a dual referral process to access support from the Home Education Service; a medical referral which is supported by a school referral. The medical referral is the trigger for pupils to be eligible for home education, school referrals alone cannot usually be considered.
- 1.3 There is a SENCO Forum that helps share best practice, ideas and generally facilitates communicate.
- 1.4 Twenty plus Local Offer Champions have been recruited and the Preparation for Adulthood brochure updated. The Local Offer has a Wirral home grown SEND Local Offer Trainee.
- 1.5 Wirral Council's Sensory Service aims to ensure that deaf and visually impaired children and young people (0-19 years) receive an appropriate inclusive education that enables them to fulfil their potential and develop into independent adults.
- 1.6 The KIND Team support schools to improve their effectiveness in managing and supporting the needs of vulnerable and complex children.
- 1.7 Wirral's SEN Team administers the statutory assessment and review processes related to education, health and care (EHC) plans. Wirral's efforts to fulfil their statutory duties are focused on three main areas: 1) the timeliness of the EHC needs assessment process; 2) the quality of EHC plans; and 3) communication with (a) children, young people and their families and (b) educational settings.
- 1.8 The Medical/Physical and Coproduction Team promotes and facilitates the inclusion of children with medical and/or physical needs in Wirral schools. It supports children in mainstream, from two-year funded provision to the sixth form, working with and through schools.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 On Tuesday, 10th September 2019 there was a meeting of the High Needs Working Party at Wallasey Town Hall. At the meeting the Chair requested an update on SEND and Inclusion services. This brief update is the response to that request and reflects the time available to compile relevant information.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That the Schools Forum clarify, in writing, areas of interest and or specific information required from SEND & Inclusion services for forthcoming meetings.

EDUCATION PSYCHOLOGY

CONTACT: CATHERINE O'CONNOR

PRINCIPAL EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST WIRRAL EP TEAM

Staff

During the last academic year Wirral Educational Psychology (EP) Team (WEPT) operated with 6.6 full time equivalent (fte) EP's. This included 1.6 equivalent of management time which then equates to 5 full time EP's for all schools, settings and FE Colleges. We were fortunate to be supported by two Assistant EP's and have provided EP drop in sessions for SENCOs in localities on a monthly basis in order to be more accessible and visible.

Statutory (re) assessment

When a statutory assessment or reassessment is initiated it always requires EP advice, but it does not necessarily result in an education, health and care (EHC) plan being written. If this is the case, given that these children will remain at SEN support, in most cases, the EP continues their involvement and support to school when possible.

Drop in's

The drop in's varied in their attendance levels and across the clusters, with some schools using them often for initial consultations and preventive strategies and some schools not taking up the offer at all. This facility will be reviewed in the next academic year based on take up.

ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) training programme

During the year we rolled out our cost-free ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) training programme. A total of fifty places were offered across 31 schools and all fifty completed the course. The team will continue the programme through professional supervision during the next academic year to enable the ELSA's to receive accreditation.

The team have been involved in a wide variety of training including Precision Teaching, Autism Awareness, courses related to Emotional Health and Wellbeing, Mindfulness, Dyslexia Awareness and Attachment.

We continued to be involved in the Future in Mind Steering group, Neuro-diverse schools, the Integrated Response Pathway, SEN panel meetings, Neuro developmental pathway development, management of the reduced ASC team, Early Years funding, the Early Years SLC task group and we gave dedicated time to the Youth Justice service.

WIRRAL HOME AND CONTINUING EDUCATION SERVICE

CONTACT: MRS JACKIE FORSEY

HEAD OF HOME AND CONTINUING EDUCATION SERVICE

Location

The Home Education Service is a local authority service which is based on the Hilbre High School Humanities College site. It provides temporary, continuing education for children who cannot attend their mainstream school, LA funded special school or alternative provision because of their medical and/or mental health needs. The majority of teaching takes place in pupils' homes but, where possible, pupils are encouraged to attend small-group teaching sessions at The Home Education Base on the Hilbre site.

Dual referral process

Admissions: There is a dual referral process to access support from the Home Education Service; a medical referral which is supported by a school referral. Medical referrals must come from a paediatrician, NHS specialist consultant, CAMHS psychiatrist or senior CAMHS therapist/psychologist. The medical referral is the trigger for pupils to be eligible for home education, school referrals alone cannot usually be considered. However, if there are exceptional circumstances, schools are invited to discuss the case with the Head of Service.

PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT AND LOCAL OFFER

CONTACT: SALLY TITTLE

PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT – LOCAL OFFER

SENCO Forum (closed group). This is something the SENCOs requested and said they would find useful to help them share best practice, ask for ideas and generally communicate with one another. Devised a protocol and requested mandatory e mail confirmation that members will abide by the listed rules to ensure GDPR compliance.

- Improvements made to the Early Years section from the recommendations made in the recent Early Years Peer Review and in direct response to users' feedback.
- Termly SEND Information Exchanges. Numbers of attendees are higher each term with Primary school SENCOs accounting for 60% of attendees. Secondary are improving but engage less frequently.
- Recruited 20 + Local Offer Champions across a diverse range of services. The Local Offer recently led on the update of the Preparation for Adulthood brochure requested by the Parent/Carer forum. It sits on the Local Offer website.
- The Local Offer manages Wirral's Children and Young Persons' Disability Register. Currently 83 CYP on the register. The registration process gives us an early-heads up as to the up and coming profile of SEND needs. This way the funding available is focused on need. It also opens new avenues to engage with our SEND families and ameliorates two-way communication whilst building trust and rapport.
- The Local Offer continues to maximise the free marketing afforded by social media. A successful business case allowed Facebook and Twitter accounts to be created. Most Wirral schools 'follow' the Local Offer @lowirral

- The Local Offer has sought training (free) and obtained the necessary software licence to progress Easy Read on the Local Offer.
- The Local Offer sits on a variety of local groups to ensure the SEND cohort are represented: Wirral Bereavement Advisory group, Wirral's Provider Forum, Future in Mind, Neurodiversity pathway review, Parenting support task and finish group and Co-Production strategy group
- The Local Offer worked on Careers and Employment event for the SEND Youth group. The format of this pilot event was in very much akin to Dragons Den. The young person and the Local Offer Lead delivered a pitch for each of the 10 young people. Tired of being used to volunteer these young people seized their opportunity to progress paid employment, bespoke training packages, ILM placements and in one case own business set up support. This came about by the Local Offer listening to the areas the SEND CYP need most help with and networking with appropriate partner organisations. From this event one young lady was offered an ILM role in Childcare, one placed on a Princes Trust scheme and one signposted to a college specializing in game design. Wirral's Chamber of Commerce offered financial & business support to help one of the young men to set up an inclusive dance school in Wirral. This is on completion of his dance degree at John Moores University – the young man in question is 95% blind, gets around with a guide dog and will lose his sight completely anytime soon. Inspirational and humbling work indeed!
- Finally, delighted to say the Local Offer has a Wirral home grown SEND Local Offer Trainee. The young lady is 20 years of age and attends the afore-mentioned Pilgrim St. She is autistic, suffers from anxiety and dyspraxia and was selective mute for some 10 years. She left mainstream high school with 10 GCSE's and through the support from Pilgrim Street and the Local Offer she has grown in confidence and most certainly found her voice. She brings depth and energy to the Local Offer bringing a SEND YP's perspective, invariably with no filter to the workplace on a daily basis. She has been invited into 10 Wirral schools thus far to engage with the SEND pupils and listen to their voice. She has already made a huge difference and we are very lucky to have her.

SENSORY SERVICE

CONTACT: PETER DAVIES

HEAD OF SENSORY SERVICE

Wirral Council's Sensory Service aims to ensure that deaf and visually impaired children and young people (0-19 years) receive an appropriate inclusive education that enables them to fulfil their potential and develop into independent adults. The teachers of the Visually Impaired, Teachers of the Deaf and specialist teaching assistants will work with you and your child throughout their education: from early years until they leave school or school 6th form. The core work of the Sensory Service is to deliver the following:

- enable students to develop specialist skills e.g. Braille, to help them access the curriculum independently
- monitor progress of pupils to ensure that student's individual needs are met, in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act
- undertake specialist assessments (hearing assessment and functional vision assessments)
- maintain records and provide reports as necessary
- undertake specialist assessments of language and literacy development which monitor progress, inform planning and IEP's, and facilitate successful transition
- provide advice on alternative methods of communication
- provide advice on the differentiation and adaptation of teaching materials

- liaise with Paediatric and Orthoptic departments to ensure an effective exchange of pupil information
- liaise with other agencies across Children's services, including health and voluntary agencies
- advise on technology which can improve access to the curriculum or the environment and deliver training for its use e.g. magnification software and radio aid systems etc
- develop visually impaired pupils' mobility and rehabilitation skills to ensure safe access to the school and outside environment
- modification of Braille or large print materials where needed
- provide advice, support and information to parents and carers which promote principles of good practice
- promote a positive image of deafness and visual impairment and encourage self-advocacy skills.
- provide training, advice and support for school/setting staff

The Sensory Service will require a medical diagnosis of impairment and will apply the NatSIP Eligibility Framework when deciding on the need and level of interventions. The NatSIP criteria is fluid and can change according to a number of factors such as transition and change of condition.

KIND TEAM

CONTACT(S): (INTERIM) CATHERINE KERR
HEAD OF IMPROVEMENT / INTERVENTION SERVICES

- Support for schools to improve their effectiveness in managing and supporting the needs of vulnerable and complex children;
- A reduction in the number of children requiring specialist provision;
- A reduction in the number of exclusions of children on the SEND register;
- An improvement in the educational attainment of vulnerable primary school children;
- An enhancement in children's positive relationships with learning;
- An improvement in the social, emotional and mental health of children & young people;
- A reduction in the risk of violence and self-harm (including harmful/risky behaviour);
- Working with parents to teach them effective skills to improve their children's social, emotional and mental health;
- An improvement in the effective engagement of parents to support interventions in schools (effective home/school partnership to reduce inappropriate behaviours);
- An increase in the ability of schools to support the development of children's resilience to cope with secondary school and beyond.

SEND STATUTORY ASSESSMENT (PRIMARY)

CONTACT: BEN BLAKE
SEN MANAGER
And

SEND STATUTORY ASSESSMENT (SECONDARY / OUT OF BOROUGH)

CONTACT: VICTORIA WHITTON
SEN MANAGER

The primary responsibility of Wirral's SEN Team is to oversee the statutory assessment and review processes related to education, health and care (EHC) plans. Wirral's efforts to fulfil their statutory

duties are focused on three main areas: 1) the timeliness of the EHC needs assessment process; 2) the quality of EHC plans; and 3) communication with children, young people and their families.

1) Timeliness

The SEN Team report on compliance with the 20-week statutory assessment timescale on a monthly basis. The data from the last 4 months is reported below. The SEN Team is working to improve timeliness by identifying barriers and developing practice to overcome these.

May			Jun			Jul			Aug		
No of plans issued	No of cases completed within 20 weeks	% of cases closed within 20 weeks	No of plans issued	No of cases completed within 20 weeks	% of cases closed within 20 weeks	No of plans issued	No of cases completed within 20 weeks	% of cases closed within 20 weeks	No of plans issued	No of cases completed within 20 weeks	% of cases closed within 20 weeks
12	5	41.67 %	24	18	75.00 %	32	22	68.75 %	22	8	36.36 %

2) Quality

The SEN department is aware of the need to improve the consistency, quality and maintenance of its EHC plans. In response to that, the local authority has recently expanded its SEN Team (i.e., SEN Review Officers x 2), is in the process of developing annual review guidance documents and is working closely with partner agencies on standardising the advices provided as part of the assessment process.

3) Communication

Meeting the expectations of Wirral’s children, young people, and their families is a priority for Wirral’s SEN Team; therefore, the satisfaction of our service users, regarding the EHCP process, is measured using feedback forms that are issued with all finalised EHC plans.

Feedback throughout 2019 has been incredibly positive, with children, young people, and their families reporting that they felt fully involved in the EHCP process; their views were fully considered; their EHCP Coordinator helped a lot with understanding the process; and, they felt confident their EHCP will help their child achieve their identified outcomes. Despite this, the SEN Team is aware there is room for improvement and is planning to utilise technology to improve communication with the families they work with.

MEDICAL/PHYSICAL & COPRODUCTION

CONTACT: JULIE HUDSON

Specialist Support Team: Medical/Physical Needs (MPN Team)

This Team (1.5 specialist teachers) is part of specialist support teams, that are part of the Children and Young People's Department.

The Team promotes and facilitates the inclusion of children with medical and/or physical needs in Wirral schools. It supports children in mainstream, from two-year funded provision to the sixth form, working with and through schools to enable children to achieve their best outcomes. The team puts intensive programmes in place to support transition (this year 25 children were supported into F1/F2, 10 into secondary school and 6 into post 16 provisions.)

At any one time the team will have around 200 children /young people on their data base. The Team's core work is to provide advice and support to schools around curricular access, special educational provision, and equality of opportunity including reasonable adjustments, so that children with medical/physical needs can make progress towards their outcomes.

Core work of the Team is as follows:

- Support for school staff in completing Individual Health Care Plans for those pupils who require one. In line with Statutory Guidance 'Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions', Individual Health Care planning includes analysis of both the educational and emotional impact of a child's medical/physical needs, and appropriate strategies to support learning and emotional wellbeing.

Communication with Families:

Wirral's IHCP format for schools and supporting leaflet for parents are co-produced documents between the MPN Team and Wirral's Parent Carer Forum. Wirral's Paediatric Diabetes Team have used the MPN Team's model IHCP for Children with Type 1 Diabetes to develop a standard plan for use in schools – a co-produced document. Wirral's IHCP format/practice has been recognised by the Regional Advisor for SHINE, a charitable organisation, as a model of good practice and used as an exemplar.

Statutory Compliance: Contribute to the LA's monitoring of Element Three Funding and its effectiveness.

Communication with Families – The MPN Team have good relationships with families, often supporting children using a case-work approach, from Early Years through to post-sixteen transition. This means that when an EHCP has been agreed, the MPN Team have a good knowledge of individual children and their needs, which increases the quality of the EHCP.

Learning assessment for pupils with medical/physical needs who are making less than expected progress, despite evidence-based interventions matched to the pupil's area of need. Provide reports, advice and recommendations as appropriate.

Coordination of ICT assessment for pupils who have difficulty accessing the curriculum because of physical difficulties. Advice on appropriate technology to support both curriculum access and communication in the classroom. Provision and monitoring of specialist ICT equipment and technology. Time-limited, targeted teaching to develop specific ICT skills.

The MPN Team is currently working with SALT to establish a pathway for the timely provision of augmentative and alternative communication.

Advice on environmental access and identification of building adaptations based on individual pupil need, and working in partnership with Paediatric Occupational Therapy, Paediatric Physiotherapy, and Wirral Council's School Asset Management Team.

Provision of specialist equipment for schools across all age ranges, and for private, voluntary and independent settings in the early years. Examples of equipment include mobile hoist, seating. Specialist equipment is provided on the recommendation of the Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service.

Statutory Compliance:

Equality Act 2010, Reasonable Adjustments – Provision of Auxiliary Aids and Service.

Data for Financial Year 2018/2019:

136 new items of specialist equipment and/or accessories purchased by the LA for school use.

45 recycled items of equipment provided to schools by the LA.

Processes around provision of equipment has historically been managed by the MPN Team including new and recycled equipment. Summer Term 2019 – MPN Team has successfully negotiated joining an existing pooled budget agreement between Social Care, Health and Medequip (Integrated Community Loans Store). Medequip agreement went live as of 2nd September 2019.

Liaison with agencies that provide services for children including Social Care and the Home Education Service. The MPN Team assists the ESW Team in identifying children with medical/physical needs who are on a flexi-school agreement or attending part-time because of health needs. The Team also assists schools in seeking appropriate support for pupil absent from school for periods in excess of 15 days due to surgery, ill health etc.
(statutory compliance)

The MPN Team produces the LA's Accessibility Strategy (statutory compliance).

Tarun Ghosh
Head of SEND & Inclusion
September 2019