

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM Wednesday, 06<sup>th</sup> November 2019

## REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN

### Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion brief update

---

#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A report for information only.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

#### 3. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Review by Premier Advisory Group

There was an Invitation to Tender for External Review of Mainstream Provision for Special Educational Needs and Commissioning of Specialist and Special School Places Phase 2 & 3. The closing date for tender submissions was 12 noon 20 December 2018. Premier Advisory Group (PAG) were successful in their tender.

Premier Advisory Group (PAG) are attending the High Needs working group on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019. Premier Advisory Group (PAG) have been identified as better able to speak to their report and respond to questions from the High Needs working group on matters arising from their report; than officers from the local authority. By Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> October 2019 the local authority was expecting to be in receipt of the final report from PAG. The main report did not arrive with the local authority on the 25<sup>th</sup> October. The report was received on Monday, October 28, 2019, morning. This main report included sections the local authority had not received before and was the first time the local authority had received the report as a 'whole'.

Premier Advisory Group (PAG) notified the local authority on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019 that they wanted to discuss further the options appraisals. There also appeared from PAG's comments to be formatting remaining to be completed. PAG enquired about engagement with Parent Carer Participation Wirral (PCPW) and the High Needs Working Group on the 4<sup>th</sup> November. The presentation from PAG to High Needs Working Group had not been seen by the local authority as at 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

By Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 Premier Advisory Group (PAG) had corresponded with Head of SEND & Inclusion on the list of 'chapter' headings below:

- Local and National Policy Context
- Demographics and Need
- Out of Borough and Independent Schools
- Home to School Transport Provision
- Option 1 – Renewal of Wirral Hospitals' School operating objectives and admissions criteria, which is time limited

- SEMH Option vDraft Final
- Resourced Provision
- Option 1 - Re-organisation of Foxfield School and Meadowside School
- Overview of the Kingsway Site, Feasibility Study and Outline of Potential Options
- Transition to Adulthood
- Transition between Key Stages and Phases
- Background
- Wirral Strategic Aims
- Current Education Provision
- Quality of Provision
- Educational Outcomes
- Consultation and Feedback
- Data and Process Management
- Improving Quality of EHCPs
- Training and CPD

The 'chapters' above were not received in sequential order and were not proofread to a finished product. This adversely affected the 'flow of the totality of the document' when reading standalone 'sections/chapters' one at a time. It is envisaged that not all the 'chapters' listed above will be part of the final report, for example operational documents around training. The final report ought to focus on the recommendations in relation to future SEND provision across Wirral at a strategic level. Operational issues such as training and quality of EHC plans are being actively supported by DfE, and (IPSEA) Independent Provider of Special Education Advice.

In September and October 2019 Premier Advisory Group (PAG) attended several meetings with the Head of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) & Inclusion, Assistant Director, Education and other local authority colleagues to provide a face to face update to the local authority, at the request of the local authority. The Premier Advisory Group (PAG) introduced the following professionals:

Keith Warburton – Education Director  
 David Noble – Research Director  
 Ellie Wright – Consultant  
 Brenda Mullen – Associate Director – SEND & Inclusion  
 Martin Bertulis – Associate – SEND & Inclusion  
 Cole Andrew – Associate – SEND & Inclusion  
 Mike Giddings – Associate – SEND financial planning  
 Tom Legge – Managing Director

In May 2019 Premier Advisory Group (PAG) provided an Interim Report entitled, Emerging Themes of SEND Review Interim Report Placement Planning. It is understood that this was made available and shared with leaders from educational settings.

#### **4. Review of Pilot Provision;**

The educational settings under review are indicated to be:

- The Co-op Academy Woodslee
- The Observatory School
- The Oldershaw Academy
- Hilbre High School Humanities College

- Ridgeway High School
- The Mosslands School.

The substantive Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability and Inclusion is working with Assistant Director, Education and 'system leaders' headteachers and SENCOs to establish an infrastructure whereby there will be a review of pilot provision through an 'educational-sector' led process to the local authority. The SENCO System Leaders and or the Local Area Panel (headteachers) will make a recommendation to the local authority on pilot provision. For example, agree, disagree, amend, decline, maintain or propose to cease.

The local authority is considering writing to (i) request advice and information from the educational settings in the pilot project on the (ii) impact of the support that is given to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). How the pilot provision has made a difference to the (iii) outcomes and experiences of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

## **5. Group PFAs;**

As reported at Schools Forum 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019 a Group Pupil Funding Agreement (PFA) has been agreed for Egremont Primary School for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Base Support in Key Stages 1 and 2. Some £60,000 has been agreed for Key Stage 1 base and an additional £60,000 for Key Stage 2 base. This is pro-rata from February 2019 and will end 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020. This agreement was made between the leadership of Egremont Primary School and the previous Strategic Commissioner, Special Educational Needs and Disability, circa February – March 2019.

If the leadership of Egremont Primary School want to discuss a new agreement after 01<sup>st</sup> September 2020 they will need to discuss this with, amongst others, Commissioning Service – Children's Services.

## **6. Exceptional Needs awards process;**

As reported at Schools Forum 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019 Exceptional Needs funding is available to Special Schools, Alternative Provision, and Mainstream Resource Provision where an assessed pupil's needs indicate that enhanced staffing is necessary.

Previously applications for exceptional needs were assessed on an individual basis by a panel consisting of a special school Headteacher, and mainstream resource provision Headteacher, and the manager of SEN, using a clear set of criteria. However, there has not been an Exceptional Needs panel meeting since summer 2018, with the former Interim Strategic Commissioner, Special Educational Needs and Disability intending to review the awards process.

The substantive Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability and Inclusion is working with Assistant Director, Education and 'system leaders' headteachers and SENCOs to establish an infrastructure whereby requests for exceptional needs will progress through a 'educational-sector' led process to the local authority. The SENCO System Leaders and or the Local Area Panel (headteachers) will make a recommendation

to the local authority on requests for exceptional needs. For example, agree, disagree, amend, decline, maintain or propose to cease exceptional needs awarded funding.

The local authority is considering writing to (i) request advice and information from the educational settings with exceptional needs on the (ii) impact of the support that is given to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). How the exceptional provision has made a difference to the (iii) outcomes and experiences of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

## **7. Individual Pupil Funding Agreements (PFA)**

A Review of Pupil Funding Agreements was notified in writing to primary and secondary schools on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2019 by the Assistant Director, Education. The review is being led by Assistant Director for Education. Headteachers will be aware that the Assistant Director for Education mentioned at PHCG and WASH there would be a review of the whole process around Pupil Funding Agreements (PFAs).

Under the current system reviewed PFAs should be emailed to the EHCP coordinator linked to the school no later than 14 days after the meeting has taken place. Having scrutinised the list of pupils receiving PFAs not all schools are following this process.

In order to establish a comprehensive baseline and to monitor the evaluation of impact of PFAs the Assistant Director, Education has requested that an electronic copy of each PFA is emailed to the local authority no later than Friday November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

Moving forward there is a plan to establish a Local Area Board with significant representation by headteachers, who will make recommendations to the Local Authority to (i) approve, (ii) maintain, (iii) amend (iv) propose to cease, or (v) decline PFA budget allocations. The Assistant Director, Education is looking for headteacher representatives for this Board. If you wish to volunteer, please could you email the Assistant Director, Education directly.

## **8. Inclusion funding including 1st day exclusion funding**

The educational settings under review for EBD Outreach / 1<sup>st</sup> Day Exclusion are indicated to be:

- Kilgarth School
- The Observatory School
- Gilbrook School
- Hayfield School
- Clare Mount Specialist Sports College
- Orrets Meadow School
- Meadowside School
- Foxfield School
- Elleray Park School
- Stanley School

The local authority is considering writing to (i) request advice and information from the educational settings with Inclusion funding including 1st day exclusion funding on the (ii) impact of the support that is given to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). How the Inclusion funding including 1st day exclusion funding provision

has made a difference to the (iii) outcomes and experiences of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Forum Notes the Report**

Tarun Ghosh

Head of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion

Paul Boyce

**Corporate Director for Children**