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Title of meeting: Health and Wellbeing Board

Subject: SEND Strategy and Self-evaluation

Date of meeting: 13th February 2019

Report from: Alison Jeffery - Director Children, Families and Education

Report by: Julia Katherine, Head of Inclusion

Wards affected: All

1. Requested by

A regular update on the SEND Strategy has been requested by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The last update was provided in November 2017.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update the Health and Wellbeing Board on the refreshed Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy and the SEND Local Area self-evaluation which identifies current areas of strength and areas where further development is required in readiness for the Local Area SEND Inspection.

3. Information Requested

3.1 The SEND Strategy continues to be a priority within the Children's Trust Plan and has been agreed by the Children's Trust Board. The aim of the SEND strategy remains to promote inclusion and improve the outcomes for Portsmouth children and young people aged 0-25 years with SEND and their families. The full document is included as an appendix at the end of this report.

3.2 The SEND Strategy has been refreshed and updated following feedback from and discussion with all stakeholders. The strategy includes six key strands of work, as set out below.

3.2.1 Inclusion

This work strand seeks to ensure more children with SEND are successfully educated in mainstream school settings wherever possible by developing a shared ethos across the city, promoting and celebrating good inclusive practice, building capacity in mainstream schools, developing the workforce

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and identifying and removing barriers to inclusion. The Inclusion group is chaired by a secondary head teacher and also oversees the Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Education Strategy and the Alternative Provision project. Recent developments include piloting an Inclusion Quality Mark school self-assessment to be launched in September 2019, Co-producing a Definition of Inclusion to be used to seek widespread endorsement (**see Appendix I**), and successfully bidding for government funding to develop innovative practice in relation to Alternative Provision. The funding is being used for the Turnaround project which seeks to use the PACE model of therapeutic intervention to increase the reintegration of pupils in Key Stage 3 back to mainstream schools following a period of time accessing Alternative Provision.

3.2.2 Implementation of the SEND Reforms

This strand of work ensures the effective implementation of the national SEND Reforms introduced in the Children and Families Act 2014. This includes the publication of the Local Offer, clear support for children at 'SEN Support', the introduction of co-ordinated, multi-agency Education Health and Care needs assessments and plans to replace 'statements', implementing personal budgets, offering short breaks and providing independent advice and support

3.2.3 Joint Commissioning

The Joint Commissioning Steering Group has overseen the Strategic SEND Review, which took a comprehensive look at SEND needs and provision within the city. The review made 49 recommendations for actions to be taken to ensure that we can continue to meet identified needs from the resources available. These have been incorporated into the 9 ambitions of the Joint Commissioning Plan:

- Delivering robust integrated multi-disciplinary support for children with SEND with a focus on clear accountability and monitoring for the most vulnerable children and young people (0-25) through the Lead Professional model.
- Ensuring capacity of places in local special early years settings and schools to meet need
- Improving the multi-agency commissioning of Out of City placements to reduce costs and meet needs
- Enabling inclusion within early years providers and mainstream schools to deliver high quality learning to children with SEND
- Improving parent and family support
- Deliver high quality support for children and young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Deliver the Portsmouth Neurodiversity Strategy
- Effective support and services for young people making the transition into Adulthood
- High quality health service for children and young people with SEND

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3.2.4 Participation and co-production

Co-production with children, young people and parents and carers has long been established as key to designing services that best meet needs. We have established a vibrant forum for young people (Dynamite) and Portsmouth Parent Voice continues to engage large numbers of parents and carers in helping shape services through the 'Shaping Better Futures Together' and 'Empowering Children and Families' groups as well as via a range of participation and coproduction activities.

3.2.5 Early identification and early support

This work strand has included work to ensure that there is early identification and assessment of children with SEND and effective joint working across health and education services in order to ensure that the right support is put in place at the earliest opportunity to secure good outcomes for children.

3.2.6 Preparation for Adulthood

The SEND reforms place responsibilities on local areas to provide support for young people up to the age of 25. There is a range of work under this strand to improve engagement in post-16 learning, secure employment and make effective and smooth transitions into adulthood, including accessing adult health and care services, where appropriate.

3.3 Readiness for Local Area SEND Inspection

3.3.1 A Local Area SEND inspection will take place at some point over the next 2 years. The inspection will be undertaken by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. There will be 5 days' notice of the start of the inspection and inspectors will be on site in the city for 5 days.

3.3.2 The inspection will focus on how well local leaders know the effectiveness of local area SEND services across health and the local authority in identifying special educational needs and disabilities, meeting needs and improving outcomes. For this reason we have worked with all stakeholders, including professionals and service users, to develop a self-evaluation which sets out our areas of strength and areas where we know further work is required. The self-evaluation was reviewed and updated in September 2018.

3.3.3 The views of children and young people (aged 0 to 25) with SEND and their parents as to the effectiveness of services and support will be central to the inspection. The annual Portsmouth survey of parent and carer views about the support available in the city for children and young people with SEND has just been completed (analysis to follow). There is also an annual Dynamite 'Big Bang' survey of young people's views.

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3.4 The **areas of strength** we have identified in our self-evaluation are:

- Strong partnership working
- Engagement, participation and co-production
- Quality and timeliness of EHCPs
- Quality of specialist provision

3.4.1 Strong partnership working

There is strong leadership, clear governance and shared accountability for improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Portsmouth. This strong partnership working is evident across organisations and at all levels. This is evidenced by:

- Clear reporting lines to the Children's Trust Board, Health and Wellbeing Board (and via the Portsmouth Blueprint for Health and Care) linking to the Transforming Care Partnership.
- Regular briefings for elected members.
- SEND Strategy, identified as a priority within the Children's Trust Plan since 2007, refreshed in 2016.
- An agreed SEND 0-25 Joint Commissioning Plan in place.
- Multi-agency planning and decision-making for SEND via the Inclusion Support Panel and High Support Needs Panel.

3.4.2 Engagement, participation and co-production

There is a commitment to co-production as the way that we work with families in Portsmouth. This is evidenced by:

- Co-production group of parents/carers, 'Shaping Better Futures Together' meets monthly to work strategically with the LA and partners on SEND e.g. co-design and on-going review and development of the Local Offer website, Future in Mind etc.
- Dynamite (young people's co-production group) annual 'Big Bang' survey and positively evaluated Young Inspectors programme, where trained young people inspect all services on the local offer and provide a feedback report.
- Trained parent/carer representatives are members of the Inclusion Support Panel (the decision-making panel for SEND), Inclusion Transport Appeals Panel etc.
- Parent/carer SEN Champions established in mainstream schools across the city.
- Evidence that this approach has been adopted more widely than SEND (e.g. Top tips for professionals, Co-production pledge, CAMHs developments, targeted short breaks etc).

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3.4.3 Quality, timeliness and scrutiny of EHCPs

Portsmouth deliver a person centred EHC needs assessment process that results in high quality EHC Plans. This is evidenced by:

- All new EHC needs assessments and transfers of SEN statements to EHCPs include a person centred co-production meeting to co-produce the plan.
- 98.4% of new assessments are being completed within 20 week statutory timescales.
- 100% of transfers of SEN statements to EHC Plans were completed by March 2018.
- Low level of complaints and appeals to the first tier tribunal.
- Positive parent/carer and children and young people's feedback via annual survey.
- Continual improvement of EHCPs via ongoing multi-agency workforce development and termly multi-agency EHCP audit.

3.4.4 Quality of specialist SEN provision

The quality of provision for children and young people with EHCPs is good and this is ensuring that many outcomes for children and young people with EHCPs are in line with national or better. This is evidenced by published data and the SEND Strategy quarterly performance reports.

- All Special schools in the city are rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.
- Two successful academy trusts are currently operating in the city, both with a track record of outstanding performance and improved outcomes for children with SEND, with formal links to all special schools.
- Recent developments have seen significant improvements in the vocational curriculum offer for children and young people with social emotional and mental health needs, including in October 2018 the move to the Vanguard Centre.
- Successful Special Free School bid, in partnership with Hampshire, to set up a new special free school for children with Autism and associated behaviour, learning or sensory processing needs.

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3.5 The areas we have identified where further development work is required are:

- Increasing school attendance and reducing exclusions
- Improving educational outcomes for those on SEN Support
- Ensuring smooth and successful transitions between phases
- Improving services and support for children and young people with Autism
- Using data to capture, monitor and report on outcomes at an individual level
- Workforce development

3.5.1 Increasing school attendance and reducing exclusions

Children with SEND are more likely to receive a fixed period exclusion from school than those without SEND. The majority of children who are subject to fixed period exclusions, however, are those whose SEND fall into the social emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) category. Exclusions rates and trends are monitored by the Behaviour and Attendance Group (BAG). Exclusions in Portsmouth are above the national average and rising, numbers are particularly high in secondary and special phases and this is also reflected in the attendance data.

In order to improve this we are providing detailed data and targeted support and challenge to schools where overall school absence, persistent absenteeism and/or fixed period exclusions are high via the Portsmouth Education Partnership. In September 2018 a school attendance publicity campaign was launched to raise awareness of the importance of attendance for future life outcomes. Impact is monitored via the School Improvement Board.

3.5.2 Improving educational outcomes for those on SEN Support

Educational outcomes for those with SEND follow the pattern for all children in Portsmouth i.e. outcomes are below national for all Key Stages except at EYFS (however there has been a decline in the percentage of Portsmouth children achieving a Good Level of Development in 2018 so achievement is likely to fall below national this year). In a number of outcome measures, the gaps to national are largest for those pupils on SEN Support. There is evidence that good and outstanding schools in the city achieve above national average progress for pupils on SEN support, however this is not consistent across all schools. The School Improvement Board has identified the need to improve outcomes for those on SEN Support in mainstream schools as a priority.

In order to improve this there is a clear process for monitoring the performance and progress at a school level via the Portsmouth Education

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Partnership and following up, where necessary, with support commissioned from the Teaching School Alliance. Educational outcomes for those children and young people at the SEN Support level remain a concern, however, and we are working with the Portsmouth Education Partnership on improving this, in particular sharing good practice via the SEN Support project. There are 22 schools engaged in this project which involves schools working with trained SEN leaders and SLEs. The schools involved are implementing action plans to embed a focus on SEND into everyday school improvement practice. CPD events, including a regional conference are scheduled to address the themes that are arising through the project. In order to maximise the impact of the project, other schools will be able to join all of the CPD events and the conference. The findings of the project will be shared through existing networks and forums including our termly SENCo network meetings.

3.5.3 Ensuring smooth and successful transitions

Transition arrangements to adult services for those with physical disabilities, complex learning difficulties and who attend a special school are good. The pathway is, however, less clear for those who do not meet the criteria for learning disability services, including some young people with autism spectrum difficulties, or those with SEND who are in mainstream schools. Young people tell us that they would like improved information on support to get into employment and to live independently. Whilst participation rates for young people with SEND are above national, there is a need to increase the numbers of young people with SEND in paid employment.

In order to improve this we are coproducing with young people clear and accessible transition information and guidance for young people, to be published as part of the local offer, including information to clarify the pathway from the Annual Review at age 14 onwards. A Transition Planning Group has also been established to ensure that there is appropriate information-sharing between agencies in order to improve the planning for transition and preparation for adulthood from the age of 14 onwards.

3.5.4 Improving services and support for children and young people with Autism

Feedback from parents/carers and young people tells us that we still have further work to do with regards to the offer of support for children and young people with Autism. There is an increase in home education in the city and some parents are turning to EHE because of a lack of confidence in provision for children with Autism in the city, in particular in mainstream schools. Transition into post-18 education and employment and training also needs to be improved for this group to ensure appropriate support is available. The transition from children to adult social care for young people with higher functioning autism can be difficult.

In order to improve this we are developing a 0-25 Autism strategy, which will be aligned to the all-age Autism strategy and monitored via the SEND Board. We have started work on supporting schools and parents to ensure that there is good understanding of the way in which the Autism pathway operates. To

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meet the growing need for specialist educational provision for children and young people with Autism we have created an Inclusion Centre for secondary aged pupils with Autism within one of our mainstream schools and we are ensuring that there a close links between the well-established primary Inclusion Centre and the newer secondary provision to ease transition from key stage 2 to 3. We have been successful in our bid for a new special free school for children with Autism which will meet the needs of pupils with autism and challenging behaviours which will result in more needs being met locally and a reduction in the need to source out of city provision. The Local Offer will be updated so that it is easier to find information about Autism all in one place. Training for all staff in education settings has been identified as a need and this will be delivered through a joint approach with educational experts in Portsmouth Special Educational Needs Support Partnership, CAMHS, and the Educational Psychology team.

3.5.5 Using data to monitor outcomes at an individual level, as well as to inform commissioning decisions

It has been identified that further work is required in order to be able to record (and therefore robustly report on) the health and social care provision specified within EHCPs and the outcomes achieved via Annual Reviews. Further work is required to track the impact of multi-agency interventions over time to ensure that overall progress (over all four domains of child development) is being made and maximise value for money. In addition, identifying costs of health provision within EHC plans is currently not possible due to CCG commissioning via block contracts. The SEND Strategic Review has confirmed the need for the development of a methodology to forecast future need and inform place planning and multi-agency commissioning and work on this is underway. A review of the use of coding is also being conducted in order to ensure that SEN data is accurate and can be used to identify trends and inform commissioning decisions. This is being taken forward as part of the Joint Commissioning Plan SEND place planning strategy.

3.5.6 Workforce development

There is a need to ensure that there is a coherent offer of SEND-focused professional support and development across the children's workforce and that this is effectively communicated so that all who need to access this are able to benefit. This professional development offer includes a graduated approach to enhancing the knowledge and skills of the workforce in relation to Autism and SEMH.

In addition to this and in response to recommendations made as a result of the SEND Strategic Review, we are reviewing our offer for families to ensure that professionals are working in a joined up way in the interests of children and their families. Work is underway to develop a SEND 'Hub', to deliver an integrated service to families. This work is in the early stages of development and is being overseen by the Joint Commissioning Group. The intention is that families will receive a child and family centred integrated 'offer', with a key worker identified and a team around the worker of other relevant

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professionals. The SEND Hub is better described as an approach rather than a service. It will involve workforce development and co-ordination in order to ensure a more efficient use of resources and a better experience for families.

3.6 **Internal Peer Challenge** - On 3rd December 2018 we conducted an internal peer challenge to test out the areas of strengths and areas for development that we have identified in our self-evaluation, and follows on from an external peer review that took place in 2017. Focus groups were convened for each of the areas of development identified in the previous peer review. Feedback included the following:

- *Compared to previous challenge sessions, the overall impression was that groups were much better at telling the story of where we have been and come to, and setting out the areas of particularly strong practice. The discipline of nominating a chair for groups to set out the initial position and ensure areas are referenced is an important one. It continues to be the case though that some of the earlier developments are overlooked (for example, the story of the development of the SENCo network) and these are really important parts of the jigsaw. Revisiting past actions and achievements is critical to explaining why we are at our current point.*
- *There is a need to strengthen use of data to demonstrate outcomes and evaluating whether we have made the difference; and this means bringing into play parent and young person feedback, or school feedback, as well as quantitative data. There was not enough evidence that people knew what impact measures were having (or not) on the quality of life for children, young people and their families.*
- *The lack of strong representation from health commissioners and providers on the challenge day meant that this is an area that has not been fully explored and may not be properly reflected in the discussion.*
- *The sense from the discussion is that the city has achieved a great deal since the introduction of the reforms and developed some excellent processes and practice, but that the areas left to be tackled now are more challenging and are areas where there are competing policy frameworks and drivers to navigate (for example, a tougher curriculum in mainstream schools and more challenging examinations placing a strain on the inclusivity of schools for those with SEND; the challenge of trying to be needs-led rather than diagnosis or setting-led, when frameworks including the benefits framework demand diagnosis; the ongoing challenge of reducing resources, particularly in schools against increased and more complex demand). For the city, continuing to make a positive impact for children and young people will be challenging in the circumstances.*

3.7 The full feedback report from the internal peer challenge is included as an appendix at the end of this report (**see Appendix II**).

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Signed by: Alison Jeffery, Director of Children, Families and Education

Appendices:

- I. Definition of Inclusion
- II. Feedback from Internal Peer Challenge

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location