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| **Newcastle Local Area SEND Executive Board Briefing: 12/07/2021** |

**Ofsted and CQC inspectors** returned to Newcastle in Mayyou can read their report here:[**SEND Inspection Revisit Letter**](https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50165189)**.** The Board were delighted that the inspectors found that we had made sufficient progress in 3 out of 4 areas, but we need to submit an Accelerated Progress Plan to show how we will quickly respond to the remaining area to ‘establish effective arrangements to identify the impact of the area’s work on improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND’. This Plan must be developed with parents/carers and submitted to Department for Education (DfE) by 31 August. We will publish the plan on the local offer once it is approved by the DfE and they will monitor our progress against the plan at 6 monthly intervals. (Addendum the plan has now been approved and can be found on Local Offer [**SEND revisit APP**](https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/kb5/newcastle/fsd/advice.page?id=6cgIAgrKjKA)**.** )

**Commissioned Therapy Services:** One of the issues identified by the inspectors was the long waiting times for services, particularly for Occupational Therapy (OT). In Newcastle you can wait up to 2 years for an assessment with OT. For the Board and the parent/carer forum improving access to these services is an absolute priority and needs to be sorted out quickly. There are also issues in implementing the new SALT service specification. The Board asked for a service review covering SALT, OT and Autism to be carried out and reported to the September Board. It must clearly set out: what the city needs, a proposal based on good practice, the estimated costs, and a timeline. A decision on the way forward will be made at the September Board.

The Board heard about progress on our work to improve support for children and young people with **social emotional and mental health needs** (SEMH). We are looking for schools and settings to become part of a network to promote good practice meeting the needs of those with SEMH. Central to the work is finding out about children and young people’s views about their own needs, strengths and what supports them to feel educationally and socially included. This video is a great example of what some of our children think:[**Being Me - Video from Workshops with Children and Young People**](https://youtu.be/RIbfSmKr5Tg)**.**

94 parents/carers gave their views to the parent/carer forum about what they thought about **Newcastle school provision for children with SEND.** On the whole parents/carers found excellent provision when a child has an EHCP or a hearing or visual impairment. But parents/carers are worried that there is insufficient provision for the more ‘hidden’ types of SEND and that the mainstream environment is challenging for these children. We have a number of initiatives underway to help strengthen the provision in the city including:

* Strengthened commissioning arrangements for our Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARPs) which will be signed off soon
* Increased support to be provided for communication and interaction needs via SEND Advice and Support Allocation Panel
* Descriptors of need to be agreed which will mean we have a full understanding of children’s needs
* SEND support plan to be used in schools from September

The Board requested that the PCF re-run this work in a year’s time to check on progress.

**The Chair’s closing comments:** We’ve come to the end of a very busy and fruitful meeting and we have covered a range of issues, where I sense we all agree, we must improve. I am delighted with the results of our SEND revisit report, we have some challenges, but as the inspectors found and these meeting show, we have a strong spirit of cooperation and partnership working across the city. It was great to have another new parent/ carer representative at the meeting representing the parent/carer voice. It is so powerful to hear about people’s direct experiences, issues and solutions. I am looking forward to seeing the reports at a future meeting of what the city needs in terms of SALT, OT and Autism services so that we can have a discussion and decide how we will collectively meet those needs.

**Business items**

The SEND Board received an update of the work on improving planning for young people in transitions year with complex needs and progress on ‘Improving attainment of children with SEND in the Early Years’.

The Board also approved:

* **Terms of Reference for the Newcastle SEND Collaborative Forum:** A space in calendars for SEND Leaders, Commissioners, Providers and Parent/Carers to meet on a regular basis to talk through and resolve emerging issues
* **Personal Budget Policy:** This formalises our arrangements to enable families to have their own budget to meet needs in creative ways.
* **Updated Graduated Response:** This sets out how we meet SEND needs in Newcastle for Children and young people aged 0-25 in early years settings, schools and post 16 providers

**Look out for the following coming soon**

**\* Relaunch of the Local Offer Website**

**\* Piloting the SEND Portal to improve the EHC process**

**\*Piloting a website and an app to improve how we get the child/young person’s voice into EHC planning**

**\* Happiness Survey: City wide survey for children and young people to find out how they are feeling**

**Date of next SEND Executive Board meeting**: 13 October 2021