

## Newcastle Local Area SEND Executive Board Briefing 21 September 2020

It was a very busy meeting, the Board considered and approved two key documents to take forward our SEND strategy: the [SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy](#) which sets out our commissioning priorities for Newcastle for the next three years; and [Getting it right together](#), this is the SEND Quality Assurance framework setting out how we intend to work together with children and young people with SEND, their parents and carers, educational settings and Health and Social Care partners. It will improve the quality of our work.

The Board received a presentation on a proposed new approach to early intervention, prevention and the community offer to children, young people and families. The Board strongly recommended that children with SEND are prioritised as part of this exciting service development. You can view the slides and have your say [HERE](#).

The Board noted the work being carried out to support children and families with SEND during the pandemic. The Designated Medical Officer and teachers at our specialist schools have carried out robust risk assessments for children that require Aerosol Generated Procedures (AGP) to enable the children to attend school safely. The Educational Psychology Service has published the following documents in response to concerns raised by parents:

- 'Let's talk about worry'. A short video can be viewed here: [HERE](#)
- To help schools to develop effective interventions to support the "catch up" process as children return to school.

**Voice:** The results of a survey to find out what parents/carers of children and young people with SEND and schools and settings think about Newcastle Council's SEND Services was considered by Board who were informed about how this feedback is being used to reshape SEND services, the detail of which will be reported to the next Board. The Head of SEND has also held a 'virtual' Question and Answer session with parents and carers in Newcastle, 17 parents and carers joined the call. A transcript of the session can be read [HERE](#)

For some time, the Board has been working to get a set of performance indicators so that it can really understand how well services are improving 'outcomes' for children and young people. We call this our **Outcomes Framework**. We have some performance indicators that are showing very good performance, but the Board are keen to focus on those where we need to improve. The Board approved the recommendations emerging from the data and commissioned a series of reviews to improve service performance. The first review to be undertaken is the Occupational Therapy service, and a review of Physiotherapy and the Community Nursing Team will follow. There is also a big focus on reducing the number of exclusions from school and improving attendance of children with SEND. We have produced SEND profiles to help schools challenge their performance and have started a review of Alternative Provision that is available to our children and young people, which will hopefully to prevent the need for exclusions.

The **SALT service** has been recommissioned and the Board were informed that the new joint service specification will start in **October**, although it will take a while for the revised service arrangements to be fully implemented and changes implemented. The SEND Board will receive regular updates to review service performance.

The Board heard about the work of the [SEND Information, Advice and Support Service](#) and how demands on the service have increased over the last few years. A request has been made for additional resources which the Board agreed in principle. However, this is subject to a joint commissioning agreement between the CCG, Education and Social Care.

**Date of next SEND Executive Board meeting:** 25 November 2020

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