

## Newcastle Local Area SEND Executive Board Briefing 25 November 2020

The Chair welcomed two parent/carers of children with SEND to the Board, who will represent Newcastle's SEND parent/carer forum and Martin Wood, the Principal of Walbottle Academy who will represent the secondary school sector. The Board now includes representation from all SEND partners across the city.

The Board were delighted to welcome the Deputy Head and two young people from Trinity School who talked about their experiences of having SEMH needs and being in school. The young people played their video about 'what helps them and what doesn't help': [https://youtu.be/Wf46i\\_NGYec](https://youtu.be/Wf46i_NGYec). This is part of a rich body of evidence collected as part of our **SEMH review**. The Board really liked the video and recommended that it is widely shared across schools and settings and used in training sessions. Representatives from schools/settings pledged to show this video to reflect on practices in their schools/settings.

The Board heard about a huge piece of work carried out over the summer to find out how we can improve our **EHC processes**. Some of the key findings are that we need to be more person centred and ensure timely high-quality advices are provided to support the plan. We have invited parents/carers to meet with us to co-produce an improvement plan. Progress will be overseen by the 'Getting it right together' workstream and update reports will be made to future SEND Boards.

The Board received an update of how **health providers plan to restore services** to pre-Covid levels. Virtual consultations are being retained and confidence in using PPE has meant that therapeutic services are carrying out face to face provision when required. All therapies and support that would normally be in place for children with EHC plans should now be back in place.

The **Occupational Therapy review** set up to tackle rising demand and long waiting times has now started and the Board heard that if all goes to plan a new co-produced service will begin from April 2021. The Board acknowledged the amazing impact that OT can have on children/young people's lives and requested regular reports on how the new service is shaping up.

Anna Basu, Consultant Paediatric Neurologist from the GNCH presented a proposal for a team to work with GPs and health professionals who would refer people to local non-clinical services. This is known as **Social Prescribing**. Anna is looking for funding to set up a team from September 2021 which will be based in GNC. The Board supported the proposal and agreed to work with Anna to see how the team could fit with existing services in the city.

The Board approved:

- A new more robust approach to how we respond to feedback from parents/ carers, children and young people: '**You said, we did, we will**'. The approach is being piloted in 6 schools and will make sure we change practise on the ground in response to feedback.
- A new initiative to enable a better understanding of the needs of children/young people at SEND support. The work to agree **SEND 'descriptors of need'** will start in the New Year with groups (including parents/carers) looking at each of the 4 main areas of need.

The following were raised as '**any other business**', for the Board's information:

- The **Local Offer website** is being redesigned and will be supported by the Council's own IT services which will provide more flexibility. It will be relaunched with a market-place event in September 2021.
- Consultation on the **SEND service review** was extended until the end November. The Head of SEND is analysing the significant number of responses to the proposals.
- We will be co-producing a **personal budgets policy** with parents/carers to ensure it reflects practices on the ground.

**Date of next SEND Executive Board meeting:** 27 January 2021

Please return any feedback to Ann Banks SEND project manager at: [Ann.Banks@Newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:Ann.Banks@Newcastle.gov.uk)