

**Lancashire SEND Partnership**  
**Working Together Strategy**  
**2019 – 2021**



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## The SEND Working Together Strategy


The Lancashire SEND Partnership brings together all the agencies in Lancashire which provide special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) support for children and young people from birth to twenty-five.

The Working Together Strategy outlines the SEND Partnership plans for communication and participation with children, young people and their families. It explains how we do this between organisations that provide services, help and support including voluntary, community and faith sector partners and local businesses.

This strategy recognises that following the SEND inspection in November 2017, the Partnership is on a journey to improve SEND services and build relationships with children and young people and their families.

This strategy describes the journey and how communication, participation and co-production is key. This inclusive culture will be grown within the SEND Partnership and service providers over the next 3 years.

Communication and participation can make a real difference for children, young people and their families in shaping the future of services together as partners; breaking down barriers between organisations and building stronger networks and groups within the communities in which they live in.

 *Feedback from children and young people, parent/carers and partners has informed the development of this strategy. (See Appendix 1)*

### Working Together – the legal bit!

Within Section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014 it makes clear that Local Authorities must have regard to:

- the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents;
- the importance of the child and his or her parent, or the young person, participating as fully as possible in decisions relating to the exercise of the function concerned;
- the importance of the child and his or her parent, or the young person, being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions;
- the need to support the child and his or her parent, or the young person, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help him or her achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes.

The Lancashire SEND Partnership will use these principles to underpin the work that we do with children, young people and their families.

## The SEND Partnership Vision

The Lancashire SEND Partnership has a vision for the future.

Although there is a great deal of work to be done and we know we are not there yet, we have high aspirations and share a commitment to achieve change.

### One Vision for the future

- We are passionate about planning for and meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities;
- We work together, as equal partners, who understand and listen to each other;
- Our highly regarded services are child centred, accessible and responsive;
- Our children and young people are supported to achieve their potential and ambitions, as valued members of the community.

## The SEND Partnership Values

We share these values as the basis of our work together to support children and young people.

**Inclusion:** Belonging and involvement

**Integrity:** Honesty, trust and fairness

**Respect:** Value, regard and reliability

When we use these words, we mean that they will guide the way we behave towards each other, so that we create a culture of understanding as the foundation for excellence.

Effective communication is key to embedding these values. Through engagement events with children and young people and parent/carers the SEND Partnership has defined the following promises.

## The SEND Partnership Promises

The Partnership will:

- Actively listen and respond to everyone's views.
- Be open, honest and clear in our communication with each other.
- Talk directly with each other and provide opportunities to talk privately.
- Understand the challenges everyone faces and provide support.
- Understand individual needs and how they affect people's lives.
- Explain what is happening and the next steps.
- Plan meetings together.

## Who is this strategy for?

The co-production partners are those represented by the SEND Partnership Board and the agreed representatives of Lancashire SEND parent carers, children and young people. It is important to have strong, inclusive, representative structures which enable effective co-production work.

Representative structures which are sustainable will ensure that co-production is embedded and resourced in the future.

Our vision is for children, young people and parent carers to be fully involved; influencing discussions and decisions about individual support and strategic planning, decision-making and commissioning.

***NB: Within this document "partners" refers to all public, voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and to parent carers where they are not named specifically.***

## Communication

### How will we communicate together?

Communication is the sharing of information by speaking, writing, or using another medium. Effective communication is a two way process which involves how we send and receive messages.

Good communication involves:

- Listening
- Time
- Be clear and concise
- Friendliness
- Confidence
- Empathy
- Feedback
- Open-Mindedness
- Respect

People communicate in many ways; the SEND Partnership recognise that communication should be within safe confidential environments and

acknowledge that families have busy, active and often challenging lives and communication needs to rise to the challenge of modern life.

With this in mind it is important to communicate in a variety of ways and provide opportunities for everyone to receive timely, relevant information and feedback on their experiences and views. We will do this through:

- Local Offer website
- FIND Newsletter
- Email groups
- Social media
- Face to face meetings
- Events and conferences
- Schools and Colleges
- Parent/carer engagement events
- Lancashire SEND parent/carer forum
- Children and young people's engagement events
- Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool (POET)

## Participation

This model demonstrates how working together with partners we can improve the outcomes for, and lives of, children and young people in Lancashire.

The Lancashire SEND Partnership will work co-productively in the here and now; we need to understand what is working well and use this to continually improve and progress.

## Co-production Model



The Lancashire SEND Partnership will work towards full co-production, at all times, over the next 3 years:

- an individual level for each child, young person and their family in schools and colleges, with health and social care partners
- at a management level to help shape and improve individual services for children and young people with SEND
- at a strategic level to develop and improve services and ensure the public pound is spent wisely

We will encourage and promote co-production with all our partners to deliver and plan for future services in a collective way.

## How do we get there?

### Communication model

The SEND Partnership has developed a model to manage communications across Lancashire. This is a two-way communication process through Local Area Partnerships to provide greater accessibility for children and young people and their families to senior practitioners within their local areas.

Parents/carers will be able to provide feedback to this Local Area Partnership and through the Lancashire Parent/Carer Forums and groups, but also through face to face engagement events throughout the year.



There will be three SEND Local Area Partnerships that will work with children and young people and parent/carers to identify and address issues locally and where necessary share these with the SEND Partnership Team and the SEND Partnership Board. The SEND Partnership Team will provide support to the Local Area Partnerships, ensure learning is shared and consistency maintained across Lancashire.

The SEND Local Area Partnership will identify local needs, gaps in services and work with voluntary, community and faith sector partners and local businesses to provide support for children, young people and their families with SEND in Lancashire. (See Appendix 2 for Terms of Reference).



## Create space for change

### We will work together to:

1. Create opportunities for providing good quality, simple information that everyone can use so that children and young people with SEND and their families are able to make decisions.
2. Support children, young people and their families to communicate their views in the way they want to, and to be involved in decisions about the way they want to do this.
3. Make sure there's good information about participation available and useful tools in place to support participation.
4. Create opportunities and supportive confidential spaces for people to share their views.
5. Celebrate and share success.
6. Support practitioners and parent/carers to encourage children and young people to practise and develop decision-making skills.
7. Involve children, young people and their families in planning, designing and reviewing services so that services are designed with those who will use them.
8. Make sure we share information between services to inform good practice.
9. Provide feedback so that people can see what happens as a result of their participation; our feedback will be timely.
10. Ensure parent carers, children and young people are represented throughout the SEND Partnership.

## Appendix 1

### Children and Young People

Children and young people were asked for their views about how people have communicated with them. They gave examples of good experiences which they called “TOPS” and examples of bad experiences which they called “PANTS”.

| TOPS  | PANTS   |
|---|---|
| Keep on time  | Don't lie   |
| Wanna be heard not just listened to   | Don't twist a young person's words around to fit your own narrative                                   |
| I want to be involved in all meetings about me  | Don't make promises that might not happen   |
| I would like time to talk to professionals and staff at hospitals   | Don't talk to me in a condescending way   |
| Talk directly to me   | People saying my name wrong   |
| Educate yourself more on a variety of disabilities to have a wider understanding for everyone                               | Finishing college before everyone else and getting longer off   |
| Be more adaptable in the way you teach, not everyone learns the same way.   | Promised to a football match (that didn't happen)   |
| Explain to me what's going on and the next steps  | Don't swear   |
| Honesty   | Bad support at school   |
| Don't treat us different  | Job centre staff are hard to understand   |
| Have a children's area  | I got mocked by peers   |
| People understand me more in college and I feel I get spoken to like an adult rather than a child like I was at school.     | Some staff at school aren't helpful.  |
| I had one to one support at mainstream school which really helped me....they told people if I was struggling to understand. | People don't seem to care about disabled people, particularly in work placements.                     |
| Staff at the youth club really listen to me and help me have a voice.   | Teachers said I didn't listen but I felt they didn't listen to me or understand how to engage me.     |
| Talking/sharing about my disability is good.  | There are members of staff who make it difficult to understand (transition officers).                 |
| Some staff in school are helpful.   | Bad changes kept happening such as larger classes with noisy students and hours of support being cut. |
| Always know you have someone to talk to if I'm worried.   |   |
| Always had a carer support through school that helped me to be confident.   |   |
| Great support at college.   |   |
| Meeting new people.   |   |

## Parent / Carer Experiences

When we asked parent carers about their communication experiences they told us about some of the problems and what would make it work better.

- Communication needs to be accurate, current, transparent and easy to understand
- Local Offer needs to be a one stop shop
- Need an appropriate response
- Two way communication
- No jargon - endless acronyms
- Better signposting and ready information for parents
- Telephone, email and letters
- Parents need to feel valued, respected and listened to
- Good communication both pre and post diagnosis - not just leaflets
- Organisations need to learn from feedback - it may sound negative, but needs to be said - open and honest
- Five minute call to "check in"
- Consistency in information
- Signposting
- Preparing us for meetings - what to expect, what it's for and who will be there
- Use a variety of communication methods - social media, podcasts, text, email
- Simple, accessible language, relevant
- Continuity - someone who knows your story
- Frontline staff need clear and consistent message for families across Health/Social education
- Information available and kept up to date
- Two way multi-way communication
- Don't know who to speak to in SEND, Don't get passed on to other people
- Feed back in both directions - meaningful communication.
- Co-ordinator/navigator of services

## Appendix 2

### SEND Local Area Partnership: Terms of Reference

#### Purpose

The purpose of the SEND Local Area Partnership is to:

- Network within local areas and proactively engage partners such as schools, sports centres, local councils, police etc
- Be visible, accessible and build relationships with local parent/carers
- Be visible, accessible and build relationships with local children and young people (CYP)
- Identify local needs

#### Role

The role of the SEND Local Area Partnership is to:

- Be a visible senior representation of the SEND Partnership at a local level
- Facilitate a two-way communication system from parent carers and CYP within their local areas to the SEND Partnership Board and back again.
- Review feedback and information from engagement events, the parent carer or CYP forums and resolving issues at a local level when possible.
- Hold engagement events in the local area (North, South or East) with parent/carers and CYP.
- Participate in quality audits of education, health and care plans (EHCP)

#### Reporting structure

The Local Area Partnership will report to the SEND Partnership Board. The SEND Partnership Team will provide support to the Local Area Partnerships and also disseminate learning and maintain consistency across Lancashire.

#### Local Area Partnership Membership

| Representative                     | Minimum Requirements | Name of Representative |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Young Person                       | 1                    |                        |
| Parent/Carer                       | 1                    |                        |
| Designated Clinical Officer        | 1                    |                        |
| SEND Locality Manager              | 1                    |                        |
| Social care                        | 1                    |                        |
| Special School                     | 1                    |                        |
| Child and Family Wellbeing Service | 1                    |                        |

#### Meeting Administrator:

PA/Admin to the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) for each locality.

**Tenure of Membership**

To be reviewed after one year.

**Frequency of meeting**

The Local Area Partnership will meet on a monthly basis.

**Attendance by Non-Members**

Invitations may be extended to non-members, where their input or advice supports the discussion taking place at the meeting.

**SEND Partnership Board  
December 2018**