



Lancashire SEND Partnership Board Meeting 25 April 2023, 10.00am - 12.00noon

Online meeting

Board Members Present:

Julie Bell, Chair, Interim Director of Education, Skills and Culture, Lancashire County Council

Dave Carr, Director of Policy, Commissioning and Children's Health, Lancashire County Council

Sally Richardson, Head of Inclusion Service, Lancashire County Council

Neil Willcocks, Service Manager (Learning Disability & Autism), Learning Disabilities, Autism and Mental Health, Lancashire County Council

Jennifer Ashton, Manager of the SEND Partnership, Lancashire County Council

Clive Groves, Designated Social Care Officer, Lancashire County Council

Sam Jones, Chair, Lancashire Parent Carer Forum

Gillian Rankin, Lancashire Parent Carer Forum

Suliman Hussain, Youth Worker, Lancashire County Council

Lorna Harris, Youth Support Worker, supporting Children and Young People SEND Board representatives, Lancashire County Council

Fran Clayton, Head at Pendle View Primary School, Lancashire Special Schools Head Teachers Association Representative

Marie Howarth, Vice Principal Preston's College, Further Education Representative

Andy Smith, Head at St Aidan's High School, Secondary Schools Representative

Tina Wilkinson, Head at St Andrew's CE Primary School, Primary Heads in Lancashire Representative

Vanessa Wilson, Director of Children, Young People and Maternity, NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board

Lesley Anderson-Hadley, Associate Director for SEND & Complexities, NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board attending on behalf of Vanessa Wilson,

Dr Maria Hall, Community Paediatrician, Lancashire Teaching Hospital

Ruksana Sarkar-Aklam, Interim Public Health Consultant, Lancashire County Council

Helen Keaveny, SEND Lead for Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

Elaine Croll, Designated Clinical Officer, South Area

In attendance:

Louise Jefferson, Integrated Service Manager, Lancashire County Council

Andrew Brooke, SEND Enabler, Family Hubs, Lancashire County Council

Anna Burkinshaw, Local Offer Development Officer, Lancashire County Council

Laura Morris, Manager of SENDIAS, Lancashire County Council

Apologies:

Jacqui Old, Executive Director of Education and Children's Services, Lancashire County Council

Andrea Duerden, MASH Senior Manager, Lancashire County Council

Clare Smith, Youth Policy Strategic Lead, Lancashire County Council

Matt Pilling, Senior Manager, Early Help, Lancashire County Council

Sue Conron, Head Teacher at Duke Street Nursery, Lancashire Special Schools Head Teachers Association Representative

Cllr Michael Goulthorp, County Councillor, Lead Member for Education and Skills/ Children and Families

Cllr Jayne Rear, County Councillor, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Cllr Cosima Towneley, County Councillor, Cabinet Member for Children and Families.

Sakthi Karunanithi, Director Public Health and Wellbeing, Public Health

1. Welcome and Apologies

Julie welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Standing Items

2.1 Minutes From 19 January 2023 Meeting

The minutes were approved by the Board and will be published on the SEND Partnership website following the meeting.

2.2 Action Tracker

The action tracker was received by all members for review before the meeting. All actions reported to be in progress, completed or on the meeting agenda.

3. SEND Plan Progress

3.1 SEND Plan 2021-2025 Highlight Report

Jenny shared the Highlight Report and introduced the 5 Priority Groups and the annual overview.

Priority Group 1: Improving Outcomes

Sally shared that half termly working group meetings were taking place with good attendance. These meetings had focussed on themes, initially education and now public health, health and social care. There is a systematic approach to feedback with quarterly reports focussing on tribunals, and complaints. The first part of the year focussed on attainment which has been disappointing, with a down turn across the country, in terms of performance, however Lancashire falls below their neighbours for all Key Stages. We do better in Key Stage 5 though. Steps have been taken to address these issues, in Early Years the Marie Gasgoine balanced approach to school readiness and language development has been implemented. In Primary Key Stages a head teachers reference group has been established to share good practice and what works well. A guide is being created which schools can use to help review their SEND provision and a directory is also being created so schools can support one another. Secondary School data has been shared with LASSH members (Secondary Heads Association) who have met and discussed how support will be made available to secondary schools. Some schools have a higher proportion of children with SEND, whereas others have limited numbers of children with EHC plans. The Emotionally Based Schools Avoidance framework has been well received by schools and has been taken up by the Department for Education with the psychologists presenting a webinar. The Alternative Provision Strategy is due to be finalised following several discussions with secondary heads and pupil referral unit heads, and will be sent out for consultation soon.

Priority Group 2: Communications

Jenny shared that the Working Together Strategy has been updated and will be presented later on the agenda. Lancashire Parent Carer Forum have been supported by Contact and they will also provide an update. POWAR young people voiced to the Board at a meeting in March that they wanted more face to face opportunities, with information provided in an easy to understand format and plenty of time to digest the information. There will be a take over day on 1 August which all members of the board are invited to. The young people also requested to speak first at the meeting if they had an agenda item, to help reduce their nerves. We have been working to ensure how the Local Offer can be improved, and as part of the You Said..We Did engagement events have been organised, 24 in 12 months which is proving challenging. However, progress has been made and we have received really good feedback from parent carers who have attended, however we need to improve our marketing strategy to improve attendance. We have set up several task and finish groups looking at the Communication Delivery Plan, and how we improve support provided to schools. We attended the SEND Early Help event organised by Child and Family Wellbeing (CFW) for 60 school SENDCO's and health practitioners, and we have supported the parent carer forum with their growth.

Priority Group 3: Improving the SEND journey

Lesley has recently returned from bereavement leave and has been catching up. Jenny and Sarah Camplin worked together to complete the highlight Report. Lesley shared that she, Sarah and Jenny will work together moving forward to look at Annex A and the Self Evaluation Framework. Vanessa shared that there had been challenges with the actions within the priority group as they don't all sit with health colleagues, so this needs further exploration moving forward. Partnership and project support needs to be co-ordinated. Actions have been identified moving forward including the finalisation of the ICB structure, the Niche report will be presented to the Executive Board in June and to the SEND Board in July. Working relationships will be established to improve future reporting, project management support needs to be identified and now Lesley is back on a phased return this will help improve co-ordination around reporting.

Action 1: The Niche report will be presented to the SEND Executive in June and the SEND Board in July.

Priority Group 4: Preparing for Adulthood

Neil shared the priorities in the plan and that the delivery group had been meeting monthly. They had been working hard to improve the Local Offer which is on the agenda later. An audit has been completed identifying where we're good and where we need to improve. Commissioning plan on a page has previously been reported and quality measures have been developed. Funding has been confirmed to increase the transitions team which will help engagement with young people earlier, which is good news. Priorities in the next quarter includes the local offer website development, finalise the plan from the audit and to finalise the transition policy, which is further down on the agenda. Risks include engagement from schools, health engagement and parent carers, as there hasn't been any direct input.

Priority Group 5: Accessible Services

Dave shared that there was some overlap in the priorities in the plan, which need to be reviewed. There are plans to increase access to mental health services, with work with the ICB, across the Blackburn, Blackpool, Lancashire and South Cumbria footprint. There has been investment in mental health support teams across the Fylde district and funding into north Preston and Wyre. There are new governance arrangements across the ICS and a proposal for a new board or steering group to

pick up learning disabilities and Autism across the patch, which Lancashire will have representation on. The Specialist Nursing Framework went to Cabinet in early April and has been agreed, with the funding decision from the ICB progressing through the system. The Graduated Response and delivery plan has been developed by Alison Moore with a series of engagement sessions being organised. There has been an increase in Special School places and the establishment of a Free School for SEMH has been approved. Break time plus is being developed and the Short Breaks Statement has been finalised. The North West Region is re-designing CAMHS but the links need to be strengthened, and there are numerous surveys being completed. There is a position statement on the neurodevelopment pathway implementation. Co-production at Family Hubs level is progressing, with user research being completed with 400 parent carers and young people to capture their feedback at local level, but it is not SEND focussed at this time. A SEND Enabler has now been appointed, so this will see an increase in SEND focus. The risks include breaktime provision and that it isn't meeting the needs of the children, more providers are being contacted and more HAF providers have been identified. There will always be a limit in commissioned services as to what gets put in place and the providers who come forward.

Action 2: Dave to share the survey and papers from the North West re-design of CAMHS

SJ asked how partners are communicating with each other about parent carer forum involvement as not all are aware that there is the Lancashire Parent Carer Forum funded by the DfE, specifically the Family hubs. This has been in part due to parent carer forum capacity but leads need to be brought together to look at how communication is delivered across the 5 priority groups apart from at this Board. JA shared that the Executive and the Operations Group meetings do cover an overview of the 5 priority groups. SJ was suggesting a mapping of communications. SR shared that systems do link and were developed as to how the groups feed in. SJ asked about communication via the local offer, and the FIND newsletter. SR asked if parent carer representatives were attending the working groups. JA shared that a Communications Delivery Plan had been initiated by CG before she started in post in February 2023 and the task and finish group were looking to populate this, to include a communication programme. DC shared that there were numerous ICB groups for mental health, autism, specialist nursing, and the Balanced System. There wasn't a specific Accessible Services working group but he had overview of all the strands. There is a clear governance structure regarding SEND with parent carers and POWAR, which Family Hubs weren't aware of. Discussions were held about increasing the SEND directory but this would dilute the services specifically for SEND. SJ stressed the importance of publicising our successes and positivity, together with improving the relationship with the parent carer forum. CG agreed with SJ and reiterated the SEND communications delivery plan. JA shared that she is new in post but is providing the conduit between all the leads to improve working together.

Action 3: Family Hubs to link with the Lancashire Parent Carer Forum.

JB shared the celebration of getting the school medical policy to go through. Although it took time, she thanked all those involved particularly those in Dave's team.

3.2 SEND inspection, continuous improvement plan and key data update

Sally shared that the annual census information comes into the authority in January from schools, which is being analysed. This will then inform the self-assessment and self-evaluation. Sally said there was no benchmarking data nationally to compare this with, just data year on year. Sally shared that the growth of Education, Health and Care Plans issued has significantly increased over the last few years, rising from 5862 issued in 2017, to 9612 in 2023. Comparisons are made with Lancashire's statistical neighbours and England, with Lancashire's rate of growth being at 8%, rising to 11% in 2022. Generally in the North West and England it is around 10%. Children aged under 5 in Lancashire

with plans have a greater proportion than nationally. The Specialist Teaching Service and the Educational Psychology Team have been working with nurseries to ensure early identification of need. The health notification system has also been reviewed. This will help children have the right level of support when they join primary school in reception. The rate of increase in primary aged children hasn't been as great, but secondary aged population children with plans has increased slightly. There has been a dedicated team targetting young people not in education, employment or training and making links with adult social care. The increase in plans links with an increase of children identified as having autism and speech and language communication needs. The number of children accessing Special School is increasing every year with Lancashire above it's statistical neighbours and England, but this year is the first time Lancashire is below the North West (by 1). Lancashire has 9% more children in Special School compared to England. EHCP requests have increased by 70% in 2022. This increase, together with new staff has impacted timeliness, with 45% being completed within statutory timescales, however, targeted measures have been taken and now 80% are completed within timescales, nationally it is 60%. Initial requests were not accepted in 19.2% compared to 23.5% in England, with 2% of plans not being issued following assessment, compared to 5.3% in England. 62% of health advices are received on time and 93% of Social Care, which has increased since the introduction of the DSCO. 78% of psychology assessments are completed on time. This again is due to increased demand.

SEN Support data was requested by MH, which Sally explained was only collected once a year from schools, and will be published later in the year. SJ discussed the importance of communicating this information, and Sally stressed that most people were happy with the EHCP process. SJ shared that this isn't the view of the public out there and needs focussing on.

Action 4: It was agreed we need to focus on our successes more within the communication priority group.

4 Key Topics (Specific topics related to the improvement plan and the SEND Code of Practice)

4.1 DCO 6 monthly report

Elaine introduced herself and the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) Team. There has been some changes in personel and short term funding has been secured until October to provide 0.4 extra capacity. The DCO priorities have focussed on the increased demand in health advice requests which has been challenging. The service took some measures to focus on statutory requirements. They also secured some funding for administrative duties to help support the increased demands. DCO's have responded to enquiries and tribunal appeals, they have provided sessions to health colleagues regarding the quality assurance of new advice requests and have focussed on establishing ICB links to support joint working. Data was shared reflecting the significant increase in education, health and care needs assessment (EHCNA) advices which showed there had been a 126% increase across the footprint from 2019-2023, but there hadn't been any permanent increase to team capacity. 500 new health advice requests were requested in Quarters 3 and 4 but these generated over 2000 individual health requests to gather this information. There has been an increase in incompleted advices being returned, with some services having limited capacity but there hasn't been the ability to drill down as to the other reasons why. DCO's provided 15 sessions to NHS services to help improve the quality of health advices for EHCNA. Bespoke support has also been provided to individual practitioners to help improve practice. DCO's have provided audit support focussing on different disciplines, disability services shared that the local offer wasn't up to date, so their information has now been updated and one service area hadn't completed advices and this was found to be due to a change in email address. DCO enquiries come from a range of sources, mainly from local authority colleagues in inclusion and social care followed by health colleagues and parent carers. DCO admin support provide signposting

to enquirers. Key enquiry themes include children experiencing inconsistent access to continence assessment and provision, which DCO's escalated to the ICB. The ICB arranged some interim spot purchasing to enable needs to be assessed, whilst options were considered. This is a dynamic situation which is being addressed. Another theme involved the medical authorisation of absence from school, so a draft guidance letter has been shared from Cumbria to help support Lancashire's response. DCO's had a meeting and identified the issue was broad, so next steps need to be identified to help support colleagues. The DCO's have asked the ICB to review their capacity, to help look at a policy to standardise practice, for a training offer and strengthened audit process. DCO's support providers through their SEND Champions meetings, engaging colleagues from Southport and Ormskirk. Elaine shared her contact details and those of her colleagues.

SJ asked about the service involvement in annual reviews, and how DCO's maintain the health input. DCO's don't have oversight of this process as it is for the involved health professionals to provide this information. Inclusion contact DCO's if they are struggling to source this information. SJ identified the DCO's wouldn't have capacity as there are now over 9000 plans and therefore there is a gap in service. Elaine re-iterated the support they had provided to colleagues regarding the completion of EHCP health advices. SJ asked what the pathway is, and Elaine shared that there is a pathway for inclusion to follow. CG shared that there is an Annual Review Working Group which highlighted this gap yesterday and the importance parent carers have in identifying involved practitioners and strengthening the process. AS shared he was pleased to see the item about GP's and inconsistencies with GP's condoning absence without diagnosis. AS asked what the timescale would be, but there is no set timescale but L A-H shared she had picked this up and had contacted primary leads to progress imminently. AB commented on the audit regarding the Learning Disabilities team and Speech and Language Therapy and that they had contacted her to update their information on the local offer.

4.2 SENDIAS 6 Monthly report

Laura highlighted the SENDIAS service report from April to December 2022 as the statistics for 2023 were not yet available. SENDIAS provide information, advice and support to children, and young people with SEND, in addition to parents and carers covering education, health and social care. All staff are legally trained to IPSEA Level 3. Laura is manager, there are 3 SENDIAS officers and 3 information, advice and support officers who run the helpline and there is a steering group chaired by a parent carer. SENDIAS has been trialling new intervention levels due to increasing numbers of enquiries. The voice of the child and young person is prioritised and enquiries triaged using an empowerment model to provide impartial information. SENDIAS have monthly meetings with the DSCO and DCO's to ensure joint working together. The helpline is available during office hours, with a 24 hour answering machine, providing a call back service. Parent carers are empowered to self serve. Most enquiries come from parent carers, but initial referrals come from professionals. Enquiries were quiet during lockdown but have significantly increased since. Information is provided to parent carers, specialist advice can also be provided when required. To be allocated a case officer, the case would be complex, advocacy and liaison with other professionals is also provided. Face to Face meetings are less likely now but the officers will attend meetings and appeals if required. Case work is mainly in the south, followed by the north and east. 652 families (737 children) have been supported in 2022 in comparison with 354 and 311 in the same period the previous year. Current themes include increasing cases with Emotionally Based School Avoidance, permanent exclusion, new to area cases, those with an additional language, tribunal support, parents with high needs who need the contents of EHC Plans and draft plans explaining. SENDIAS has a website and a Facebook page, to share information and gather feedback. Families are also asked to evaluate the support which is mainly positive. SENDIAS work with partners including the SEND Partnership, Lancashire Parent Carer Forum, Child and Family Wellbeing, DCO's and Designated Social Care Officer. SENDIAS will continue to embed the new intervention levels and co-produce guidance and policies with young people and their parents. Resources are also being developed to complement the support.

SJ thanked SENDIAS for their hard work, especially as their team had reduced from 16 to 7 and given the increase in enquiries. Laura shared how they wanted to work with the LPCF moving forward.

4.3 Parent Carer Forum 6 monthly report

Sam shared they had received support from Contact, due to their capacity difficulties. They have received support from them since October to help grow the membership and to build capacity. They have doubled their membership and steering group, written a development plan which highlights a more reciprocal relationship, as the forum give a lot but don't ask for much back. Clive (DSCO) has been supporting with strategies and the final meeting will be held with contact to discuss next steps and the grant application from the DfE. CG thanked Sam and Gill for working so hard in moving the forum forward.

4.4 Review of Local Offer Improvements and ongoing development

Anna shared an update for the local offer, for the last 12 months. Anna has been getting out and about more, engaging face to face with people, which they couldn't do previously due to the pandemic. Over the last year there have been SEND engagement events, coffee mornings, and practitioner events, where they have really been shouting about the local offer, reminding people about it, and asking them to signpost families to it. Improvements have been made to the local offer, ensuring it is regularly updated, including the new You Said ... We Did page, and icons have been added to the front page, following feedback from children and young people. New health pages have been added for Learning Disabilities, Autism and Sensory Processing, information how to contact the Designated Social Care Officer, a video explaining EHCP's, SEND transport updates, better signposting to the HAF programme and updates to Children's Hospice Care. The SEND directory was launched 18 months ago providing a valuable space for SEND families, including groups, events, activities. Improvements are being made to the search facility and adding posters. New providers are sought and added. The Local Offer engage with families and have attended 15 events, there has been an internal campaign to improve signposting, co-production sessions for Working Together Strategy and Short Breaks Statement, presented at LASSHTA and Dadsnet. Surveys have been completed on the Find Newsletter, what parent carers want practitioners to know, what organisations families would recommend which were added to the directory. 70% of service users find the information useful and relevant. Children and young people are involved in the Local Offer development group which focuses on the service user and what they need. Evie has recently left the group, with her achievements being celebrated including use of widgets and a survey at Sir Tom Finney event. Comms have created a pathway template, to bring information to one place, for example Specialist Teaching Provision or needing to get an EHCP, but there is much more support available before applying for an EHCP. Parent carers wanted staff in education to understand more about specific health conditions, which is being addressed through a multi-agency working group together with comms to bring the information together in one place. Parent carers and young people have provided positive feedback about the engagement events and the improvement of the local offer.

4.5 Preparation for Adulthood Update

Neil shared the areas of work that the PfA priority group have been developing, including the local offer pathway guide, the data dashboard, the audit and gap analysis and the transition policy statement. The pathway guide is in draft for several areas, including EHCP, Early Years, Primary, Secondary, post 16, traineeships / apprenticeships, adult social care, employment, housing and health services. A PfA template has been shared in the agenda and will be shared in the brief giving more detailed information. The data dashboard will cover EHCP's, personal budgets, destinations for

young people who have a plan, number of young people known to youth justice, those eligible for adult social care services and the number of young people who are on the dynamic risk register, which is regarding risk of hospitalisation due to mental health needs. Future reporting will be on health data. An audit was completed based on CDC / NDTi and the SEND Code of Practice. The audit identified areas that were good, requires improvement and high priority areas. These require greater input including how we work with schools, knowledge of support, improving compliance through audit and a joint strategy for post 16 education. The group needs greater involvement from school leaders to develop these areas further. The transition Policy is due to be signed off on 9 May, and comments are invited from board members.

MH mentioned the importance of health care transitions, which will be developed further, now that Lesley is back.

4.6 Working Together Strategy

Jenny presented the updated Working Together Strategy 2023-25, which had been previously presented to the board in October 2022 but was rejected, due to lack of co-production. Due to time constraints a brief outline was shared of the changes including the co-production on the previous strategy, face to face engagement events in 2022, a participation workshop in 2022 and online consultation events in 2023. Further co-production was completed with SJ the chair of the parent carer forum and also with partners in the SEND partnership. The strategy includes what is the working together strategy, the background, what we mean by working together, why we need a strategy, what the SEND partnership is and who is involved, mirroring the SEND Plan, vision and values, the Local Offer, the Graduated Response providing SEN support for 70% of children with SEND, how this links with Early Help, what is communication, how we communicate with you and the variety of means, including face to face, co-production individually, operationally and strategically, about the 5 priority groups and how children, young people and parent carers can participate, concluding with how we will measure success, which will depend on feedback. Once finalised this will be uploaded to the local offer. Feedback received so far has been positive, that it flows better and reflects the SEND plan better.

Suli added that members were invited to the Young People's Take Over Day on 1 August. Lorna added the purpose of the Take Over Day is for the young people to capture what the 5 priorities mean to them and have a good understanding of what we are trying to achieve moving forward. Lorna thanked members for the improvements in supporting the young people regarding easy read summaries and providing longer time to read the presentations. Suli shared that Lorna is leaving in May, Lorna has offered her services to the partnership virtually. JA and JB thanked Lorna for all her hard work with children and young people.

5 Meeting Governance

5.1 Forward Plan

To be discussed at the next Exec Meeting on 3 May due to time constraints.

5.2 Impact and effectiveness: because of this meeting children and young people with SEND will...

Have access to the information, advice and support when they need it, feeling listened to and valued.

5.3 Confidentiality and Board Brief

To note.

6. AOB

None raised but can be emailed for a response.

7. Dates and times of future meetings and close

4 July 2023, 10.00am - 12.00noon

Action Summary

Actions from meeting	Who	When	Update
Action 1: The Niche report will be presented to the SEND Executive in June and the SEND Board in July.	Vanessa / Lesley	4 July	
Action 2: Dave to share the survey and papers from the North West re-design of CAMHS	Dave	4 July	
Action 3: Family Hubs to link with the Lancashire Parent Carer Forum.	Andy / Sam	4 July	
Action 4: It was agreed we need to focus on our successes more within the communication priority group.	Jenny / Sam / Anna	4 July	