

Thank you for your positive feedback in response to our last SEND strategic group update. In particular, a huge thanks to those professionals who have volunteered to be part of some of our workstreams in the coming months.

Following comments from some primary school headteachers, we recognised that there was scope for further representation for this key group of professionals. We are delighted that Nichola Irving, Headteacher at Horton Grange in Blyth has agreed to join the group until we review our processes for recruiting headteacher representation next academic year. If you need to get in touch with Nichola, or any of our group members, their details are overleaf.

Parent/carers survey

We were extremely pleased to receive almost 300 responses from parents/carers of children and young people from over 90 education provisions. The responses have been collated into a summary document with an analysis and some key recommendations for action. You should find the survey summary attached to the email which included this update. If you have any questions about the survey or the recommendations, or have any ideas about aspects of provision that could feed into this work, please don't hesitate to get in touch with your SEND strategic group representative.

One of the recommendations is that we need to review and improve the training and support offer to schools/SENCOs. Schools should have received a request to complete a short information return about their SENCO and training needs. The google survey can be accessed via this link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/161djwQ9W6eozgh8QCk0qtYNFp9kwY8PdLRWhDuUkAoo/viewform>

Improving the Education, Health and Care assessment process

Thanks to consultant paediatrician, Dr Belinda Bateman, who got in touch with our Designated Medical Officer, Dr Paula Batsford, to suggest a new approach to collecting information from paediatricians for the EHC assessment process. This has been quickly implemented. Health visitor and school nurse leads are now involved in a similar discussion to consider whether they can streamline the information they provide so that it is more useful within the needs assessment process. If you have ideas for making the process more efficient and effective, please let us know.

Facts and Figures

Our SEND strategic group have been reviewing information about our population of pupils with SEND. Did you know that we have just over 7500 learners with SEND in Northumberland? Around 1500 have a statement of SEND or EHC plan. Our highest areas of need are learners with moderate learning difficulties, those with social, emotional and mental health needs and those with speech, language or communication needs.

A reminder of our current priorities:

A. Early identification of SEND issues and preventative work
B. Services to support specific learning difficulties including dyslexia
C. Effectiveness of provision to support children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing
D. Capturing the views of children and young people with SEND
E. Integration of services to support children and young people with the most complex needs
F. The effectiveness of speech and language support and intervention in meeting children's needs

Work is well underway with workstream A. The group are particularly focused on improving the join-up between health visitors and schools to ensure that the vitally important information gathered through early

health and education checks is best used to support all children, but particularly those with special educational needs and disabilities, to make the transition to their first school placement.

We have now established a group to tackle workstream B – services to support specific learning difficulties including dyslexia. We're excited that Dyslexia North East will be joining professionals from our locality inclusion support teams, as well as headteachers and senior leaders from mainstream and specialist schools. If other school professionals have views to share, Alison Nicholson from Malvin's Close and Sharon Leonard from Collingwood School would be happy to hear from you.

We are beginning work on priority C - children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing. Professionals from CYPS and the primary mental health worker team, alongside our clinical commissioner for mental health and school leaders, including Derek Cogle from Atkinson House and Heather Cape from Richard Coates CofE Middle will be reviewing what we do well in Northumberland and identifying actions we can take to improve our provision.

How can you get involved?

Our next emerging workstream is "capturing the views of children and young people with SEND." If you are particularly interested in this or have already undertaken work in this area, we are keen to hear from you. We would particularly like to ensure we have school representatives for this group, as well as colleagues from health and social care. Please email Claire.brown@northumberland.gov.uk to express an interest.

If you have a SEND issue you're struggling to resolve, an idea to improve our local area provision or would like more information, you can contact your representative on the SEND strategic group:

Representing	Name	Title/Role	Contact
Clinical leads	Dr Paula Batsford	Designated Medical Officer	pbatsford@nhs.net
Clinical commissioning (children)	Rachel Mitcheson	Head of commissioning (children)	r.mitcheson@nhs.net
Clinical commissioning (mental health)	Kate Brundle	Head of commissioning (mental health)	k.brundle@nhs.net
Clinical commissioning (public health)	Karen Hearne	Commissioner for public health/Public health service manager	Karen.Herne@northumberland.gov.uk
LA education service	Alan Carrick	SEND schools' commissioner	Alan.Carrick@northumberland.gov.uk
Mainstream schools (secondary)	Andrew Day	Executive Director, Northumberland Church of England Academy	andrew.day@ncea.org.uk
Mainstream schools (first/primary)	Nichola Irving	Headteacher, Horton Grange Primary School	Nichola.irving@northumberland.gov.uk
Special schools	Michael Thompson	Headteacher, Hexham Priory School	Michael.Thompson@northumberland.gov.uk
Northumberland parent/carer forum	Elizabeth Johnston	Chair, Northumberland Parent/Carer Forum: <i>In It Together</i>	elizi_elizi@hotmail.com
Social care (adult)	John Young	Head of Service Care Management	John.Young@northumberland.gov.uk
Social care (children)	Marcus Weatherly	Children's Services Manager	Marcus.Weatherly@northumbria-healthcare.nhs.uk
Joint Commissioning	Lynn Bryden	Children's Commissioner	Lynn.bryden@northumberland.gov.uk

Chair: Claire Brown, Senior Manager for Partnerships and Resources Claire.brown@northumberland.gov.uk