

## Welcome - Cath McEvoy-Carr, Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Children's Services and Siobhan Brown, Accountable Officer for the Northumberland CCG

After a significant amount of hard work, our formal action plan to support the Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was approved by Ofsted and CQC on its first submission. I would like to thank all those who contributed to this process as it is quite an achievement for this to be accepted without any requests for changes.

There is a great deal of activity going on behind the scenes to ensure that we deliver on the plan. One of the priorities is the completion of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which is almost done and will provide us with a dynamic opportunity to look at what the overall presenting needs of our children and young people are and help us determine the commissioning priorities for the future.

The Strategic Board has been reviewed and refreshed and this will be the responsible body for ensuring that the WSOA Plan is monitored and progressed.

We have been asked to be involved in some research around pathways for autistic children and young people by the Chief Social Workers for both adults and children and we look forward to contributing to the project as well as benefiting from any learning that may come out of it.

## SEND in Northumberland, The Inspection and the Written Statement of Action- Sam Barron Northumberland SEND Inspection, what happens now?

The WSOA is now available on the Northumberland Local Offer. We have had the initial visit by the DfE/NHS England monitoring team, and will have another at the beginning of June. In the meantime, the Strategic Board within the Council, along with teams across Education, Health and Social Care will be ensuring that the progress through the Action Plan is timely and at a pace.

## Working Together - Ensuring quality in EHCPs via multi agency audits

Each month, a group of representatives from all the different services meet to look at a number of EHCPs using an audit tool. This has been very helpful in guiding the local authority and all the professionals involved in both writing advice for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment, and in ways to improve our Plans. The measures in place ensure the quality assurance of our Plans as we move forward, including that the voice of the young person and the family is at the heart of EHCP processes. An action plan has been put in place, and this can be seen as part of the WSOA.

## Working Together - Developing improved systems for mental health support to children and young people

These past two months have seen some consultation events with designated mental health leads from 20 of our schools coming together with staff from Education and Health teams to help plan the way forward for support to schools in identifying and intervening at the earliest signs of emotional and mental health issues in children and young people. This work will involve close join up of professionals within Education, Health and Social Care but will also focus on supporting schools with whole school approaches. A Good Practice Guide on Whole School Approaches to Promoting Emotional Health and Wellbeing is being coproduced, and will be shared with all schools by July 2019.

As part of the work on the ASD/ADHD pathways, the SEND Autism Support Service is now working with CYPS and delivering the CYGNET parent support programme for the parents and carers of children and young people recently diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. This programme aims to increase understanding of the strengths and difficulties associated with ASD, and therefore develop parent/carer confidence in understanding and managing the behaviours they might see.

## Working Together - The Voice of Young People

In recent months, the work undertaken by Vicki Graham (SENDIASS) with groups of young people has gathered a rich source of information about what works well for them in schools and what they would like to be done differently. There are some powerful messages which will be being included in training events with schools and other services. Commonly, young people say that what works well is having teachers who are

aware of and interested in their individual needs, and they emphasise that they value staff asking them and understanding what works for them. 'I have some support in lessons I don't feel I need help in, and no support in the lessons I do need help in,' but also 'I feel my needs are known by my teachers, if I need time to calm down I am given it.'

They appreciate the benefits of feeling 'safe' which they describe sometimes as having a space to go to if they are worried, and having trusted adults in school who understand their learning and wider needs. They make it clear that good pastoral systems and fair behaviour policies are also very important to them. There was a widely held view that whilst extra adult support in the classroom is helpful, it works best when it is provided by a learning support assistant/TA who knows the content of the lesson in advance and who also understands and responds to the needs of the learner. A consistent message from many young people across many different schools and settings is that they find there are mixed levels of understanding of their needs across the teachers they meet each week.'If all teachers understood me it would be better.'

Developing better consistency across our schools, and even within them, is a part of the WSOA and the action plan for the local area.

### **Working Together - In It Together Update - Elizabeth Johnston (Chair)**

In It Together is the forum for parents and carers (PCF) of Children and Young People (CYP) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who live in Northumberland. Through our activities, we continue working towards a better future for children, young people and their and families of those with SEND in Northumberland.

In coming weeks we have some events taking place where we would warmly welcome all parents and carers of young people with SEND. At the upcoming locality meetings we will be having discussions to enable us to contribute to the work on the ASD and ADHD pathways that is currently taking place. Information can be found at <http://www.in-it-together.org.uk/meetings.html>

Also, we have been hosting some workshops on Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Personal Independence Payments (PIP), led by Rachael Turnbull, Contact Parent Advisor for Finance and Welfare. These workshops have proved popular were with parents and carers in both Hexham and Alnwick, and were advertised via In It Together Facebook group, and on the ecourier for schools.

We want to reach out to as many families as possible so please contact us for any further information via email: [info@in-it-together.org.uk](mailto:info@in-it-together.org.uk) or telephone 07729 192909

### **Working Together - Supporting schools and settings**

It is really important that the local authority supports schools to meet the needs of our Northumberland children and young people with special needs and disabilities. In a large County with 170 schools who vary considerably in size and situation, ensuring that all schools are supported equally and have a consistent understanding and knowledge about how to best meet needs can be challenging. Currently, developments in this area include:

- Establishing a number of Lead SENCOs across the County who will be available to schools to support with implementation with the graduated approach and disseminate information and messages
- Preparation of an offer of training to be delivered to partnership SENCO networks via their half termly meetings throughout 2019-20. This training will be delivered by our SEND Support Service staff
- Annual SENCO conference to take place in June covering a range of topics identified by stakeholders as being priorities
- Ongoing individual school support work by SEND School Improvement Leader
- Ongoing support for individual learners and for whole school training by our SEN Support Services. This includes supporting schools with target setting, strategies to reduce the impact of an identified need on learning and wellbeing at school, peer awareness and transition planning
- Establishing a SEND focus for the summer School Improvement Partner visits which will provide an opportunity for self evaluation of SEN practice on an annual basis
- The offer of Governor training for individual or groups of Governing Bodies
- Northumberland was one of 23 Local Authorities selected by the National Association for Special Educational needs (Nasen) to take part in the government funded Early Years SENCO Award

course for practitioners in PVI settings. Our Northumberland Early Years Inclusion Consultants have been running this course with a group of 21 SENCoS from settings all over the County

### Upcoming Training

All training for schools and settings, unless otherwise stated, can be accessed at no cost and via the Northumberland Training Directory [here](#):

- New SENCoS group
- Secondary/High School SENCo group
- Identifying SEN (Concise) offered via SENCo network meetings in the Summer Term
- Portage 'Overcoming the Barriers'; contact Lisa Headington on 01670 622741 for further information.
- SENCo Conference 2019 'Getting it Right From the Start' (cost per delegate applies)
- SEND Behaviour Support/CYPS 'ADHD Awareness' June 7th in Hexham; contact BST on 01670 624802 for further information
- SEND Autism Service/CYPS 'Autism Awareness', also June 7th in Hexham; contact ASD Service on 01670 624802 for further information

### Training Offered over recent months

- Gathering Evidence of your Graduated Approach (SENCoS)
- Portage Service offered workshops to share the Portage Model with EY practitioners in 2 localities
- Sensory Support Service Conference was recently delivered to 35 delegates from across the County. The focus was developing a greater understanding of the needs of learners with a sensory impairment and on equipping school staff with knowledge and strategies to best meet those needs using the Graduated Approach
- SEND Behaviour Support Team ran 'ADHD awareness' sessions to 40 delegates over a number of sessions
- Participation in 'Management of Actual or Potential Aggression' (MAPA) training has been really positive this year. So far 11 foundation courses have been delivered (with a total of 140 participants) along with 6 refresher courses, renewing the training for 79 staff. From now onwards, courses delivered will be the new PIVOTAL MAPA course, specifically designed for use in schools and much more tailored to the needs of children and young people. MAPA training is delivered at a reduced cost to support widespread take up
- All the SEND Support Services provide extensive training on both a whole school and individual learner basis on request. Contact the team managers for further information:

[Fiona.Tarn@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Fiona.Tarn@northumberland.gov.uk), (ASD, Behaviour, Speech and Language Support Services)

[Katinka.Bryan@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Katinka.Bryan@northumberland.gov.uk) (Psychological Services, English as an Additional Language, Literacy Support)

[Isabel.Russell@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Isabel.Russell@northumberland.gov.uk) (Sensory Support Service)

[Lynne.McKillup@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Lynne.McKillup@northumberland.gov.uk) (Portage Service).

*We would like our communications to be as beneficial as possible. If you have any views about how we can do this better, or the sorts of things you would like updates on, please get in touch by emailing:*

[Samantha.Barron@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Samantha.Barron@northumberland.gov.uk)

[Nicola.Taylor@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Nicola.Taylor@northumberland.gov.uk)

[Angela.Davies@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Angela.Davies@northumberland.gov.uk)

[Russell.Pickering@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Russell.Pickering@northumberland.gov.uk)

Head of SEND Strategy, NCC and DCO, Northumberland CCG

SEND Project Manager

School Improvement Leader for SEND

Senior Manager (SEND)