

**SEND and Inclusion Executive Board, Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024, 11am – 1pm, Civic Centre Minutes**

**Present**

**Cath McEvoy-Carr** (Chair), Director: Children and Families, NCC  
**Kirsty Sprudd** (KS) Deputy Director of Delivery Fraud ICB, Joint Chair  
**Deanne Taylor** (DT), Head of SEND, NCC  
**Jenny Ellis** (JE), Designated Clinical Officer for SEND, ICB  
**Jenny Hicken** (JH) Network Delivery Manager, ICB  
**Joanne Scott** (JS) Manager SEND Sensory Service, NCC  
**Katherine Carr** (KC) Qualified Teacher of Vision Impairment (QTVI), NCC  
**Stella Wilson** (SW), Director of Operations, Family Health Clinical Board, NHS  
**Gail Ballance** (GB), Head of Children, Young People and Community, ICB  
**Sarah Francis** (SF), SENDIASS Manager, NCC  
**Rachael Hope** (RH), Public Health Portfolio Lead, NCC  
**Steve Gittins** (SG), Chair of SEND subgroup on behalf of the Promise Board  
**Christopher Richardson** (CR), CEO, Prosper Learning Trust  
**Johnathon Jamison** (JJ) (Assistant Director Community Support, NCC)  
**Sarah Kerrigan** (SK) Service Manager, NCC  
**Richard Scott** (RS) Director of Nursing North, ICB  
**Ann Banks** (AB) SEND Service Improvement Lead, NCC  
**Emily Nesbitt** (EN), Service Improvement Assistant, NCC (minutes)

Apologies:

Mark Patton (Assistant Director Children and Families, NCC)  
 Ian Dawson (Head of Educational Development and Inclusion, NCC)  
 Marie Leddy (Chair of Parent Carer Forum)  
 Claire Taylor (CT), Chief Executive Officer, Footsteps  
 Gareth Smith (Headteacher, Walker Riverside Academy)  
 Helga Charters (Associate Director of Nursing; Safeguarding, Learning Disability, MCA)  
 Christopher Rollings (Headteacher, Hadrian School)  
 Miriam McGregor (MM), Commissioning Lead Specialist, NCC  
 Rachel Gibson (Assistant Director at Newcastle College, Representative of the post 16 sector, Newcastle College)

1	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	<b>Action</b>
	Chair welcomed all to the meeting.  Apologies were noted.	
2	<b>Minutes of last meeting</b>	
	It was agreed due to timing that all should feedback to EN any discrepancies in the minutes as well as updates on previous actions.	<b>ALL</b>

3	<b>Accessibility Consultants – Children with visual impairments – Katherine Carr</b>	
	<p><b>PowerPoint Presentation shared in meeting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Katherine Carr, Rob Oglethorpe, and students from the VIARPS at Gosforth Academy and Gospel Junior High Academy attended to share the work they have been doing around Pupil Voice to raise awareness of vision impairment.</li> <li>• The Importance of Pupil’s Voice gives our pupils the opportunity to have their voice heard and allows them to have a say in their education and future.</li> <li>• It all started with a trip to the Great North Museum where they were introduced to the Audio Universe by Dr Chris Harrison and Dr Nic Bonne. The children fed back on their shows, which led to improvements and new versions of the show.</li> <li>• The students have a role as accessibility consultants in promoting people's voices and improving accessibility in various locations, including a trip to Beamish. This led to a partnership with Beamish Museum, focusing on accessibility and feedback from children on various aspects, including signage and audio guides. They are planning to return to Beamish to see what changes have been made.</li> <li>• RO talked through the importance of rehabilitation and cane skills sessions during visits to unfamiliar environments.</li> <li>• There is now a partnership with the Centre for Life where there us a VI Science Club. As well as sporting partnerships and future collaborations which include Goalball Demo, VI/Blind Football Taster Session, and a VI Cricket Club.</li> <li>• There has been a lot of great feedback and recognition of the contributions of various individuals and the positive impact on children's education and confidence.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chair</b> asked what the next project will be. <b>KC</b> confirmed they have the ongoing VI cricket club and VI Science Club. They are also setting up a new voice panel.</li> <li>• <b>Chair</b> suggested that we should explore how KC and her team could link up with SEND voice lead and the voice team.</li> </ul>	
4	<b>23/24 Annual Reports Sensory ARPs – Joanne Scott</b>	
	<p><b>Documents shared in meeting papers pack.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently, there are 39 children and young people across six ARPs. This is as a result of successful planning and placement of students. The flexibility of ARP provisions also allow for immediate placements when needed.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is upcoming recruitment for a QTVI (Qualified Teacher for Visually Impaired) due to increased primary-level needs.</li> <li>• Excellent practice within the ARPs, includes innovative use of technology and community involvement.</li> <li>• There is a focus on preparation for next steps in education and transitions, especially for young visually impaired children.</li> <li>• Comprehensive support and opportunities are provided to the children within the ARPs.</li> <li>• There are good working relationships and clear expectations established through commissioning agreements with headteachers and CEOs of schools.</li> <li>• JS and service leads recently attended a national sensory impairment service event to benchmark standards and ensure quality assurance.</li> <li>• Secondary curriculum development is a focus to support seamless transitions.</li> <li>• Recognition of the unique model of ARPs in Newcastle compared to other regions was discussed, emphasising the benefits of integrated mainstream and ARP education.</li> <li>• There is no imminent need for a significant increase in ARP capacity, but ongoing monitoring and planning are essential.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Queries were raised about the external placement of children and the adequacy of local services. <b>JS</b> confirmed that recent transitions were from other authorities and that local needs were being effectively met without external placements.</li> <li>• There was a discussion on the potential increase in demand for ARP places and the need to manage this effectively was raised. <b>JS</b> confirmed the adaptability of staffing to meet varying needs and the proactive planning for future cohorts.</li> <li>• There were queries on the demand for ARPs and parents' preferences for mainstream or special school placements was noted. <b>JS</b> confirmed that local ARP provisions were successfully meeting needs, avoiding the necessity of external placements.</li> </ul>	
5	<b>Parent Carer Forum update – Jenny Hicken</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DfE and Department of Health joint initiative PINS, is being led by the ICB with Newcastle Council and Redcar and Cleveland Council among the participating local authorities.</li> <li>• The project faced initial delays, leading to a late but successful start before the summer holidays. The project manager, Emma Smith (ES), has been coordinating the training offer for schools.</li> </ul>	

- ES has built a self-assessment tool for schools to evaluate their needs across several domains, including mental health, pupil readiness, teaching, learning, and the school environment.
- Training providers have been identified based on common themes from the self-assessment results, and a rolling programme of training will commence throughout the rest of the term and into the spring term.
- The programme is funded by the NHS and will conclude by the end of March, aligning with the financial year rather than the academic year.
- The parent carer forum's role is to support parental engagement and involvement within the schools. There has been a challenge in getting schools to sign a memorandum of understanding for this aspect of the programme.
- 17 schools have returned the memorandum of understanding, but only 5 have provided possible dates for parent engagement events such as coffee mornings.
- There is a need to prompt schools to facilitate parental engagement, considering the challenge of capacity and timeframe for the project.
- A general parent carer survey has also been conducted, providing valuable insights into parental perspectives on school management. The results will inform ongoing work and discussions with school leaders.
- Efforts are underway to increase the capacity of the parent carer forum by training and recruiting more steering group members.
- ML from the parent carer forum is working on a full strategy to address the current engagement and involvement status with schools.
- The forum is also working on revamping its website to better promote its activities and increase engagement with parents.
- There is a formal evaluation commissioned by NHSE for the programme, which includes follow-up surveys and assessments of the impact on schools and parental engagement.

**Discussion:**

- Concerns were raised about the timing of the training for the schools and the need for reporting to NHSE. It was suggested that while the funding must be spent within the financial year, training could potentially continue into the summer term, pending NHSE's requirements.
- Questions were raised about how the programme's impact will be measured and the potential for a second phase of funding based on the evaluation results.

**Action**

**JH** to Speak with the NHSE link as to whether the funding can be spent this year but training delivered after this time, so we ensure more take up and effective training.

**JH**

6	<b>Mental Health, Learning Disability and Neuro Pathway – Timeline, Action Plan and Data – Gail Ballance</b>	
	<p><b>PowerPoint Presentation shared in meeting.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GB provided an overview of the current challenges in delivering mental health and developmental pathways in Newcastle. There is no current autism diagnostic service in Newcastle, and over 4 million children are waiting for a diagnostic appointment.</li> <li>• There has been substantial increase in referrals between May and September 2024, particularly from Newcastle.</li> <li>• There has been a significant increase in mental health referrals attributed to complex factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis.</li> <li>• The system is currently reactive rather than proactive, focusing on mental health diagnosis rather than addressing broader needs.</li> <li>• Plans are in place to transform the mental health and developmental pathways in Newcastle such as redesigning the 5 to 18 pathway, including access routes and specific support pathways. As well as moving support from secondary care providers to more integrated services within the community and developing a needs-based system rather than a diagnosis-led system.</li> <li>• GB acknowledged the complexity of the issue and emphasised the need for a system-wide, needs-based approach to better support children and young people.</li> <li>• Several transformation priorities were discussed, including improving access to support within educational settings, ensuring children's voices are included in the transformation process and monitoring and evaluating the impact of transformation efforts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns were raised about the system's ability to respond to the needs of children without a formal diagnosis, and the importance of addressing barriers within the system. It is important that we understand who is waiting and whether they are accessing other services.</li> <li>• Discussion took place on the role of parent carers, the support provided by outreach services, and the need for better data sharing to ensure comprehensive support for children on waiting lists.</li> <li>• <b>SK</b> highlighted the need for a broader support system, including mentoring schemes, to help build resilience among children and young people.</li> <li>• <b>GB</b> reiterated the importance of a joined-up approach across the system and the need for cultural changes to improve overall well-being rather than focusing solely on mental health.</li> </ul>	
7	<b>Update on Medicines in Special Schools – Rachel Wilcox</b>	

**PowerPoint presentation shared in the meeting.**

- RW presented on the delivering healthcare tasks within Compass Trust schools' pilot.
- There is an increasing health complexity and higher medical needs in children and changing workforce roles have led to gaps in service delivery.
- Health inequalities and educational inequalities are developing as a result as well as challenges from unions and provider trusts about role responsibilities and sustainability.
- There are several pieces of legislation impact the delivery of care and education and governance systems must align information from health and education sectors.
- A quality improvement framework has been used to develop partnership and shared language. Partnerships have been developed with Compass Trust schools, ICB, local authority, and provider trusts and a creation of a glossary of terms to aid understanding across different sectors.
- There is a new pilot pharmacy model provided by ICB to handle medication delivery, a joint governance system created for oversight at operational and strategic levels, a joint data dashboard developed to reflect needs of ICB, local authority, school, and provider trust and supervision, escalation, and training matrix established to support new roles.
- There has also been a generic principles document created for potential national application.
- The Proposed Pilot Delivery includes new health support assistant roles anticipated to be filled by current teaching staff, a children's community nursing team to drive training and supervision of new roles. There is also the consideration of a project management role to oversee pilot implementation.

**Discussion:**

- Discussion about funding and responsibility for costs and concerns expressed about unpicking funding responsibilities and potential political and legal challenges.
- **SG** expressed the need to replicate the model for mainstream schools in the future.
- Emphasis on the importance of collecting accurate data to present to the government and concerns were raised about the need for oversight and clarity in data collection.

**Action:**

All agreed that the pilot needs to go ahead.

**8 Update on Therapies – Jenny Ellis/Sarah Kerrigan**

- There is a current focus on SALT due to feedback from SEND inspections and peer reviews highlighting a fragmented service.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newcastle has two providers for SALT: CNTW (special schools) and N (Nuffield -rest of the community).</li> <li>• It was revealed that the current service operates more as a specialist service, often providing specialist interventions for children whose needs could be met by universal or targeted approaches. This has resulted in long waiting lists.</li> <li>• Meetings have been held with N and CNTW to discuss changing pathways within the current system to meet the needs of the city.</li> <li>• Discussion on pathways indicated that the service is not meeting the needs effectively due to an uneven spread of staffing across various pathways.</li> <li>• There is a specific issue with the autism diagnostic pathway, where a significant number of referrals sit within SALT, demanding a potential removal of this pathway from SALT to bring therapists back to address other needs.</li> <li>• Three weeks ago, a partnership meeting concluded that the current model is not meeting needs effectively, with discussions focusing on avoiding contractual issues and addressing waiting lists.</li> <li>• The conversation highlighted the need for a generalist model to reduce waiting lists and better meet children's needs.</li> <li>• It was noted that there are numerous pathways and triage processes that are overly complicated and need streamlining.</li> <li>• There was a mention of the OT (Occupational Therapy) pathway, with a consultation underway to bring adaptations under the Community contractor to unify the service.</li> <li>• Funding has been requested for additional OT in special schools to ensure full-year support and follow-through for children and young people with EHCPs, addressing the current lack of staffing to meet these requirements.</li> <li>• The funding and pathway changes are intended to create a more consistent support system for children in special schools, ensuring their needs are met throughout the year.</li> </ul>	
9	<p><b>High Needs Funding Block Budget Review Update – Deanne Taylor</b></p>	
	<p><b>Document shared in meeting papers pack.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The high needs project report has been added to the agenda for transparency and openness. It highlights the work being done in Newcastle to reduce the significant overspend.</li> <li>• The high needs block is a challenge for the local authority, and they are investing heavily to bring down the predicted deficit. The government has announced additional funding for schools, but the exact amount and distribution is unknown.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This comes alongside a proposed national review of the SEND system to ensure a better offer across the system.</li> </ul>	
10	<b>Story Boards – Deanne Taylor</b>	
	<p><b>Documents shared in meeting papers pack.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DT thanked everyone for their contributions to the storyboards.</li> <li>• 22 storyboards have been prepared and produced with contributors' names listed on the bottom of each storyboard.</li> <li>• The storyboards will be published on the Padlet platform, and the link is provided in the paper.</li> <li>• The Padlet link will be submitted to inspectors for review.</li> <li>• The storyboards were circulated prior to the meeting for review and agreement on the content.</li> <li>• The board is requested to approve and sign off on the storyboards so they can be published and included in the local offer.</li> <li>• Feedback from the DFE was positive, noting the storyboards as a fabulous resource and expressing interest in sharing them more widely.</li> <li>• DT encouraged suggestions for any additional storyboards .</li> </ul>	
11	<b>SEND Celebration Events – Ann Banks</b>	
	<p><b>Document shared in meeting papers pack.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AB provided an overview of the SEND celebration events and mentioned areas that were planned but not realised:</li> <li>• Currently involving a Question Time panel of children to engage with board members. A proposal for the Question Time panel would be brought to the next board meeting.</li> <li>• The events were conducted with a cost-effective budget and there is the intention to possibly do more for less in the future.</li> <li>• There was lots of positive feedback was received from the events and parents and children appreciated the opportunities, especially the internships. Parents were keen for similar events to be conducted in the future.</li> <li>• Newcastle College played an essential role in the events and we would continue to maximise their involvement in any future activities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was an acknowledgment of feedback about balancing celebration with addressing individual experiences, especially for those who have faced challenges.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on the inclusivity of events for children both in school and those not able to attend.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p><b>AB</b> to share the video link once this is ready with the board.</p> <p><b>DT/AB</b> to share a proposal on the Question Time Panel at a future SEND Exec meeting.</p>	<p><b>AB</b></p> <p><b>AB/DT</b></p>
12	<b>GIRT Draft Annual Report 23/24 – Deanne Taylor</b>	
	<p><b>Documents shared in meeting papers pack.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on the "Getting It Right Together" (GIRT) Draft Annual Report.</li> <li>• The report outlines the work progressed as part of the GIRT workstream. It includes audits, feedback, and learning that has been progressed as a result and encompasses multi-agency workstreams and multi-agency wide practices.</li> <li>• The purpose of the report is to ask for approval to publish it on the local offer.</li> <li>• There were no objections raised to the publication of the report.</li> </ul>	
	<b>AOB</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deanne highlighted that the DfE had handed over their support, mentioning the recent APP meeting with DfE and NHS England representatives. The letter from this meeting is awaited and will be circulated upon receipt.</li> <li>• Update on new special school: Assurance given that the project is ongoing, with an internal board established to oversee its progress. This will be an agenda item at the next board meeting.</li> <li>• EOTAS Policy: The new policy, which has been co-produced and agreed upon by Newcastle City Council, will proceed to Cabinet. This marks the first time such a policy has been established.</li> <li>• Jenny addressed the ongoing consultation within the ICB regarding changes to the SEND team roles and responsibilities across the North East and Northumbria. The 30-day consultation ends tomorrow, with a new model expected to start in January. Concerns have been raised about potential slimming down of resources, and the final model is awaited.</li> <li>• Reminder to board members to follow up on actions from the last set of meeting minutes by providing updates to Emily. There was an emphasis on the importance of completing these actions to avoid slippage.</li> </ul>	

### Action summary from this meeting

Agenda Item no. Date of mtg	Action	Owner	Due by date	Status
2. 11.11.2024	It was agreed due to timing that all should feedback to EN any discrepancies in the minutes as well as updates on previous actions.	ALL	January	Open
5 11.11.2024	Speak with the NHSE link as to whether the funding can be spent this year but training delivered after this time, so we ensure more take up and effective training	JH	January	Open
7 11.11.2024	Healthcare tasks within Compass Trust schools' pilot to go ahead.	GB	January	Open
11 11.11.2024	SEND Celebration event video link shared.	AB	January	Open
11. 11.11.2024	Proposal on the Question Time Panel to be shared at the next SEND Executive Board Meeting.	AB	January	Open
16.09.24	Add the number of children on the waiting list for Bedeburn to the SEND and Social Care Draft Work Plan to help identify any challenges in short breaks.	KM	November	Open
16.09.24	Bring Community Short Break Offer report to the 11.11.24 SEND Executive Board. – Deferred to next board	KM	January	Open
16.09.24	Meet with <b>CRo</b> to discuss helping with consultation of parents as work progresses on the RPIW Action plan.	CRo / ML	November	Open
16.09.24	Bring update on progress of RPIW Action plan work to the January SEND Exec Board meeting.	DT / JE / ML	January	Open
16.09.24	Meet to discuss with Ewan Dick the accuracy of the data in the SEND Outcomes Framework before progressing with potential workshops for staff.	JE / SW	November	Open
16.09.24	To share details of North East Children with Additional Needs Network with Sarah Francis.	CRo	November	Open

Agenda Item no. Date of mtg	Action	Owner	Due by date	Status
16.09.24	Ask for advice from public health literacy lead to help ensure all families can access and understand the Transitions Guide.	RH	November	Open
16.09.24	Investigate in the Spring Term if the Transitions Guide has been seen by parents and if they understand it.	DT / LM	January	Open
20.05.2024	Ask about the ability of adding post-16 data to the dashboards	SF	June	Open
20.05.2024	Check whether the early years data reflects children attending other settings or only those at maintained nurseries.	ZF	June	Open
20.05.2024	Provide a list of hourly rates for providers as an appendix to the contract specification.	MM	Sept	Open