

**S.E.19 SEND Conversations**

**Wednesday 28th April 2021**

**12:30 - 13:30**

**Notes of meeting**

| **Local Authority/ Organisation** | **Attendees** |
| --- | --- |
| Brighton and Hove | Rhianned Hughes |
| East Sussex | Beverly Moores |
| Hampshire | Jayne Howarth |
| Isle of Wight | Anita Pitman |
| Kent | Louise Hickman |
| Milton Keynes | Delphine Taylor |
| Milton Keynes | Nina Broderick |
| Oxfordshire | Catherine Clarke |
| Oxfordshire | Bianca Sankey |
| Oxfordshire | Janet Bailey |
| Portsmouth | Julia Katherine - Chair |
| Portsmouth | Karen Spencer |
| RB Windsor & Maidenhead | David Griffiths |
| RB Windsor & Maidenhead | Kelly Nash |
| Reading (Brighter Futures for Children) | Hester Collicutt |
| Reading (Brighter Futures for Children) | Nikki Stevens |
| Reading (Brighter Futures for Children) | Kate Reynolds |
| Slough | Deborah Bowers |
| Surrey | Sharon Scott |
| Surrey | Hayley Connor |
| West Sussex | Helen Johns |
| Wokingham | Pamela Iyer |
| Wokingham | Elaine Munro |
| Wokingham | Jenny Hooper |
| DfE S.E. Region SEND Adviser | Liz Flaherty |
| S.E.19 SEND Network Co-ordinator | Tracey Maytas |

1. **Welcome and background to meeting - changes and new focus**

Julia Katherine, Portsmouth, welcomed everyone and reiterated the online meeting protocols.

She explained that these remote meetings for the S.E.19 Network were set up a year ago to deal with issues regarding the pandemic. The meetings have been very helpful and recently the topics requested are more business as usual rather than focused on Covid. There is still an opportunity to discuss pandemic related items if helpful, but there is also an opportunity to use this time as information sharing and problem solving of other issues.

It was proposed that these meetings are called SEND Conversations moving forwards.

Before the pandemic, these meetings were face-to-face and they used to include the steering group function as well as business issues. It has been decided to separate these two functions with this meeting continuing with business issues and a smaller steering group has been set up, chaired by Kevin McDaniel (RBWM), regional ADCS SEND link. Julia then went through the new structure diagram circulated.

The steering group will focus on allocating resources provided through DfE and SESLIP on key priorities for the region. This will include workforce development resources provided through the DfE national DBOT partnership, with providers such as NDTi, CDC, etc. The aim is to have this provision delivered in line with the needs for the region.

The following comments were made regarding the other groups in the SE19 SEND Network:

* SEND Operational Managers Forum and S.E. Region Inclusion and SEN Support Group have not met in the last year and we would like to re-establish them.
* Preparing for Adulthood groups, DCO/DMO S.E. Regional Forum and High Needs Budget Working Group have continued to meet and are very active.
* Strategic Coproduction for Commissioning Group (SCCG) and S.E. Region Local Offer Group have had contact by email and have shared queries but they have not met regularly over the last year.
* DSCO S.E Regional Forum and S.E. Region Early Years SEND Group are suggested new groups which have not been set up yet.

The structure has the working groups feeding back to this group when there is a piece of work to update on, in order to ensure that everyone is informed.

It was agreed to provide a list of the LA representatives on each group.

It was agreed to continue with the meetings of this group remotely for the time being.

1. **Actions and matters arising from last meeting**

The actions from the previous meetings were reviewed:

* **Feedback from NHSE/I SEND Review: Liz Flaherty, DfE S.E. Region SEND Adviser, will follow-up with Natalie Warman to see if she has anything else to share with us.** *- To carry forward to the next joint meeting for Natalie to update*
* In terms of consultation for the new local area SEND inspection framework, Liz agreed to ask about the general consultation plans and feed back. - *Discussed on agenda*
* Tracey to send an invitation to link LAs that have not been inspected yet with other areas which have been inspected for a catch-up on experiences, top tips, etc. - *Completed*
* Tracey to contact Ian Turley, DfE PfA unit, around funding and phases that might be needed. - *Completed. Ian Turley will be attending the post-16 and PfA groups. Tracey remarked that there are 2 separate DfE sections around PfA: PfA unit and the post-16 unit, which are independent from each other. She will extend her contacts with both.*

1. **DfE update**

Liz Flaherty, DfE S.E. Region SEND Adviser, provided the following update:

* An announcement is expected around the 10th of May in regards to Covid, although it might be basically an update around face coverings.
* School attendance is still very closely monitored. Special schools in the country are doing better than anticipated, although not up to pre-Covid rate. An area of concern is alternative provision.
* New Ofsted SEND inspection framework:
  + It is being discussed. It is expected to come out for consultation in the Autumn term, where local areas will be able to feed back on it.
  + The replacement for DoLS, the Liberty Protection Scheme will apply for 16+ and it will be part of the new inspection framework. Liz did not have any more details around that.
  + Alternative Provision are likely to be included in the framework.
  + More information will be available in 6 to 8 weeks.
* SEND review: They are picking up that it might be a green paper, which would accommodate legislative changes, although this is not definite. They are talking about alternative provision as well and they are quite keen on EHCPs being electronic. There are also focus group consultations taking place around a national standard EHCP, also it is not definite.
* The DfE have a list of first and second contacts for SEND for all areas, which Liz needs to keep up-to-date. **It was agreed for Tracey to circulate the existing list of contacts in the SESLIP website for members of this group to update.**
* **Outstanding initial SEND inspections: Liz has requested clarity whether the phone calls will start on 1st June or the week before. Tracey to share the response.**
* **Liz asked members of this group if they could send her good examples of the following for one of her colleagues:**
  + **Integrated commissioning of SALT services**
  + **Personal health budgets**
  + **ASD pathways**
  + **SEN support and mainstream approaches for ASD**

Julia remarked that it is helpful to have Liz's comments on what might be happening even when the information is not definite yet as it gives an idea of direction of travel.

**New SEND inspection framework: regional feed into consultation**

This item was added to the agenda during the meeting, as per request from Tammy Marks, Southampton.

The next consultation meeting for the new inspection framework is on Friday. Tammy asked for comments or suggestions from this group to feed back. The focus of this week's meeting is accountability.

The following comments were made:

* Liz Flaherty said that in their discussion they made the point that schools also need to take accountability for outcomes.
* Julia Katherine mentioned that under the previous inspection framework, sometimes inspection reports referred to 'leaders' - implying leaders within the local authority, when in the verbal feedback they had specified that this meant school leaders, so the accountability needs to be made clear.
* It was reiterated that with the previous framework the same number of schools/settings were visited regardless of the size of the authority and consideration would be needed in terms of how representative a sample this is.
* Karen Spencer, Portsmouth, suggested that schools should be accountable for provision in EHCPs and SEN support as well as local authorities. She provided an example where a special school for the most complex profound needs had put provision within their particular offer which differed with what professionals had written but had the same outcome. However, parents were challenging it. In the case of SEN support, sometimes there is discrepancy of the amount of provision that a school might provide arguing that they cannot provide certain resources because it is not how they work in school.
* Another area where there might be less understanding among inspectors was accountability in adult services and some thought might be needed there.
* Liz mentioned that the new framework is highly likely to have a social care inspector on the team, who would also be expected to cover adult services.

**It was agreed to have an agenda item for next meeting for Tammy to update on the new inspection framework discussions.**

**Covid Recovery topics:**

1. **Requests for re-taking year/ college course and impact on placing**

Helen Johns, West Sussex, asked for feedback on two aspects: 1) Requests for re-taking the year since college courses have not been completed and the impact on placing; 2) Early years - delayed entry into Reception.

David Griffiths, RBWM, said that courses are being delivered in a different way and he cannot think of many colleges stating that courses will not be finished this year. In terms of apprenticeships and supported internships, they are looking at repeat funding them on a case by case basis.

Louise Hickman, Kent, noted that they are seeing requests coming in from independent schools, but not so much from maintained or mainstream.

Nikki Stevens, Reading, mentioned that they have not had as many requests as anticipated and they are not sure if this is because there is an assumption in some colleges that there will be a repeat year. They are looking at it on a case by case basis. They have not had any unreasonable request or any parents/carers asking for a repetition. She assumes that colleges and post-16 providers have dealt with it.

Karen remarked that they might not have received all applications to start school.

Helen stated that they have seen an increase in exclusions potentially for children well supported in smaller groups who, now that all children are back, are not coping. There was variation in experiences, but there were some remarks of increase in EHCP requests related to lockdown/Covid experience.

1. **Impact of last lock-down on EHCP completion; Feedback requested on % naming schools by 15th February phase transfer date and % meeting the post-16 phase transfer date of 31st March - Hero Slinn (Buckinghamshire)**

It was agreed to carry this item forward to next agenda, since Hero Slinn was unable to attend today's meeting.

**Business as usual:**

1. **Sharing of Regional responses to High Needs Funding Consultation**

This was a reminder that the high needs funding consultation is under way.

1. **Regional MoU for Cross-Border Placing *(document attached)* - Re-confirming sign-up**

The MoU was drawn up a few years ago, to look at cross-border placing arrangements and reviewed and circulated in December 2019.he revised document has been circulated several times for comment and approval but there has been no feedback.

The meeting was asked if they had any issues or concerns that would prevent sign-off.

No comments were made, therefore it was agreed that the document would be taken as accepted by all LAs, unless the request to opt out was sent to Tracey.

**Any members of the meeting who felt they do not have the authority to adopt the MoU to seek formal approval as appropriate and inform Tracey if their local authority wishes to opt out.**

1. **SEND Review - Proposal/ Consultation on Standardised EHCP**

It was noted that Liz had already mentioned earlier in the meeting that the proposal to have a national template for EHCPs, as part of the SEND Review, is not definite.

Tracey commented that there was a consultation advertised through CDC around this topic, Julia asked if anyone present had been able to book onto this, no-one from this region had because it was full.

**Liz agreed to share the notes from her colleague who attended. Tracey to circulate those notes.**

**Tracey to feed back to CDC that no-one from this region was able to attend due to the meeting being full.**

**It was agreed to come back to this item in the next meeting.**

1. **AOB**

* It was proposed to have a catch-up discussion around tribunals and it was agreed to add it to the list of future topics.

**Future meeting dates:**

Tues 25th May 12:30-13:30

Tues 22nd June 12:30-13:30 - Joint with DCO/DMOs & DSCOs (proposed)

**Future topics:**

* + SEND Review and funding
  + DCO/DMO T&F: Health staff training framework (May)
  + NHSE/I National Autism strategy
  + Local Area SEND joint inspection framework
  + EHCP outcomes: How many outcomes are needed?
  + Tribunals

Please send items to Tracey.

**Summary of Actions**

* **Feedback from NHSE/I SEND Review: Liz Flaherty, DfE S.E. Region SEND Adviser, will follow-up with Natalie Warman to see if she has anything else to share with us.** *- To carry forward to the next joint meeting (June) for Natalie to update.*
* The DfE have a list of first and second contacts for SEND for all areas, which Liz needs to keep up-to-date. **It was agreed for Tracey to circulate the existing list of contacts in the SESLIP website for members of this group to update.**
* **Outstanding initial SEND inspections: Liz has requested clarity whether the phone calls will start on 1st June or the week before. Tracey to share the response.**
* **Liz asked if members of this group could send her good examples of the following:**
  + **Integrated commissioning of SALT services**
  + **Personal health budgets**
  + **ASD pathways**
  + **SEN support and mainstream approaches for ASD**
* **Tracey to add an agenda item for next meeting for Tammy to update on the new inspection framework discussions.**
* **Any members of the meeting who felt they do not have the authority to adopt the MoU to seek formal approval as appropriate and inform Tracey if their local authority wishes to opt out.**
* **CDC Consultation on Standardised EHCP:** 
  + **Liz agreed to share the notes from her colleague who attended. Tracey to circulate those notes.**
  + **Tracey to feed back to CDC that no-one from this region was able to attend due to the meeting being full.**
  + **Tracey to add this item in the agenda of the next meeting.**