**Notes from SE19 DCS SEND Network Steering Group Meeting**

**30 January 2018**

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| **Present:**  | **Representative** | Apologies |
| **S.E. DCS Group** |  | Steve Crocker  |
| **Bracknell Forest** | **Katy Elliot** |  |
| **Brighton & Hove** | **Rodger Wardle** |  |
| **Buckinghamshire** |  | Jayne Howarth |
| **East Sussex** | **Beth Armstrong** |  |
| **Hampshire** | **Lynn Mead** | Liz Flaherty |
| **Isle of Wight** | **Lynn Mead** |  |
| **Kent** | **Karen Flanagan** |  |
| **Medway** | **Wendy Vincent** |  |
| **Milton Keynes** |  | Caroline Marriot  |
| **Oxfordshire** |  | Janet Johnson  |
| **Portsmouth** | **Julia Katherine (Chair)** |  |
| **Reading** | **Simon McKenzie** |  |
| **RBWM** |  |  |
| **Slough** |  | Vikram Hansrani |
| **Southampton** |  | Tammy Marks |
| **Surrey** | **Susie Campbell****Alison Stewart** |  |
| **West Berkshire** | **Jane Seymour** |  |
| **West Sussex** | **Jon Philpot** |  |
| **Wokingham** |  |  |
| **DfE** | **Andre Imich (p.m. only)** |  |
| **NNPCF** | **Lara Roberts (am)****Andrew Howard****Michelle Nice** |  |
| **S.E.19 Network** | **Tracey Maytas** |  |

**Welcome and Apologies:**

Apologies were given as above

**Item 1: Inter-Local Authority MoU for cross-border placements**

Liz Flaherty introduced the draft paper *(circulated with agenda)* she had prepared for the Meeting.

Discussion points:

Unanimous agreement expressed for purpose and principles of the paper but differences between processes in Areas make details harder. In particular -

* How support is calculated (hours or actuals)
* Therapies
* If top-up is assessed differently by the Home & Host, who re-assesses?
* If top-up amount identified is different who decides?
* Need to be confident that EHCPs express the child/young person's needs so this can be done accurately
* Easiest and more consistent for schools if Host arranges but may place pressure on Areas who have many coming in.

Agreed - Region very much wants to put this in place but it needs further discussion and work.

Action : TM to organise Task &Finish meeting to work up 2 or 3 examples and analyse pros and cons of each and recommend pilot process.

Volunteers for T&F received from:

* Surrey
* Brighton & Hove
* West Berkshire
* Portsmouth
* Hampshire
* NNPCF

**Item 2: Feedback from SE19 Workshops and Meetings**

Overview: An updated diagram of SE19 SEND Network structure was circulated with the two new groups who have been added in 2017/18: Operational Leads Group and DCO/DMO Group.

1. DCO/DMO Group

Alison Stewart (Surrey DCO) reported back on first meeting of Group: AS will attend Steering Group as DCO/DMO representative and feed back to them.

Key points from Group:

* Huge variation in DCO/DMO role at moment; hours available, focus, where sit within structure, background.
* All recognise amount of work that needs doing and see Group as useful in progressing this
* Will build on different expertise - plan to share developments that come from strength
* NHS England (South) are linked to the Group; attended the meeting and are supportive of it going forward

Discussion points:

Steering Group are interested in having more information about the variety of things that DCOs are doing across the Region

Action - TM to arrange future agenda item

**Q:** 0-25 working and DCOs: Most DCO/DMOs seem to be from Childrens Health - is it seen as an all-age post?

**A:** Yes in theory but there are difficulties with this at the moment. In practice the 18-25 expertise is much less developed; links are being built and 0-25 pathways stating to be worked on.

Some Areas have one person working 0-18 and another 19-25.

1. Strategic Coproduction Group

Lara Roberts (NNPCF) fed back:

* Last meeting had fewer LA reps attending which was disappointing as a lot of work was covered
* The Group is doing a baseline analysis of parent/carer involvement in different areas of coproduction. This will be reported back to Steering Group
* Group has decided to look at young people's involvement in co-production as an area of development for future work
* The next meeting will be structured differently with a workshop in the afternoon; 'Transition from Education to Life-long Learning' about post-education daytime support run by Bill Love from NDTi. People will be invited to attend both parts or just one.
1. Operational Leads Group

Katy Elliot (Bracknell Forest) and Tracey Maytas fed back:

* Last meeting and next one both focused largely on EHCP Peer Review, working through sections in a structured format supported by André Imich (SEND Advsor)
* Last meeting provided good opportunity to discuss quantifying support and specificity in plans - useful to have André there as issues of legal requirements came up and clarification was shared
* All those attending brought both pre- and post-16 EHCPs; significant difference in how PfA outcomes were included (or not)
* Next session will cover Social Care and Health input - Health and SC partners from Areas will be joining Op Leads.
* Will complete 3 sessions then do full review and feedback within Areas

Discussion points:

* How are Areas building in feedback opportunities from those who attend?
* Shared templates: no discussion at meetings about a Regional template, everyone worked on their own version, but good ideas from other Area versions are being taken back so hopefully strengths will be replicated
* PfA outcomes on EHCPs: NDTI have been working with Portsmouth to create a PfA template

Action: TM - template to be circulated

* Hampshire are working with Open Objects on a project to create a secure digital hub for EHCPs

Agreed : Hampshire to feedback this time next year

1. Local Offer Group

TM fed back:

After coordinating the Group for some years, Natalie Kenwood from Hampshire has stepped down due to an increased role and workload. A request has gone out to members of the Group but no-one has offered to take over Natalie's role at the moment. As a result the Group has lost impetus, although the Peer Review is going ahead, coordinated by TM and Mott Macdonald

Steering Group was asked if any Area would be prepared to co-ordinate this Group

* Surrey (Susie Campbell) offered to 'foster' the Group - Surrey are happy to help but are aware that they were very involved during Pathfinder and Champion phases and there may be others who would be better taking a lead going forward
* Brighton & Hove (Roger Wardel) may be in a position to take the Group forward later in 2018, after implementing the re-design of their Local Offer.

Action : SCa and TM to liaise re next meeting and arrange date and agenda. TM to publicise.

**Item 3: Feedback from NNPCF/ Contact National Conference**

Lara Roberts fed back from the annual NNPCF/ Contact (formally Contact a Family) 2 day national conference. Reports, pictures and further details are available on the Contact website.

For the first time SEND Regional Network members, 1 from each Region, were invited to attend and participate. S.E.19 had two volunteers and were given 2 places: Tammy Marks (Southampton) and Helen Womack (Oxford) both attended. Helens notes from the meeting have been circulated.

**Item 4: S.E. Region: Feedback from recent SEND inspections**

Wendy Vincent (Medway) fed back from their recent SEND inspection.

**NB** The letter is not expected to be published until February 9th /12th so all information is about procedure.

Wendy was involved in one of the early inspections in her previous role at Bexley in 2016 so interesting to compare and contrast.

Process:

* Call came at 9.30 am Monday. Just 20 minutes. CCG/CQC call at same time.
* At 10.00 am the lead inspector had a 1 hour call with the nominated officer

TIP - Have inspection framework and Code of Practice to hand; you will be expected to have detailed knowledge

* The inspection timetable was pre-set and emailed through while initial discussions were in progress (not negotiated as other Areas have reported)
* The 3 inspection information letters were received by end of that day for sending out
* Technical issues: took day and a half to log in to Portal - this caused massive stress as unable to send or receive documents (issue sorted by Ofsted)
* LA was not asked for much data, CCG got asked for a huge amount of data
* Wanted case list for ALL YP with EHCP / SEN support in places they were visiting - unclear if Medway residents only or all - by following day (Tuesday). By Thursday - list came back with 12/15 highlighted at each provision for which full files were wanted
* Also on Thursday: 6 lines of enquiry identified - no negotiation. Timetable stated what focus groups they wanted and when
* Webinar for parent/carers was scheduled on Friday BEFORE inspection again (as for RBWM) and time set by Ofsted - had very low take-up (26)

Discussion Point: - Webinar is crucial part of inspection but new approach seems inflexible and unhelpful to giving parent/ carers a real opportunity to input. Concerns that extremely low numbers resulting from it were as unhelpful to LA/ PC working relationships as the Surrey experience of 120+ participants

Action: LR will feedback concerns via NNPCFs

December 4th - Inspection week

* 8 inspectors in total including main team and monitoring
* At Bexley LA and CCG had given joint presentation of their own choice. At Medway Inspectors asked for 2 specific presentations, 10 pm Lead Members for 30 mins then 10.30 others
* After that had 8 am KIT each day with them; information session - lines of enquiry closed down, new ones opened, new data needed.

TIP - This is only opportunity to challenge - needs to be used

* Also had KIT 6pm each day - so 7pm to 7.30 am to do the work that came out of these!
* Internal meeting each day with data, A&C Social Care & other leads to feedback from KIT - worked well for everyone and helped build 'team'
* Final feedback given at midday Friday - no opportunity for challenge

TIP - Have 2 scribes at feedback meeting - need to keep detail

* Focus Groups - wanted front line staff but needed to make sure seniors there as well
* Had 20 minute briefing with each focus group before went - vital both to support staff and to get 'voice' coordinated
* Nominated lead in each group asked to take notes

TIP - have SEF records ready at all times

After inspection:

* Use the factual accuracy check - both to be rigorous about names etc. BUT also to challenge as well

Role of PCF:

* Need to be met with ASAP after first call - huge amount of pressure on PCF with distributing letters and getting feedback / queries
* In ideal world inspection needs PCF to have 10 parents who can drop everything and come in to meetings!

TIP - LOOK AFTER YOURSELVES!

* + Really hard work
	+ Difficult environment as Inspectors focus on shortcomings NOT positives

**5a - Item brought forward from AOB**

The Chair brought forward an inspection related AoB item:

Lynn Mead (Hampshire) went through a Review of Inspection Outcome Letters *(presentation circulated with agenda)* undertaken by herself together with the Hampshire DCO (Sue Thomas). The review identifies 7 common themes, issues arising and considerations for each theme and a summary of all 2017 published inspection results.

The presentation is available to all and is offered for other Areas to adapt for themselves.

**Item 5: SE 19 SEND Peer Review Framework - Report back from Portsmouth/ Reading pilot**

Tracey Maytas introduced the SEND-specific Peer Review Framework developed for SESLIP *(circulated with agenda)* to compliment their existing Review and Challenge framework. Based on

* Pairing of 2 Areas who reciprocate reviewed/ reviewing roles
* 1 day on-site on each occasion plus preparation (as wished) and write-up time for reviewing Area
* SEND specific
* Focuses on Self Evaluation Framework using focus group approach
* Reviewed Area identifies 4 lines of enquiry (3 areas of development and 1 area of strength)
* Framework and guidelines flexible and can be negotiated between the two areas
* Support available from Network Coordinator

Julia Katherine (Portsmouth - Reviewed Area)

* Differed from guidelines in having 4 areas of development, not 3 + 1 strength
* Very worthwhile but needed a lot of planning - ended up having 'dry run'
* Excellent for raising staff awareness of inspection, particular those not part of core implementation team who were not familiar with inspection process but could be key evidence providers. Even DCS had learning experience
* Particularly helpful for elected members - relatively new in Portsmouth.
* Much of the value came from strength of Reading team that came; SEND Lead (Simon), Head Teacher, DCO, & Principle EP
* Have used outcomes and Report to take work forward

Simon McKenzie (Reading - Review Team)

* Also useful for Reviewing team; Helped build Reading team ready for inspection
* Picked up interesting ideas from Portsmouth and how they are working
* Focus groups that were enthusiastic worked best
* Gave 5 minutes feedback at end of each focus group, not on Guidelines but worked well
* Also felt people in focus groups and leadership learnt a lot - including mistakes!
* Time taken to organise Reviewing team was more than expected
* Pulling together feedback in 1 hour at end felt very pressured

Discussion Points:

Consideration of whether Framework could be used with narrower focus. Hampshire interested in doing a health and public health review. Surrey (AS) would be interested in working with Hampshire on this.

**Item 6: SEND Peer Reviews: Options Available**

Julia Katherine (Portsmouth) provided information about the range of frameworks for SEND Peer Reviews now available, having recently been invited to be part of an LGA SEND Peer Review:

* S.E. 19 Network framework:
	+ 1 day (repeated)
	+ SEND specific
	+ Focused on Self Evaluation Framework
	+ Reciprocal between 2 Areas
* SESLIP Peer Review & Challenge framework:
* 2 days
* General peer challenge framework that can be adapted for SEND
* Focus chosen by Area requesting Review
* Review team drawn from across different Areas
* LGA SEND Peer Review & Challenge Framework
	+ 4 days
	+ SEND Specific based on LGA Review & Challenge Framework
	+ Inspection focus
	+ Review team drawn from people who have done LGA training across different Areas

**Item 7: S.E. 19 SEND Network - Options for 2018-19**

Julia Katherine reported to the meeting on behalf the S.E. DCS Group that the Network had been agreed as part of the 2018-19 South East Sector Led Improvement Program (SESLIP) and would be continuing as part of that work.

Continuation of DfE funding or not has yet to be announced.

**Special Item**

Jon Philpott's retirement from West Sussex was announced. SCa and LR expressed thanks to on behalf of the group for his tireless work, both for West Sussex and in supporting other Areas, from the very beginning of the consideration of the Reforms through to now.

Lunch Break

**Item 8 : Outcomes from Education Psychology Capacity Task & Finish Group**

Karen Flanagan introduced the paper *(circulated with agenda)* on behalf of the working group. The working group has requested that the paper be discussed at the next Steering Group when EP members involved can also be in attendance. This was Agreed.

Discussion Points:

As the paper is complete it was felt sensible to share it with Principle Education Psychologists for their thoughts prior to discussion.

Action : TM to move discussion to next SG agenda

Action : SEND Leads to share document with PEP

**Item 9 : SEND Single Route of Redress National Trial**

Jon Philpot (West Sussex) introduced a discussion item following on from the recent Regional training days.

Discussion points:

* Many had concerns highlighted by training, judges expectations/ legislation and Code of Practice do not always seem to tie up
* Although this brings in social care and health the legal focus is still education. Concerns were shared about issues of quality of social care and health input to EHCPs and what education can do to help this
* Kent (KF) had been part of the original pilot but feels like things are changing significantly from that.

Change causing particular concern is around need for social care input; have been accepting 'not known to social care' - now clear no longer acceptable and some level of assessment is needed. André Imich informed the Group that a Northern LA is covering this by looking at scripted phone call contact with family to discuss if they feel there are any social care needs related to SEN. If decide not, this can be put into EHCP. Main thing is that EHCP doesn’t say 'not known'.

* Discussed decisions around Tier 3 c&yp as the main issue - 1 & 2 are covered locally and rulings from Tier 4 known.

Agreed : Not yet ready to define additional training/ action for Region but needs to be kept on agenda.

**Item 10 : SEND IAS Regional Arrangements**

Tracey Maytas introduced the item on behalf of Lara Roberts:

Hampshire (Liz Flaherty) and NNPCF (LR) have co-authored a survey for the Region around the impact of the previously expected loss of IS funding and provision and the impact this would have on IASS provision. Has the recent DfE announcement of an ITT for a contract to combine both support strands made this unnecessary?

Discussion points:

* Some parts of the questionnaire are now wrong and it would need to be re-edited
* Has caused chaos in some Areas - staff have already been given notice where 3 months required, huge sense of uncertainty amongst them. Unlikely anyone would be in a position to respond to the questionnaire at the moment.

AI stated that there will be further clarification in next DfE Newsletter, including for IS providers.

Expectation is that IS will continue and no redundancies are needed - but contracts may be late. Contracts will not be novated to the new contractor until 1st April 2018.

Q - What is the role of the LA in the new arrangements?

A - Will be LA responsibility still

* Concern was expressed about the funding being attached to the new contractor, not LAs. It is being seen as a possible additional call on budgets when there is no spare funding available to run these responsibilities.

Agreed / Action : Hold on questionnaire and review need at next meeting. If needed, LR and TM to re-word and circulate

**Item 11 : Update from DfE SEND Advisor**

André Imich presented the DfE update:

Transfers : Very high profile at moment across all organisations involved.

* Thanked LAs for timely provision of transfer data. DfE will be honouring commitment to keep all information supplied confidential.
* Special Needs Jungle web article from FOI statements indicates 8% will not be completed. DfE think it will be significantly less BUT SNJ is only published figure so useful to keep in mind.
* Encouraged people to work on basis of 'no surprises' - if not achieved then why will be important
* Most LAs are focussing on actual numbers at moment BUT should also look at them as % of total number had at September 2014, looks a lot less both for public and staff morale - accentuate the positives
* Need to check detail eg. have all transfers been legally started?
* DfE will follow up LAs that haven’t completed but response will be proportionate eg. Kent reported 3 yp needing transfers moved in last week - impractical to expect will be done.
* Discussion point: Publicity about hard work and progress of SEND is not as high profile as negative publicity focussing on non-completion. SEND Teams are tired and in need of positive support and recognition and this doesn't help. AI recognised this - DfE are trying to address this and Minister has included thanks to SEND teams in last two letters.

Next DfE Newsletter: will include

* IASS
* PCF feedback from survey; it is different to LA feedback

Looked After Children

DfE met with Virtual School Heads from S.E. Region. They wanted to raise issue of how DfE are working with LAC. Expressed concerns about the priority LAC hold, in particular around SEND and disputes between LAs about responsibilities.

* Discussion points: Meeting found it very disappointing that VSHs feel that. All felt LAC are very high priority, West Sussex and others meet weekly with VSH. However, accepted that LAC can be a very complex issue and funding in particular can become a necessary but unfortunate focus.

JK asked if there was any information about SEND Networks next year?

AI - DfE are keen to support but cannot comment at moment. Information will be coming.

**Item 12 : Post 16+ Nationally Reported Attainment**

Lynn Mead (Hampshire) presented an information item on behalf of Liz Flaherty.

Liz has met with and had e-mail exchanges with Helen Brooks from DfE around reporting of post-16 attainment and triangulation of data from multiple sources to make this more robust. It is clear that ILRs provided by colleges have a lot of 'soft' information about supported internships, outcomes and destinations. Other returns also hold information helpful to measuring the impact of SEND provision. None of this is normally shared.

Liz had invited HB to this meeting but unable to attend.

Discussion: Everyone interested in exploring this further

Action : HB to be invited to either a Data or Operational Leads Group meeting to discuss this further. If this isn't possible, ask her to attend a Steering Group and TM to liaise with Alistair Lee to ensure he is there.

**AOB**

JK raised Regional/ Sub Regional Commissioning and if this could be used to help challenge fee increases.

Discussion: This is a problem for all but mechanisms need further development. Query whether would benefit from a half day Strategic Review feedback event as rising fees are the sort of issue that many have included.

Action: TM to progress follow-up meeting proposed at initial Strategic Review meeting

**Dates of Next Meetings:**

* **26th June 2018**
* **9th October 2018**