

## SEND Voices Wokingham AGM 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

### Emotional Health & Wellbeing Strategy Update

The WBC Emotional Health & Wellbeing Strategy is being updated. Carey Tulloch (WBC Senior Commissioning Specialist) went through the work that is being done on this and how parents can feed into the new strategy, this includes focus groups and a survey.

A copy of the slides that Carey presented are on the SEND Voices Wokingham website (these also include the feedback from the parent focus group)

The survey will be shared via email and social media as soon as link is available.

#### Comments/Questions from families:

All these comments will be fed back to Carey to include in the EHWP Strategy work.

- Why is it so difficult to actually get help for our children?
- Snap!
- It (strategies) always looks good on paper and the 'plan' but it's just rubbish! Early intervention never happens!
- I have lots I'd like to say/suggest but I'm not going to bother unless I am reassured this time it's not just talk as it's always lots of fancy documents and lots of waffle and not enough action
- How is the strategy measured (targets?) and how does it appear not to dovetail with CAMHS?

Part of this work will include a Strategy into Action Group, which will include schools, SEND Voices Wokingham and will hold leaders to account and monitor progress (quarterly) against a plan which will have measurable success.

There will be some quick wins and some longer-term actions. All will be reported back to stakeholders.

- Define what YOU mean my emotional wellbeing and mental health and possibly also mental illness as because it can be quite confusing to understand the differences and where young people are aligned
- EARLY INTERVENTION - I could give a whole story about how one of my children could have avoided being put in care - it's disgusting how CWD team managers deal with parents!
- Why do certain schools deny the children are struggling or try to blame the parents when needs are not being met?
- just a thought that maybe interesting to seek feedback from private specialists undertaking diagnostic assessments / treatment, as they hear a lot about issues parents / children face i.e., school provision, accessing support etc.
- Schools need better support / training in identifying SEN (particularly where there is masking and / or where children are on track academically)
- My daughter's CAMHS appointment changed from 2 years to 3 years in the space of a couple of months. She'll be an adult by then. What's worse is that it was questioned if she needed referring to CAMHS over 10 years ago

- why hasn't the MHST been available to all WBC schools? my daughter has been unable to access school full time since last May and is now months into waiting for a triage call from CAMHS when they said it would be 8 weeks, even during the EHCNA she wasn't seen. had the MHST been available for her school we may be in a different position now
- Early intervention/anxiety is a big thing and always being mentioned how is it all linking together?

Health is working with the LA. This project is working with PCAMHS, SEND IIP Boards oversee the EHWP strategy, and the CCG is represented on these groups/Boards. It is the responsibility of the LA and Health to make sure the services are seamless for families.

- Schools seem to be focused primarily on academic achievement, or significant behaviour, and sensory needs / anxiety less focus. they can also be reluctant to implement support / recommendations which impacts potential EHCP
- Agreed. It's all about their grade results
- talk about liaising with secondary heads / SENCO but what about primary schools?
- Has PCAMHS finally dissolved, and if so, can it be clarified what support is available for children's (non-suicidal) mental health right now?
- There needs to be mental health access for children with ASD rather than them being told their anxiety is due to their ASD and therefore do not need to be seen.
  - we agree
- Agreed. It's well known that mental health and anxiety are a part of ASD
- Modified CBT for ASD? It does not work and my now 20-year-old son told the person why
- CMHT has no support after talking therapy for people on spectrum
- Talking therapies don't under autism in our family's experience
- No Trauma therapy under CMHT (adult mental health)

There are a few mentions in the comments of children with ASD not being able to access mental health support. It is my understanding that this is not the case as a 'blanket' rule but I would need to take this back to colleagues within CAMHS. I'm happy to do so and can then get back to you via Terri and Sarah.

## Ordinarily Available

Dan Robinson (WBC SEND Operational Lead, Improvement and Innovation) updated on the work that has been done on the Ordinarily Available Provision for Wokingham Borough. Rebecca Girnary (CYPF Lead for School Years Services – Berkshire West NHS) provided information about the services provided by Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (BHFT) that are part of the Ordinarily Available.

All SENCOs and Heads in all Wokingham Borough schools have been updated on the Ordinarily Available (this is the provision that all schools should provide to children in Wokingham Borough schools). So, children should get the same support regardless of which school they attend (ie the same provision across all mainstream settings).

Work is ongoing to improve Specialist Provision across the Borough so that more places are available locally, this includes outreach services from Addington School and also SEMH provision/support.

CYPIT Services provide Occupational Therapy, Speech & Language Therapy, and physio for children 0-19 years.

### Comments/Questions from parents:

- They need to clone both you and Jenny Hooper, Dan
- a senco at one of my children's school said the document (ordinarily Available) was too long and she gave up reading it half way through.
- Within the 'Ordinarily Available' the focus seems to be a.-Secondary schools, b.- Schools on general. Where do parents fit into any of this, how is it measured and why not a bigger focus on early intervention (prevention is better than damage control)

Now all schools (early years, primary and secondary) are aware, parents can ask school about what is being provided for their child as part of the Ordinarily Available.

You can read the Ordinarily Available documents here: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/local-offer-for-0-25-year-olds-with-additional-needs/education-and-special-educational-needs/support-in-school-and-college/> (click on the Available Support link)

- absolutely prevention/early intervention would save so much money rather than reacting once the damage is done (= much more £££)
- sorry, missed what K coded children refers to?
- so would parents be advised if their child is k coded?

A K code refers to a child that is registered as on SEN support at school and should have some targeted provision (stage before EHCP) and yes you should be made aware.

The legal definition of SEN should determine if a child is put on the SEN register which is that a child or yp has a special educational need if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. special educational provision is provision that is additional to or different to that normally available to pupils of the same age. learning difficulty is in any of the 4 areas of need.

- Do you need to have an EHCP to access OT?

Yes. Schools can signpost parents to ask their GP to refer their child to Dingley OT (RBH) without them having an EHCP. We have tried hard to get this info out to schools.

That's true as our OT referral was made via the GP

Link to CYPIT services here: <https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/children-and-young-peoples-integrated-therapies/about-our-therapy-services/>

- Why do professionals rarely attend Annual or Transition reviews and why do they not send up to date reports to inform the EHCP?
- What happened to the new/proposed ASD school that was supposed to be opening in September?

2 delays with DfE, but it has now been announced that work is progressing, and it is planned to be built by Easter'23 and open September '23.

- Yes. It's difficult to get assessed let alone receive therapy
- No mental health therapy if you are autistic

- I was told by my daughter's school that they didn't have enough evidence to apply for an EHCP even though my daughter was unable to attend school due to anxiety. I applied myself and we are awaiting our final plan, but this is because I know what the COP says and what the legal test is.
- We haven't had the SALT or OT assessments done as part of the EHCP assessment. This means my daughter's plan doesn't truly reflect her needs. Why aren't the SALT and OT reports being provided within the legal 6 weeks. Private reports should be obtained to meet the 6 weeks legal deadline. I told my case officer this, but they said they can't make CYPIT provide the reports on time.

There is a national shortage of OT and SALT this is having a knock-on effect with gaps/delays in service. There has also been a 350% increase in OT referrals for assessment. Health is looking at different ways that they can meet demand and meet the 6-week assessment needs. 60% of request for needs can be met by the Ordinarily Available provision.

- I appreciate there are shortages, but guidance is clear that it's a legal requirement to provide it within 6 weeks and this must be provided even if it means getting it from a private assessment.
- Rebecca - Can we re-engage with S&L as they seem to have disappeared since he left infant school?
- How will school's access salt and OT when they can't even be accessed in time as part of a needs assessment?
- even when recommendations made seems to be a battle to get schools to implement
- Where can we get a Clinical Psychologist assessment done?
- Why can't we access OTs if we choose to home school

Accessing OT for children who are home schooled... This comes down to commissioning as the service commissioned by the LA is a school-based service and children who are electively home educated are not covered by the contract. If the child being home educated does not have an EHCP, they can be referred to Dingley via the GP. If there is an EHCP in place and a need has been identified with OT in section F, I would recommend that you discuss this with your SEN case officer. Hope this helps.

As things stand, for children with EHCPs, CYPIT aren't commissioned to work with children who are EHE so I'm afraid that even if the LA asked us to deliver this 'over and above' the core commissioned service, we would not currently be in a position to do so. This would need to be confirmed by the SEN team, but I believe that it would most likely be a different therapist. For children without a Plan, you would need to discuss this with Dingley as I'm not sure what their offer is for children who are EHE

- Thanks Rebecca, can we still have access to the same OT he has seen already in a school?
- I have a LAC child - I'd love to know more about what should be available for him
- I'm not sure if it's relevant to mention but the most support I've received from people within the LA is from The COMPASS team. I just wish I could have got this support earlier as may have saved a awful lot of heartache which could have been avoided. I'd like to know if there are plans to expand this team as so many other families could really benefit from their help
- Why is it impossible to find a personal assistant or buddy to take my young person out under the Local Offer? We have been given a small personal budget for this but the only people available come to the home and the idea is to get her out of the house

Please feedback any concerns about the Local Offer and how well it is working for families to Dan Robinson

- Parent suggestion - Have you looked at Me2Club, may be possible they can help. They help by going to activities with children, such as Scouts etc
- I had a look and from what I read, they support club activities and not going to the town centre for a couple of hours :(
- More parents of children with SEND need to be recruited as we are less likely to disappear
- Maybe we should be employing other SEND parents to take our children out?
- It is a whole other job for the parents to employ a PA it seems
- Seems only this (SEN) stuff is not well documented in the council

Constant change of SEND Team personnel has not helped, but processes and structure now in place to maintain things going forward. SEND team do not have to have any qualifications, therefore robust processes now in place along with training packages for the permanent staff. It is planned there will be 75% permanent SEND team by June 22

- that is quite shocking about SEND team. seems this should be job description amendment
- why can't pay be increased? if the right people come in and prevent further issues then i'm sure costs will be reduced in the longer term
- Why are Wokingham's team paid less than other LA's?

This is set nationally by the size of the authority and gives a budget that has to be worked within.

- You should look at the teaching assistants in our schools as schools cannot employ qualified /experienced people for the money they pay. And they are doing the work