

Feedback From Families – Autumn Term 2023

Overall Themes for the Term:

- **SEND Team communication**
- **What action is happening NOW - Safety Valve good, but too far away for our children now**
- **EOTAS/AP provision being paid for in a timely manner and provision being stopped. No clear policy or processes**
- **Inconsistent Ordinarily Available and Reasonable Adjustments in mainstream schools**

Local Offer Live 2023 – Consultation Feedback, Saturday 7th October 2023

We want to know.....

....What Really Matters

- SEND team to follow-up on what has been discussed today – will they?
- Accountability
 - Stop parent blaming!
 - Mainstream education cannot be inclusive
 - Effective communication is vital
 - Communication
 - For parents to be listened to and feel that they matter
 - More specialist provision – square pegs cannot fit in round holes
 - Appropriate respite options, vital carers and siblings get a break and children are able to have experiences
 - Children's services need to look at the bigger picture and stop the culture of protecting individual department pots, this is counterproductive
 - Transport policy needs immediate review before it's too late and damaged everything for the kids
 - Being listened to by someone with empathy
 - Happy children having their needs met
 - Need to work 'with' parents (mostly SEND team)
 - Stop making us go to Tribunal.
 - For children to be provided with everything in section F of their EHCP

....What's going well

- SIBS group
- ASSIST
- LOL Day Live – really helpful to find out so much. I'm new to this and it's all so scary
- LOL – so helpful to see what is available in the future
- Really useful to meet the people making the decisions
- Thank you SEND Voices for another great event. My son would have been glued to me, but the snakes stopped that 😊
- LOL Day- really useful conversations that will really help us – thank you
- Thank you so much for holding today, its been so helpful to have people and information in 1 place. Really great!!
- I like the reptiles (YP)
- LOL- reptiles, that's what got us through the door
- LOL- lots of leaflets, lots to digest very helpful
- Great organization and appreciate having the picture guide of what to expect at the event

....What can be improved

- Review the fact that most of the activities/clubs/respite etc. They don't accept children with epilepsy. It's incredibly un-inclusive!
- Not enough access to respite services for SEN kids
- SEND team comms
- Reform of mainstream that is meaningful
- Communication from SEND Team to parents
- Respite provision for mainstream children – refused Saturday club due to funding
- Early intervention being early!
- Annual Reviews being finalized – still waiting!
- SEN team in a big mess and needs sorting
- Understanding timescales of EHCP process
- Better speech and language support
- Still difficult to navigate the Wokingham SEN system and understand who does what
- Need to have an EHCP and be in a specialist school to attend Saturday club – WHY?!!
- Communication needs addressing ASAP in SEN team, totally unacceptable.
- SEN team pulling essential therapies is having a big effect on children
- SEN never reply to emails, even complaints.
- EOTAS process needs work, feels like things are being made up as go along
- Funding panels need to be more effective with 'timely' clear outcomes or at least updates

- No respite for SEMH children
- SEN systems not effective, no consistency
- CWD Team still pulling funding even when court ordered

Safety Valve Update with Families (via Zoom) - Wednesday November 8th

Full Q&A document available on our website: [SV Q&A's Nov 8 23](#)

Themes:

- Good plans for the future, but what is happening for children now – ACTION NEEDED NOW!
- Poor communication from the SEND Team.
- EOTAS/AP provision stopping because WBC not paying providers.
- Lack of EBSA support. No support available from Foundry. More information needed for families and schools on what is in offer from Foundry and Emotional Wellbeing hub. There is a gap in services between Hub and CAMHS
- Short Breaks - when will this be reviewed, it's been delayed for years
- Private reports not being accepted
- Families would like data about SEND services performance including timeliness, mediation and tribunals

SENDIASS Drop-in's - 3rd & 13 November, 1st December – 20 attendees /comments

- Looking for activities that are free/low cost eg Scouts
- Schools making reasonable adjustments, but EHCP refused due to lack of evidence of child "failing".
- Schools make reasonable adjustments but is inconsistent – often only in place for a few weeks then it stops
- Child masking at school. School won't apply for EHCP assessment
- Did not receive any PfA support – child now 18
- Child out of school for 3 months – going to tribunal
- Child out of school or late (school refusing) – attendance now below 50% - what can I do?
- Lack of communication from Send Team – even an acknowledgement that they are still working on an email would help. Occasions when waited for response – only to find they had not even received it

Parent Carer Participation Groups via Zoom and face to face - 16th November

7 via Zoom and 10 face-to-face meeting

Priority areas for improvement:

- Would like to see changes and improvements NOW – not 5 years down the road
- Would like accountability for decisions and actions made for their child parents would like more transparency around the processes such as panel meetings.
- Would like to improvements in communication from SEND team – how they are changing – how is it going to improve
- EOTAS – Alternative Provisions – services not being paid – therefore reluctantly the service provider has stop delivering. Needs clear processes including how payments are made
- Would like SEND Team communication channels to be clear and understandable:
 - Have acknowledgement from team that message has been received.
 - Want follow up to advise on progress.
 - Want escalation process when this goes wrong and these figures to be reported on.
- Would like SEND team to have training to be responsive, empathetic, knowledgeable and accountable.
- Clear information on the Local Offer – flow charts rather than text
- Signposting after diagnosis – Not a consistent process at a time when parent carers need most help
- Mental wellbeing for parents
- Information about SEN register, SEN support or EHCP and the difference in support

Some suggestion from the group to help improve services:

GP managers to be more aware of SEND support and for who to direct families to :

- train on Local Offer
- Distribute leaflets
- Invite to events

Schools and SENCO's to be more aware of SEND support available in the local area and who to direct families to :

- train on Local Offer
- Distribute leaflets
- Invite to events

Consistent information for all schools to show ability to meet needs, provisions in their school (including onsite therapies) SEND policies, access to Family liaison workers etc summarised on the Local Offer.

Carers Partnership Event - 22nd November - approx. 23 attendees

What's going well:

- SEND Voices trying very hard to get LA to listen to our voices

What matters:

- Respite provision
- Looking at family holistically as many have more than one with SEND and they can have conflicting needs - Don't forget parents and siblings
- Proper Carers assessments

What needs improving:

- Where to find help to get specialist equipment into school for child. School say they cant afford it.
- Transport not just being pulled with no discussion of child's needs
- EHCP's not being rushed and bad job done just so targets can be met
- Respite care – knowledge and access to qualified SEND childminders
- Tutors – knowledge and access to qualified SEND tutors – primary age
- Signposting to local activities specific to abilities
- Communication within SEND still delayed (as at 22/11/23) but also since new mailboxes started it's been confusing as case officer replies to you from personal email address rather than mailbox.

SENDIASS Training sessions

EHCP Annual Reviews 19/9, PfA 2/10, SEND Support 8/11, EHCP – 15/11 - General Questions / Comments - 51 attendees

- How can we see what money is being spent on our child
- School SEND or Observation reports are subjective when only 1 teacher comments and they may not have the best understanding of SEND needs – therefore evidence is not as thorough as could be
- What happens if there is no SENCO in your school. Senco covering maternity leave then redirected to classroom.
- What are the consequences for SEND team who do not respond within the timeline
- Reasonable adjustments not being done
- Annual review timelines not being followed (parents not sent invite/papers 2 weeks before meeting)

- PfA - Didn't know there was so much to think about – want more information, don't know where to go for it
- What is Ordinarily Available? – never hard of it

General feedback via email and social media

- SEND team communication issues and agreed actions not being done
- Transport changes without any co-production
- Complaints not being responded to/actioned
- Complaints not being properly recorded

So childrens services now do not put calls through to the sen team at all.....

Her response was email them. Well I do but they don't answer. Her response sorry can't help you as no longer allowed to put you through 🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄

No feedback From Jamie 7 weeks after the Local Offer Day when he promised he would reply to me

I cannot understand how the sen team including senior management constantly get away with the service they provide. I also don't know how these individuals sleep knowing how they treat our children. They easily and simply ignore parents and deliberately waste time all at the cost of the children and families.

I know of many parents in WBC that have had provision pulled from their child due to continued non-payment issues and I'm concerned that this will happen for my child as invoices sent to the SEND team for AP have not been paid

I've now just reached a point where I really think the SEND at Wokingham just don't care.

- Child has no school place
- taken off roll by send team
- breached AR timeline by 8 weeks now
- not paying AP providers so looks like that will all stop
- not consulting with schools or following up for taster/ assessment days even through specialist agreed 18 months ago
- have ignored all emails for the last two months from us and providers
- have upheld complaints yet failed to carry out the agreed remedies

unacceptable for it to have taken 5 months to reach a decision (CWD Team)