

Berkshire Neuro Inclusive Early Help System Change

Date: 7th July 2025, 7.00 – 8.00pm via Zoom

Presenting:

Andrea King - Berkshire Neuro Diverse Preventative System Programme Lead

Miranda Walcott - Designated Clinical Officer for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
(0-25) Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board

From SEND Voices Wokingham (SVW)

Terri Walsh and Sarah Clarke

Parent carers attending: 15

Meeting was opened with welcomes

Introduction on SEND Voices Wokingham

"We are the independent voice of SEND families, representing their experiences with the aim to improve day-to-day lives."

A Parent Carer Forum is a formal group of parent carers of children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) who work with local authorities, education settings, health providers and other providers to make sure that the services they commission, plan and deliver meet the needs of SEND children and families in their area.

Andrea King and Miranda Walcott presented on the Berkshire Neuro Inclusive Early Help System Change

See slides for more detailed information on the proposal.

The waiting times for appointments for neurodivergent assessments are too long. Berkshire is now looking at codesigning a system to identify and support need earlier. They want to ensure families as well as children and young people are involved in this process.

The areas is looking to adapt the Portsmouth ND profiling tool for all the local areas across Berkshire.

Questions & Answers from the session:

Q – Will there be any lived experience individuals going to support?

A – Yes, there will be lived experience individuals. We also want to encourage families to get involved.

Q – Who does the assessment and what qualifications do they need?

A – the ND tool is designed for schools and parents to work together to complete the tool. It is a lower level of screening which has been designed by clinicians. The new tool is not a diagnostic tool.

Q – Any plans for additional support for SENDCo to support those who have Autism and ADHD? Particularly when you are having to wait so long for appointments. It means our children are falling further and further behind academically.

A – in parallel with ND profiling tool, we will look at the support services around the family and school.

SVW Comment - Along with the profiling tool, support services are required for this to be successful. We continue to raise families feedback that this is critical to the success of this work.

“Private diagnosis is often needed to avoid years of waiting. If we could make that more cost effective with volunteers or charity funds, that would be useful”.

Q – As you mentioned complex trauma and neurodivergence present similarly. What is the plan/tools to help distinguish them so that the children or young people are on the right path? And how are we going to be informed?

A – We will follow the guidance on complex trauma. We will come back to you and share how the tool will look as soon as we have more information which will include how it can show the difference between ND and trauma. We are also investigating complex trauma support as this is a gap locally.

The ND tool, is a series of questions, covering a variety of aspects about environment, and helps to build a picture of the needs of a CYP.

We know that “screening” is not the right name for the tool and are looking to rename it something more meaningful to our families and children & young people. It has also been

agreed that “profiling” is the wrong descriptor because this is used to look at needs/concerns of an individual and this tool will look at strengths as well as needs/further support required.

We would be grateful for your suggestions which will be shared with the Strategic Board:

Suggestions from parent carers:

- Early Indicators Assessment
- My Brain & Emotions Quiz
- Peaks and Troughs of Me
- Diagnostic Indicator
- Strengths Map
- ND Wellness Tool
- Neurodiversity Early Support Tool
- Neurodiversity Early Help Tool
- ND Preview Tool
- Profiling tool sounds better
- Learning Adventure

There were also a number of offers of help with this work – thank you. SEND Voices Wokingham will keep families informed of how they can be involved in this project going forward.

If you have any more questions comment or thoughts, please do let us know so that we can collate and feed these into the project.

Please email: info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk