

SEND Improvement & Innovation Programme Update- Monday 4th May 2022

WBC representatives:

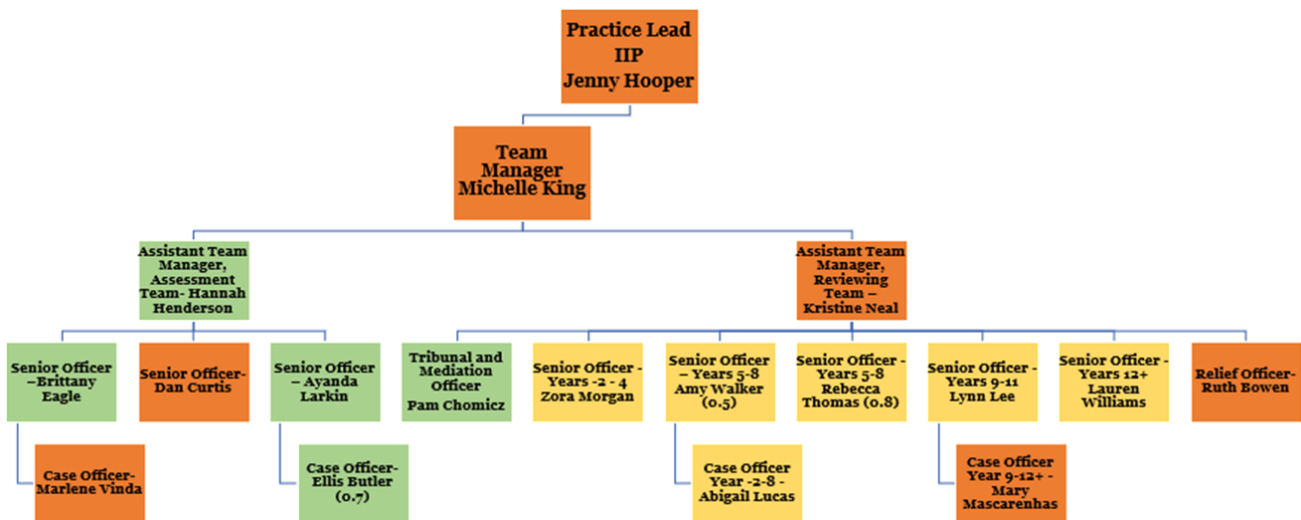
Dan Robinson - Operational Lead, SEND Improvement and Innovation
 Matthew Booth – Programme Manager, SEND Improvement & Innovation Programme
 Jenny Hooper - Consultant for Innovation and Improvement
 Helen Watson (remote whilst travelling) – Interim Director of Children’s Services

DAN Robinson updated families on the progress of the SEND IIP and in particular the progress around provision in the Borough and the structure of the SEND Team. In addition the following summary has been provided by the SEND Team:

1. Send Structure

- The SEND Team now hold 1500+ cases with an average growth of 25-30 each month.
- The team have moved and continue to move to a permanent structure. The latest structure highlights all the people currently involved and role. The Annual review team is now split into year groups and the structure and process goes live **June 6th**. To accommodate our new permanent starters.

June 6th Structure of the WBC SEND Team:



Colour	Position
Orange	Interim / Consultant
Green	Perm – Assessment team
Yellow	Perm – Annual Review Team

Oak Tree Special School: WBC continue to work in partnership with Reading and Maiden Erlegh Trust around the new school and with the DFE are entering into admissions discussions in the next few months. The school is due to open September 2023 with more update on the way.

Resource Base Review: The Resource Base / SEND Unit review is now complete. WBC are in consultation with Heads and CEOs around the proposals before presenting to the WBC Leadership Team for sign off.

SEND Transport: The implementation of new process leading from the transport review has been in place for four months. The key change is a SEND Transport Panel that meets in the first week of each month to look at specific cases requesting sole, PA, or any other support outside of basic travel requirements. All information is available on the council website.

Special Schools: The needs analysis and projections supported by commissioning and finance have allowed WBC to engage in conversations around increasing capacity and this process is ongoing. Thanks to Addington and Chiltern Way for the support in these conversations as we look to make sure we increase capacity to meet Wokingham's growing need.

Annual Review: Linda Burgess and Jenny Hooper have finished the work around Annual Reviews linked to Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) and year 9. Recommendations and a report will be following for next steps and continual training for schools and families with regards expectations at Annual Reviews and specifically PFA targets.

High Court Ruling (over time scales for EHCP Annual Reviews): The local authority is currently reviewing the High Court ruling as part of its ongoing improvement journey (for Annual Reviews). As part of this process, we are looking at capacity, and timelines in relation to the SEND Service and current staffing levels.

WBC are reviewing:

- Paperwork
- Needs of the LA to follow new process
- Risk areas
- Engagement with Legal
- Engagement with Schools
- Engagement with Local Authorities
- Engagement with DFE

Once the LA have gone through this process, we will be working with families on how we communicate the step change that the LA will have to look at to move within new guidelines and the timeframe this will be done under.

High Needs Block/Funding: WBC are working the DFE and the Safety Valve Project in looking at HNB options from current work around what is Ordinarily Available, pressures on places for SEND and provisions deficiencies including the Resource Base Review.

The following questions were raised in the Chat

(answers provided on the evening in BLUE and answers which required follow up answered in GREEN)

NB: topics have been grouped together, so that the relevant information is together.

What is PfA - PfA is Preparing for Adulthood (which starts at age 14+)

what's lap structure? LAP = Learning Achievement & Partnership (Basically Education service)

Now we're confused what is the difference between SEND and LAP? SEND team is part of LAP

Virtual school team? never heard of this before! Virtual School basically supports education for children in care

With regards to resources bases - I'm assuming these are in mainstream schools? How does this work with academies? Are they on board with the changes taking place? Yes, they are part of mainstream schools. WBC are working with all schools to build relationships and Resource Bases units will be open for any school to tender for

Will it be competitive tendering? Yes

It sounds like the authority is trying to restrict parents' Choice. I am aware of the green paper but the recommendations in regard how parents can select schools has not yet been adopted. Is the authority still supporting parental preference? Yes, LA have always supported parental preference, and this will not change

I heard that there will be 5 spaces in "Indigo pathway" - ASD provision within ME? Is there a plan to increase the number of places at ME? 5 is just not enough? Are more mainstream secondary schools going to have similar provisions in their schools?

Whilst we accept that your submissions to DFE have to be generic/data driven but still the question is how are you planning to interact with parents now, not in the future?

We are planning to run consultations with families over a number of issues which will including EOTAS packages and Resource Bases.

You mention resource bases for ASD, what about for DLD (language disorder)?

Greater provision across the Borough is being worked on at the moment. There will be further IIP updates and opportunities for parents to feed in.

Parents can also be more involved with the work SEND Voices Wokingham do as part of the SEND IIP working groups, please email info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk if you would like to be more involved.

Training around the therapeutic thinking approach has not been carried out widely enough, behaviour policies are still punitive even in many schools that claim to take a trauma informed approach. How will you address this? SEND leads have very mixed levels of knowledge in school!

There is almost no provision for SEMH, trauma and attachment issues before year 3, leaving younger children suffering in inappropriate settings!

Further work is needed in this area, and it requires a real project management approach as part of the SEND IIP

Training and adding personnel in the interim is essential then

Could Dan update us on how they are working to improve SLT and OT waiting times and what those times currently are?

Where does the budget sit for health, physio, SALT etc is it the CCG or the LA

Whilst you mention there is a lack of some health care professionals, this usually comes down to lack of funding

The CCG commission SALT & OT for the EHCP process, they are currently recruiting at the moment as there is a national shortage. Currently there is no Designated Clinical Officer in post.

SALT & OT as provision in an EHCP is commissioned from by the LA and currently provided by Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust. This is currently being recommissioned and out for tender as a unit cost competitive tender (which is a different way of commissioning)

It's not big on parental input, it appears as if the LA is a wholesaler and the school are the retailers in this plan, is that so?

Re SLT and OT -you've explained the long-term view and how you are working on it but right here, right now, what are you putting in place for children who need this as part of their EHC Needs assessments? We aren't at the stage of needing therapy yet - just needing it for the needs assessment!

Jenny how about the Owl centre for SALT And OT they provide to independent schools?

Why not go to Private assessments for OT, SALT EP's and mental health - that's how independent schools do this. Long term this would be cheaper

You can use the Cardinal Clinic for mental health

What is the LA doing about the increasing waiting time for CAMHS? We are currently on a 36 month waiting period [The LA have no control over CAMHS waiting times. They have however recently launched a Wellbeing hub to support mental health.](#)

[Is SIIP going to be challenging the CCG for refusal to assess or for their haste in discharging our children from their service when they have not yet achieved set targets?](#)

How does WBC supervise the SEN provisions at the Wokingham schools? Does it have power to instruct the schools to improve? Or, only the OFSTED has the power? [The SEN team are building relationships with all the borough's schools through the Ordinarily Available work and also the PFA/Annual review work.](#)

Was the CCG been invited to this meeting to give their input? [Yes, though no one is in post \(DCO\) and the manger above them is also vacant. Health leaders were also invited to our AGM.](#)

[None of the local offer \(schools\) allow you to visit the school until after you have been accepted for admission](#)

[They won't allow you to visit until you have an EHCP with a choice of school and have then been accepted by admissions team.](#)

[This has also been the case for me, not independent school, local LA school](#)

[SEND Voices Wokingham will follow-up on this at the next Operational meeting we have with the SEND team](#)

How many cases go to the SENDIST tribunal annually via WBC? [Around 10](#)

Please could Dan update us on the provision of Direct Payments for those parents who are currently paying for provision then claiming back from the SEN team?

How quickly does the LA pay for provision within education? My daughter has not been able to access Mable therapy as school states that the LA have not paid the bill. This is affecting her and increasing her anxiety as she liked the tutor.

[Please email \[Daniel.robinson@wokingham.gov.uk\]\(mailto:Daniel.robinson@wokingham.gov.uk\) or \[Info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk\]\(mailto:Info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk\) to follow-up on this](#)

Dan has the pence per mile rate for transport been increased yet as discussed at the last transport meeting? [There is a meeting on 30th May to discuss this. Information will then be shared with families](#)

A child needs an EHCP for accessing special provisions most of the time? It seems even having diagnosis is not enough? [All future commissioned provision will not have a diagnosis need as part of admissions](#)

We have requested an official selective mutism (SM) diagnosis to be included in the EHCP. The initial assessment was last week, and we expected a SM SALT. Instead, we got a SALT who isn't qualified to diagnose SM and who phoned to tell me that she didn't think our daughter has SM until I stated that another SALT had picked it up.

Our children will not thrive if their needs are undiagnosed or dismissed

[Please follow this up with Jenny Hooper \[jenny.hooper@wokingham.org.uk\]\(mailto:jenny.hooper@wokingham.org.uk\)](#)

There is a real reluctance to use part time timetables even when there isn't appropriate alternative provision available. This seems to be stuck in policy rather than individualised to the child?

Are schools being held to account on the 6 weeks if there is a part time T/T

There are lots of part-time timetables being used across the LA, this is school driven and for schools to report on. It must be appropriate to each child's needs and should be reviewed every 6 weeks.

SENDIASS can support parents with any questions/issues around parttime timetables
www.sendiasswokingham.org.uk

Schools appear lacking in incentives (or scrutiny) to meet children's needs. More needs they recognise and more they try to help, they will be spending more money which they do not have enough as funding (for K coded) do not come based on the number of SEN pupils nor based on the needs of individual child. Would WBC consider changing how they provide SEN funding to the schools?

Meetings are ongoing with the LA about how the schools are using K code funding/SEN budgets. As part of the LAP restructure a SEN Support Service is being proposed, this will support as well as have scrutiny over schools.

What about children that cannot access school and require EOTAS - where does this leave children and young children? Who supports the implementation of their provision? You talk a lot about how schools support and what is place for children in schools but if they cannot access this?

RE EOTAS packages - again there's a gap between schools and the LA. By the time families get to the point where you are seeing us the kids can no longer access school. I hope the changes you are making will help prevent more children ending up to traumatised to go to school

There is work ongoing on EOTAS and we are planning focus groups with parents to get their feedback

Dan just mentioned provision being needs led. I have recently been told that my EBSA (emotional based school avoidance) daughter cannot access foundry because she hasn't got a specific medically vulnerable diagnosis from CAMHSs! [A review of the provision at Foundry has just been completed and a matrix now being put in place about how this provision can be accessed which will include criteria not having a formal diagnosis from CAMHS](#)

It feels like there's a gap between our children and their schools and then the LA actually supporting those children who are EBSA. [Work is being done across all 9 secondary schools to share good practice and improve work in this area. A Vulnerable Learners Forum is also being set-up to support, which will include this cohort of children.](#)

Has Mr Redwood or any other member of Gov't been invited here to justify their views, especially as with academies the LA has less sway. [Since this meeting was held SEND Voices Wokingham are in the process of planning a session to invite all elected members of the Council following the recent local elections.](#)

We are signed up for one of the Green Paper sessions in June, but how do we access the document in advance?

[Link to the SEND Review Green Paper can be found here:](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-and-ap-green-paper-responding-to-the-consultation>

[SEND Voices Wokingham sessions on the SEND Review Green paper with SENDIASS on:](#)

[Thursday 19th May 10-11.30 @ St Paul's Parish Rooms Wokingham](#)

[Monday 13th June 7.30 -9.00pm via Zoom](#)

Email: info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk for the link/to book a place

When the journey has been awful from the start it's hard to see how a child is going to make any progress as we are in the system now and it's not working. It's great to see how things might look in 2/3 years but what is happening now to make things work?

Sounds great for future support. Really concerned about the immediate and the LA visibility for our current children's need

What is the Friday drop in? [Dan Robinson holds a virtual drop-in on a Friday morning – you can book a slot to talk about any SEND issues by emailing Daniel.robinson@wokingham.gov.uk](#)