

**Kingston Parent Carer Consortium: Tuesday 16th January 2024, 12:00-13:30**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Parent Carer Forum / Parent & Carer representatives:** Claudia Isaby (CI) · Jo Thomas (JT) · Karen Gale (KG) · Linda Nystrom, (LN) · Laura Mann (LM) · Linda Ikwue (LI) · Natalie Kay (NK) · Nicola Rossington (NR) ·

**Staff:** Alys Robinson, Inclusion Development Officer, AfC (AR) · Ashley Whittaker - Chair, Programme Director, AfC (AW) · Councillor Archer, Portfolio holder for Children's Services including Education, Kingston Council (SA) · Caroline Roberts, Inclusion Development Officer, AfC (CR) · Chike Nnalue, Associate Director for SEND, AfC (CN) · Diane Sanderson, Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) for SEND, AfC (DS) · Farah Ahmad, SEND Parent Engagement Officer, AfC (FA) · Helen Barnett, SEND Policy and Project Coordinator, AfC (HB) · John Wood, Head of SEND Travel Service, AfC (JW) · Jonathan Rourke, SENDIASS (JR) · Karen Lowry, AfCinfo and SEND Local Offer Website and Content Manager (KL) · Pippa Czarnowska, Designated Clinical Officer SEND (Kingston and Richmond) NHS South West London (PC) ·

## **1. Welcome, introductions and apologies**

AW welcomed everyone to the meeting, outlining it as a space for all attendees to participate in an equal discussion about SEND in the local area.

PC introduced herself as the new DCO (Designated Clinical Officer) for the borough. NK, who is new to the Consortium, is a parent of a child with SEND and works at the Stanley Picker Gallery at Kingston University and would like to use this as an opportunity to organise more events for local families at the gallery.

Apologies were received from Beverley Pass, Megan Francis-Falkner and Rob Harris.

## **2. Parent Carer Forum (PCF) update**

CI provided the following update:

- Gavin Spiller (Deputy Head of Transformation - Children (Kingston and Richmond) NHS South West London) attended a meeting of the PCF Steering Group in December to present the SALT (Speech and Language Therapy) options appraisal paper. It was decided that a redesign of the paper would be made for parents, carers and young people, making the information more accessible and concise. CI added that guidelines for what to do should a child or young person not receive their SALT will soon be added to the [news and articles section of the Kingston PCF website](#) and is part of the PCF's planning document shared with Andrea Ferns (previous DCO for SEND).
- In December, the PCF, AfC and adult social care in Kingston held a PFA (Preparing for Adulthood) pathway focus group for parents and carers with children aged 14 years plus. The purpose of the session was to gather views on the current transition process to help reshape the service pathway for PFA. CI noted that a technical glitch in the PCF's email system caused a potential delay in coordinating initial invitations to the focus group so details will be added to the PCF's newsletter. CI is the designated member of the PCF steering group for the PFA pathway refresh and any parents or carers who wish to be involved should contact her at [hello@kingstonpcf.co.uk](mailto:hello@kingstonpcf.co.uk).
- Suzy Rowland from the Happy in School Project is hosting a series of seminars aimed at families of neurodiverse secondary school pupils using a psychological safety approach. [Full details and how to register for the seminars can be found here.](#)
- Have Your Say and Play sessions begin on a monthly basis starting on Sunday 11th February. The sessions run from 1.15pm - 3.15pm, are SEND friendly and open to all age groups - [more details can be found here.](#)

AW thanked CI for the update adding that he has worked with Suzy Rowland and her seminars will be valuable to local families.

### 3. Deep Dive - SEND Travel

AW welcomed the new parents to the meeting and invited them to share their experiences of the SEND travel service ahead of JW's presentation. NR advised that her child has received travel support since September 2023 but during this time there have been several changes to the staffing with little or no pre-warning resulting in a disrupted handover. NR added that her child's journey time of around 85 minutes is too long and there have been safeguarding issues on board concerning the use of mobile devices. LM echoed NR's concerns adding that changes in staffing who are known to the family and child causes additional anxiety. The mobile phones for staff are not always able to receive calls or messages from families and a tracker app would be helpful to improve communications between home and the staff onboard the vehicle. CI added that feedback from local parents is that changes to the morning routine can result in the child being unprepared for school and the repercussions of this can be seen throughout the day.

JW thanked the parents for their feedback and for raising their concerns. Work has started on providing a tracker phone app for parents to use to monitor journeys and contact staff. As a result of poor mobile phone network coverage in the area, the mobile phone provider has been changed which will help to improve communications between families and the travel team. All members of the SEND travel team are trained to at least a level 2 in safeguarding and the training programme is undergoing improvements that will be rolled out across schools and any other providers involved with the service. From the 22nd January, the service is launching bookable 15 minute online sessions for families to raise issues, big or small, with members of the team. The sessions are available between 8am and 8pm and will use a 'you said, we did' basis. In addition, JW continues to host online monthly meetings, each one with a specific theme along with a general service update with 4 available 1.5 hour slots between 8am and 8pm. Over 150 parents attended the December meetings and the team is encouraging questions to be submitted in advance with a combination of written and verbal responses. [The link to book an online session is here.](#)

JW advised that all students will soon have their own unique profile document, co-produced with the child, their families and any professionals that support them using a unified, holistic approach. Other services have successfully implemented student profiles as a method to ensure continuity of information across the workforce should there be a change in staffing or new starters. Around 80 profiles have been completed, renewed on an annual basis, and each profile details a child's needs or disability, their likes and dislikes, any triggers and successful methods to overcome these. Schools are supportive of using student profiles as it will help a child or young person to have a positive start and end to the school day. There are also plans to engage with the PfA (Preparing for Adulthood) team to help develop the service pathways to support with setting independent travel targets with families. The independent travel training will also be rolled out to students from Year 8 upwards.

JW also noted that by March, the travel team will have a permanent workforce, replacing the previous model of employing agency staff. This should hopefully reduce the number of changes in staffing and all members of the teams will be trained accordingly. A pictorial survey will be sent out in early February to all young people who access the travel service to get their views and experiences. The team is encouraging schools and colleges to support the child or young person to complete the survey independently to help build a true picture of the lived experience. The travel service guidance documents have been reworked into bitesize, easy-read formats and following feedback from parents and carers, the SEND travel application form has been revised to make it easier to understand and complete. Please click here for access to the [Post 16 Travel Assistance Policy Statement \(16-25 Years Old\) Mainstream & SEND Bitesize Guide](#) and [Home to School Travel Policy \(5-16 Years Old\) Mainstream & SEND Bitesize Guide](#).

JW concluded that the ambition for him and the team is to be an outstanding service and work with local families, children, young people and professionals to achieve this.

AW thanked JW for his update adding it is evident that JW's knowledge of SEND is helping to drive the service forward.

Q: AW asked if a journey time of 85 minutes, as cited by NR, is reasonable.

A: JW explained that the guidance provided by Kingston Council is 75 minutes but the transport policy is being reviewed to help improve journey times.

CI commented that plans for change within the service are encouraging and the online booking link will be advertised across the PCF network. JT supported the changes happening in the service as the psychological wellbeing of children is so important to ensure they arrive at school feeling happy and ready to learn. She also added that due to the number of roadworks in the borough causing delays to journey times, could a system be introduced whereby pick up locations could be temporarily changed. JW advised that this has been considered by the team and they are in discussions with depot managers about using temporary pick-up locations to manage the traffic diversions. LM added that many members of the travel team are very positive and make a real difference to the lives of the family and child or young person.

**Action:** JW to include RH and FA on the service's mailing list for service updates, improvements etc.

#### **4. Participation, Engagement & Co-production update**

As RH sent his apologies for the meeting, the following update was shared via email with HB:

- RH is due to visit Dysart School for a parents coffee morning on the 24th January, attend a new SEND Parent peer support group run by Kingston Carers Network on 26th January and the Stay and Play at Moor Lane on the 7th February.
- Other projects include:
  - the new Family Hubs scheme, which is due to launch in April 2024 at the Old Malden Manor Children's Centre;
  - supporting NHS colleagues to make Kingston Hospital more welcoming to SEND children and families;
  - working with the Short Breaks team to help coordinate and publicise the FUEL scheme and holiday offer;
  - creating a new Autism/ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) policy for the borough in conjunction with Kingston Council Social Care and Health partners to make sure that SEND parents are represented on the interview panels for the new post-diagnostic team.
- The SEND Parent Champions scheme continues to go from strength to strength. This month Nicola Wilson from Crossroads Care gave a talk to our SEND Parent Champions about their services and support. In the next month we are looking to interview 5 more SEND Parent Champions and start their training.

#### **5. Health, Social Care & Short Breaks update**

AR and CR provided the following update on Short Breaks:

- Over the Winter holidays, the Short Breaks team visited the F.U.E.L (Feed Ur Everyday Lives) activities, reporting good attendance figures and a high quality of provision. The F.U.E.L programme also provided theatre tickets for relaxed performances, a first time experience for many families who gave very positive feedback.
- Stay and Play sessions at Moor Lane Centre continue every wednesday morning from 10am to 12pm during term time. Every month a guest speaker will join a session and this month the Community Nursing team will be in attendance on the 31st January.
- The team are working with mainstream providers in Kingston to help improve their SEND offer as part of aiming high support funding. In addition, [CR and AR are hosting a session at Skylarks](#), Friday 26th January from 10am - 12pm, to present what resources are currently available to families.
- Following a presentation on the Aiming High Support Funding from Alison Danks (Associate Director of Health Services, AfC) and Geraldine Burgess (Short Break Operations Manager, AfC) in the October meeting, discussions are ongoing around what options are available and parents and carers are invited to contact AR with any ideas or suggestions at [alys.robinson@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:alys.robinson@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

Q: CI asked if there is a deadline for which contact should be made.

A: AW advised that as it is a financial matter, a decision will need to be reached to align with the closing of this financial year (March 2024) so parents and carers should make contact sooner rather than later.

*Update: AR contacted HB after the meeting to advise that the Short Breaks Team and the PCF are meeting in early February to discuss the Aiming High Support Funding.*

- There are also core team meetings with the Short Breaks team key providers and planning for the year ahead.

**Action:** JR to contact AR/CR to arrange for a member of the SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service) team to attend the Moor Lane Stay and Play sessions.

JR provided the following update on SENDIASS:

JR introduced two new employees who will be providing general administrative support to the organisation. Recruitment has begun for another vacant post for a full-time position.

**Action:** JR to share the job advertisement with KL to be uploaded to the Local Offer.

DS provided the following update on Social Care:

The timeliness of social care advice for EHCNAs (Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments) has improved and good progress is being made in this area. Links between the education and social care teams are growing to ensure any families known to both services are supported appropriately. DS delivered training as part of the AfC SEND Champions project which was well received and there are now plans to roll the training out across a wider network.

CN provided an update on the SEND service:

CN will be visiting schools across the borough in the coming weeks to meet staff and school leaders and there are several new members of the SEND team currently receiving training. For any children with SEND who are transitioning to a different phase or setting of education, the deadline for amending an EHCP with the details of their preferred provision is February 15th. CN added that the team is working hard to secure placements and meet the preferences of the family.

PC provided an update as the new DCO (Designated Clinical Officer):

PC joined AfC in early January and her previous work includes a Speech and Language Therapist, moving into management of SALT (Speech and Language Therapy) and complex needs across mainstream schools and then as the DCO for Bromley. Current priorities are to meet key people across education, health and social care to help identify the strengths and areas of need.

## 6. Actions from previous meetings for further discussion

Actions from December meeting:

CI advised that this action should be carried over as no discussions have yet taken place.

**Action:** Tom Mann (Customer Experience Team Manager, Kingston Council) and BP to discuss setting up a co-production working group for concessionary travel in Kingston. This would address the role and cost of the independent assessment team, introducing a parent and child point of view, data analysis of the number of children cases and joint working between JW's and TW's teams.

**Action:** CI to share the details of the [Buddy Up scheme](#) across the PCF network.

**Action:** HB to follow up with Sarah Herbert (Lead school improvement adviser SEND, AfC) to make arrangements for a member of the PCF to attend an online SENCO network session.

**Action:** JW is due to meet Tom Mann in early February and will be able to provide an update in the next meeting on ways in which their teams can work together to create a single touch service for families to avoid the repetition of information or their child's story.

Actions from November meeting (carried over from December meeting):

All actions from November were completed.

## 7. A.O.B

AfC's Pupil Support team are interested in receiving feedback from both parents and young people who have recently transitioned from primary to secondary school.

**Action:** HB to share the links to the [parent/carer survey](#) and [young person survey](#).

KL provided the following updates:

- A page on the Local Offer is being developed as one-stop shop for SEND travel
- Skylarks are offering [career coaching sessions](#) for young people with SEND in addition to an online workshop on [Money Skills for Work](#).
- There is currently a pictorial survey on the Local Offer to gather feedback from visitors to the website, but a google form has been added in order for KL to contact people who have submitted comments, both positive and negative. This will help to address any areas of development and work together to make improvements to the website.

AW thanked KL for all her work on coordinating the volume of information available on the Local Offer.

CI thanked all the new parents who joined today's meeting as the PCF are always keen to widen their membership.

**Action:** HB to share details of the person at Kingston Council who advises on designing accessible spaces.

Finally, as this was AW's last meeting of the Kingston SEND Consortium, he thanked everyone for their hard work and contributions and wished everyone well for the future.

**Next meeting: Wednesday 7th February 2024, 12:00-13:30**

**Forward plan of deep dive topics:**

**Please note this plan is currently under review**

Meeting date	Deep Dive Topic	Owner
Tuesday 12th September	Transition to secondary school for children with send	Sheldon Snashall, AfC
	CAMHS Tier 2*	Jo Steer
Wednesday 11th October	Swimming facilities in Kingston	Martel Atterbury – Sport & Leisure Development Officer, Kingston Council.
Tuesday 7th November	F.U.E.L (Feed Ur Everyday Lives) project*	Moved to a future meeting
Wednesday 13th December	Blue Badges	Nkem Obianyor – Head of Customer Experience for Kingston and Sutton
<b>2024</b>		
Tuesday 16th January 2024	SEN Transport	John Wood, Head of SEND Travel Service, AfC
TBC	Health Services - current challenges relating to resources / budgets	Alison Danks, AD of Health Services, AfC

March 2024	F.U.E.L (Feed Ur Everyday Lives) project	Seema Sehgal, Policy and Projects Officer-FUEL Lead, AfC
TBC	Neurodevelopmental pathways for 0-18 year olds inc post-diagnosis support	Sharron Nelson, ICB Karen Gale, member of PCF
TBC	Speech and Language workshop on eating	Carmel Brady / Fraiza Sword from Your Healthcare

\* Items to be carried forward to a future meeting