

Kingston SEND Family Consultation 20th March 2018

Summary of key points raised

1. Inclusion

1.1. Feedback on the vision

- Who are “senior leaders”
- “Wide range” is a catch all - what are the specifics?
- How are the principles evidence based?
- Social skills - what evidence base? Most research shows increase in mental health as a result
- The vision feels very mainstream focussed - how can complex children and young people be included? They are transported to school - no school gate community and have their own play schemes
- Children and young people should define inclusion individually, not policy makers
- Great if appropriate for individual children with the appropriate support.

1.2. What can providers do to support the vision?

- Needs should be specified so that schools know what the needs are - in order to be trained to meet them
- Get trained and qualified - CPD
- Acknowledge parents’ expertise on pedagogy with regards to their children, not just preferences
- Data- driven evidence based practices, individualised, teachers trained
- Teachers (who cannot be expected to be experts on all special needs) can be defensive when faced with knowledgeable parents - and ‘pretend’ they know best, because they feel expected to
- Inclusion means differentiation to meet various needs of child, not just “allowing” them to be there

2. Day-to-day support

2.1. What’s working well?

- Enthusiasm of staff, who have desire to give best support they can within the system as it is
- There are some great teaching staff and SENCOs
- Peartree/Stanley - good respect for parent knowledge and contributions
- Quality behaviour intervention
- ABA. Can be delivered more cheaply and whole school than many specialist settings
- Jigsaw school
- Schemes like Early Bird and Portage

2.2. What are you worried about?

- AfC getting left behind Southwark and Newham where great innovative practice occurring
- Post 16/19 pathways
- Lack of post 16 complex and high needs options, and no focus on this, just on NEET
- DSG is needs led, not just demand led
- What if funding or support reduces?
- No specialist, individualised learning programmes - ABA
- No ASD specific special school in borough and no plans for any - it is the biggest single need of SEND pupils in the borough and therefore inadequate - leading to increase of pupils educated out of borough and independent schools, leading to £££
- Very little commissioning based on mapping need - provision made to fit the figures
- SEND language being used to justify denial of provision
- Transitions to the next stage
- Hostile relations between AfC and parents due to increased demand for EHCP due to falling confidence due to lack of data-driven evidence-based practice and transparency
- Fudged SEN figures - provision identified for a child being used as a resource for the class or for other children
- Increased placements without specialism
- Some specialist staff do not have either expertise or support (including funding) to respond to fluctuating needs of the individual child
- Child's support/ hours/ funding being used to support non-EHCP children in class

2.3. What do you think providers need?

- Good understanding of how to deliver individualised data-driven evidence based practice and how to set SMART targets
- To listen to parents knowledge about their child - as valid as waiting on EP strategies etc
- More awareness of what support is actually out there
- Training in high quality behaviour intervention ie ABA
- Training for mainstream staff
- They need to be able to speak to people at AfC for help and guidance quickly. Too many times caseworkers ignore emails/ calls from parents and schools
- Full transparency around the decision making protocol between AfC and adult social services for post 18/19 placements
- Needs to be at the heart of decision process and not finance

3. Support in difficult times

3.1. What's working well

- AfC do respond to calls and emails quickly during transition and EHCP issues
- Some individual schools access support well in crisis times

3.2. What are you worried about

- SEND kids being blamed for diminishing school budget and activities and subject areas having to be cut
- High staff turnover
- Poor home/ school information- could staff visit CYP at home once a term?
- Homogenised provision - promising rhetoric but meaningless provision - not specific or individualised
- Unclear pathways for transition to adulthood - from 18 is not joined up with AfC and other departments (the work behind the scenes on this is becoming convoluted and taking years).
- Primary teachers do not know which secondary schools to recommend - they haven't visited them
- Parents need to be able to visit special schools before year 5 so families can make decisions which affect their whole day-to-day lives, not just the education of their child

3.3. What do you think providers need?

- Social care needs, even if not required at time needs to be known for planning for Post-16 and beyond eg identified at primary age
- I don't even know what I could access if I needed it therefore reliant on school staff knowledge
- Receiving schools need to work with feeder schools for individual children years before they arrive
- Additional training and time to consult with next stage setting so that they can recommend schools to parents
- ABA training as data-driven evidence based practice depersonalises and provides evidence of progress to increase parent confidence

4. Educational psychology

4.1 How could your child's school benefit from systemic support from the educational psychology service?

- EPs need to stop telling head teachers that kids won't get a EHCP forcing parents to go against schools and apply
- Training in ABA
- Service is spread very thin - 1 EP per school can't do much
- EHCP assessments take up all the time, not support
- EPs need to do more than simply assess kids. Training in behavioural interventions but also behaviours in general focussing on motivation and engagement not just for kids causing problems for teachers but for kids whose behaviours are barriers to their own learning., ie engagement, processing and learning.
- My son's EP time is only a few hours per school year and this is a school with an SRP. School has therefore had to buy in private ed psych time. The AfC EP time would be taken up by just a few pupils
- Only seen EP for her assessment part of EHCP but no ongoing input - Systemic work would be great to support children in mainstream
- Where are the EPs going and how often? Is it fairly and consistently spread

- Remember the CYP in special schools also need EP input & there is a sense that special schools are the end of the line
- Could EPs be the lead champions, eg have an EP leading on dyslexia etc

5. EHCPs and progress

5.1. What's working well?

- Some schools can deliver despite nonsensical EHCPs
- Quality provision is based on individuals and their training and attitude and this is despite the system not because of it
- My son would not have an EHCP except that he needed it as the key to Peartree. Once there, the provision is quality and based on excellent school-parent partnership
- In theory, EHCPs go to 25 - but I have no experience of how that works in practice, still too early to say

5.2. What are you worried about?

- Overloaded caseworkers means that children are not getting support soon enough
- Case officer turnover
- Case officer training and support
- SEN review officer job, which is clearly only an EHCP cessation role
- It took 11 months to get annual review paperwork sorted, supposed to be four weeks
- Tribunals
- Social care input poor and often doesn't happen
- Health input/ everyone tries to wriggle out of it

5.3. What do you think needs to happen to make sure we support children and young people to achieve the best possible outcomes?

- Listen to parents
- Read the professional reports so that the draft reflects the CYP and is not generic diluted version to fit all- my 4 x amended draft ended up looking like the original submitted by the school but took 9 months of negotiation - what a waste of time
- Teachers to be trained in what SMART means
- Teachers given the resources to actually deliver
- Outcomes need to be really deliverable with achievable steps to get there
- My son's EHCP just being rushed through because of the deadline
- Annual reviews learning to patch up poor EHCPs