

RICHMOND SEND PARTNERSHIP BOARD
Cedar/Willow Room, Thames House, Teddington
17 July 2019 – 3.00pm

Attendees:	
James Thomas (JT)	Director of Children’s Services, Richmond Council
Ian Dodds (ID)	Managing Director, AfC
Grace Over (GO)	Participation Officer for Children and Young People with SEND, AfC
Mitchell (M)	Young person representative
Romany Wood-Robinson (RW-R)	Parent representative
Doreen Redwood (DR)	Lead Children’s Health Commissioner, Kingston & Richmond CCG
Ian Hutchings (IH)	Headteacher, Sheen Mount Primary School
Charis Penfold (CP)	Director of Education Services, AfC
Jonathan Rourke (JR)	SENDIASS Team Coordinator for Richmond and Kingston, KIDS
Ashley Whittaker (AW)	Programme Director, AfC
Eamonn Gilbert (EG)	Associate Director Commissioning, AfC
CLlr Penny Frost (PF)	Cabinet member for Children’s Services and Schools, Richmond Council
Roxy Clancy (RC)	Parent representative
Dan Collins (DC)	Acting Head of Learning Disability and Mental Health (Adults), Richmond Council
Tracy Mabbs (TM)	Early Years provider representative
Heather Mathew (HM)	Children and Young Peoples Voluntary Sector Strategic Lead Manager, Richmond CVS
Hannah Gill (HG)	Senior Public Health Lead, Richmond Council
Alex Hardy (AH)	Independent Supporter, Ruils
Kirsty Hogg (KG)	Commissioning Support Lead, Richmond Council
Dave Leeman (DL)	Parent representative
Ivan Pryce (IP)	Headteacher, Strathmore Special School
Janice Riley (JR)	PA to Ian Dodds & James Thomas, AfC, minutes

Apologies:	
Tonia Michaelides (TM)	Managing Director, Kingston & Richmond CCG
Laura Turner (LT)	Chief Executive Officer, Richmond Mencap
Elaine Ball (EB)	Headteacher, Orleans Park School
Pranay Chakravorti (PC)	Interim Senior Commissioning Manager – LD, Richmond Council
Claire Schneider (CS)	Clinical Service Manager for Paediatric Therapies
Mandy Skinner (MS)	Assistant Chief Executive, Richmond Council
Enno Kuettner (EK)	Interim DCO, Kingston & Richmond CCG

1. Introductions and welcome

JT opened meeting, noting that this is the third meeting of the Board and we are still getting going and finalising the plan we will be working to. We still need to develop an effective dataset and clarify how all the workstreams will work. Having said that we do need to start on the impact that we are beginning to make, our whole purpose is to drive improvement for young people and improve the quality of our services for children and families with SEND. It is important to keep a clear focus on how we work and not chop and change our approach. JT asked the Board for their comments and/or suggestions.

RW-R – asked if there is a plan to publish what we have collectively agreed to do. JT responded that we do want to be open and transparent and feels we are ready to do that. This will form part of our ‘Inform’ priority. The SEND Futures Plan will be a public document but the work of this board will also be publicly accessible.

HM – asked how we will progress issues outside of the meeting. JT advised that he does feel the partnership approach is important and that we share responsibility. We need to make clearer what the invitation is for everybody around the table and others to join in the work and to open this up between AfC and CCG. We can discuss at workstream updates but we should be sharing with all the board members how we can engage with the work within the next couple of weeks. We are not quite there yet but very close, JT has set himself a deadline to ensure this is completed by the end of this month.

2. Introduction: Board Ways of Working

JT outlined the thematic approach to Inform, Involve and Improve, as well as the forward plan which was circulated with the agenda. HG raised concern around public health leading on the data as they currently do not hold most of the relevant data. JT acknowledged that and suggested it was about distributing leadership across the partnership - a meeting with HG and the Director of Public Health is planned and this can be discussed there.

Decision: Board approved the thematic approach and forward plan. Agreed to make the work of the Board available publicly on the Local Offer website.

3. SEND Futures Plan

AW advised that the draft plan came out 6 weeks ago and received feedback at the last meeting of this Board. It then went to the Education and Children’s committee and is going back to the Education and Children’s Committee on 25 July 2019 for final approval. Consultation was launched middle of June and closed on Sunday 14 July 2019. Various events took place including focus groups, drop in sessions and one to one meetings including young people. Input was received from 38 young people. If committee approve this will then be the final plan and will be published.

Feedback received from young people was broadly positive and it was believed to be an easy read plan. There was however some comments that there was too much on researching, looking and finding out and not enough doing. Most young people enjoyed activities and trips at school and supported the review of therapy. Young people warned of trying to deliver therapy on the cheap.

Feedback from adults was that they are supportive of the emphasis upon parental engagement. Some commented that often the only place to go for help is the voluntary sector, which led to a discussion that this was positive as long as statutory services were also providing advice and support. JT noted this could be an issue to come back to for further discussion. It would be good to think further about how we recognise and support voluntary sector organisations. Feedback was that there should be a stronger emphasis upon mental health issues. There is a need to boost the profile of children and young people receiving support but do not have an EHCP.

JT noted that it is a large and complex plan and our job as a board is to make sure it makes a difference but would like to recognise that this is quite challenging. JT advised the onus is on him and his teams to bring updates to the board but would also ask board members to take responsibility for scrutinising the plan and raising any concerns. It would be helpful to raise concerns prior to the board meetings so that we can come prepared with a response.

DL asked if there will be a change document to show the differences as a result of the consultation. AW responded that there isn't at the moment but this is a good idea and he will arrange this.

4. Inform

a) Data Dashboard and analysis

AW presented draft dashboard template detailing the proposed performance indicators. We have adopted the balanced scorecard approach. There is currently a very large amount of data available and there are also lots of new pieces of data which haven't been collected historically and should have been so this is very positive. Challenges are significant, data is collected in various formats and not always aligned to the plan. One example is recording how proactive schools are in identifying need as there is significant variation in individual schools practice. A lot of data also includes out of borough children. There is often narrative behind data and it is important to recognise that data alone is rarely sufficient to tell you a full story but will tell you where to ask questions. The dataset will be populated on a quarterly basis and will have targets. At the next meeting in September Qtr 1 should be completed. We will get better at making use of the data as we get used to using it. In November we will have Qtr 2 to compare. The Board were asked for comments regarding the proposed draft.

PF – there is a problem with baselining data looking at SEN as this varies across different schools. Schools will have their own approaches and there is no benchmarking. It is very difficult to know what to use to show how effectively schools are working. JR noted that the same applies to the support we provide to schools as the need varies largely.

JT reminded the importance of considering the triangle noted in our first meeting.

- Corner one - What does the data tell us?
- Corner two - Our quality assurance – how are we evaluating?
- Corner three - What are our children, young people and parents telling us?

RW-R - page 4 - would be good to add in something to help gather qualitative data. PF noted that schools do parent satisfaction surveys. IH responded that the school survey doesn't specify SEN support but is more general around whether they are happy with the school. It was noted that there is a huge variation in school practice throughout the

borough. CP advised that feedback is requested from families at the end of the EHC process, which includes some questions around transition periods. Coffee mornings have been organised and we are piloting some other schemes at the moment.

RC noted that there are very few indicators for children with SEN support but without an EHC Plan. There was a discussion about the difficulties of collecting information on SEN Support systematically. ID noted an option would be to create a sample group of parents, maybe 10%, who would be willing to be involved in monitoring. PF noted that in the school where she is a governor children are monitored at every governing board. IH suggested doing some benchmarking and then look at that level across schools.

DL asked if there are definitions behind some of the statements. CP advised that we are working on this at the moment. Also noted that the column stating whether higher or lower is better can be too simplistic and needs reviewing.

AH suggested appeals resolved at mediation stage might be a better indicator rather than those found in AfC favour.

Action: AW to revise the data template in response to comments and agreed to find a way to include systematic reporting on SEN Support.

b) Six monthly self-evaluation update – expectations for next meeting in September

This will be a bigger piece of work. The Self-evaluation currently is not sufficiently rigorous but gives us a starting point. Very important that the Self-Evaluation is owned by all the partners. JT will be emailing all members of the board asking for contributions and with specific questions. We want to consider bringing a group of people together to do some joint working on this. JT will start with a virtual round and then invite people to come together to get the evaluation ready for September Board. A meeting will be organised for early September.

5. Involve

CP referred to the document previously circulated on Co-Production and noted that some feedback has been received but she hasn't had a chance to pull these together yet however the document will be updated. HM asked for the voluntary sector to be included in the development of the ASD Strategy. CP will pass the request to Enno and Sarah.

Action: HM to send Anna Chiva suggestions of where she should start.

Action: CP to complete Co-Production document and circulate.

6. Highlight report from workstreams

AW highlighted four areas which are working well and three worries as below:

What is working well

- Engagement and participation. Progress is being made with the Parent Panel and Parent Carer Forum. The SEND Futures conference had significant involvement of parents/carers in planning and delivery and children/young people in delivery.
- Our Local offer continues to improve. Examples of this are the growth in appropriate local specialist school places at both special schools and specialist resource provision in mainstream schools. This is tribute to our local school leaders who have stepped forward to play an even bigger role in this than they already do. The proportion of EHCP placements in independent and non-maintained sector continues to decrease and is now lower than many others (having previously been amongst the highest). This trend is set to continue with the opening of Capella House School in September

and two new special free schools (aim is Sept 2022). Current therapy review now has real traction and we expect this to bring improvements also in 2020.

- Peer review of inclusion practice in secondary schools is up and running. There has been great feedback on value from schools.
- Q1 20 week EHCP performance 100% (compared to national average in 2018 of about 60%).

Worries

- Actual total number of EHCPs continues to rise at same rate as past 18 months i.e. 10 to 11% p.a.
- This is feeding through into the high needs block overspend of about £5m in this financial year alone, which will be added to existing overspend.
- Workforce across the system - availability / supply / recruitment / retention and skills gaps, across schools and health. There are already strains with recruiting e.g. Ed Psychs, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language etc. If EHCPs continue rising as they are where then the concern is around where the professionals to support them are going to come from.

AW presented the summary of what is happening at the moment. We are in a much stronger place in relation to participation and our Local Offer is improving significantly. We need to think about how we will manage increase in demand. There are concerns around workforce and ensuring we have a sufficiently skilled workforce. RW asked if the report could be published.

RC asked who will oversee the future process of new schools etc. JT responded that all new schools have to be free schools now so the DfE are in charge of this but we do work closely with the DfE on this. The main issues of delay that arise are usually around buildings.

Action: AW to report back to the Board on workforce strategy.

7. Deep Dive – Transitions

GO and Mitchell talked to the presentation regarding Transitions to Adulthood. Mitch highlighted that there is a lack of support around attending college, and that there is an underlying issue of a failure to promote high aspirations for young people with SEND. Only 26% of young people reported to have been asked what they want to be. There was also a wish for greater attention to learning life skills rather than just an academic focus.

JT asked Mitchell and GO if it was clear who the young people would like advice and support on future options and life skills to come from. GO advised that she feels that most think first and foremost of their schools. GO went on to say that most young people were excited about adulthood but were worried about whether they would be able to cope. JR said there is an element of the work they do around including young people in meetings about them. RW-R noted that perhaps we should be supporting and considering parents as well as young people through transitions as sometimes it is difficult for parents to adjust.

EG talked to the presentation which was circulated with the agenda. There are two core groups of young people, one with the highest level of need that will meet adult services thresholds (11%) and the bigger group of young people who will not meet that threshold. A Transitions Navigator is being produced as a family friendly piece of guidance rather

than a service protocol, and there will be consultation with parents before this is finalised and put on the Local Offer website.

HM – asked if it would be possible for the programme to include some of the life skills referred to in GO’s earlier presentation. EG advised we can adapt programmes to include these.

JT asked if this is enough to address the difficulties being expressed by young people and their families who describe a lack of clarity about the options for them. EG feels that the combination of the revised guidance, the Next Steps interviews for all young people, and the improved local offer will address this.

EG noted the example shown in the presentation of the success story of a young person who, with support from his 14-19 Transitions Advisor, has secured a job at TFL which was what he always wanted. AH noted that things did not start off so easy for this family. Statutory responsibility for careers guidance shifted to schools and they tend to focus on University. It would be good to hold face to face meetings where the young person can discuss what they really want to do. The 14-25 partnership seeks to do this working closely with schools in the borough identifying young people with less than 5 GCSEs who they will work with the across the summer to look at alternatives available to them.

ID noted that the focus has been mainly around education and we should also be discussing transition into social care and health.

DL suggested we should be sharing and celebrating success stories as this really helps with encouraging high aspirations. EG noted that often young people feel they can do more than their parents think they can. It is always really good to hear success stories of young people.

JT asked the group what the most important things are for us to focus on, the following concluded to emphasise in our plans:

Action: AW and CP to review SEND Futures Plan and ensure that these are covered with appropriate targets and milestones:

- **More transparent marketing around achievement to raise aspirations**
- **Focus on employment as an outcome for those where it is appropriate, specifically raising the numbers of young people with supported internships**
- **Provide clearer guidance and expectations**
- **Raise 26% of young people who are being asked what they want to do in the future**

8. Minutes of previous meeting and action points

JT confirmed actions from the minutes have been completed. There were no further concerns/queries relating to the previous minutes and they were therefore agreed.

9. AOB

CP - nothing around early years so needs to be considered.

JT - some attended CYPwDLD Forum where there was a discussion around being an inclusive borough and JT will be taking forward with the Council to see what the appetite might be.

JT noted this is EG's last week in post and thanked him for his immense contribution to the borough. A very big thank you from us all. This is also RW-R's last Board as she is moving away so a big thank you for all your contributions.

Future meeting dates: 19 September 2019 10.00am – 12.00 – Thames House, Teddington
26 November 2019 9.30 – 11.30am – York House, Twickenham