



## Covid 19 Update - Kingston SEND Partnership Board

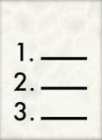


	Friday 15 May 2020, 10-12pm
	Virtual via Google Hangout



### Members

Ian Dodds Acting Chair	<b>ID</b>	Director of Children's Services	Achieving for Children
Alison Danks	<b>AD</b>	Associate Director for Health Services	Achieving for Children
Alison Stewart	<b>AS</b>	Designated Clinical Officer for Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	Kingston and Richmond Clinical Commissioning Groups
Alison Twynam	<b>AT</b>	Director Children's Social Care	Achieving for Children
Anna Chiva	<b>AC</b>	Associate Director for Special Educational Needs	Achieving for Children
Ashley Whittaker	<b>AW</b>	Programme Director	Achieving for Children
Beverly Pass	<b>BP</b>	Parent Representative	Parent Carer Forum

Brian Gale	<b>BG</b>	SEND Professional Adviser	Department for Education
Charis Penfold	<b>CP</b>	Director for Education Services	Achieving for Children
Cllr Diane White	<b>DW</b>	Lead Member for Children's Services	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Georgina Andrews	<b>GA</b>	Head of Practice Learning	Achieving for Children
Grace Over	<b>GO</b>	Participation Officer for Children & Young People with SEND	Achieving for Children
Helen Green	<b>HG</b>	SEND Support Broker	Kingston Centre for Independent Living
Jane Spencer <i>on behalf of Sian Wicks</i>	<b>JS</b>	Non-Executive Director	Achieving for Children
Jessica Thom	<b>JT</b>	Director of Commissioning and Partnerships	Achieving for Children
Julie Percival <i>on behalf of Peter Mayhew</i>	<b>JP</b>	Assistant Principal - Curriculum & High Needs	South Thames Colleges Group
Laura Smyth	<b>LS</b>	Chief Executive Officer	Yorda Adventures
Martin Ellis	<b>ME</b>	Interim Director of Commissioning & Transformation	Kingston and Richmond Clinical Commissioning Groups
Nigel Evason	<b>NE</b>	Interim Children's Health Commissioner	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames / Achieving for Children
Sean Maher	<b>SM</b>	Headmaster	Richard Challoner School
Stuart Sweeney	<b>SS</b>	Lay Member	
Tonia Michaelides	<b>TM</b>	Managing Director	Kingston & Richmond CCG
<b>Apologies</b>			
Ian Thomas (Chair)	<b>IT</b>	Chief Executive	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Caroline Mark	<b>CM</b>	Associate Director for Quality Assurance and Review	Achieving for Children
Claire Deadman	<b>CD</b>	Nursery Manager	One Nine Seven Early Years Nursery
Elizabeth Broadhurst	<b>EB</b>	Interim Children's Commissioner	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
George Chaplin	<b>GC</b>	Participation Member	
Iona Lidington	<b>IL</b>	Director of Public Health	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Jonathan Rourke	<b>JR</b>	SENDIASS Coordinator for Richmond and Kingston	SENDIASS
Karen Long	<b>KL</b>	Service Lead, Frontline Services	Your Healthcare
Leigh Edser	<b>LE</b>	Principal	Dysart School
Peter Mayhew-Smith	<b>PMS</b>	Group Principal and CEO	South Thames Colleges Group
Rachel Nye	<b>RN</b>	Headteacher	Tolworth Infant and Junior School
Sarah Ireland	<b>SI</b>	Director of Corporate and Commercial	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Sian Wicks	<b>SW</b>	Non-Executive Director	Achieving for Children

 1. — 2. — 3. — <b>Minutes</b>	<b>Action</b> 
1. 	<p><b>Welcomes, Introductions and Apologies</b></p> <p>ID welcomed the members to the virtual Board, introductions were made and apologies given. ID explained that the structure of the meeting will be for the members of the Board to provide a verbal update on their service during Covid 19, including any areas of concern. The Board will respond to questions, provide information and problem solve during the meeting</p>
2.	<p><b>Children and Young People (children and young people) – Grace Over on behalf of children and young people</b></p> <p><i>Comments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Participation Team is continuing as normal, but virtually. There is a lot of individual 1-1 contact with young people, but providing more individual emotional support. There is also a weekly group catch-up for the young people to hang out together.</li> <li>• Referrals are still being accepted.</li> <li>• Young people continue to be involved in meetings, but virtually. They also helped design the accessible correspondence letter that was sent out to children and young people from ID and TM, and also the Top Tips and Positive Messages Poster.</li> <li>• Local Offer: the young people have been involved in the “Have my Say” consultation tool and app, which has been helpful.</li> <li>• The Recruits Crew continues and is working well with 6 sessions to date.</li> <li>• Young People's Voices co-delivered training has been adapted so it is a virtual session and should go ahead in June.</li> </ul>

- Helping to rollout “About Me” guides for SEN Transport.
- Supporting the universal participation for the Youth Council elections so that it is more accessible.

### **Challenges**

- Virtual meetings: it is difficult to involve all young people, especially those with more significant needs and also those without access to IT equipment / Wifi.
- Young people have been sharing their views and the themes emerging are: -
  - Contact: children and young people are missing their friends and also adults who they would see at school, college etc.
  - They are receiving an email with school / college work, but not a general check in call / email or an opportunity to talk to anyone on the telephone / video call.
  - Keeping busy is a challenge and a lot of young people are saying that they are bored and running out of things to do and finishing their school / college work quickly.
  - Struggling with routine and school / home life is merging, which they are finding a challenge.
  - Those who are fasting at the moment, understandably need more distraction.
  - For those young people who were building up their independence skills not being able to go out and travel is proving a challenge.
  - Worried about C19 and also their family, friends and carers who support them.
- Things that are helping are: -
  - Schools / colleges proactively contacting them, either by telephone / video call.
  - Youth / activity clubs arranging fun activities.
  - Trying to find new ways to keep fit.
  - People remembering their birthday.

### **Worries**

- For those who are at college / apprenticeship who do not have access to IT equipment / WiFi are struggling to complete their college work.

	<p><b>Discussion</b></p> <p>JP from South Thames College explained that providing IT equipment has been a challenge and staff had to be prioritised. It was noted that AfC are expecting a delivery of laptops and dongles from the DfE for those young people who do not have access to IT equipment. These will be shared with schools and colleges.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Parents and Carers – Beverley Pass</b></p> <p><b>Comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parents are finding home schooling children with SEND, 24/7 support at home is a challenge.</li> <li>● Responding to anxiety and changes in behaviour has been difficult.</li> <li>● Contact with AfC continues, this was weekly, but is now bi-weekly. This has helped understand what is going on, but the PCF involvement is limited at the moment due to the responsibility of homeschooling.</li> </ul> <p><b>Positives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The letter to ECHP families from ID and TM was welcomed. It is good that children can exercise more than once a day.</li> <li>● On-line therapy provision is a positive.</li> </ul> <p><b>Worries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Initially the shielding list had gaps.</li> <li>● There was a lack of information and understanding about the risk assessment methodology and also who is allowed to go to school.</li> <li>● School support for those home schooling was variable, but this has improved.</li> <li>● The process for returning to school, this will be another big change for young people and they will struggle. The reintegration back to school will need to be carefully managed.</li> </ul>	

- Access to mental health support has been difficult, need to look at this system to see how it can be improved to help our children and young people.
- Transfer process, parents are unable to visit schools, which would normally help in making a decision about the future school / college for children and young people.
- Communicating with the whole SEND community. A letter was sent by AfC recently to all parents with an EHCP, but this is a small minority of the SEND Community. Need to look at a central way to communicate with all children and young people with SEND from Early Years through to school / college.

**BP** noted that the PCF is relatively new and the current circumstances have been a challenge.

### ***Discussion***

**ID** asked if the Board could look at the issues raised by **BP**, in particular Risk Assessments, Phase Transfer, Transitions and Mental Health.

**CP** commented on the Risk Assessments. A lot of work was completed with SENCOs to give them the tools and confidence to help with this process. There have been online briefings and we are very clear in our expectations that this is done in partnership with parents and the Risk Assessment needs to be an ongoing process that will change over time.

**CP** noted that there has been a lot of feedback about the consistency of school provision and the situation is different for each school, but they are all working hard to manage challenges. AfC are clear and consistent in their message and where a school is struggling, have been supporting them. Consistency in schools is a difficult area and families also have differing views about the most appropriate young people of home learning, some of who find it harder to engage, some are keen to access 6 hours of daily remote learning, and others, where there are 2-3 children in one family with access to one iPad, this causes a challenge. It is clear that there are inconsistencies in families' expectations about what the current offer should be.

**AC** explained that sessions have been held with secondary SENCOs to think about the Phase Transfer process. Looking to host a webinar session in mid-June to look at the process and discuss parents' concerns. It will be attended by a panel of mainstream secondary schools who will be able to talk about the provision they can offer, there will also be a separate meeting for special schools. Secondary schools are looking at producing a video about their provision, which will be on the Local Offer. The schools are also looking at the possibility of a social distance school visit in early September. There are only slight changes in the timelines for transfers, giving parents an extra 20 days to help make a decision.

**SM** commented that the school is particularly concerned about Y6 children transitioning from primary to secondary, the transition needs to be positive and this is going to be difficult this year as we do not know what school is going to look like this September, this process will need to be managed carefully. This will be harder for children with particular needs, some EHCP children have returned to school as they are struggling with anxiety and routine. The school is beginning to look at producing a video for parents and children to meet teachers and also looking at the possibility of a social distance school visit. It is a challenging time as the school is focussing on preparing for a safe opening in June for Y10 and 12. The school is hoping to have a better idea about transitions by mid-June.

**BG** noted that Kingston has a strong approach and there are good links between the SEN, School Improvement teams with schools. School attendance for children with an EHCP and vulnerable children is good. The revised guidance around Risk Assessments will be released shortly by the government.

**NE** explained that it is a challenging time for mental health trust at the moment. The team is currently updating the offer and will soon be able to share what services are available and what adjustments have been made and how people can access the services.

	<p><b>AS</b> updated the Board on the current position. The team are currently working collaboratively with Tier 2 and 3 on the dynamic support register, the CCG are told about children and young people with ASD or learning difficulties who have mental health issues, these children and young people are added to the register.</p> <p>Due to technical issues <b>AS</b> gave an update on behalf of <b>TM</b>. <b>AS</b> explained that they are working on identifying those children and young people most at risk to ensure they have access to services and contacting children and young people where issues have been identified. Referrals have reduced during C19, but teams are aware that this may increase when children and young people return to school, especially those with increased anxiety. The team will work with schools regarding emotional wellbeing. The on-line offer has been rolled out across Kingston and the data will be reviewed to see who is using this offer and the impact it has had, however the team are mindful that there will be a cohort of children and young people who will not be able to access this service.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Voluntary Sector</b></p> <p><i>Helen Green - Kingston Centre for Independent Living</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with children and young people on personal health budgets through education and also working with the team working with direct payments for children in social care. The process for each service is different and this has not helped children and young people / families trying to navigate the funding process.</li> <li>• This has highlighted the work that had started around procedures and pathways. Going forward we need to continue to work together to identify robust systems to help children and young people with personal budgets.</li> </ul> <p><i>Cllr Diane White – Lead Member for Children’s Services</i></p> <p><b>DW</b> explained that she works for the Kingston Carers Network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families are under a lot of pressure and there have been some family breakdowns recently. Particularly difficult for those children who had 1-1 support at school, home life is now very hard for them.</li> </ul>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there any flexibility around the Activities Fund?</li> </ul> <p><b>Action</b> - After discussion it was agreed to look at the amended guidance and see if there is flexibility for individual families. <b>AW / HG to discuss and see if there is a way to take this forward.</b></p> <p><i>Laura Smyth - Yorda Adventures</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have been working together with Dysart, Bedelsford, Strathmore and AfC to deliver child care to children with disabilities, primarily over the Easter holidays when the schools had a much needed break and intend to do the same in the May half term.</li> <li>• Have continued to support some children on days they are unable to go to school.</li> <li>• Have also created a safe space for families to come and play, either in complete self-isolation or in safe social distance groups.</li> <li>• Completely clean the playhouse before and after every visit to ensure it's as safe as possible. This has proved popular with families and we are usually full for every session offered.</li> <li>• Colleagues in the voluntary sector have been working hard to also adapt and reinvent services to ensure our most vulnerable are cared for and not forgotten.</li> </ul>	AW / HG
5.	<p><b>Early Years / Primary / Secondary / College</b></p> <p>ID noted that some issues have already been covered earlier in the meeting.</p> <p><i>Early Years / Primary – CP</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The team are working towards reopening the EY sector and some year groups in primary schools – nursery, reception and Y1 and Y6. This is not definite, but we will work towards this and start planning. The plan is to open on 01.06.20 and the EY Team are working with settings to provide support.</li> <li>• Infant schools reopening will be a big challenge, and includes year groups N, R and 1, this will mean three quarters of the school returning and a huge pressure on staff to try and keep a large number of children safe.</li> </ul>	

- The recent Government guidance has left headteachers frustrated as the expectation is that children should be in full time education from the outset, the view is that this may not be possible and should be planned in a phased gradual way. AfC will support schools with what individual school plans might look like. There will be a risk assessment and each school will have a named school improvement partner.
- Consideration will also need to be given to those children with an EHCP and also SEND support.
- There will be a lot of work around safety, social distancing and hygiene, which will vary from school to school, depending on the site.
- The Emotional Health and Educational Psychology teams have produced resources to help with reintegration and transition, at a universal level and also for particular groups.
- Current focus is on primary and EY settings.
- There is a secondary headteacher meeting planned for WB 18.05.20, where the plan is to discuss Y10 and Y12 return to school.
- There is a meeting planned with the headteachers from the special schools this afternoon – 15.05.20, to discuss how they will gradually increase their attendance in a safe and sensible way.

#### **Secondary – Sean Maher – Comments also noted in Section 3**

- Richard Challoner has been liaising with Holy Cross about a co-ordinated reopening. The schools, and governors have made the decision not to insist on staff returning to school if they feel uncomfortable about doing so.
- Once staff numbers have been confirmed, timetables will be planned for Y10 and Y12, half a year group at a time on alternate days in the morning and afternoon. Initially this Y12 will return and then Y10.
- Timescales, the plan is to open the school to staff after half term and discuss social distancing plans.
- Support will need to continue for critical worker children.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consideration will also be given to the special provision children and how they are supported.</li> <li>● Concerned for the safety of staff and how safety is maintained. There is a lot of anxiety, but teachers will continue to do their best to support children and young people.</li> </ul> <p>ID noted that the circumstances for each school will be different, but it is important that schools make decisions about reopening based on the government guidance and their own assessment of risk. There is flexibility noted in the guidance and this will be schools lead and schools will need to make decisions on the individual circumstances.</p> <p><b>Colleges - Comments noted in Section 2</b></p>	
6.	<p><b>Short breaks – Alison Danks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The service is continuing as best they can and working with schools and voluntary groups.</li> <li>● Checking in with families on a regular basis, some of who have said thank you, but not taking up the offer, which is completely understandable.</li> <li>● There has been increased 1-1 home and community support.</li> <li>● The team have been meeting children and young people at Moor Lane, when appropriate. This has involved more cleaning, but it is appreciated by the children and young people and their families.</li> <li>● Virtual support is working well and increasing.</li> <li>● Overnight Respite – Warren Park is now open, but on a limited basis. Working with the Disabled Children’s Teams to prioritise the most vulnerable.</li> <li>● AfC Centre at Moor Lane – the builders are on site, but the completion date is TBC.</li> </ul>	
7.	<p><b>Therapy Provision</b> <i>Alison Danks</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All teams are working virtually.</li> </ul>	

- Physiotherapists are completing some appointments face to face when required eg. if children and young people have had surgery.
- Teams are working in special schools, in a limited capacity, but they are on site.
- Nurses are on site in schools.
- Planning for the 01.06.20 and what happens next and numbers potentially increasing.
- Looking at how to phase therapy staff back to face to face appointments and need to look at Community Provision Guidance around face to face appointments.
- Received a lot of positive feedback from children and young people and parents, virtual meetings do not work for everyone, but a lot of good work has been done and have tried to be flexible.
- Paediatricians have done their best remotely, and have been gathering evidence until they can meet children and young people face to face.

***Alison Stewart*** - Comments also noted in Section 3

- Working together collaboratively with AfC, schools and services providers. Looking to collate what children and young people should be receiving in terms of statutory provision and what is being currently provided through the virtual offer.
- Looking at and planning for what returning to school might look like.
- Health position – now have sight of the shielded list and which children and young people on a plan are included. Preparing a consistent message and advice for paediatricians, nurses and GPs who may receive questions from children and young people and their families about whether they should attend school.

***Carmel Brady***

- The team has continued business as usual, but virtually.
- Continue to contribute to various panels, to help children and young people access provisions.
- Established contact with families and have been available to support them virtually.
- Sent out resources to families about symbols and alternative means of communication.
- Run a virtual programme called “I Chatter”.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responded to the CCG Vulnerable Children list and ensured that all children identified have a plan in place.</li> <li>• In terms of receiving services, the information sent out from AfC and the SEND Advisory Support Line has been helpful, it is always clear, relevant and timely.</li> </ul> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new ways of working is progressing and accelerating where we needed to in the new virtual way for therapy.</li> <li>• The timely and relevant information around the statutory process for children was helpful.</li> <li>• The strength in our partnership working has been very helpful.</li> </ul> <p><b>Concerns</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The time it will take to return back to normal and what does recovery look like.</li> </ul> <p>CB noted that 10% of the team were redeployed. 3 staff had to self-isolate. Apart from that the team is fit and well and wellbeing support was provided.</p> <p><b>Shielding</b> – AD noted that the guidance was very unclear and if anyone has any concerns about the 12 week shielding period coming to an end, please contact AD or the nursing team. ID noted that the SEND Advisory telephone line needs to have this information.</p>	
8.	<b>Mental Health - Comments also noted in Section 3</b>	
9.	<p><b>Social Care – Alison Tywnam</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The increasing need, complexities and challenges for families continues, but social workers are doing all they can to support them.</li> <li>• Children’s social care is operating at 90-95% of its capacity. Completing virtual visits and alternating face to face visits, but obviously there are some challenges, particularly with children with disabilities and particular needs where</li> </ul>	

	<p>they are shielding. Staff have been issued with the appropriate equipment when visiting children and young people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Working closely with our education colleagues to support families in returning to school.</li> <li>● Working with our health colleagues in terms of respite care and provision.</li> <li>● Appointed a Designated Social Care Officer to support social care / SEND in improving the support for children with SEND.</li> <li>● Received positive feedback about the virtual visits.</li> <li>● Staff are working from home, but we are now working on our recovery plans and expecting an increased workload and are looking to address this.</li> </ul>	
10.	<b>Adult Services – No representation.</b>	
11.	<b>Public Health – No representation.</b>	
12.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>It was agreed to look at communicating to all SEND children and young people and families, not just those with an EHCP. <b>Action – AW to review.</b></p> <p>A number of Board members expressed their thanks for the continued partnership working and support during this crisis.</p>	<b>AW</b>
13.	<p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <p>ID thanked everyone for attending. ID noted that we are working in a strange and challenging time, it would have been very difficult if we hadn't pulled together in partnership. The strength of our partnership working has been evident in what we have already achieved. We are going to enter a more challenging time and the future is unknown and we do not know what is going to happen when we bring all children and</p>	

	young people back to school and we will need to continue to support children and young people who are still at home. We need to continue to work closely together in finding solutions. It is great to work with you all and thank you for all that you continue to do.	
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**KINGSTON SEND Partnership Board will next meet on:**

**NB. Electronic invites have been sent.**

**8 July 2020, 12.30-2.30pm – Venue TBC**

**16 September 2020, 10-12pm – Venue TBC**

**12 November 2020, 10-12pm – Venue TBC**

**21 January 2021, 12.30-2.30pm – Venue TBC**