

RICHMOND SEND PARTNERSHIP BOARD
Virtual meeting via Google meets
6 July 2020 – 9.30am – 11.00 am

Attendees:	
Ian Dodds (ID) (Chair)	Director of Children's Services, Richmond Council
Jessica Thom (JT)	Director of Commissioning and Partnerships, AfC
Alison Danks (AD)	Associate Director of Health Services, AfC
Tonia Michaelides (TM)	Executive Locality Director, Richmond and Kingston, NHS South West London CCG
Nigel Evason (NE)	Interim Lead Children's Health Commissioner for SWL London, CCG and AfC (Kingston & Richmond).
Karl Burgess (KB)	Representing Dan Collins, Richmond Council
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
Sara Doyle (SD)	Associate Director for Identification & Assessment, AfC
Cllr Penny Frost (PF)	Cabinet member for Children's Services and Schools, Richmond Council
Julie Hale (JH)	Divisional Manager Richmond Children's Services, Hounslow & Richmond Community Healthcare NHS Trust
Alison Stewart (AS)	Designated Clinical Officer for SEND, CCG
Minta Townsend (MT)	Parent Carer Forum representative
Heather Mathew (HM)	Children and Young Peoples Voluntary Sector Strategic Lead Manager, Richmond CVS
Jamie Fisher (JF)	Commissioning representative, Richmond Council
Alex Hardy (AH)	Independent Supporter, Ruils
Claire Schneider (CS)	Clinical Service Manager for Paediatric Therapies
Ivan Pryce (IP)	Headteacher, Strathmore Special School
Janice Riley (JR)	PA to Ian Dodds, AfC, minutes

Apologies:	
Tracy Mabbs (TM)	Early Years provider representative
Mitch (M)	Young Person representative
Cathy Maker (CM)	RUILS
Natalie Douglas (ND)	Deputy Director Clinical Services for Richmond and Southwest London
Dan Collins (DC)	Acting Head of Learning Disability and Mental Health (Adults), Richmond Council
Kirsty Hogg (KH)	Commissioning Support Lead, Richmond Council
Elaine Ball (EB)	Headteacher, Orleans Park School
Anna Chiva (AC)	Associate Director of Special Educational Needs, AfC
Grace Over (GO)	Participation Officer for Children and Young People with SEND, AfC

1. Introductions and welcome

2. Q4 Dashboard and report on SEND services during COVID

AW presented the Dashboard report previously circulated. We have received a good response to the SEN Support survey. There has been a decrease of just under 5% in the average cost of an EHC plan which is also good news. Unfortunately there was a low uptake on the request for feedback from parents in relation to the EHC needs assessment process, although a change in process yielded better results in Q1 of the current financial year. Meetings are taking place with the DfE to discuss the funding issues. Videos to support families of Year 5 children with EHC plans in making their secondary school selections are now live on the Local Offer website.

PF asked if the target is high enough in relation to Annual Reviews being completed within 16 weeks. AW responded that quality of the assessment is also key and that a large amount of work is being done to improve this area, particularly around ensuring changes to plans are followed up and implemented in a timely fashion. PF asked for more information to be added to the annual review performance data to ensure that progress in implementing the recommendations / action plan arising from the LGSCO report can be accurately tracked.

Action: AW to arrange for the additional information to be added to the Dashboard

MT asked about out of borough residential placements. AW explained there are a variety of reasons why these may be required and that we are looking at a more joined up approach with multi-agency partners to reduce the need for residential placements. SD also noted that it will always be our aim for young people to remain in borough whenever possible to maintain connections.

IH asked if schools are being contacted in relation to consistency of offer. AW confirmed that we are working with schools to address any issues that arise. AH asked how SEN Support numbers are being monitored. AW responded that numbers are recorded on a termly basis through the schools census and that in Richmond the numbers are relatively low and increasing.

3. Therapy update

AD talked through the report circulated with the agenda. We will be working with families and young people to encourage their involvement moving forward including through the Richmond PCF. AD advised that she would be happy to receive nominations from any of the Board members to join. Feedback has indicated a lack of clarity around what a 'Balanced System' and a paper with more detail on this was circulated with the papers for this meeting and is also now posted on the Local Offer.

Action: AD to provide timeline at the next Board meeting.

CP noted that the CCG made a commitment regarding funding for SEN support and we are re-engaging schools to look at this but it has currently not yet been resolved. NE noted that one of the workstreams will be looking at funding.

HM added that learning also needs to be for the voluntary sector groups and charities which many families access, many of whom have models of excellence such as Small steps and Action attainment.

JH asked, on behalf of CS, if they (HRCH) would be asked to participate in the Therapies Review. AS confirmed that they are holding a preliminary meeting today and will then be in touch regarding next steps.

4. Mental Health update

NE presented the report shared previously noting that this has obviously been a very tricky time for people, particularly for some young people who need the routine of school to help maintain their mental health.

Kooth has been promoted however take up has not been particularly good. A business case in relation to CAMHS Spa was being developed prior to lockdown and this is continuing to be developed. The SWL, CCG Care Partnership is working with AfC on this. Emotional Health Service Tier 2 has long waiting lists between decision and treatment and this is being looked at as part of the recovery plan. NE advised they are looking at investment opportunities as part of the SWL approach in relation to CAMHS offer for children and young people with LD.

A large number of NHS staff who were re-deployed at the beginning of lockdown are slowing starting to come back. TM noted the Trailblazer pilot which is under way and work will be done with schools as they start to come back in September. Early intervention will be a key aim.

HM noted that feedback from young people has been that for many virtual sessions are challenging as they do not necessarily have the privacy they would like in their own homes. Off the Record, which CCG also funds, reported that a third of their case load opted out of virtual meetings initially and they have worked hard to find alternative ways to deliver. They still have a rising waiting list of 150+. Many are accessing national lines such as Child Line and Young Minds. Bereavement support is also being flagged, and Kingston Bereavement support and Richmond Cruse are both offering support for children and families. SD noted that social workers are doing some really great work with children and families using Jam Boards and we could share how this process works if that would help. CP noted that Tier 2 EHS is now starting some face to face meetings. TM noted that as lockdown eases there will be much more of a balance of face to face meetings.

AH raised a concern around children who are able to mask conditions and anxiety in school, succeed academically and then as a consequence have behavioural and social difficulties outside school. AH advised that in his experience families have an almost impossible job to establish diagnosis and support without corroborating input from the education setting. NE confirmed this is definitely within their thinking and they will be reviewing the process. ID also has an example of this which he will share with NE.

Action: ID to share example of AH's point with NE.

Action: AH, JR, NE and AS to make contact outside of this meeting to discuss further.

5. EHC Plan Outcomes framework

AS shared a presentation regarding the Outcome Framework which is currently in draft. There has been a slight delay due to COVID-19 but they are getting back on track. They are looking for volunteers via the Richmond PCF to help take this forward. There is consideration nationally as to whether it would be better to have a National Outcome Framework or whether this would be better locally.

Action: All to provide thoughts on National versus Local Outcome Framework

HM asked about Voluntary sector involvement as it doesn't appear to be included. AS asked HM if she would be willing to be involved to which HM responded that she would be very happy to but there is a need to recognise all of the organisations that are key and the need for them to be involved. MT asked if there is more that the Richmond PCF could do to involve the voluntary sector and HM responded that would be very much appreciated.

Action: AS to contact HM to take forward voluntary sector involvement.

6. LGSCO update

ID noted that the audit of all EHCP cases, as directed by the Local Government Ombudsman, is now complete and the final report has been received. 37 children were identified as not having their needs met and the majority of this is around plans not being amended in a timely manner after annual reviews. One of the auditors, Sarah Jackson, is contacting each of the families to explain the outcome and the process to resolve the problems. All cases are expected to be resolved by 30 July 2020.

We are also working with the PCF on two of the issues highlighted. These are to consider the best way to communicate the outcome of the audit and the development of the action plan. A meeting has already taken place with the PCF and they are contacting a wider field of parents before providing their feedback. Next steps are to produce a draft action plan by September. JR noted that he has been contacted by several families and is providing them with support through the process.

IH asked if any of the young people are attending Richmond schools. ID advised there are only two and he believes the schools are aware of the findings but will follow up to confirm.

Action: ID to confirm the two affected schools are aware of the audit results.

MT raised concern that schools are not fully aware of the situation and the outcome of the audit. ID noted that schools are dealing with a lot at the moment and their focus is on trying to prepare for children to go back to school in September. The concern is that any other communication shared with schools at the moment could be lost. IH confirmed that he agreed it would be better to wait for wider communication however it is important to ensure any involved schools are aware. Communications will be shared with schools in a very measured way and school representatives have already been made aware.

7. AOB

MT – asked if there have been any savings around transport during lockdown and if so whether this money could be re-deployed. JT advised that we have had to pay a percentage of the costs as a retainer and have also used the minibus service for other uses i.e. delivery of food parcels etc. A report will be available at a later date. ID noted

that SEN Transport is always usually overspent so any reduction in cost will be a saving rather than any available funds.

JR - SENDIASS has some additional development funding to develop training to support professionals/ Carers in:

- 1) Understanding the role of the SENDIASS service and
- 2) Understanding the processes used to provide support to children and young people.

If there are services who would find this helpful please get in touch and we can arrange bespoke packages for teams

AH asked about the Government announcement regarding extension to easements currently in place until 31 July 2020. ID advised that they are only currently making decisions on a month by month basis and safest to wait and see what happens at the end of July to see whether or not this will continue.

Next meeting: 9.30 – 11.30am 30 September 2020