

Nottinghamshire SEND Partnership Improvement Board: July 23 stakeholder update

Following the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) local area inspection undertaken by Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) between 30 January 2023 to 3 February 2023, the SEND Partnership Improvement Board has been established to oversee SEND improvement activity in Nottinghamshire, with a focus on improvements identified in the inspection report.

The aim of the Board is to provide both support and challenge across the partnership, facilitating solution-focussed practice to resolve issues and barriers that impact on the timely delivery of the Nottinghamshire SEND Improvement Programme. The Board will ensure that the SEND Improvement Programme achieves its aims with the required pace and ownership of partner members, whilst maintaining a relentless focus on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND in Nottinghamshire.

General update

The Independent Chair, Dame Christine Lenehan, thanked regional colleagues for attending, as the challenges the Partnership is facing are not unique to Nottinghamshire.

The Board signed off the updated Terms of Reference.

It was agreed that any issues raised at these meetings should be logged and then passed on via the agreed governance structure.

Nottinghamshire SEND improvement Programme – spotlight report

Priority area 1: Leaders, NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board and education, health, and care providers should cooperate to urgently identify, assess and provide for the needs of children and young people with SEND. This includes assessment of needs, timely issuing of EHC plans and holistic oversight of these plans through annual reviews.

- Educational psychologist staffing increase has been approved.
- 4 additional plan writers are now in post to concentrate on reviews.
- 10 additional staff have started to deal with backlog in Education and Healthcare (EHC) Plans.
- Progress has also been made in liaising with other local authorities who have been through this process, including Hampshire, Hartlepool and Brighton.

- Significant improvements seen in the timeliness within which new EHC plans are being issued, although requests for assessments continue to increase.

The Board reflected positively on the progress that has been made so far.

It was felt that more work needs to be done at a system level around 'preparing young people for adulthood' / transition to adult services.

Priority area 2: Leaders, including commissioners and providers, should act urgently to identify and address the delays and gaps in access to some health services, particularly speech and language therapy, neuro-developmental pathways and equipment services. They should also ensure that they use available performance data to identify where gaps exist and whether actions taken to address these are effective.

- Project Manager has been appointed.
- No patients are waiting longer than 18 weeks for an appointment for speech and language communication needs.

The Board are keen to have more up-to-date information on waiting times and this challenge will be taken back to those providers who are supplying the information.

The Board agreed that it was important to include all children from Nottinghamshire in the data. It was recognised that there are difficulties in extracting some data for Bassetlaw children but a commitment was made to not lose sight of the needs of Bassetlaw children throughout the improvement process.

The Board received an update on the other workstreams including strategic planning, leadership culture and review of governance; co-production; data, insights and intelligence; quality assurance.

Communications and engagement:

The Board received an update that a joint Engagement and Communication plan is in draft form and will come to the next Board meeting for discussion.

SEND Improvement Programme – timeline

It was agreed that an updated version of the timeline would come to each Board meeting.

Derrymount School

The Board reflected on a recent inadequate Ofsted report at Derrymount School. The school was inspected in May and the report was published on the last day of term.

Following the report, resources are being put in place by the local authority including support from the educational psychology team, and investment in the governing body around safeguarding. A safeguarding review and governance review are also being carried out. The school is also being supported by NEXUS Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) to address the concerns raised and an Academy Order has been issued by the DFE. It is understood that an Academy Trust will be identified by the DFE during the Autumn Term.

Summary

The Chair reflected on how useful the meeting was. She emphasised the importance of communications and engagement and ensuring that headteachers are involved in this work. An item will be included at the next meeting around the involvement of schools.

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 24 August (11.30am – 1.30pm).

Improvement Board attendees

- Dame Christine Lenehan: Independent Chair, Council for Disabled Children
- Nick Harrison: Senior Programme Manager, Children and Young People and SEND, NHS England (NHSE)
- Tina Ward, Children and Young People Learning Disability and Autism and SEND Senior Manager (East Midlands), NHSE
- Ian Dixon, East Midlands Regional Lead for SEND, NHSE
- Kevin Rowland, Regional SEND advisor for Department of Education
- Georgina Palmer: Lead of Nottinghamshire Parent/Carer Forum, Nottinghamshire Parent/Carer Forum
- Paul Heery: Chief Executive Officer, White Hills Park Trust
- Matt Rooney, Principal, St Giles School
- Rosa Waddingham: Director of Nursing & Joint SRO of the SEND Improvement Programme, NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board
- Cllr Tracey Taylor: Lead Member, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Colin Pettigrew: Corporate Director, Children and Families & Joint SRO of the SEND Improvement Programme, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Melanie Williams: Corporate Director, Adult Social Care & Public Health and Member of Integrated Care Partnership Board, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Heather Bennett: Executive Officer, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Natasha Wrzesinski: SEND Improvement Programme Manager, NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board *and* Nottinghamshire County Council
- Julie Cuthbert, Head of Communications, NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board

Apologies:

- Lucy Dadge, Director of Integration, NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board
- Ifti Majid, Chief Executive, Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust