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| **2021/22 Autumn Term: 23 September 2021** |
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| **What was discussed? With thanks to…**  **Strategic update |** Karen Spencer and Liz Robinson  **SEN Team update |** Karen Spencer  **SEN Support - a consistent approach to identification |** Cathy Seal and Sally Turner  **Sensory Provision |** Jo Johnson  **Brief updates:**  **PPV |** Èlise Meyer  **Children's Therapies** | Jessica Taylor  **Inclusion Outreach Service |** Lisa Caine |
| **To begin…** |
| Liz Robinson, Service Manager, Education Support and Principal Educational Psychologist, welcomed everyone to the meeting.  Apologies were noted for Julia Katherine and Sarah Christopher who could not attend today.  Liz welcomed Mike Bowen in his new role as commissioning project manager with responsibility on SEMH and SEND. |
| **Strategic update** |
| Liz announced that Julia Katherine is moving to Surrey County Council at the end of October. She has left strong leadership frameworks in place. Liz wanted to acknowledge the huge impact that Julia has had on Portsmouth and the Inclusion Service.  Karen Spencer, SEN Team manager, provided the strategic update.  **SEND accommodation**: A special free school for children and young people who have autism and challenging behaviour will be opened.  Since around 2018-19 we have been talking about opening a new school which we were successful in a bid for in terms of being a free school. Due to various delays it won't be ready to be opened in September 2022, but there is close work with contractors for completion in late November 2022. The Local Authority and Delta Academies Trust will aim for admissions from January 2023.  In the meantime, Karen is working with Delta on admissions and banding criteria. Places will be considered through specialist panels in the usual way.  **Inclusion Conference**: This is scheduled to take place in person at the Marriott Hotel on 21st October 2021. The conference is now sold out. |
| **SEN Team update** |
| Karen provided the SEN Team update.  There have been some **changes to the SEN Team**. Tanya Harris-Stunt has taken up the mantel of team leader for the Central Hub, after Lauren Bray left a couple of months ago. Congratulations to Tanya!  Tania Jarjat will be moving under Sharon Willis in the South Hub.  **Portsmouth SEN2 return**: You can find the statistics in the embedded slides. We need to provide this to the DfE and it is published information. Very proud of the SEN Team in managing to keep the 100% target of assessments in 20 weeks and to health care and social care colleagues who contribute into that.  **Annual SEN timeline**: If you have any questions about the timeline, please direct them to your SEN Team contact.  **SEND timescales**: the legislation gives a number of statutory timescales to meet. Please check the dates in the embedded slides.  The dates of the **Annual review timetable for 2021-22** are also in the embedded slides.  And remember to advertise the [**Local Offer website**](https://portsmouthlocaloffer.org/) with your families as best as you can. Some families have still reported that they are not aware of the Local Offer website. Always go to the Local Offer for SEN paperwork and templates as the most up to date paperwork for the SEN Team can be found there. |
| **SEN Support - a consistent approach to identification** |
| Cathy Seal and Sally Turner, Inclusion Outreach SENCOs, shared a presentation.    Cathy explained that findings by KS3 colleagues showed that there was not always a consistency on identification of need. We are trying to work together on trying to build towards city-wide consistency on identification of additional needs in schools.  She recapped what the Code of Practice says and posed the following key questions to consider when identifying students for the SEND Register:   1. Do the student's long-term needs prevent them from making progress? Should that child be put in the SEND register? 2. Does the student have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority? 3. Overtime, does the student have lots of profile of need scores of 1 and require additional provision to be made for them? 4. Overtime, does the student have at least one profile of need score of 2 and require additional provision to be made for them? 5. Are there environmental factors influencing the young person's presentation? 6. Has the young person experienced environmental factors which have led to long term ingrained needs which require additional provision to be made for them?   SENCOs were prompted to reply to questions 1 and 2 in the chat:   * It depends what the nature of the long term is. * It depends what has been put in place and the need itself. * Yes, if progress has stalled despite intervention. * Yes. * Different conditions will have different impact. * It depends. It may be just a slower rate.   SENCOs were split into breakout rooms to discuss the rest of the questions with the following scenarios:   * Student A has a diagnosis of autism but does not require support. * Student B does not have a diagnosis but receives high levels of support for long term barriers to learning. * Student C has three profile of need score of 2. * Student D is a low attainer who is making good progress through quality first teaching.   Feedback from the groups was provided as follows:   * Student A: they would not put on register because that is more about support rather than diagnosis. Student B: very dependent on the impact. If there was a long term barrier, there would have been some assessment and you would have come to grips to what that barrier was. Student C: Definitely going on the SEND register, since they have quite a high score in a few areas of the profile of need. They did not have time to discuss the last scenario, but they had discussions on the profile of need, which can be found on the [Local Offer website](https://portsmouthlocaloffer.org/documents/profile-of-need/). * Similar discussions to the previous group. * Lack of consistency in the message between professionals and the consistency of what is actually available in schools, which can change whether a child goes on the SEND register or not. * Discussion around whether it was important to have a child on SEND register to ensure that discussions were had about their needs at points of transition. They also discussed whether you needed to ID as SEN to raise needs of the child at transition points.   The Outreach SENCOs will be available at the Inclusion Conference.  Liz thanked Cathy and Sally for providing such good talking points. |
| **Sensory Provision** |
| Jo Johnson, Children's Occupational Therapist and Operational Manager for Children's Therapy team, provided an interactive session on sensory provision.  You can find the information she presented and additional information in the embedded presentation.  She explained what sensory integration is, when that happens and how much of it we use.  Usually, we only use 5% of the sensory information our body is provided with.  She posed some questions to participants:   * What happens those times when we are not filtering out enough of that sensation?   When stressed, leads to shut down, overwhelmed, distracted, when I hear noisy traffic, when I get lost, noise when trying to concentrate, too many things at once, in new environments, when you are learning new things, small children on chaos mode when you're also trying to cook dinner, when you have to turn down the radio to park the car.   * Why might you see more issues in children now?   Technology, unfamiliar environment - used to being at home, too much screen time, mobile tech, prolonged period of stress, Covid impact, the world is opening up again, not had any experiences due to Covid, not wearing restrictive clothes, change in routines, not enough time experiencing natural resources as a youngster, shoes not slippers.   * Are children responding differently this year when they come into school?   Yes, far less focus, our littlest children have not had experiences outside the home, years 1 and 2 seem ok, I think a greater number of children are responding differently, shorter attention spans, some young children haven't had input in the home from health visitors.  She continued explaining how our nervous system reacts and how children can overreact when their sensory system is overloaded.   * What impact does that have in the classroom or the school?   Refusal to come into the building, children are not learning as much, tearful, some children becoming violent, hypervigilant.  This is a transitory time for a lot of children. It will improve but we need to help them to improve that.  SENCOs were split into groups to consider three elements:   1. person - the child and their needs, their underlying abilities, personality, how they learn 2. environment - social, physical, political and financial environment 3. occupation - tasks they are required to do, e.g. put on your coat, go to the toilet, do school work, etc.   What is happening in each of these 3 areas for the children you are particularly concerned about? What are you doing that works well and what would you change?   * Conversation on impact of Covid on some of the children in a school. They are having a high number of Covid cases and having to go into bubbles - they have seen more aggression, feeling anxious and worried about the virus. Also the impact on their learning and their play skills and communication development that Covid has had on the last 2 years, especially on those in Y2 who have missed part of Reception and Y1. * Transition period and now meeting new children for the first time, having to learn the things that trigger their sensory needs and get to know each other very quickly is quite a challenge. The wider environment, i.e., not only heating, light, noise, but also political, financial, etc. becomes overwhelming and then simple tasks becoming more difficult. * Important to involve parents and children, particularly the child that acts well at school and has a meltdown at home or the other way round. Those kids can normally vocalise what is going on but it is believing them and having the understanding that sensory can make a massive difference.   Jo said that the biggest factor is to understand your sensory needs. It is about looking, listening, talking, watching – the observation of all those factors to find out what is going on in order to find out what we can do about it.   * Transitions between the playground and classroom, coming to school from home, especially on a Monday morning, and going back home from school.   What are you already doing that works well?   * An area that came out of a group was the mis-match between primary and secondary school and how they are able to meet the sensory needs of their pupils and how to ensure the curriculum pressures aren't too overwhelming. * One of the groups discussed the new play equipment they have been rolling out in Copnor School. Some they kept from lockdown to limit sensory overload to the staggered entry/play times because children are finding that overwhelming. Also talked about an intervention for emotional regulation. * Ally talked about the support in Place at Copnor Primary:   Copnor School has had to be modernised. They have very large open shared areas and had very few closed off quiet areas. In terms of thinking about children with sensory needs, it is key to raise awareness of those needs to the whole school community and making it consistent. They have 102 pupils on their SEND register, 15 EHCPs, 14 children diagnosed with autism, 10 children with ADHD. They have made adaptions to school environment, investing in engaging play equipment for the children, such as a piece of equipment that can have 50 children in at once. There are also 2 quiet areas - one very inviting with lots of bean bags and empty floor space. Also at times, they set up the hall with sensory circuits for children who have restricted space in their home environments. Pre-Covid they had a lunch club available because some children hate the smell of the dinner hall. Also use things like ear defenders, fidget and resistance bands, chewies, movement breaks are incorporated as well making it very discreetly, individual work stations, weighted blankets, etc. They applied and were successful for capital grant from PCC. She wants the staff to understand how it is used and that it is not a play room. It is to regulate some of our children so they can go back to the environment ready to learn. One sense doesn't fit all.  Ashley Oliver-Catt, Senior Director for SEND & Safeguarding, Solent Academies Trust, said that the work in Copnor is phenomenal. She introduced herself. She was head of school at Cliffdale for the last 9 years. Cliffdale, Mary Rose and Redwood Park are the 3 special schools catering for children with severe, complex and profound learning needs, as part of Solent Academies Trust. She has moved into a role across the Trust and she will be attending SENCO Network meetings.  In their 3 schools, sensory, integration work is a huge part of what they do. They employ private OTs at Cliffdale and Mary Rose for short amounts of time. They have a lot of experience and expertise across the school in terms of supporting youngsters with very vast and diverse range of sensory difficulties. Over the years, as they have improved facilities, they have had a new soft play room, a studio – which isn't a sensory room but designed specifically for sensory processing needs, sensory regulation, sensory diets and that kind of work.  They have a lot of expertise that they are happy for you to tap on. If people want more information, contact Ashley and she will put you in contact with the right people.  Some links which may of be of interest:  <http://thinkingtalking.co.uk/word-aware/>  <https://www.zonesofregulation.com/index.html>  <https://what0-18.nhs.uk/application/files/7515/7771/9038/Section_6_and_6a_-_Sensory_Difference_and_Challenges.pdf> |
| **Portsmouth Parent Voice** |
| PPV are running all our services as normal.  We will be hiring a new admin in the coming weeks.  Top trends   * Support in secondary school. (Especially around ND and mental health) * EHCP provision not being fully implemented in schools. * Increase in parental contact from year 6 plus. * Increase in children/young people including LAC being issued with detentions and half/full day exclusions. (Mainly year 6 plus).   We have a **Coffee morning** on Wednesday 20th October, ‘The World Offline’, with guests SENDIASS and Moriah.  We will be doing a few activities, its aim is to help encourage and increase families to start interacting with each other and other services face to face again.  <https://fb.me/e/1V1ovp8XR>   PPV are also available to attend school coffee mornings once they resume.  *Èlise Meyer, Portsmouth Parent Voice Manager* |
| **Children's Therapies** |
| SLT are still managing a significant backlog of new assessments, we are having to prioritise and have spent the summer managing all the children on our caseloads who were due to start school in September.  The first part of the Autumn term we will need to ensure all the children with EHCP’s have their needs met before we can manage the rest of the ongoing caseload and following this, we can consider new referrals in to the service.  If you have children you are thinking about referring to the service please ensure you discuss with a speech and language therapist first as they are able to give advice and information before an assessment takes place.  Attached is a liaison form to record your conversations, if you do make a referral please include this liaison form with it so we are clear what advice has already been given.  Please liaise with the link therapist for your school, if you don’t currently have one (as there are staff vacancies and maternity leaves affecting our service delivery) then please use the Telephone Advice Line on 0300 300 2019.  Please do look at the Therapies Resource pack where you can find screening assessments for key stage one and advice and information for all universal and targeted interventions. <https://what0-18.nhs.uk/solent/therapies>  Children's OT are running a pilot service of drop in clinics in schools. If you would like us to come into your schools please contact anna.moughton@solent.nhs.uk to have a discussion. We are particularly looking at Secondary Schools, but can also support any school in the city.  *Jessica Taylor, Operational Manager Children's Therapies (East)* |
| **Inclusion Outreach Service - Autumn Central Training** |
| Inclusion Outreach Service  The Inclusion Outreach Service has put together an exciting range of free training for the autumn term, including the 'PACE+ (Trauma Informed) Approach and Everyone’s Wellbeing' as a series of webinars**, delivered by Ian Hunkin,** commencing in **November 2021, and:**  4th November - De-escalation & emotion coaching SCH/21/57  5th November - Developmental Trauma & PACE SCH/21/58  11th November - Behaviour as Communication SCH/21/61 (also available in 2 virtual sessions on the 16th & 30th November)  18th November - Enhancing pupil wellbeing through resilient schools - Primary SCH/21/59  22nd November and 6th December - Enhancing pupil wellbeing through developing resilient schools - Secondary SCH/21/62  25th November - 3rd March - **PACE+ Approach Webinars** (booking information in the attached flyer)  2nd December - PACE: Practising in the moment (Primary) SCH/21/60  All training (barring the PACE+ Webinars) can be booked through the Portsmouth Learning Gateway and further detail about each of the courses is included in the attached flyer. Information about further training for the Spring and Summer terms will follow shortly, and if you have any school specific training needs please get in touch: [Outreach@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:Outreach@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)    *Lisa Caine, Inclusion Outreach Coordinator* |
| **SEMH Guidance** |
| This year we have undertaken a citywide review of children and young people's mental health support pathways. As part of the review process, we've worked alongside partners to map out the current pathways; what we’ve learnt is that professionals and families don’t always know when and how to access the right support.  This identified a need for clear and comprehensive guidance about commonly experienced mental health issues, when and where to access support.  We have started to draft this guidance and now need feedback to help shape its development and ensure it is useful to as many people as possible.  **The guidance**  The current plan is that the guidance will be hosted on the Portsmouth City Council website in a dedicated section for children and young people's mental health, which will include:   * A quick guide for professionals (PDF drafts embedded) * Comprehensive guidance on a range of areas of concern * A section for young people with advice and where to get support     On accessing the section, the user will be able to select whether they are a child or young person or a professional or parent. The guidance for professionals/parents will be further categorised by aged 5-10 or 11-16.  The draft guidance can be accessed here:  <https://staging1.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/health-and-care/health/mental-wellbeing/mental-health-support-for-young-people/>  **Your feedback**  This project is being co-produced with partners including the Parent Board and we have various focus groups planned with parent representative groups. We would value input from any additional stakeholders and are therefore sharing this with schools and a select group of services.  All feedback would be very welcome; this is an opportunity to test out the guidance and share your thoughts and recommendations. We would particularly like to hear feedback on the attached quick guides for professionals. Please also let us know if you have any suggestions for relevant support services i.e. national websites or resources.  We've set up a stakeholder feedback session on Tuesday 19th October at 2 - 3pm for anyone who wants to 'virtually' drop in to share their feedback.  This is the link to join, please click [here](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_ZTU0YTkzNTQtNjgwYS00YmRhLTk2NDAtMDBiYjczMDE1Y2Y3%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22d6674c51-daa4-4142-8047-15a78bbe9306%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22e021b5f0-5db4-4fb0-984f-abf67732740c%22%7d)  We ask that you do not forward on the link or quick guides at present. The guidance is still in draft format and some is still under development.  **Next steps**  Comments can be sent to Polly Drew - [polly.drew@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:polly.drew@portsmouthcc.gov.uk) and we ask that you do so by 31 October.  Once we have gathered feedback, the guidance will undergo further development. The aim is for the webpages and quick guides to go live in December 2021.  Thank you in advance for your feedback.  *Stuart McDowell, Commissioning Project Manager* |
| **Government Note on Delivery of Specialist Interventions** |
| You can read the Government note on delivery of specialist 1:1 and group interventions for  children and young people in education settings, in the embedded document. |
| **Dates for your diary** |
| **Next SENCO Network meeting**: Tuesday 30th November 2021 from 3 to 5pm  **Inclusion Conference**: Thursday 21st October 2021 |
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| Do you receive the weekly [PEP bulletin](https://www.portsmoutheducationpartnership.co.uk/bulletins/test/pep-weekly-bulletins/)? If you don't and you would be interested in receiving them, please subscribe [here](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKPORTSMOUTH/subscriber/new?topic_id=UKPORTSMOUTH_19). |