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| **2021/22 Autumn Term: 30 November 2021** |
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| **To begin…** |
| Sarah Christopher, PEP and School Inclusion Manager, welcomed everyone to the meeting.  A special welcome was given to the following people, since it was their first time joining the SENCO Network:  Fungayi Zinyemba, Manager of Mental Health Support Teams  Lizzie Norland, LA Link Coordinator for schools in the South of the city  Sarah Pearce, SEND Caseworker, Virtual School |
| **Strategic update** |
| Liz Robinson has been appointed as the new Head of Inclusion. Liz could not be at the meeting, but she sent a video with some highlights, which you can watch by clicking on the 'View recording' link. You will be prompted to enter the access passcode.    [View recording](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/7jgrqtAg7s8PC7xTxgDLbGqngPiqcAJ-Ljth2NSH7GvXK1xzSZocCiVI1i-STlOA.EpS8_nCOvum-0VFM)  Passcode: F5&2Gs=F  The **SEND review** is likely to focus on reduction of local variation, including access to services, how we interpret the children and families act and what ordinarily available provision might look like. Also on improvement to early intervention and clarification of support and services everyone should be able to expect and have funding and accountability systems in place to support this. The framework is not yet published so these areas are not confirmed.  A steering group has been set up and proposals will be published in the first quarter of 2022. The steering group has representatives from parents carers, schools, colleges, early years, local government, health and care and independent experts. It will be important to review and respond to proposals and consider the impact on our overall SEND strategy.  Progress with the **new special school for children with social communication difficulties and challenging behaviour**. Building started on 15 November. It is due to finish in November 2022 and due to open in January 2023 with 30 places initially. There will be 66 places in total, with 15 of those allocated to Hampshire.  We have been working with Delta Trust to develop the admissions criteria. |
| **Support and supervision | small groups discussions** |
| SENCOs were split into small groups to talk about the questions below:   * How do you get your support? * What else do you need? * Do you have supervision and, if so, what does that look like?   Feedback will help to look at how to take that across the partnership to see what else can be done.   * A few SENCOs noted that they get supervision from their school/academy. Other SENCOs mentioned that there is nothing formal in place. * Outreach SENCOs have been helpful to those new to the role. It was reminded that the support offer through the Outreach SENCOs is there for all SENCOs, not only the new to role ones. * Time is a big barrier for SENCOs to be able to work together in clusters or teams. Many SENCOs have class-based responsibilities as well. * MHSTs go into schools and they are in a position to offer support, but not formally offer supervision.   Regarding supervision, several offers are being looked at and proposals for consultation will come out. If you would like to give further information about current supervision and your needs in these areas please complete this [form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd39C38ONjcSr0aLedNKal6vVdsaFHGbLOfPqG20kVmvj5xhQ/viewform?usp=sf_link). |
| **SEN Team update** |
| Karen Spencer, SEN Service manager, provided the SEN Team update.  In the embedded slides you will find a reminder of the **phase transfer deadlines**.  In terms of **educational placement**, it was reminded that parents can express a preference and local authorities must ensure that a child is educated in a mainstream setting unless parent expresses a preference for a special school.  There are very few reasons in which a tribunal will not direct the local authority to place a child in a mainstream school if that is the parents' preference.  The SEN Team have received some feedback from parents who claim that they have had negative responses from schools they have visited. It was acknowledged that schools have many EHCPs and it is an issue for some. It is difficult for schools to know what the actual needs are if the child has not had an EHC needs assessment, or you have not seen the EHCP. Please offer a warm and reassuring welcome to parents. If the child has an EHCP you will be consulted on before being named in an EHCP and will have the opportunity to make an informed response based on what is / isn’t written in the plan.  You can read why Portsmouth LA ask schools to complete an **Early Help Assessment or stronger futures toolkit** when making a request for EHC needs assessment in the embedded slides. |
| **Inclusion Outreach updates** |
| Inclusion Outreach Service  Lisa Caine, Inclusion Outreach Service Coordinator, gave an update of the work that **Outreach SENCOs** are involved in:   * Looking at the professional section of the Local Offer website to check if everything is up-to-date and if there are any gaps. Some gaps in the links have been identified. Could you please check your links to: * Local Offer to School Website * Local Offer to your SEN Information Report * Your school website to the Local Offer   If the top 2 links are incorrect or not working please contact [Amanda Tickle](mailto:amanda.tickle@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)  Please make sure you include the information that is needed to put it right.  If you think there is some information missing on the Local Offer website, or you have other feedback, please contact Fran Marshman (Outreach SENCO) [fmarshman@langstone-inf.portsmouth.sch.uk](mailto:fmarshman@langstone-inf.portsmouth.sch.uk) so she can liaise with Amanda Tickle.   * Providing peer support for new SENCOs. They can provide that support for SENCOs regardless at what stage you are at in your role. Someone to link in around a particular challenge or someone to check in as and when you need to. * Looking at the best use of Teaching Assistants. * Cathy Seal has been developing a forum for secondary SENCOs. * Contributing to the early literacy and phonics work. * Looking further at transitions to better understand what support at key stages looks like. * Support for PIE QM. * Later on in the year there will be a review of the ordinarily available provision. * Involvement in the ND in schools project.   You can read the highlights of the **2020/21 evaluation feedback** for the whole Inclusion Outreach Service in the embedded slides.  Additional information:  A lot of requests have been received for Team Teach Training. This is not offered via the Outreach Service. Please contact [Ashley Oliver-Catt](mailto:Ashley.oliver-catt@solentacademiestrust.info) for that.  Funding for resources or equipment is not available through this service.  Safer people handling training: schools are finding it difficult to release their staff to attend. Lisa is looking at putting a training on PLG for schools to send one person at a time. More details will come out soon. |
| **Specialist School Nursing Support** |
| Anthony Harper, Head of Integrated Children's Commissioning, explained the changes which are being made around support for children with complex medical needs in schools.  At the moment, the nursing support offer is largely through our special schools. There is some support through our public health school nurses for mainstream schools but very little support across the rest of it. An investment has been made in our school nursing offer for this particular group of children. It will continue to be based at Mary Rose, where most of the children with complex medical needs are based, but there will be some coordination and outreach into mainstream provision for those children with the most complex needs.  In order to ensure the offer is right for schools, a framework will be created which will outline the way the support works. Once the descriptors are more defined they will be shared for feedback. The framework will describe the medications and delegatable tasks as well as the expectations and support that will be available.  In the coming weeks, it will come back for feedback and perhaps a smaller group input. Please think of issues you have on complex health. It would be helpful to understand what you get stuck with and what would be helpful. |
| **Mental Health Support Teams update** |
| Fungayi Zinyemba, MHST manager, provided an update.  The number of referrals has increased since September:   * 90% of initial assessment being offered treatment at a low intensity level. That is probably an improvement in terms of correct referrals coming through, which means that schools increasingly understand what MHST do. * 4% went to the high intensity level. * 6% of referrals were not suitable or had to be re-referred to the appropriate level.   You can see the **treatment that MHSTs offer** in the embedded slides.  The Mind and Mood group for young people has not had the expected uptake. Discussions are being held in consultation with schools around what the best use of this group could be and how best to facilitate it - school based group or virtual group - to increase the need and demand.  **Consultation** is very important. You can contact the MHST for a consultation before sending a referral. The consultation offer should be open to anyone in the school, even if you are not the school's primary point of contact for MHST. Use that process and encourage your colleagues to use it too.  SENCOs were split into small groups to discuss:   * How are you working with MHST and the SEMH partnership to support pupils? * What else do you need? * What is working well with MHSTs in schools and what else you may need?   The **SEMH pathway**, which Stuart McDowell, Portsmouth CCG, presented a draft of at the June network, will come out in January. It is based on the THRIVE model, where it talks about getting advice, getting help, getting more help and crisis support. |
| **Portsmouth Parent Voice (PPV)** |
| Portsmouth Parent Voice logoÈlise Meyer, Portsmouth Parent Voice Manager, explained that PPV services are running as normal. They still have face to face appointments, events, coffee mornings.  Currently families are contacting them about the following: support in school, school attendance, trying to get their children back to school, increase in reduced timetables, bullying of children with SEND and mental health for transition between 18 and adult services.  Sleep still seems to be an issue. PPV are organising a course in January/February specialised in **SEND and sleep**. It will be run during the day and in the evenings too to make it available for young people and parents carers. If both the young person and the parent attend, PPV will pay for a one-to-one session with a sleep specialist to come up with an individual plan to support them. It will be advertised to young people as well for those that do not want to attend with their parents, so they can better understand their sleep. These sessions will be virtual. They can have up to 15 parents per session.  A **free event** will be run in the new year at the Pyramids centre for parents carers and their young children **to beat the January blues after Christmas**.  More details on the above training and event to follow.  Please send invites to PPV for events and coffee mornings. PPV are happy to attend to offer support. |
| **CAMHS** |
| Sarah Glanister, CAMHS Clinical Team Lead, provided an update on CAMHS **waiting times**.   * Initial assessment around 16 weeks * Extended long-term intervention around 35 weeks * ND assessment around 67 weeks   They are highly monitored around that and there are innovative ideas to support that, specially for ND.  The main issue why the waiting times have crept up is about staffing, illness and recruitment. There are 8 vacancies across CAMHS and MHST at the moment.  There is a significant volume of cancellations to appointments due to illness and those people still need to be seen, which contributes to the increase.  Reminder - get in touch with the **CAMHS Duty team** if it is a priority, such as increase in terms of mental health presentation, in terms of risk or young people into crisis. |
| **Portsmouth SENDIASS** |
| Portsmouth SENDIASSAshley Raynor, Programme Manager, said that they are receiving lots of enquiries at the moment. The main things they are seeing are emotionally based, school refusal, requests for support to phase transfer deadlines.  They are an impartial service to support in all aspects, not only to parents and young people but also professionals. They would love to increase their direct contact with schools. Please get in touch if you need support.  If you are dealing with families that could benefit from help from SENDIASS, they are happy to help with those meetings.  **Virtual drop ins** are still running on Tuesday mornings from 10 to 11 in term time via Zoom, where people can drop in to ask questions to the team. Find more information about the virtual drop ins here: [Virtual Drop-ins – Portsmouth SENDIASS](https://portsmouthsendiass.info/virtual-drop-ins/)  You can find all the information on all the ways parents/carers, children and young people, and professionals can **get in touch** with Portsmouth SENDIASS in this link: <https://portsmouthsendiass.info/home/contact-us/>.  All their factsheets and webinars can also be accessed via the [website](https://portsmouthsendiass.info/) so it is a good source of information for families and professionals. |
| **Dates for your diary** |
| **Next SENCO Network meeting**: Thursday 3rd February 2022 from 3 to 5pm |
| 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). |