



# Rutland County Council

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Minutes of the **MEETING of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held via Zoom on Thursday, 21st April, 2022 at 7.00 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor P Ainsley (Chair)  
Councillor E Baines  
Councillor N Begy  
Councillor A Brown  
Councillor P Browne  
Councillor J Fox

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor S Webb (Vice Chair)

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS PRESENT:** Peter French Dioceses

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER PRESENT:** Councillor D Wilby Portfolio Holder for Education and Children's Services

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Dawn Godfrey Strategic Director of Children and Families  
Emma Sweeny Head of Children's Social Care  
Bernadette Caffrey Head of Early Intervention, SEND & Inclusion  
Jane Narey Scrutiny Officer (Clerk)

**IN ATTENDANCE** Caroline Crisi Education Inclusion Partnership Development Officer  
Darrell Griffin Service Manager - Early Intervention & Inclusion  
Donna Cartmell-Fry Senior Practitioner Children Centre & Early Years  
Helen Chester Service Manager Early Help SEND and Inclusion  
Lesley Hawkes Early Help Coordinator  
Penny Rawlings Deputy Head, Edith Weston Academy  
Suzanne White Early Help Coordinator - Youth & Community Development

Councillor P Ainsley welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that three deputations had been received and that, as a result, he had amended the order of business. He also reminded all attendees that they should be courteous and polite as this was a public meeting.

Apologies were received from Councillor S Webb.

## **2 RECORD OF MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022 were approved as an accurate record.

## **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor A Brown declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was a member of the family court.

There were no other declarations of interests.

## **4 CHILDREN'S SERVICES: UPDATE**

Report No. 80/2022 was received from Councillor D Wilby, Portfolio Holder for Education and Children's Services and was presented by Emma Sweeny, Head of Children's Social Care. During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- OfSTED focused visit held in January 2022 and quality assurance work undertaken by an external agency in February 2022.
- Areas identified that required improvement included the recording of data in relation to children missing from care.
- Processes were being followed but not recorded correctly on the Council's recording system.
- Following the review of processes and the training of staff, the recording of work being undertaken and completed had improved.
- Quality assurance checks of the data recorded had already started to show an improvement in the quality of the data being recorded, especially information regarding the voice of the child.
- No agency workers were employed within Children's Social Care but staffing still remained an issue in other areas. The quantity and quality of social work staff was a national issue.
- A local Workforce Development Strategy and a regional Workplace Development Programme were being developed to aid in the recruitment and retention of staff across Children's Services in Rutland and across the East Midlands.
- Significant improvements had been made since the OfSTED inspection two years ago and work was continuing to improve services. All the services within Children's Services worked closely together to ensure that the right services were provided to children at the right time.
- Councillor Ainsley thanked the Strategic Director of Children and Families, the Head of Children's Social Care and all the team for their hard work and dedication in improving children's services in Rutland.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- a) **ENDORSED** the actions taken in response to the areas for improvement identified by OfSTED and offered comment on any areas where they felt progress was slower than expected.
- b) **NOTED** the next steps being taken and any areas of risk to progress.

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**The Head of Children's Social Care left the meeting at 7.35 p.m.**

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## **5 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS**

The Scrutiny Officer reported that three deputations had been received from members of the public and she reminded all attendees of the process as per Procedure Rule 28 of the Council's constitution.

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**Mrs Tree Gillions joined the meeting at 7.35 p.m.**

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Mrs Tree Gillions, on behalf of the SEND Action Rutland, addressed the Chair and the Committee with their deputation regarding the SEND service.

Councillor A Brown queried the statement in Mrs Gillions deputation that the 'LA has refused to follow tribunal orders.' Mrs Gillions clarified that some parents had informed SEND Action Rutland of orders issued at a tribunal which the LA, at the time of notification, had not actioned.

Councillor Begy asked what changes SEND Action Rutland thought would change the process for the better for parents. Mrs Gillions stated that the correct processes were in place to support SEND children and their families but that the LA should be more pro-active in following the processes.

The Committee thanked Mrs Gillions for her deputation.

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**Mrs Tree Gillions left the meeting and Mr George Toseland joined the meeting at 7.44 p.m.**

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Mr George Toseland addressed the Chair and the Committee with his deputation regarding the SEND service.

Councillor Begy asked Mr Toseland how the process could be improved? Mr Toseland stated that communication was important but that it needed to improve between the Council and parents. Mediation could help but personal experience had shown that it would not but confirmed that assessments had improved over the past couple of years.

The Committee thanked Mr Toseland for his deputation.

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**Mr George Toseland left the meeting and Miss Fabienne Rose joined the meeting at 7.52 p.m.**

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Miss Fabienne Rose addressed the Chair and the Committee with her deputation regarding the SEND service.

The Committee thanked Miss Rose for her deputation.

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**Miss Fabienne Rose left the meeting at 7.55 p.m.**

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## **6 SEND SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND UPDATE**

Report No. 77/2022 was received from Councillor D Wilby, Portfolio Holder for Education and Children's Services. The report and a presentation were introduced by Bernadette Caffrey, Head of Early Help, SEND and Inclusion. During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- The Strategic Director of Children and Families informed attendees that a parent engagement event had been held in March 2022 for issues to be raised and discussed.
- There were approximately 300 Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) within Rutland and the vast majority of parents were happy and pleased with the service provided (77% fully satisfied).
- Any and all complaints were taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
- The Strategic Director of Children and Families agreed with the Committee that communication with all parents needed to be correct. As a result, parental engagement workshops were to be established so that officers and families could work together to help produce a communication workplan. The workshops would be led and facilitated by an external consultant who was also a parent of SEND children.
- The Strategic Director of Children and Families confirmed that all tribunal actions must be carried out by the LA. They were a legal order so the council could not and would not refuse to do them.
- The Strategic Director of Children and Families also confirmed that the use of barristers at a tribunal was not unusual. Practice did differ across the country but Rutland was very small compared to other LA's and had very limited resources i.e. no in-house specialist legal advice. Rutland County Council had to employ external specialist legal services but processes had changed over the past 12 to 18 months to decrease the use of barristers but they were still needed in some cases.
- A regional contract had been developed with Global Mediation to provide mediation services. No parent would be forced to partake in mediation but would be encouraged to do so as the council was always willing to do mediation.
- The number of cases going to tribunal remained in single figures.
- The Head of SEND, Early Help and Inclusion confirmed that there was an internal governance process, which entailed monthly performance reporting and an external governance process, which entailed quarterly completion of the regional and DfE performance dashboards. There were also bi-annual performance reviews with the Regional DfE SEND Advisor and NHS England Improvement Lead.

- The Strategic Director of Children and Families confirmed that statutory timescales were identified but that there were no national targets to meet. The service always strived for 100% but achieving this figure was not realistic especially when dealing with the small numbers dealt with by Rutland County Council. No statutory duties had been, were being or would be neglected but better communication with parents was needed to explain when a timescale was not met, the reasons why it was not met and what the LA was doing to ensure that it would be met in future.
- In response to a question from Cllr Begy, the Strategic Director of Children and Families confirmed that 23% of parents of those surveyed were not fully satisfied with the service they had received and that was why the service was working very hard on improving parent engagement. It was noted that the percentages detailed were deceiving as they only represented the small numbers that the LA dealt with. The Strategic Director of Children and Families confirmed that the actual numbers behind the percentages would be made available to the Committee.
- Councillor Wilby stated that he understood the pain and frustration of parents trying to do their best for their child/children but confirmed that RCC had passionate and dedicated staff, who were very forward thinking in trying to provide the best service for SEND children with ever decreasing resources so that children could achieve their very best.

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**At 21:26, it was unanimously agreed to extend the meeting  
by 15 minutes**

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- Councillor Ainsley thanked everyone for the report and presentation as it showed some of the excellent work being done.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- a) **NOTED** the performance, developments and challenges in the SEND service.
- b) **NOTED** and provided direction on recommendations for future actions.
- c) **RECOMMENDED** that Children's Services actively engaged with SEND Active Rutland to assist in the improvement of communication with parents.

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**The SEND Service officers left the meeting at 9.32 p.m.**

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## **7 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS**

There were no questions with notice from members

## **8 NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS**

There were no notices of motion from members

## **9 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE FOR A DECISION IN RELATION TO CALL IN OF A DECISION**

There was no call in of a decision

**10 REVIEW OF FORWARD PLAN AND ANNUAL WORK PLAN**

Councillor Wilby requested that a review of the SEND Services be added to the forward plan.

**11 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business

**12 DATE AND PREVIEW OF NEXT MEETING**

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee would be replaced by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and dates for that group would be confirmed at Annual Council on the 9th May 2022.

Councillor Wilby thanked the Chair and members for all their hard work and dedication in running an excellent Scrutiny Committee over the past year.

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**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.34 pm.**

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Rutland County Council

# SEND and Inclusion Update

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

21 April 2022

## Purpose

- Update the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the performance and developments in the SEND and Inclusion Service.
- ∞ • Outline the opportunities and challenges for SEND services in Rutland.
- What's working well, what we need to change and develop
- Next Steps.

## — National and Local Policy Informing SEND Services

- Family Hub Programme
- DfE Capital Grant allocation.
- DfE Better Value Review
- The Schools White Paper
- The SEND national Review, and Green Paper and consultation
- Ofsted SEND Inspection Framework
- LLR SEND Commissioning Strategy
- LLR Neurodevelopmental Pathway and Key Worker programme
- Children’s Strategic Plan and Health and Well Being Strategy
- Governance and Performance oversight

## — Service Update - Helen Chester

- Performance Headlines
- Staffing Update
- Funding model to provide support for children in education.
- Provision planning and expansion
- Contract performance – SENDIASS, Educational Psychology, Mediation, ADHD Solutions
- QA Framework

## — Performance Headlines 2022

282 EHCPs

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- 100% compliance with 20 week EHCP timeframe YTD
- 85% EHCNA requests processed within 6 weeks YTD – delays due to staff absence meaning letters were sent 3 days late.
- 81% annual reviews completed within 12 months (academic YTD) – delays due to reasons outside LA control e.g. parental availability, school capacity
- 45% parents informed of LA decision within 4 weeks of an annual review (academic YTD) - delays due to staff capacity
- 84% Annual review issued within 12 weeks (academic YTD)
- 96% transition year annual reviews and schools named in plans by deadline (academic YTD) - delays due to Tribunal process
- 50% children met or partially met medium term outcomes during the year
- 77% parents satisfied with EHCP post annual review

# Best Practice Example

**Intervention delivered by Stephanie Holmes,  
Early Help Worker for Visions Children's Centre**

**Briefing by Donna Cartmell-Fry,  
Senior Practitioner Children's Centre and Early Years**

# Best Practice Example

Intervention delivered by **Alisha Penn,**  
**Early Help Worker - Supporting Families**

Presentation delivered by **Suzanne White.**  
**Senior Early Intervention Co-Ordinator**

## SEND Recovery Plan - Interventions – Caroline Crisi and Sharon Milner

Changing practice to improve inclusion:

- Education Inclusion Partnership
- Primary and Secondary work
- Transitions Support
- Nurture Hub and outreach support to Primary schools

## — Summary SEND 5 year Recovery Plan - Context

- Demand for services, pressure on High Needs Budgets
- 2022-23- carrying forward £1 million overspend - Dedicated Schools Grant funding
- Agreed 3 key principles to drive the plan
- Projects are designed to:
  1. Develop capacity in mainstream for more children with EHCP- Mainstream+
  2. Shape Nurture approaches in universal practice – led by Edith Weston
  3. Review SEN available funding models so they remain fit for purpose across Primary and Secondary, equitable for schools, provide confidence to parents.
  4. Address system gaps in practice, confidence in inclusionary practice

## — Summary SEND 5 year Recovery Plan - Education Inclusion Partnership (EIP)

- **Aim to prevent children with Social, Emotional or Mental Health Needs (SEMH) becoming at risk of exclusion** from their educational entitlement and apply most appropriate pathway of support to meet their needs
- **Funded by schools for schools to change practice**
  - building skills and confidence of staff in school
  - universal toolkit for schools /specialist resources agreed some children
  - evidence based practice and support to children and families
- **Swift expert support for schools where child's needs escalate - SEMH Specialist teachers** - linked to all mainstream schools
- **Nurture practice outreach**
- **Speech Language and Communication Snr Therapist** EY to Secondary
- **SENCo Network** development

## — How the EIP works to change practice

- **Resources and Interventions - the toolkit universal to complex**
- **Primary Phase Panel** and **Secondary Phase** targeted work
- **A Provider Group meets monthly and SENCo Network**
  
- 138 **primary children** received up to Feb 2022 (case work)
- 26 are now closed – EHCP:9 (3 at referral stage declined for EIP intervention)
- Gender split: Male 104 Female 34
- Needs assessed:
  - SEMH: 63
  - ASD/ social communication:35
  - ADHD:16
  - Combined or Other: 22 (Hearing Impaired /Complex SEND)
  
- **Secondary - 38 young people** supported with funded interventions
- Early Years - Speech and Language, Transitions support



## — Evaluation outcomes and recent changes

- Continued high levels of **positive feedback** and evidence of changed practice, from Primary and Secondary schools, and children.
- Examples provided where EHCPA avoided
- **Gradual shift to increasing whole class EIP support** (cost and time effective, early intervention and developing practice opportunities).

### Recent trends and changes

- **Uplift in Anxiety Related Non Attendance (ARNA) Primary-** commissioning additional resources
- **EYFS- ineffective Transition due to COVID-** Thriving through Change programme responding

## **Aiming High Programme – Lesley Hawkes**

### **Aiming High short breaks scheme**

Personal budget of up to £1000 per annum

42 children/young people 2021/22

Improves parent/carer wellbeing

### **Aiming High positive activities**

4 weekly sessions, 6 monthly sessions

81 children/young people 2021/22

Independence, friendships, social skills, confidence

## Voice of Disabled Young People – Lesley Hawkes

### Individual voice

EHC Plans

Funding Panel

SENDIASS advocacy project

### Rutland Disabled Youth Forum – collective voice

Shaping services across LLR and nationally

My view app development

## Personal Budgets – Lesley Hawkes

### What is a personal budget?

- Included in SEND Code of practice – parents/YP can request
- Agreed sum to deliver some/all provision in an EHC or CiN plan
- Commissioned service or direct payment
- Logistical challenges

### Rutland status

- 74 personal budgets currently in place for CYP
- Co-produced booklet

## — What's working well

- A successful Children's Centre and Youth Offer, strong early help and partnerships, creation of an inclusive Family Hub.
- Good integration with education and social care – CWD social workers completing 'getting to know you' meetings and social care sections of EHCPs
- Covid learning - a more flexible and accessible offer to families, families wanted a blended approach to information and advice, through virtual and face-to-face contact
- Increased confidence and joint working with schools to identify and meet needs of children earlier. Appropriate request for EHCAs. Positive support from Schools' Forum.
- Children being supported in their Early Years setting with additional funding so that their needs are identified and met earlier, are more resilient and there is less reliance on statutory services.
- Improved working arrangements with NHS and across LLR
- Increased local provision and additional capital investment, fewer residential and distant placements
- Positive and collaborative working with RPCV – recruitment, key projects

## — Challenges

- Growing demand, locally and nationally.
- New duties for LAs coming from the SEND review.
- Lack of capacity in some services and waiting lists.
- Suitability and shortfall in provision in special schools.
- No long-term funding for additional personnel or resources confirmed by Government.

## — SEND Review /Green Paper and Consultation – Dawn Godfrey

Published on 29 March 2022 - sets out proposals for a system that offers children and young people access to the **right support, in the right place and at the right time**, so they can fulfil their potential and lead happy, healthy and productive adult lives.

At a glance, the proposals in the SEND and AP green paper include:

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- creating a single, national SEND and alternative provision system
- providing excellent provision from early years to adulthood
- introducing a reformed and integrated role for alternative provision
- reforming system roles, funding and accountability

The consultation will be open for 13 weeks, closing on 1 July 2022.

To find out more about the SEND review visit [sendreview.campaign.gov.uk](https://sendreview.campaign.gov.uk)

## — Next Steps for Rutland

- Fully operational SEND team in place – by September 2022
- Engage partnership and community on the Green paper consultation - to end of July
- Partake in a regional Peer Review – mid-July 2022
- Complete funding model and present to Schools' Forum - June 2022
- Launch Mainstream Plus provision at UCC – September 2022
- Review of the Early Years Pathway and Provision – May 2022
- Regular engagement events with children, young people and families
- Task and Finish Group to test the Local Offer
- Complete procurement of a new Education Psychology and SENDIASS contract – by September 2022

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