## SEND Transformation Briefing

### July and August 2018

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Change of Governance

The SEND Transformation welcomes direct leadership from The Director of Children’s Services, at Staffordshire County Council, Helen Riley from mid-August 2018.

Helen will be taking over lead responsibility of the SEND Transformation from Richard Hancock the former Deputy Director of Children’s Services and Families First, who has now left Staffordshire County Council to pursue a new position as the Director of Children’s Services at Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council.

Helen’s direct leadership over the SEND Transformation will ensure that the projects strategic focus is retained.

Over the next few months, Helen will be out in the districts holding a number of meet and greet events with schools to discuss the Education Vision for Staffordshire and the advancing direction of the SEND Transformation.

Dates for the events are below:

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<th>District</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle / Moorlands</td>
<td>2 October 2018</td>
<td>09:30 – 11:30</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stafford / South Staffs</td>
<td>5 October 2018</td>
<td>09:30 – 11:30</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cannock / Lichfield</td>
<td>9 October 2018</td>
<td>13:30 – 15:30</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burton/ Tamworth</td>
<td>12 October 2018</td>
<td>09:30 – 11:30</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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Please email ann.harford@staffordshire.gov.uk to confirm your attendance at one of the above events. We will be sending you locations of the events within the next few weeks by email.

SEND Local Area Review

Staffordshire is expecting a Local Area Review (LAR) imminently.

The LAR will last for 5 days and will involve meetings with officers from Education and Social Care in the Authority as well as school leaders, parents, pupils and members of the Health Authority. This is a major review of all aspects of SEND provision in the Authority and we have been working on our self-evaluation and action plan for a number of months.

The key lines of enquiry from the lead Inspectors will be:

- outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities in national assessments
- attendance and exclusion information
- data relating to the identification of special educational needs at special educational needs support and education, health and care (EHC) plan levels
- information about the destinations after leaving school, including about young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- performance towards meeting expected timescales for statutory assessment
- inspection reports for the local area, its services and providers
- the published local offer
- special educational needs and disability strategic plans devised and used by the local areas
- the level of appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Health and Social Care Chamber) (Special Educational Needs and Disability), including cases resolved prior to tribunal hearing
- any relevant serious case reviews and their outcomes
- commissioning and performance data on delivery of the healthy child programme, school nursing service, our neonatal screening programme and our 0–25 services for child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).

We expect that there will be some significant recommendations for us to apply. However, we are confident that we have identified areas to improve and have plans in place, even if not all are underway.

Our main areas include:
- The SEND Transformation Project and the move to locality working in order to provide early intervention for special needs.
- Improved outcomes for pupils with Special needs
- Reductions in exclusions and improved attendance
- Improved joint working with all agencies,
- Increased involvement of parents and carers
- An improved Graduated Response process leading to more effective identification of SEND
- Improved processes around EHCPs and Annual reviews, leading to a reduction in tribunals
- Improved transition processes at post 16 and post 19
- Reduction of pupils out of school to reduce risk to themselves.

We will share the findings of the LAR with you in due course. We appreciate everyone’s contributions to supporting the LAR.

**The SEND Transformation’s Vision**

The vision of the SEND Transformation programme is to ensure that all children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are able to reach their full potential. We want to ensure that they receive the right support at the right time, with choice and control so that they are able to realise their aspirations and lead fulfilling lives in their local school, home and community.

We want to ensure that children with SEN and Disabilities are appropriately supported to achieve their full potential in their local school, home and community. Wherever possible we want to reduce the need for escalation into higher tier services. However, when escalation is necessary, we want to ensure that the process is as streamlined as possible to ensure children receive the correct support quickly and efficiently.
SEND Prototype Updates

The SEND Transformation has been testing new ways of working during the 2017-18 academic year through a number of prototypes that have been working to help shape the new approach to supporting children with SEND.

Two hubs based in South Staffordshire and Leek focused on improving the SEND journey for children at statutory school age and one ‘Early Years’ hub based in North Stafford looked at spotting signs of SEND earlier for children aged 0-5 years old in early education.

The aim of the development activities has been to find different and innovative ways of working in partnership with each other and local agencies to improve the SEND support children receive.

During the summer months, the prototypes have developed their end of year reports. The prototypes highlights and findings are below.

South Staffordshire SEND Prototype Update

- **Local working** - In South Staffordshire the district SEND Hub has developed four local SEND hubs that sit under the main district Hub. The local Hubs divide South Staffordshire into four geographical areas (Hub 1: Penkridge, Hub 2: Cheslyn Hay & Great Wyrley, Hub 3: Codsall, Hub 4: Kinver & Wombourne). The local hubs are made up of local schools, headteachers and SENCO’s. Each local Hub has now met once and they will continue to meet on a regular basis in the 2018-19 academic year.

- **Governance Arrangements** – It has been recognised that in order to support the new way of working that governance arrangements and a budget need to be recognised to drive the prototype forward.

- **Local Networking Event** - The first South Staffordshire SENCO networking event was held at Wightwick Hall Special School on the 19th June 2018. The event was held to deliver important information about the South Staffordshire SEND prototype, explain the new ways of working, the changes to the South Staffordshire SEND referrals process and to get SENCO’s feedback on the new way of working. The success of the first networking event has prompted the prototype to plan another event for spring 2019 (details of the event will be shared in due course).

- **Early Years Involvement** - The South Staffordshire hubs recognise the importance of identifying a child’s need at the earliest point. The Hubs plan to work more closely with local Early Years providers to help support children who are 0-5 years old that may have SEND including children whose needs have not yet formally been recognised by professionals. This will give the hubs a lifetime view of pupil and enable them to work together as schools to support the child at every stage of their education, from pre-school to high school. The hubs will be meeting this Summer to explore arrangements to integrate early years into the current hubs.

- Paul Elliott, project lead of the South Staffordshire SEND Prototype will also no longer be contactable at headteacher@wightwickhall.staffs.sch.uk. Paul’s new email address is p.elliott@endeavourmat.co.uk.
Leek SEND Prototype Update

- **Expansion of Local Working** - The Leek prototype started its journey looking at improving working practices in the Leek as a single location. As the prototype has developed, the SEND Hub wants to explore how they can extend their support to the rest of the Staffordshire Moorlands. Going forward this hub will be referred to as the Staffordshire Moorlands hub.

- **Early Years Involvement** - Similar to the development of the South Staffordshire SEND Hub, The Staffordshire Moorlands SEND Hub also recognise the importance of supporting children in Early Years education (0-5 years old) and identifying a child’s need at the earliest point. The Staffordshire Moorlands Hubs are also planning to extend their responsibility to support Early Years children so they can offer whole life support to children.

- **Success so far** – The Prototype in Leek have so far heard 10 cases. They have gained some qualitative feedback from parents of the children they have helped and the SEND Family Partnership (SENDIASS). Here is what they had to say.

  "Being part of the prototype has been a positive experience. Intervention has been immediate and next steps have been identified early on. As part of SENDIASS, I see what goes wrong for families and young people on a daily basis. The prototype has been a different experience where the communication has been positive for all involved especially the young person and parent/carer:"

  Samantha Joyce - SENDIASS Officer

  "School are backing me and my child finally. Our relationship is much better. My child is currently in Germany on a school trip. This wouldn’t of happened before as he wasn’t given any extra support:"

  Voice of Parent - Leek prototype

  "My daughter has more support now. She believes in herself a little bit more - this is a huge improvement. I’m not sure what will happen next. I hope the support continues:"

  Voice of Parent - Leek prototype

  "The prototype has opened doors for my son. An Education Plan and Special School assessment were accessed immediately which was brilliant. My stress levels have reduced and I have hope at last that we will get the support he needs:"

  Voice of Parent - Leek prototype

Early Years SEND Prototype – North Stafford

Thanks to the work of the Early Years Hub trial in North Stafford, the importance of supporting children with SEND at the earliest point in their education journey has been highlighted as a priority by both the South Staffordshire and the Staffordshire Moorlands hubs. As a result of this realisation these two hubs will now take the lead on researching how they can work better with early year’s settings to identify need and support children with SEND who are in early education.

We would like to thank the Early Years Hub at North Stafford for their contribution to the SEND Transformation and the work completed to date.

Graduated Response Guidance Document
The Local Authority are in the process of developing a guidance document for schools regarding the Graduated Response, led by Jo Ward, District Senior Educational Psychologist. The document has two main purposes:

- to provide information and guidance for schools in meeting the needs of children and young people with SEN in line with The SEN Code of Practice
- to aid the LA and schools in the decision making about EHC needs assessments.

The document will be structured to take into account each area of need and will focus on both Quality First Teaching and provision at SEN Support and will also provide guidance on working with specialist agencies. Jo is in the process of working with schools and other stakeholders in collating this information and it is planned that a draft document will be ready to share with schools at the end of September. There will then be a consultation period with the plan of finalising it at Christmas.

If you have any queries or would like to be involved in the planning of this document, please do not hesitate to contact Jo on jo.ward2@staffordshire.gov.uk.

**High Needs Block – Update**

**The local authority has commenced consultation with schools and academies to consider a 0.5% transfer of Schools’ Block budget to the High Needs Block (HNB).**

As with many other local authorities, Staffordshire is increasingly concerned about the level of overspend in the HNB, that supports children with SEND. The HNB overspend is forecast to be between £4m - £7m for the 2018/19 academic school year.

The 0.5% budget transfer from the Schools Block will provide the support needed to meet the increasing demand of supporting pupils with SEND.

The demand comes from an overall increasing SEND population, a greater demand for costly specialist provision, an increase in requests for Education Health and Care assessments and the fact that our permanent exclusion rates are above the national average.

The request for the transfer of funds to the HNB matches the process that the majority of local authorities have followed in order to meet the increasing demand of supporting SEND pupils across the country.

In order for make a transfer of budget from Schools’ Block to the High Needs Block, we are consulting with all local maintained schools and academies, so that the Schools Forum can take into account the views of all schools before giving their approval.

At the meeting of the Schools’ Forum on 3 July 2018, members supported the proposition to enter into consultation with schools and academies.

The consultation commenced on Monday 9 July and is due to close at 5pm on Friday 28 September 2018.

You can request a copy of the consultation documents by emailing highneedsfundingswitch@staffordshire.gov.uk. Please take time to read through the consultation documents and share our thoughts with us.
Following consultation and evaluation, the local authority will be making a request at Schools Forum for agreement to transfer 0.5% of Schools’ Block funding to the HNB.

We will update you with the decision of Schools Forum in October 2018.

**Developing Locality Working Models**

In order to develop the ‘local’ focus of the SEND Transformation, we are currently working with Schools and Partners to create local governance arrangements and a vision of accountability in order to drive the SEND Transformation forward.

During October, Helen Riley, the Director of Children’s Services at Staffordshire County Council and the lead for the SEND Transformation will be hosting a number of roadshows across the county to meet schools and share the proposed model for your consideration.

**Alternative Provision**

In the Autumn term (2017-18) it was agreed that a further strand of the SEND Transformation Program would be established to develop the Alternative Education Provision offer for Staffordshire.

Over the past few months, a number of workshops have been held with schools and partners where a range of ‘options’ for improving Alternative Provision in schools were created.

On the 11th July 2018, the group met to explore one of the options that aimed to “develop primary and secondary resource base across Staffordshire, located in mainstream schools linked to established SEMH specialist provision”.

A number of schools stepped forward to offer their resources to support for the option.

Work on developing this option will continue in the new school term starting September 2018. We will keep you updated on the projects progress.

**SEND Strategy**

The local authority is currently developing Staffordshire’s SEND Strategy (2018 – 2021).

Our SEND Strategy reflects what families have told us matters most for children and young people with SEND. This is independence, being happy, feeling integrated and included as part of a local school community and receiving the right support to meet individual needs.

The SEND Strategy will sit along-side the All Age Disability Strategy (2018 – 2021).

We have to acknowledge the challenges we face to deliver this strategy especially in the current financial climate. We are determined, however, to bring about the necessary improvements for our children and young people with SEND, from the early years through into early adulthood. Ultimately the success of this strategy will be judged on the outcomes for our children, young people and their families.
We want feedback on our proposals for the future. We plan to start consultation in October 2018. We will ensure that links to the consultation document are available within the next SEND Transformation Brief.