

DSPL7 Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 30th June 2020

Attendees: Elaine Bridle **EB** (Primary SEND Lead, DSPL7 Manager); Sharon Coubray (ISL Speech, Language and Autism lead); Angela Gaughan **AG** (Parent); Joe Gore **JG** (Oaklands College); Steven Hoults-Allen **SHA** (Collett, St Luke's & Forest House); Damien Johnston **DJ** (HT Margaret Wix); Alex Lindley **AL** (HT Fleetville Infants); Steven Lloyd **SL** (HT Sauncey Wood); Margot Nichols **MN** (Secondary SEND & ASD and DSPL7 Manager); Androulla Peek **AP**, Chair, (CEO, Director of Business, Spiral Trust); Annie Thomson **AT** (HT Marlborough); Gillian Warwick-Thompson **GWT** (Parent)

Apologies: Serena Baker **SB** (Parent); Helen Barton **HB** (HT St George's); Kate Bell **KB** (Trust Business Manager); Patricia Walker **PW** (ISL)

No Apologies: David Allen **DA** (HT Links Academy); Joanne Summers **JS** (Deputy Principal Educational Psychologist: St Albans and Dacorum Team)

Minutes taken by: Sophie Heselton **SHe** (DSPL7 Administration Assistant)

		Action
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>AP welcomed everyone to the meeting, which took place over Zoom due to Covid-19. Apologies have been received from Serena Baker, Helen Barton, Kate Bell and Patricia Walker.</p>	
2.	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>Minutes of 12th May accepted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharon Coubray has joined the DSPL7 board. SC provided an overview of ISL's operational protocol for supporting schools and families transitioning back to school – see section 5 (i). Action: Several mental health online training courses are available for parents, for example on MindEd. These will be signposted on the website and communicated to schools. Adam Haynes has organised a meeting at the end of this term to discuss DSPL7's needs. 	DSPL7 Action
3.	<p>Conflicts of interest</p> <p>None.</p>	

<p>4.</p>	<p>Budget monitoring</p> <p>This is a 17-month budget. From September 2020 a new academic year funding model will be used. From March onwards there have been significant changes in some budget lines due to Covid-19 disruptions to delivering services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of income has been received for this year. • Expenditure varies according to the budget area and delivery of services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Salaries were continued throughout. Furloughing staff/applying for government retention scheme provision was not deemed appropriate as staff needed to continue working with schools and families. ○ Training and courses have had to be postponed or cancelled, resulting in savings in the budget. ○ Funding from the currently unfilled EY's and transition posts have also resulted in savings. • Underspend: surplus of approximately £87,000 - see section 6 (ii) on how the underspend will be spent (20-21). • Approximately £54,000 will be carried forward - ISL and the Funding unit have agreed that due to exceptional circumstances 20% can be carried forward without penalty. • Approximately £9,000 will be spent in the remainder of this academic year on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional resources for the sensory library (EB has consulted with the autism advisory teacher about this). ○ Increased ADD-vance coaching to support parents struggling in lockdown – 10 additional families. ○ EY's – WellComm toolkits and sensory library. 	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Monitoring and review of local need</p> <p>i. ISL teams</p> <p>SC (new County specialism lead for Speech, Language, Communication and Autism, with area responsibility for St Albans and Decorum) aims to do project work in the area identifying schools that need help and putting in systemic support. SAS teachers have changed the way they work in response to Covid-19, reducing report lengths and increasing time in school modelling and supporting teachers. Anticipating a surge in referrals and cases – contact with parents already substantial. High levels of anxiety about returning to school on the part of parents and children.</p> <p>To accommodate this there will be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Priority visits – the entire team (including SC and lead teachers) will attend emergency visits for children who need urgent support, i.e. those in crisis. Case work is taking priority. Schools book directly - other organisations and parents cannot self-refer. The advice line will continue to support parents at home. 2. School systemic advice visits – visiting struggling schools to establish what help is necessary, where and for who. Follow-up visits will be booked depending on level of need. Some schools have already been visited and some offered advice remotely. 3. Other high need CYPs and transition – offering transition support to those moving across key stages. Families and schools have already been contacted about providing this support. 4. Postponed visits – meetings with those who weren't high/priority needs or school visits will resume. 5. New referrals – will be assessed to establish level of priority. Where possible the school will be contacted to gain more information and establish level of need. <p>Action: ISL produced a 'back to school' resources pack (Covid-19 specific) for all schools with classroom support, including social stories around different scenarios and age ranges. SC to</p>	

- Requests for more support with dyslexia and dyspraxia.
- SENCOs would like more networking opportunities.
- Support and advice for children with acute behaviour needs – high priority.

These findings need to be discussed with all relevant organisations to identify how to support these groups in their areas of need.

iii. Parents (inc feedback from the annual parent survey)

DSPL7 Annual Surveys - Parents

- 251 responses from parents (increased from last year).
- Most accessed support – ADD-vance coaching.
- Over 75% of parents hadn't accessed any training opportunities. The majority didn't access any information. Some hadn't heard of DSPL7. This is a concern and raising awareness will go on the action plan.
- Focus on support for: dyslexia, dyspraxia, learning at home and helping children to catch up, as well as sibling support and managing behaviour. Similar findings to the school survey.

It needs to be considered how DSPL7 can help children catch up, not just with learning. Areas of concern: Sensory processing difficulties and missed OT and SaLT sessions. Speech and Language needs may be feeding into behaviour challenges.

6. Strategic Plan 20-21

i. Budget

The budget has been confirmed for next year – protected at similar levels with a slight increase due to inflation, plus approximately £54,000 carry forward. A budgeted plan will be produced ASAP (due 30/09/20).

ii. EY and Post 16 worker discussion – docs distributed

Strategic Plan proposals for 20-21 - Some provision is continuing as it has proved successful and feedback shows it is still needed.

- Specialist SEND family worker - cost includes salary, supervision, line management and travel expenses. Feedback shows it is high impact and very successful, with lots of families and children accessing this support even during the lockdown, via remote working.
- NESSie – well received, highly used, addresses higher needs.
- ADD-vance funding – very well used.
- Part funding of steps training – aware of County's concern about lack of roll out.
- Communication friendly settings – completion postponed due to Covid-19. This will be finished next year to create specialisms within the district.
- Accreditation for EY SENCOs – very useful in strengthening SEN support for all settings.
- Post-16 conference – postponed due to Covid-19 but will run next year.
- DS advisory support – will continue next year due to specific need in this area.
- Post Covid-19 action plan - male learning mentor to support children returning to school, providing either individual or group support. These children are low-level (so wouldn't be supported by NESSie or ISL); this support is preventative - before they become in crisis. £11, 647 for a day and a half per week, or approximately £7,000 for one day.
- St Albans Plus sibling support will continue.
- Training requests from schools and parents will be prioritised depending on the funding available.

