

DSPL7 Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 22nd September 2020

Attendees: David Allen **DA** (HT Links Academy); Helen Barton **HB** (HT St George's); Elaine Bridle **EB** (Primary SEND Lead, DSPL7 Manager); Angela Gaughan **AG** (Parent); Steven Hoult-Allen **SHA** (Collett, St Luke's & Forest House); Damien Johnston **DJ** (HT Margaret Wix); Alex Lindley **AL** (HT Fleetville Infants); Androulla Peek **AP**, Chair, (CEO, Director of Business, Spiral Trust); Joanne Summers **JS** (Deputy Principal Educational Psychologist: St Albans and Dacorum Team); Patricia Walker **PW** (ISL); Gillian Warwick-Thompson **GWT** (Parent)

Apologies: Serena Baker **SB** (Parent); Kate Bell **KB** (Trust Business Manager); Joe Gore **JG** (Oaklands College); Steven Lloyd **SL** (HT Sauncey Wood)

No Apologies: Sharon Coubray (ISL Speech, Language and Autism lead); Annie Thomson **AT** (HT Marlborough)

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, Kate Bell, Joe Gore and Steven Lloyd.</p>	
2.	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>Minutes of 30th June accepted.</p>	
3.	<p>Conflicts of interest</p> <p>Action: All board members are to re-confirm their conflicts of interest and business interests on GovernorHub for the year. This will be a standing item on the first meeting of the new academic year.</p>	Action All
4.	<p>Review membership and Terms of Reference</p> <p>Action: All board members to read the up-to-date Terms of Reference document which has been uploaded to GovernorHub. This will be discussed at the next board meeting.</p> <p>Group membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board does not currently have an EY's/PVI setting representative. EB has consulted with Julie Carroll (the EY's adviser) for advice on who could potentially fill this role. • PW suggested Rebecca Foster (ISL SEN Lead for South/West) should join the board. <p>Action: PW to send SHe Rebecca Foster's contact details.</p>	<p>Action All</p> <p>PW Action</p>

<p>5.</p>	<p>Budget monitoring – docs distributed</p> <p>This budget covers 1st April 2019 – 31 August 2020 (17-month budget aligning the financial and academic year).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most expenditure went as planned and was spent against the operational plan as identified. • Variations were due to various posts not being filled because of Covid-19. • A lot of services continued throughout lockdown, however there was some underspend left over. County increased the amount that could be carried forward from 10% to 20% this year due to exceptional circumstances. • Some remaining underspend went towards off-budget items, such as refreshments and an outdoor space at the back of the Hub. Some of the underspend was also used to update the Sensory Resources library and the Early Years library. 	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Updates</p> <p>i. Annual Report 19-20</p> <p>This report details last year’s DSPL7 activities and plans for the forthcoming year. Data collected from previous courses was very useful. This report will be distributed to County shared services who will collate reports from all districts to generate an overview view of DSPL and share positive practices.</p> <p>13:19 – AG and SHA arrived.</p> <p>ii. LHNF Panels – docs distributed</p> <p>Local High Needs Funding (LHNF) is replacing ENF top up funding for CYP with SEND. DSPLs will run these panels monthly and control their own budget. SENCOs have been given guidance on how to complete the application form. The first trial meeting will be held on November 12th 2020. EB is in the process of compiling a panel for each monthly cluster group.</p> <p>This is for pupils who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • currently don’t have an EHCP, but have band 3 needs • have had a change in circumstance and need short term support • are coming into the County without funding or a Hertfordshire EHCP • would benefit from short term funding to support a focused piece of work <p>Representation at these panels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISL representative • Local Behaviour Provider representative – Fiona Haynes has been contacted • Local Special School representative – Karen Thorp has been contacted. <p>Action: DA will discuss panel representation with SLT. EB to send DA and SHA the panel dates.</p> <p>iii. Local Schools Partnerships</p> <p>The LSPs have continued to work as normal. Contracts have been issued alongside DSPL ones. LSP and DSPL have good communication, and there are strong links between the St Albans and Harpenden Partnerships. LSP and DSP meet termly. Clare Tominey-Smith is deployed by the LSPs and has continued working with families throughout lockdown.</p> <p>iv. The Collett Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen Thorp has had a phased return to work since September and has appointments (online/in person) booked for the next month. • 219 Outreach sessions are funded for this year. • Only 1 or 2 schools can be visited per day due to Covid-19 restrictions. • DSPL were going to provide additional funding for Outreach in the Summer term, however this was put on hold due to Covid-19. SHA confirmed additional funding this year would be welcomed. 	<p>DA & EB Action</p>

- Ideally other staff will be trained to deliver Outreach, to protect Karen and the Outreach programme.
- JS suggested Karen Thorp regularly co-ordinate with the EP service to avoid duplication of provision.

Sharing of advice and services, and managing school expectations of support was discussed.

v. **The Links Multi-Academy Trust**

- **Cedars Update** - Links remained open to all students (primary and secondary). The new cohort started in Autumn rather than in the Summer term. Children of cedars continued to be worked with. Cedars new cohort (6 YP) began in September.
- **Secondary Update** - A lot of time was spent working with years 10 and 11 to ensure they were not disadvantaged for GCSEs. 94% of students achieved Maths and English GCSEs, 81% achieved a science GCSE. One student got 14 GCSE's and 81% left with 7 or more qualifications. Some of these students joined as late as the week before lockdown.
- **Outreach Update** - The Outreach team worked throughout lockdown. All schools who wanted transition work were offered this (virtual or provision of materials). A booklet was produced to support EY's – KS1. Fiona provides Outreach support for Primary & KS3 and Gemma Nash works with the Cedars and KS4 & 5. Richard Boxer has also been appointed as a Modern Lifestyles Lead helping YP with drugs, alcohol and tobacco issues. This service is being offered to STASH secondary schools who can buy a day of his services. SIBS group has been cancelled until New Year as the local authority do not allow meetings of 6 or more. It is looking to restart in April.

Action: EB to alert schools that these children will no longer be receiving Sibs support and discuss with the group leaders whether support can be offered virtually.

EB Action

vi. **NESSie** – report available on GovernorHub

NESSie support has continued during lockdown through remote sessions and phone calls with parents. NESSie's focus this term is children who have witnessed domestic abuse during lockdown – the St Albans and Herts women's refuge have been contacted to identify children in school who they could support.

There has been a huge uptake in courses which have been well received:

- Anxiety and returning to school (120 parents registered)
- Bereavement and loss (as part of Covid) – 61 professionals attended
- Developing resilience
- Attachment and Trauma

One therapist has left – Natasha has increased her hours. Tim has remained working 2 days a week.

EP services

- Developed and distributed surveys for parents and school staff to establish need.
- EP services have produced three documents: 1) Lockdown Isolation, 2) Bereavement & 3) Return to School. These should have been circulated.
- The EP services are prioritising wellbeing and mental health.
- Webinars for parents to support their children on returning to school and with bereavement are available on Youtube.
- Supporting the return to education project – uses materials developed by MindEd and the Anna Freud centre. Schools will identify a member of staff to attend training which will then be rolled out. Begins 18th October 2020.
- Contact line for parents once a week providing signposting and information over the phone – this was run every day during lockdown.

Action: EB & SHe will ensure links to these resources are on the DSPL website.

EB & SHe
Action

vii. **DSPL Staffing Update**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EB is now the manager and SEND lead. • Clare Tominey-Smith is the specialist family support worker • Mike Rose is the new KS3 Male Mentor • Sophie and Rachel continue in admin roles – this is currently overstaffed. <p>Post-16 continuum co-ordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A post-16 continuum role is being considered to fulfil the post-16 section of the strategic plan. This post would help with transition, supporting those in mainstream secondary schools who are in danger of becoming NEETs or not sustaining their further education placement. The outcome measures are to reduce NEETs and provide secondary schools with signposting support for students and families. • The original Oakland’s transition worker role being considered didn’t meet the brief, as Oakland’s doesn’t just serve this district. • This co-ordinator would work with secondary schools in the district and have a caseload of students who they would support and track through the year to ensure they had stickability, providing support, working with families to ensure successful outcomes and signposting. • Other DSPL areas have had a similar, very successful role - one DSPL now has no NEETs post-16 and all YP were successfully tracked from secondary school onwards. • Their caseload would be YP on SEN support - not those with EHCP plans as these students already have a lot of support. • A proposed job description will be circulated to the board – this is currently with a grade expert to ensure it is paid appropriately. It has been added as a notional budget in next year’s operational plan as a proposal to ensure it is affordable going forward. <p>PW explained that Jo Fisher chairs a County wide board with Children and Adult services, which have done some a similar project called ‘My future’ coach – this supports YP transitioning out of college to training or employment pathways.</p> <p>Early Years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Originally had an EY’s specialist support worker but it was decided that there was already enough provision here and it was more important to ensure schools and PVI settings were aware of how to access support. An EY’s sub-group is being set up as part of this DPSL to ensure that parents, PVI’s and schools know where to access EY’s support. 	
7.	<p>Strategic Plan 20-21 – docs distributed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and Management - Margot originally lead the secondary SENCo work but EB is upskilling herself in this area. There is holiday cover in place in case anything needs to be done outside of term time. • Secondary Mentor (KS3) – DSPL7 are working with the LSP who have a male mentor (a trained counsellor with lots of experience). DSPL7 have bought his services for 1.5 days (1 day – St Albans, ½ day – Harpenden). He will work one-to-one or with small groups of 6 students (mainly year 8-9 boys) focussing on resilience, learning behaviour, attendance and relationships. This has been received very well so far with lots of referrals being made already. • Resources have been channelled into people and support rather than training (previous years have been more focussed on training which is more difficult to measure the impact of). • Some professionals’ training is being done in response to the annual survey of schools and SENCo’s needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st month – SENCo update 2nd month – small workshop training session 3rd month – HFL briefing • No parent training has been set up yet apart from Bereavement and loss NESSie training, but this is being considered. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication friendly schools training has been carried forward but meeting in large groups is not possible so delivery to schools may be difficult. • EY's – DSPL7 are funding the SENCO award for PVI settings in EY's (CERTSEY award) - £175 a setting but is really valuable training. • The board agreed that school online courses could be added to the budget – (£800 for 100 SENCo logins to access all SEN training – this was received well during lockdown). <p>It was clarified that ADD-vance coaching is allocated through school family workers at the LSPs, not through schools directly, and that NESSie was currently only available for Primary schools with strict referral criteria for schools. Families in Focus has been put on hold due to government restrictions on group meetings.</p> <p>Action: EB to investigate if Sibs group can be delivered online rather than completely postponed.</p> <p>Action: JS & EB to discuss potential trial schools to pilot a new EP project on early intervention for school refusal.</p> <p>14:28 – PW and GWT left</p>	<p>EB Action</p> <p>JS & EB Action</p>
8.	<p>AOB</p> <p>Dates for this academic year's meetings have been distributed.</p> <p>The board will review going forward whether AG leaving at 2:15 in future board sessions is appropriate.</p>	

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 10th November

Venue – Board meetings may continue on Zoom, or resume in The Hub depending on circumstance.