

## DSPL7 Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020

### Attendees:

David Allen **DA** (HT Links Academy); Helen Barton **HB** (HT St George's); Elaine Bridle **EB** (Primary SEND Lead, DSPL7 Manager); Sharon Coubray (ISL Speech, Language and Autism lead); Rebecca Foster (SEN manager for St Albans and Decorum); Angela Gaughan **AG** (Parent); Steven Lloyd **SL** (HT Sauncey Wood); Androulla Peek **AP**, Chair, (CEO, Director of Business, Spiral Trust); Annie Thomson **AT** (HT Marlborough); Patricia Walker **PW** (ISL); Gillian Warwick-Thompson **GWT** (Parent).

**Apologies:** Serena Baker **SB** (Parent); Kate Bell **KB** (Trust Business Manager); Damien Johnston **DJ** (HT Margaret Wix); Alex Lindley **AL** (HT Fleetville Infants); Joanne Summers **JS** (Deputy Principal Educational Psychologist: St Albans and Dacorum Team)

**No Apologies:** Joe Gore **JG** (Oaklands College) and Steven Hault-Allen **SHA** (Collett, St Luke's & Forest House)

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

		Action
1.	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p><b>AP</b> welcomed everyone to the meeting, which took place over Microsoft Teams due to Covid-19. Apologies have been received from Serena Baker, Kate Bell, Damien Johnston, Alex Lindley and Joanne Summers.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p>Minutes of 22<sup>nd</sup> September accepted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most board members have re-confirmed their conflicts of interest and business interests on GovernorHub for the year. <b>SHe</b> will email those who haven't yet done this.</li> <li>• Fiona Haynes will be the Local Behaviour Provider representative on the LHNF panel. <b>SHA</b> is organising a representative to attend from the Blue Tangerine Foundation.</li> <li>• Schools were alerted that Sibs group was no longer running.</li> <li>• Lots of resources (including those from the EP service) have been added to the DSPL7 website.</li> <li>• <b>EB</b> enquired as to whether Sibs could be delivered online but the Local Partnership felt this would be challenging.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance concerning the trial schools has not yet been released so this action has been temporarily postponed – there is a meeting organised in the Spring term to discuss this further.</li> </ul> <p><u>SEN Distribution</u></p> <p>Concerns were raised regarding the distribution of CYP with SEN across St Albans and Harpenden, with some schools having much higher numbers than others. E.g. lots of SEN CYP are being recommended to attend Marlborough due to their pastoral care.</p> <p><b>Action: RF</b> to ask the SEN team at ISL, which holds information about EHCP distribution across the County, if this data can be shared with DSPLs and their boards.</p> <p>Parent representatives confirmed that this is a long-standing issue with particular schools discouraging SEN children from attending. <b>DA</b> explained that this had been discussed in STASH meetings but no schools will admit doing this. <b>DA</b> has suggested to Richard Woodard and Sally Glossop that the local authority should challenge this. ISL managers and the local authority are aware of which schools are less inclusive.</p> <p><b>Action: RF</b> will discuss these school inclusivity issues with Sally Glossop.</p>	<p><b>RF Action</b></p> <p><b>RF Action</b></p>
3.	<p><b>Conflicts of interest</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Budget monitoring</b> – docs distributed</p> <p>This budget runs till the end of September 2020 (October has not yet been completed). The budget has been allocated - there has been little movement. Any variance in percentage spend is due to timings of when invoices are presented or when income arrives. More information will be available at the next meeting.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Strategic management group feedback</b></p> <p><u>DSPL Review</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DSPLs are being reviewed over the coming months. The aim is to consider what each DSPL area does and see if DSPLs can work in a more joined up, targeted way in order to ensure that the budget is being allocated in the most efficient way to cope with growing demand.</li> <li>DSPL are funded from the higher needs area which has had an increase in funding from the Government by 9%, however there is still an overspend - the local authority forecast there to be an overspend of £11 million in 2022/23, and £20 million by 2023/4. There is lobbying involved for fairer funding as Hertfordshire has one of the lowest funding amounts per pupil in the Country for SEN.</li> </ul> <p><u>LHNE</u> (new funding replacing ENF)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The first panels across all DSPL areas are this week. DSPL7's is on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November.</li> <li>DSPL7 has a budget of £67,500. 33 applications have been made to this panel – if all were to go through at the requests that schools have made, we would be over budget by £70,000, so not all of these will receive the level of funding requested.</li> <li>PVI settings are not allocated the first £6,000 that school settings get for children with SEN, so DSPL7 would have to fund this initial amount as well, meaning any PVI setting applying for band 3-4 funding will get £10,000.</li> <li>This is a trial panel to see how far the funding goes, which will be reviewed, ready to begin properly in January.</li> </ul> <p><u>Inclusion team</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a new inclusion team which monitors attendance and exclusions – they sit under Richard Woodard and Adam Haynes will be line managing them. They are</li> </ul>	

	<p>now part of the access and inclusion team and will be joining the ISL local managers meeting for St Albans and Decorum. This team will be particularly helpful in working with cases of children who are finding re-integration into education post-Covid difficult.</p> <p><u>Wellbeing for Education Return Webinars</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DfE released funding and Hertfordshire's bid was assigned to Herts for Learning who have produced two webinars – the first has been completed and the second begins this week. Two members of staff in each school should be trained in these webinars, and they can then cascade this training to the rest of the staff.</li> <li>• It looks at all the post-Covid measures put in place to support children's wellbeing.</li> </ul>	
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Monitoring and review of local need</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>I. ISL Teams</b></p> <p><u>SENDSASS</u> SENDSASS underwent a review consultation in 2019 and the service has now been restructured in four areas:</p> <p>1) <b>Early Years team</b> – led by Deena Walworth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EY's specialists development centres – supports children with more complex needs and their families.</li> <li>• Includes specialists workers – 4 EY's teachers and Jane Keech.</li> <li>• The EY's team now works up to age 7 (previously 0-5 years) so children transitioning out of nursery will have continued support, following feedback that 'stage is more important than age'.</li> <li>• Working with HfL on the EY's toolkit.</li> <li>• Set up a new EY advice line (developed based on feedback from families).</li> </ul> <p>2) <b>Physical and Neurological Impairment (PNI) team &amp; Specific Learning Difficulties team</b> - led by Louise Carter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PNI team now has a lead teacher, Gemma Cannon Jones, who works County wide. She is currently doing a lot of work with families in the home post-Covid.</li> <li>• The SpLD team lead teacher is Lynne Williams. The SpLD offer is currently being reviewed (as it is the newest team in ISL) and stakeholders feedback about this support is being considered.</li> <li>• They have noticed an increase in children with SpLDs and MH issues.</li> </ul> <p>3) <b>Speech, Language, Communication and Autism</b> – led by Sharon Coubrey. Rhona McDonald (representative for this area) is currently off sick.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are 4 specialist lead teachers across the County.</li> <li>• This team provide support for speech and language needs, as well as ASD.</li> <li>• Supporting CYP and schools in implementing strategies to continue SaL support. They are liaising with SaL to ensure they are complementing each other's work. James Dickinson (County lead for Speech and Language) is part of the team. They are considering training needs for staff.</li> <li>• EY Autism staff have joined their team to create an all through service for Autism which should help with key periods of transition for CYP. EY's staff now cover ages 0-7 to ensure CYP are supported when transitioning into school.</li> <li>• Pro-active casework - contacting schools with high numbers of CYP with SLC and Autism needs and offering regular whole school visits to support ongoing cases, rather than waiting for cases to come in. Doing strategic work with schools to try and upskill staff within the setting.</li> <li>• Broader school work around SEN – implementing a strategic collaborative approach to allow professionals assisting schools from different services to work together more effectively. <b>SC</b> and <b>EB</b> have discussed doing this in DSPL7 and will look at establishing which schools might need this support.</li> </ul>	

#### 4) Sensory Team

- SEN South are now part of ISL.
- Visual impairment service: A range of specialists are working collaboratively with health and social care professionals. They are targeting EY's. Work on online teaching was completed during Covid-19, to ensure children had continued access to education outside the classroom.
- Hearing impairment service: The specialist advisory teacher is working closely with audiologists and the speech and language therapists. Across the service they are targeting EY's and early intervention. A sign support worker has just been appointed who will work with families to communicate via British sign language. The HI team name is being changed to reflect feedback from the deaf community.

#### SEL Statutory Services

##### Service Development Plan:

- Improvement of KPI's for EHCPs – new requests aim to be processed within 20 weeks.
- Currently focussing on improving communication in the service.
- Vacancies in all teams currently – can't recruit right now but this is something they are continuing to look at.

##### Service-wide

- Annual Review Performance – there is a significant backlog on this. They recently recruited an Annual Review Recovery Team of 8 case workers to work on the backlog of annual reviews. 1 of the 8 is currently in post; it is anticipated that all 8 will be in post within the next couple of weeks. There are currently pilots taking place using EHM to do ARs.

##### Local level

- **RF** and Su Hurren within statutory SEN are making sure they have a presence and active role within the ISL strategic conversations.
- Currently have 30 active appeals within the Sta and Decorum area – this is the highest they have ever had in an area team. They are currently assessing the nature of these appeals.

**Action:** RF will analyse this data to establish potential areas for development.

**RF Action**

#### **II. Education**

- There has been a worrying increase in YP being brought to The Links Panels returning from EHE (Elective Home Education). The Links is there to support children at risk of permanent exclusion but we are now seeing applications from parents for children who should be in mainstream school but have lost school places due to low attendance because of Covid-19.
- There is also an increase in school hopping because of staff and parent anxieties. It was suggested that compiling an overview of this and tracking these individuals would allow DSPL7 to identify any patterns and target some interventions.
- St George's have told parents that they will not be allocated places if they try and return after choosing to EHE, in an attempt to discourage this.
- Concerns about potential significant increases in MH issues with students and also parents and teachers, especially with exam uncertainty.
- Concern regarding burn out of staff who have worked throughout Covid-19, and of head teachers who are having to be constantly making decisions and dealing with change throughout a very stressful period.

14:07 - HB left

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>III. Parents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent representatives pointed out that parents are opting for EHE because they feel they have no alternative, rather than from choice, due to Government attendance rules and schools pushing the narrative of children either needing to attend or being off role. There is currently a lot of anxiety about child wellbeing but also broader family concerns such as parents struggling with underlying health issues and the health of older family members.</li> </ul> <p><b>14:15 - AG left</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion about EHE application process - for children without a plan the process simply requires parents to write to the school explaining that they would like to pursue EHE. For those with an EHCP, SEN would only allow them to EHE once they had completed a home visit from the EHE advisor.</li> </ul>	
7.	<p><b>Staffing update</b></p> <p>Post-16 co-ordinator – has been recruited. This job was ringfenced to the DSPL7 team due to admin redundancies. One member applied for the role, was interviewed and had good previous post-16 work experience. She began on Monday - referral forms have been sent to schools and SENCos contacted, and she’s had her first referral. She has been in contact with the DSPL4 post-16 co-ordinator to get ideas on how to take this forward.</p> <p>KS3 Mentor – Mike began in September and has had a lot of referrals. He has done his first cohort – works with 9 young people a week. He is now working with set 2 for this half term and has a full waiting list for next half term. His hours may potentially be increased to fulfil this demand.</p> <p>Specialist SEND family worker – Clare has expressed that it may not be financially viable for her to continue in this role due to family circumstances. She is currently investigating her options.</p>	
8.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>DA and AT employ Richard Boxer as a healthy lifestyles lead (specifically looking at drugs education). He is available at cost to do training for parents.</p>	

**Date of next meeting – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

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