

## DSPL7 Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021

**Attendees:** Serena Baker **SB** (Parent); Elaine Bridle **EB** (Primary SEND Lead, DSPL7 Manager); Angela Gaughan **AG** (Parent); Sarah Hedges (HT Batford Nursery); Alex Lindley **AL** (HT Fleetville Infants); Androulla Peek **AP**, Chair, (CEO, Director of Business, Spiral Trust); Patricia Walker **PW** (ISL Area Manager); Gillian Warwick-Thompson **GWT** (Parent).

**Apologies:** Helen Barton **HB** (HT St George's); Kate Bell **KB** (Trust Business Manager); Victoria Burman (HT Mount Pleasant Lane); Steven Hoult-Allen **SHA** (Collett, St Luke's & Forest House); Steven Lloyd **SL** (HT Sauncey Wood); Annie Thomson **AT** (HT Marlborough).

**No Apologies:** David Allen **DA** (HT Links Academy); Joe Gore **JG** (Oaklands College);

**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. Apologies were received from Helen Barton, Kate Bell, Victoria Burman, Steven Hoult-Allen, Steven Lloyd and Annie Thomson.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p>Minutes of May 2021 accepted.</p> <p>Matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>EB</b> has shared the budget breakdown on GovernorHub.</li> <li><b>EB</b> and <b>GWT</b> met to discuss the parent stakeholder survey and develop questions. The questionnaire will first be piloted to the DSPL7 parent representatives and then forwarded to the board. This will be distributed to school parents in September.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> <b>EB</b> to include questions concerning whether parents need support helping their children with mental health difficulties like anxiety in the parent survey.</p>	<b>EB Action</b>
3.	<p><b>Conflicts of Interest</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Budget Monitoring – docs distributed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This budget runs till 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021.</li> <li>Committed expenditure is on track.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DSPL7 are trying to carry forward as much money as possible, so spending has been limited this term.</li> <li>• Limited variances in expenditure – other than school training, one DS advisor invoice and some ADD-vance funding invoices, there has been no change to expenditure.</li> <li>• It has been confirmed that 20% of the underspend can be carried forward, which is expected to be approximately £30,000, however the next budget has assumed a £20,000 carryforward to ensure no overspending.</li> </ul>	
5.	<p><b>Strategic management group feedback – docs distributed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EHCP Data:</b> Data on increasing numbers of EHCP applications in Hertfordshire was shared. Increasing numbers were expected and bring Hertfordshire in line with other LAs, matching national statistics, so this isn't a concern. Personnel required to carry out these assessments are not in place in the LA which is causing delays. EHCP data specifically on St Albans and Decorum has been shared on GH.</li> <li>• <b>SEN Strategy events:</b> these are planned for September and look at priorities up to 2025 – there will be one in each quadrant. Our closest one is in Hatfield on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Priorities will focus on supporting inclusion in schools and taking forward recommendations that were highlighted in the DSPL review.</li> </ul> <p>13:18 – PW arrived.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New local offer for CYP with DS (built into SEND SAS):</b> ISL are committed to offer better systemic support to CYP with DS and their families and schools. SEND SAS will develop this alongside the EPs and Special School Outreach. Rather than having a dedicated specialist advisory teacher, DS should be 'everyone's business' across SEND SAS and ISL; staff have been identified in each department who will receive training through DS international. See slides 23 – 29 in the DSPL Strategic Planning Group document on GH for more information.</li> <li>• <b>New Emotional Wellbeing and Behaviour Strategy:</b> this will be re-launched in September with an implementation toolkit, resources and practical advice for schools to use alongside this. This will be rolled out to SENCOs in September to give them a wider toolkit to use in tackling challenging behaviour in school.</li> <li>• <b>EHCP Reviews &amp; Statutory SEND Pathway:</b> completing the EHCP reviews online in special schools has been quicker and more effective, so will be rolled out to mainstream EHCP reviews from January 2022. A '7 S' framework has been produced for stakeholders so all the information is available on one page. The results of their review, what they've learnt from it and what they hope to do next was also covered.</li> </ul> <p>13:26 – SH arrived.</p>	
6.	<p><b>ISL Monitoring Visit feedback</b></p> <p>Contractual elements of DSPL, provision and how people work across different sectors were considered. DSPL7 received lots of positive feedback, such as praise about the involvement and composition of the board in terms of DSPL7 priorities. If written feedback is provided this will be circulated to the board.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Monitoring and review of local need</b></p> <p>i. <b>ISL teams</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEND statutory services are being reviewed. Updates will be provided in the Autumn term.</li> <li>• Focusing on improving communication – there is now an advice line for SENCOs. More staff are being appointed into statutory send.</li> <li>• SEND SAS is almost fully staffed. A new Speech and Language lead will be starting in September. There is still an absence in the EY lead role (Jane Keech is still off sick).</li> </ul>	

	<p>Deena Wolworth is currently covering the EY role). More capacity will be put into the St Albans EY team in September. There is also an EY advice line.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EP services are currently very under resourced. Assistant psychologists have recently been appointed.</li> </ul> <p><b>ii. Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NESSie are continuing to work well – referrals are being acted upon quickly.</li> <li>• The DSPL offer is very positive and meeting needs.</li> <li>• There is now a greater understanding of what DSPL7 offers, which has been helped by <b>EB's</b> contact with each school.</li> <li>• <b>AP</b> presented the ELSA flyer at the last St Albans head teachers meeting and it was very popular. ELSA is currently being rolled out to secondary schools. There is a similar accredited offer available (in mental health support) from NESSie which DSPL7 can access for free as part of our package, for up to 10 primary schools. ELSA will be rolled out in primary schools from next September.</li> </ul> <p>13:33 – <b>GWT</b> arrived.</p> <p><b>iii. Parents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has recently been an increase in the number of SEN children experiencing issues and anxiety around gender identity – this has been raised in the parent survey. Primary SENCos have also raised this as an area that they would like more support with. <b>EB</b> has spoken to NESSie who have developed a training package for school SENCos and may be able to produce something similar for parents.</li> <li>• It was clarified that 'looked after' children who have SEND needs are receiving a lot of additional funding through LHNF panels and are appearing increasingly at LMAG for EHC assessments. It is difficult to support their needs - they seem to be clustered in one or two main schools. <b>EB</b> has discussed putting on further trauma and attachment training with NESSie to assist with these students, but this course been run several times previously. As part of the new EY offer the virtual school is providing training on attachment and trauma to the EY settings.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>2021-22 Strategic plan discussion – docs distributed</b></p> <p>Outcomes from the DSPL7 school survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DSPL7 have had good engagement (50 – 60 responses) and outcomes from our survey. The highest presenting need was SLCN, followed by ASD, SEMH &amp; ADHD (ASD was the highest need last year).</li> <li>• The service most affected by Covid-19 was Speech and Language. <b>EB</b> and <b>PW</b> have a meeting with the EY's and Speech and language teams to establish how to support these children more quickly.</li> <li>• Areas where more support is needed: Speech and Language, Challenging behaviour, ODD &amp; PDA, Attachment and Trauma, Dyslexia support (in secondary schools) and Effective differentiating and scaffolding.</li> <li>• These findings were analysed and have been used to inform the projects for next year.</li> </ul> <p>Discussion about funding for speech and language support and whether this should be covered by a different funding stream (under health): currently, only children with this written into their EHC plans are being supported, which leaves EY students without support. If DSPL7 could upskill the settings they would be able to implement the support needed, but they currently rely on the speech therapist's instructions. Concerns raised about SaLT funding being reduced by 50%.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <b>EB</b> to update and distribute the SLCN Quality Offer work map to SENCos.</p>	<p><b>EB Action</b></p>

### Strategic Plan Discussion

The vast majority of the budget is allocated towards staff salaries (Post-16 worker, SEND family worker, KS3 mentor & NESSie), all of whom are working well and receive positive feedback.

#### Agreed projects for 21/22:

- **Word Aware EYs and Primary training** - rescheduled from June 2020 to October 2021. This course is being shared with DSPL 5 & 6 to save costs (£600 instead of £1800) – 100 spaces for EYs and 100 spaces for primaries are available across the three areas.
- **DS Advisory support** - Helen Long will continue as the DSPL7 DS advisor for another year whilst the LA are training up employees for their advisory support DS offer.
- **Impact of gender issues on MH** - NESSie will provide school training on gender issues for £379.00. Parent training would cost a similar amount – **Action: EB** to contact NESSie and confirm this.
- **ADD-vance coaching** - there are still a few ADD-vance coaching sessions which haven't yet been completed (worth approximately £6500); these will either be paid this side of September or next side at the latest.
- **HfL Termly SEND Briefings** - these are crucial for SENCOs to understand what is happening both nationally and locally. £400 has been budgeted for each briefing, (likely to be less than this), which provides 30 SENCO spaces. This was DSPL7's most attended training this year.
- **ASD Secondary Mentoring Project for Y7-Y12** (money has been rolled forward) - Two schools wanted to take part in this project. They should have recruited their mentors and identified year 6s that need this support. This should re-launch in September. Settings have been offered £200 each to cover all admin costs.

EB Action

#### Potential projects (based on £20,000 carry forward):

Projects were selected which targeted and impacted the most children.

- **Communication friendly status** – outstanding amount of £2300 for two schools to finish this. This project was a priority when it first began but is no longer and relies on speech and language therapists who are difficult to get. Training may also be hindered due to the 18 month gap between this project first beginning and now. **Action: EB** to discuss this with the two schools involved.
- **Sibs and young carers group** – this is a large amount of money to benefit a small number of children (who don't have high needs themselves) and hasn't been run since February 2020. Some schools and Families in Focus run an alternate version of this, and support groups often include siblings. This money could alternatively be relocated to ADD-vance - £3600 would fund 10 ADD-vance coaching spaces (which may indirectly benefit as many siblings). The LSP currently run this and may wish to continue it independently.
- **OfSTED readiness** – it was felt this should not be prioritised for funding.
- **Speech and Language support** – Level 4 SLCN training part funding would train 15 EY settings for £1500 (approximately £200 per setting).
- **Dyslexia support in secondary schools** - training two members of staff in 13 secondary schools for £3500. Includes 6 weeks of training and all the resources. It was clarified that this wouldn't just benefit dyslexic children but also those with low reading ages. Concerns were raised about ensuring that this training had a lasting impact; DSPL7 can request updates about project impacts to establish how successful they have been. **Action: EB** to upload DSPL9's project overview to GH which asks for data and level of impact throughout projects.
- **Effective differentiation and scaffolding** - DSPL9 have requested HfL deliver training on this – DSPL7 could access this training too for £400. Discussion about Helen Long potentially providing information on scaffolding and differentiation to schools.

EB Action

EB Action

	<p>All other projects which were highlighted as necessary from the school survey can be run at no cost using ISL and other contacts.</p> <p><b>14:07 – AG left</b></p> <p><b>Action: EB</b> to enquire about whether the EP service could resurrect their training on executive functioning (began pre-lockdown in March 2020 but was postponed due to Covid-19).</p> <p><b>Action: EB</b> to draft the strategic plan, including all potential projects, before the end of term and distribute this to the board for feedback.</p>	<p><b>EB Action</b></p> <p><b>EB Action</b></p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Proposed dates for the board meetings next year have been distributed.</p> <p><b>AP</b> thanked the board for their commitment throughout Covid-19.</p>	

**Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> September (TBC)

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